



2009 Community Development Master Plan



2009 Community Development Master Plan

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*“The right of children to play, to sing and to dance;
The right of youth to sport for sport’s sake;
The right of men and women to use their leisure in the
pursuit of happiness in their own way,
are basic to our American heritage.”*

Harry S. Truman; US President 1884-1972



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Chapter 1

Executive Summary: *A Vision for The Colony*



Opportunities

The progress made by a community is often a direct result of the opportunities presented to that specific community and to what degree the City leadership takes advantage of such opportunities. The Colony has been blessed with many opportunities that have shaped the community thus far and can continue to shape and provide benefit to the community and its residents into the future. Some of these opportunities are geographic in nature, such as The Colony's **regional positioning** and proximity to Dallas, Fort Worth, and other cities in the area as well as the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Such positioning places The Colony in the highest-growth sector of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. A more unique opportunity for The Colony is its **adjacency to Lewisville Lake** which provides 26 miles of shoreline and over 1,000 acres of lakeshore land. Another geographic feature is the beautiful valley in the southern portion of The Colony (near Austin Ranch) that has been created by **Indian Creek**. These geographic features not only define the physical features of The Colony, they also define the image of the community.

In addition to these geographic opportunities, the physical development of The Colony also provides opportunities for the community. **Recent development** within the City (such as that at The Cascades, The Tribute, and Austin Ranch) has been of high quality and is setting a new precedent for development in The Colony. **Opportunities for new commercial development** in The Colony have been recently provided by the improvement of State Highway 121; such new commercial development which will help to improve the City's tax base. Finally, the **distribution of park land** within The Colony is a great opportunity for the community. The City has a great amount of park land that is generally well-distributed throughout the City that, with a few additions and reallocations of land, will easily meet The Colony's needs at build-out conditions.

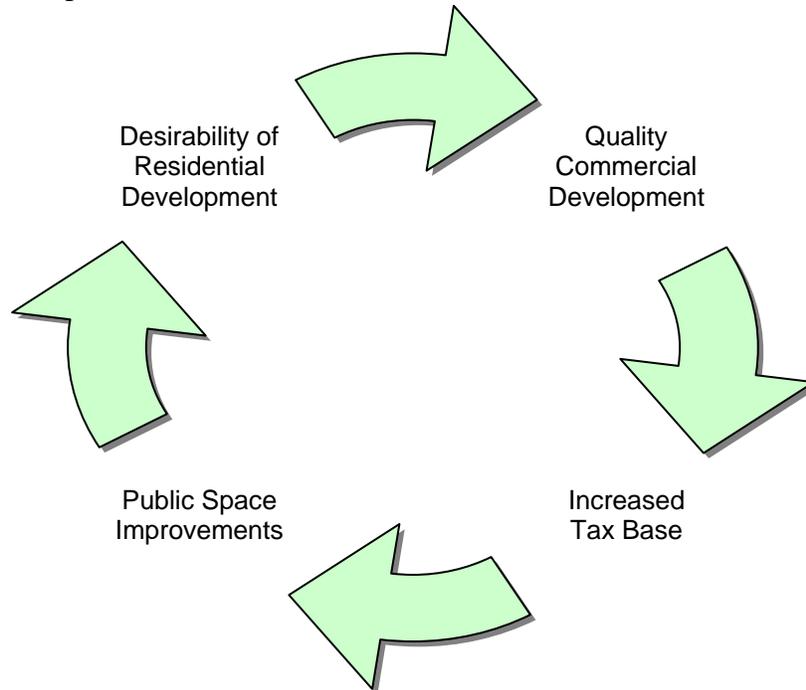
Finally, The Colony is blessed to be made up of citizens that are positive, hard-working people that believe in The Colony and are invested in their community. With the support and efforts of its citizens, The Colony can achieve great things and be a community with a strong sense of identity and much to offer its citizens.

Challenges

While many opportunities are present, there are also weaknesses which, though few in number, pose great challenges for The Colony. The first and possibly most challenging weakness of The Colony is that development patterns beginning in the 1970s and leading up to today **have not embraced Lewisville Lake** and have, in effect, cordoned off the Lake from the rest of the community. Today, one can be less than a quarter of a mile from the Lake and not realize it is there. Taking steps to embrace the Lake through redevelopment and parks and trails is of paramount importance to The Colony. Another challenge that is facing the community is **aged residential and commercial development** in the older parts of the City. There have been efforts in the recent past by some homeowners to meet the challenge of the upkeep of the older residential areas but generally the commercial areas have not had the same attention. Many of these areas have become depressed and outdated and therefore impact the image of The Colony accordingly. Further impacting the image of the community is the manner in which park development has occurred within The Colony. While the City has an admirable amount of park land that is well distributed, it appears that parks in The Colony have in the past been **developed in an as-needed fashion** as funding has become available rather than in a comprehensive manner. The City has begun to change this practice with recent park development, but efforts are needed to revamp older parks which exhibit varying levels of quality to meet a higher standard of quality to improve the image and character of public space in The Colony. All of this results in a community that does not have a strong sense of its identity and considers itself subpar to its neighbors.

The overarching challenge to community development that The Colony faces is that **the quality of residential development, the amount of quality commercial development, the size of the City's tax base, and the quality of public spaces** (including parks and streets) **are all dependent upon one another**. Specifically, there is a cycle wherein quality residential development attracts quality commercial development which helps to increase the City's tax base which allows the City to improve its public spaces which in turn attracts additional quality residential development. It is then vastly important for

The Colony to set this cycle in motion. The occurrence of new quality development can begin to start the cycle, but must be assisted on all fronts – namely by investing in public space improvements to continue to improve the desirability of the community and its residential development.



The above is a graphic representation of the self-perpetuating cycle to be initiated by the leaders of The Colony: commerce leads to tax base, tax base allows improvements to public space, improved public space attracts residents, and residents attract retail.

Vision

Considering these opportunities and weaknesses, the vision for community development in The Colony focuses on taking full advantage of its opportunities which will, in turn, address and mitigate the weaknesses of the community. Specifically, The Colony must decide to invest in its public spaces, coordinate development to embrace the City’s natural resources such as the Lake and the Indian Creek valley, and build upon the cache of parkland that the City has amassed over the years. Working toward these tasks will help to build a strong, positive identity for The Colony, improve quality of life, and allow for the continued growth and improvement of the City and its public spaces. The end result will be an attractive community with a defined image that provides a full array of amenities and services to its citizens, as well as non-governmental resources (retail, jobs, etc.), while maintaining a strong sense of identity.

Purpose of the Master Plan

The Community Development Master Plan (CDMP) was sponsored by the CDC Board in conjunction with The Colony Parks and Recreation Department and was developed with the aid of a team of consultants led by Halff Associates of Richardson, Texas (hereafter,

Planning Team). Through the community development master planning process, the Planning Team consulted the public to gain input on what is important in The Colony. Information gathered from these meetings was combined with the mission of the CDC to develop a roadmap for community development. Through the implementation of the recommendations presented in this master plan, the City will take considerable steps to improve the quality of life, image, and character of The Colony over the next five to ten years. Specifically, the Community Development Master Plan:

- Identifies the need for additional community facilities, including parks;
- Evaluates the spatial location of parks, recreation, and cultural facilities within the City and recommends measures to ensure a balanced distribution of facilities within the City;
- Guides the CDC Board and City Staff in acquiring land to meet current and future park, open space, and facility needs;
- Recommends and prioritizes key improvements so that the most significant deficiencies are addressed as quickly as possible;
- Is intended to guide City Staff and City leaders in determining where and how funding should be allocated over the next five to ten years;
- Identifies opportunities and recommends appropriate measures for improving quality of life within the City; and
- Provides a plan which is consistent with the funding and grant requirements for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Key Community Development Needs

Community Development needs are derived from the results of the Public Input process, which utilized several methods of input – both quantitative and qualitative – during the process. The Planning Team reviewed a previously conducted community survey (the 2006 DirectionFinder[®] Survey), attended a community event and spoke with citizens (the 2008 Easter Egg Hunt), held two Focus Group meetings, organized an Open House, and distributed and analyzed a self-conducted questionnaire. Consolidating and comparing the input from these various components of the Public Input process results in the creation of five key Community Development Needs:

Image & Identity

There is a need to improve the physical image of the City through beautification, art, gateway features, and signage as well as the need to improve the identity internally and externally of The Colony and its citizens. This latter facet includes improving community involvement, community spirit, and the City’s reputation.

Improvement of Existing Parks

The Colony has a wealth of parkland that is generally well-distributed throughout the City. Many of its parks, however, are in need of repairs and renovation including new playgrounds and other equipment, additional walkways and ADA access, and overall “freshening up” of park facilities to provide an improved image of parks in The Colony.

Trails

Citizens of The Colony expressed a need to develop more trails within the City to serve as recreational amenities and as means to support alternative transportation. These trails should connect schools, residences, and parks as well as the Lake and natural areas. They should also connect residences to commercial areas so that users can walk or bike to and from shopping and dining destinations.

Recreation / Community Center

The provision of a facility that provides expanded recreational opportunities, flexible use space, and places for people to gather is in great demand by the community. This was often expressed as one of the top needs throughout the public input process.

Lewisville Lake & Natural Areas

The protection of and access to the natural areas surrounding Lewisville Lake and the shoreline are a high priority of the citizens of The Colony. People expressed their desire to capitalize on the Lake's recreational opportunities, its natural habitat and open space, and its ability to improve The Colony's image and identity. The City should identify ways in which it can "embrace" the Lake through redevelopment and future new development so that it becomes a much more visible feature of the community.

Youth, Families & Seniors

Providing opportunities for recreation and enrichment of the diverse population of The Colony is expressed as a significant need by the community. Expanded programming offered through the City and the provision of facilities, both indoor and outdoor – that meet the needs of the full cross-section of the population of the City are paramount to the citizens. This includes expanding programming beyond league athletics, which is typically provided for children up to twelve years old, to meet the needs of user groups currently not fully served by the City.

Values & Goals

Heavily informed by the public input process, the CDC, City Staff, and the Planning Team developed values and goals for the CDMP. Five "Value Areas," which represent the broad statements describing what The Colony should be in the future, were created. These can be seen as components of an overall vision for Community Development within the City. In Chapter 4 of the Master Plan report, each of these Value Areas are broken down into goals for community development. It is from these goals that decisions throughout the CDMP process are made, including performing needs assessments, setting target levels of service, making recommendations, and prioritizing recommendations.

Identity

The citizens of The Colony value a city-wide Identity – an image and a sense of community. An identity for The Colony should include a strong, clear vision, it should unite the City, and it should be visible. An identity announces one's arrival to the city, yet is also present within the core of the city. The identity will reflect the culture and history of the community and should be represented in a unique and artistic manner. An

identity incorporates Lake Lewisville as a destination and visual attraction, maintaining The Colony’s image as the “City by the Lake.”

Family & Community

The citizens of The Colony value children, families, and seniors. This focus on the family is important to the social structure and community of the city. This culture of family-orientation should support community, safety, and education in recognition of the spiritual, creative, and educational welfare of children, families, and seniors. Building the self confidence, self awareness, and self esteem of youth positions them to become better adults and the foundation of the next generation of citizens.

Diversity

The citizens of The Colony value diversity – both of its citizenry and the physical City itself. Community involvement and the expansion of cultural and recreational activities should transcend the lines of gender, age, ethnicity, wealth, and physical and mental abilities. There should be a diverse array of activities accessible to all citizens of all backgrounds. It is important to meet the diverse needs of different citizens, but it is also important to bring these groups together. As the City has older districts and newer districts, so should there be a diverse array of opportunities for cultural, artistic, and recreational activity.

Health & Fitness

The citizens of The Colony value health and fitness. Opportunities for exercise, wellness, and recreation should be accessible to improve the public health of the city and to fight obesity in children, youth, and adults. Different types of opportunities should be provided to meet the health & fitness needs of differing user groups.

Nature

The citizens of The Colony value the natural environment, which is most abundant along the shoreline of Lewisville Lake and along creeks and lowland areas that feed into the Lake. Natural open space is valued for its recreational use as well as its importance to the health of the city. The citizens value the preservation and accessibility of open space.

Achieving The Vision

Community Development requires **commitment**. It requires commitment from the Council, the CDC, and City Staff to make decisions in accordance with and strive toward the vision to improve The Colony for current and future residents.

With the multitude of choices available today, peoples’ priorities when relocating to a new city is determined by the type of lifestyle they desire rather than a specific job. The question then becomes: How do we capture and attract this demographic to The Colony? It is through an understanding that quality lifestyles are not only about functional infrastructure, safety and education, but are often defined by the intangibles of mental well-being – including happiness, beauty, and a sense of purpose. Officials often shy

away from such concepts, but when approached with an open mind and willingness to extend the boundaries of the conventional, true greatness can be achieved in communities through enlightened and committed leadership.

As a matter of City policy, The Colony is challenged and called upon to make a commitment to Sustainability, Quality, and Beauty for the City:

Commitment to Sustainability

Due to worldwide population growth (the world population officially transitioned from majority rural to majority urban in 2007) and the affects of pollution and over-development in a finite environment, the awareness of the importance of environmental stewardship is not a fad anymore, but is rather regarded as a necessity by most people today. Therefore, commit to developing and operating the City in a sustainable manner.

Commitment to Quality

Today’s young professionals and their families are drawn to cities by state-of-the-art facilities, community buildings, parks, and arts (both performing and visual) facilities. These people expect to find amenities and facilities in cities similar to what they experienced during their education at universities and colleges. Attracting and retaining residents, as well as businesses to employ and serve such residents, will depend on providing high-quality, state-of-the-art facilities in The Colony. For too long, it appears that residents of The Colony have settled for the mediocre or the “good enough” – today, The Colony needs to commit to quality facilities and programs.

Commitment to Beauty

As an age old quest to define beauty, it is often found in the smallest and simplest of ideas and concepts, especially as experienced in nature: a sunset, a view over quiet water, the appearance and change of fall color, spring flowers. However it is defined, all people deserve to have access to beauty – to live, work, and play in beautiful surroundings and environments. Therefore, commit to beauty – to providing attractive places for people to linger, to play, or to pass by. The impact of attractive environments are major on mental well-being; therefore, commit to achieve beauty in The Colony.

Achieving Uniqueness

Expressing the uniqueness of The Colony is paramount to having a strong City image and community identity. The recommendations, actions, and policies contained in this CDMP – as well as actions taken externally to this Master Plan – should serve to not only support the vision, but also to set The Colony apart from the banal and apart from other surrounding communities.

Achieving this uniqueness will depend on specific ideas by which to base recommendations and future actions so that the steps taken by The Colony are distinctive to this City, this community, and this land. Forging these ideas, adopting them, and implementing their products will ensure the growth and development of The Colony as a community, a place to play, and a unique city in North Texas. The ideas most crucial to The Colony today are:

- Creating a strong, unified, and coordinated City Identity that includes physical landmarks, quality graphic standards for signage, and a quality higher than average for everything the City does. In addition, the enhancement and beautification of streetscapes and parks is vital to the formation of a strong, positive City Identity.
- The protection, enhancement, and recognition of Lewisville Lake, its Shoreline, and views toward it. Protect these areas against erosion and development that prevent access to the lake; ensure viewsheds remain open so that the natural beauty of the area can be seen to reinforce the City Identity.
- Becoming a City connected by parks, trails, and greenbelts by which people can move throughout the community on foot or by bicycle. This network should also provide linkages for wildlife and ribbons of green that enhance physical and mental health for the City's residents.
- Provide state-of-the-art services and facilities to the City's diverse population that includes the amenities and programs required by the community.

The implementation of such ideas requires visionary leadership, whereby tools are used to identify, define, preserve and respect important natural and cultural features within the community and find ways to incorporate those creatively in the City. The direct results of the comprehensive implementation of improvements to the City that adhere to the vision and that stem from these four ideas will be higher property values, a more beautiful City, enhanced City Image, and a greater quality of life for citizens.

Key Community Development Recommendations

The following does not encompass the complete list of recommendations for The Colony; rather, it provides an overview of the key recommendations for community development.

Access to the Lake

Paramount to the success of the CDMP and the improvement of The Colony is physical and visual access to Lewisville Lake. Work toward achieving this goal by:

- Providing trails along entire shoreline
- Providing trail heads and other access points to the lake for every one mile of shoreline
- Holding more festivals/events at lakeside parks to draw people to the lake
- Developing more parks to have lake access (such as a trails system/access at Wynnewood Peninsula)
- As described and recommended in the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, efforts should be made to preserve the views of the lake from Main Street/FM 423. By providing appropriate guidelines for development along the corridor, the "City by the Lake" image can be strengthened.

Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan

Develop a Beautification and Streetscape Master Plan for the entire City that includes the location and design of gateway features at major City entrances (such as FM 423, SH 121, Windhaven, Plano Pkwy), the coordination of signage, developing monument signs

for every park in the City, and landscaping medians with trees, shrubs, seasonal color, and grasses. The City has an existing Beautification Plan which should be updated as a component of a combined Beautification and Streetscape Master Plan. Throughout the City, strive to establish a unique Brand for The Colony that establishes a presence in peoples' minds.

Park Land Acquisition/Reallocation

While The Colony already has a wealth of parkland, it must designate additional acres to neighborhood and community parks to meet the needs for these parks in the next 10 to 20 years and at build-out conditions. Land acquisition should follow the needed acreage for build-out as outlined in Table 6.1 in Chapter 6. The following describes the recommended acquisition of park land per City Area:

Wynnewood Peninsula

Proposed parks situated in this area include three Neighborhood Parks, and two Community Parks.

City Core

Proposed parks situated in this area include two neighborhood Parks and one Community Park.

South of SH 121

Proposed parks situated in this area include two Neighborhood Parks and one Community Park.

Park Dedication Ordinance Revision

The Colony currently determines Park Dedication Fees in Lieu of Land based upon the average per-acre value of the land within a development, rather than utilizing a set fee. The Park Dedication requirement is currently five (5) acres per 1,000 persons projected population (at the City's average persons per household figure of 3.1, this equates to 1 acre / 64.5 DU). While The Colony has an arguably progressive Park Dedication Fees in Lieu of Land rate, the Park Dedication acreage requirement is quite low. In addition The Colony accepts floodplain land at a ratio value of 1:3 compared to out-of-floodplain land, whereas many cities do not accept floodplain land as part of park dedication.

Revision:

a) Park Dedication

1 acre / 50 DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently 1 acre / 64.5 DU)

b) Fee in Lieu of Land

\$500 / DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently: fee is based on the value of the property that is developed)

c) Floodplain land

Revise the allowance of 1:3 ratio to 1:15, or ideally, no acceptance of any floodplain land as part of park land dedication

New:

- d) **Dwelling Unit Park Improvement Fee**
\$1,500 / DU
- e) **Non-residential Park Improvement Fee (new):**
\$1,000 / acre
- f) **Floodplain land**
Have all flood plain land protected with no reclamation allowed

Individual Parks

Recommendations are made for each park in the City's park system. These are general master plan level recommendations, and are intended only to define the magnitude of the improvements for each park. **Each park should be programmed and master planned as it enters the design phase, and extensive area citizen and user group input should be included in the design process.** Specific facility improvements per individual park are recommended in the Appendix of the Master Plan report. Typical improvements to be made to all parks in The Colony include:

- Ensure that all improvements meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements.
- Increase shade in all parks by planting additional trees where practical.
- For additional landscape improvements, place preference on the application of native plantings including trees, wildflowers and grasses.
- Provide shade structures at the children's play areas where feasible.
- Provide adequate funding.

Activity Center Development

Construct a facility that serves as a regional activity center for the City (and includes recreational, cultural, and civic amenities). This would allow multiple programming to occur for entire family interests. When the City decides to proceed, an in-depth analysis of citizen desires and preferences with a citizen survey and public meetings dedicated specifically to the recreation center will help set exact priorities for such a center.

Develop an Arts Master Plan

It is recommended that The Colony develops an Arts Master Plan for the entire City. Involve the Cultural Arts Board and the Community Development Board as well as the Parks and Recreation Department in the master plan process. This master plan should include an analysis and recommendations for public art and the display and performance of other types of art. The plan should include general themes and ideas for public art to be located in public spaces such as parks and streetscapes and should identify funding opportunities. Finally, the feasibility of a stand-alone arts facility should be studied as part of this City-wide Arts Master Plan.

Create an Arts Selection Committee

An Arts Selection Committee – dedicated to the selection and procurement of qualified art pieces for public projects – should be created out of citizens and should include liaisons from the CDC Board, Cultural Arts Board, and City Staff. This committee

should be given the responsibility of seeking out artists and art pieces to be featured in public projects, should identify funding opportunities, and should determine the location and type of art for specific projects.

Festivals & Events

The Colony’s festivals and special events – such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt, the Liberty by the Lake events, and Holiday in the Park – serve as the backbone for cultural happenings in the City. It is at these events that the most people participate in any type of programming offered by the City. It is recommended that the City commit to improving each of these events each year and adding additional festivals and special events whenever appropriate and as funding becomes available.

Action Plan Summary

Prioritized Task List Priority 1 Action Items			
	Units	Estimated Cost (2009 Dollars)	CDC/City Assumed Cost*
Land Acquisition and Repurposing	149 acres	\$5,940,000	\$300,000
Trails & Trail Amenities		\$80,000	\$80,000
Public Space Development and Improvement		\$6,457,000	\$2,457,000
Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities		\$150,000	\$150,000
Consultancy Studies		\$270,000	\$245,000
Total Priority 1 Expenditures		\$12,817,000	\$3,152,000

Action Plan Implementation Strategy

In order to achieve the vision set forth in this Master Plan, to meet the needs of the community, and to improve quality of life in The Colony, the Priority 1 Action Items as described in the Prioritized Task List (see Table 8.1, Page 8-3a) must be implemented. It is understood that the City does not have unlimited funding and that public improvements must be paid for somehow. However, initiating improvements requires considerable up-front funding. In the 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey, citizens were asked their likelihood of supporting bonds and increased taxes to fund various projects within the City.

Overall, citizens were more supportive of bond funding for parks and recreation facilities than they were for tax increases for various parks and recreation and cultural arts facilities. When asked how likely they were to support the issuing of bonds for parks and recreation facilities, 66% responded “very likely” or “likely.” Only 15% said “not likely” or “not likely at all.”

In addition to general citizen support for issuing bonds for the projects recommended in this master plan, there are other reasons to make a large initial investment in The Colony’s public spaces. Two primary reasons are cost effectiveness and inflation. While

it might be initially more affordable to make only piecemeal improvements to the City's parks, trails, and facilities, in the long run it is often more cost effective to fund and implement a number of projects concurrently (for example, materials purchased in bulk are less expensive per unit). Finally, cost inflation must be considered. The current economic recession has caused rapid fluctuations in the costs of goods and services; as our nation emerges from the recession, a rapid rate of inflation is very likely.

Chapter 2

The Community Development Master Planning Process



2.1 What is Community Development?

“Community development” is a term that presents some degree of ambiguity for most people. Upon hearing the phrase, a variety of ideas about what community development is and what it means for our city come to mind. No doubt, each of us has a slightly (or very) different idea of what community development might be.

Across the country, the specific focus of community development ranges between developing affordable housing for low- to moderate-income families, empowering communities or groups of citizens to have a voice in local government, building economic and environmental sustainability, and developing public spaces such as parks, community centers, and pedestrian-friendly streets. While these foci are varied, community development can be defined as **actions that work in unison to improve quality of life for all citizens within the community.**

In Texas, the *Development Corporation Act of 1979* allows the creation of two types of public “development corporations.” These organizations are not to be confused with land developers and are, in fact, public bodies – they are founded by a city government and are managed by a board comprised of citizens. Two types of development corporations are allowed – a §4A corporation, which focuses on manufacturing and industrial development, and a §4B corporation, which focuses on community development and quality of life improvement within a city. Both types of corporation are funded by local sales tax and are responsible to the public.

The Colony has both a §4A and a §4B corporation – known locally as the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the Community Development Corporation (CDC), respectively. As with other §4B corporations in Texas, The Colony’s CDC is authorized to collect sales tax revenue and use this revenue to carry out projects that will help secure the **economic and social sustainability of the city by improving quality of life.**

The proposition approved by voters and establishing The Colony Community Development Corporation is as follows: "The adoption of a Sales and Use Tax within the City of The Colony , Texas , at the rate of one-half of one percent to be used, after the holding of at least one public hearing, for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, and improvements required or suitable for use for sports, athletic, entertainment, tourist, convention, and public park purposes and events, including but not limited to Community Centers, Libraries, and Hike and Bike Trails, and the promotion or development of new or expanded business enterprises, as authorized by Section 4B of Article 5190.6 Vernon 's Texas Civil Statutes, as amended (The Development Corporation Act of 1979); and maintenance and operating costs associated with any of the above projects that are publicly owned and operated."

While The Colony’s CDC is authorized to be involved in these various types of projects, the Board focuses the majority of its efforts on developing and enhancing public spaces, including individual parks, all of which add to quality of life. Specifically, the CDC supports parks, recreation, and athletics facility projects as well as projects that support the cultural identity of The Colony, such as renovations to the City Library. With the completion of this Community Development Master Plan (CDMP), the City of The Colony and The Colony CDC will have a road map, which includes a vision, guidelines, and strategies, for the future of community development in The Colony.

2.2 Why is Community Development Important to The Colony Today?

All cities practice planning – the act of understanding current conditions and trends and developing and applying strategies to influence the development of a district, city, or region. This planning takes many forms – transportation planning, zoning, water resources planning, etc. – and results in actions and changes to cities that impact the way citizens live, travel, and work. While all adopted planning efforts impact citizens significantly, it is the work performed in community development master planning that is often most recognizable by citizens.

The purpose of The Colony CDC is to enhance the quality of life within the community for all of the city’s residents. The CDC strives to achieve this purpose through developing public spaces, such as parks, athletic facilities, and cultural amenities that directly impact the lives of citizens. Looking around the city, one might notice the influx of new playground equipment, sidewalks, and shade pavilions in the city’s parks. Many of these new additions were funded by the CDC. Specifically, the CDC has been instrumental in attracting the development of the Hawaiian Falls Waterpark; development

of the \$7.5 million Five Star Athletic Complex – the addition of which helped The Colony earn the title of “50th Anniversary Sportstown for Texas,” which was awarded by Sports Illustrated Magazine and the National Recreation and Park Association in 2003; \$2.5 million trail development; and over \$1 million park improvements. It is through these and other projects (including the sponsorship of this Community Development Master Plan) that the CDC is helping to improve the quality of life in the city and make The Colony the standard for excellence for community development.



The Community Development Master Plan was sponsored by the CDC Board in conjunction with The Colony Parks and Recreation Department and was developed with the aid of a team of consultants led by Half Associates of Richardson, Texas (hereafter, Planning Team). Through the community development master planning process, the Planning Team went to the public to gain input on what is important in The Colony. Information gathered from these meetings was combined with the mission of the CDC to develop a roadmap for community development. Through the implementation of the recommendations presented in this master plan, the city will take considerable steps to improve the quality of life, image, and character of The Colony over the next five to ten years. Specifically, the 2008 Community Development Master Plan:

- Identifies the need for additional community facilities, including parks;
- Evaluates the spatial location of parks, recreation, and cultural facilities within the City and recommends measures to ensure a balanced distribution of facilities within the city;
- Guides the CDC Board and City Staff in acquiring land to meet current and future park, open space, and facility needs;
- Recommends and prioritizes key improvements so that the most significant deficiencies are addressed as quickly as possible;
- Is intended to guide City Staff and City leaders in determining where and how funding should be allocated over the next five to ten years;
- Identifies opportunities and recommends appropriate measures for improving quality of life within the city; and
- Provides a plan which is consistent with the funding and grant requirements for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

2.3 The Components of the Community Development Master Plan

There are many facets to community development, but for this specific planning effort, the Planning Team was asked to examine five elements that best describe the role of community development for The Colony. These elements were identified through discussions between the CDC Board, City Staff, and the Planning Team and are as follows:

- City Image & Beautification – Including the physical appearance of the city’s public spaces and community spirit
- Parks, Open Space & Recreation – Including active and passive recreation opportunities as well as open space to preserve the city’s rural identity
- Arts – Including performing and visual arts both indoors and outdoors
- History – Including the natural and cultural history of The Colony
- Culture – Including community identity and cultural development and educational programs

2.3.1 The Community Development Master Plan as a Parks Plan

One of the key ways in which community development affects people is through the experiences provided in parks, open space, and recreation centers and programs. In addition, parks and open space often play a large role in forming a city’s image and providing beautification. For The Colony, parks, open space, and recreation are key elements in achieving the vision for community development. As such, a considerable portion of the Planning Team’s efforts has been toward parks and recreation planning tasks, including identifying the condition of existing parks, developing target levels of service for park acreage and facilities, and producing a prioritized action plan.

2.3.2 Project Timeline

This version of the Community Development Master Plan took approximately eighteen months to complete, from December 2007 to June 2009.

2.3.3 Master Plan Timeline

After discussing the needs of and changes occurring within The Colony, the CDC Board and City Staff determined that the CDMP should cover a fifteen (15) year timeline. This specifically effects the recommendations of implementation, phasing, and funding created by the Planning Team. These recommendations, discussed in Chapter 7, will be divided into three levels of priority (Priority 1, Priority 2, and Priority 3) and by topic:

- Policy Actions
- Land Acquisition
- Trails & Trail Amenities
- Public Space Development and Improvement
- Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities
- Consultancy Studies

Chapter 3

Context of the City



3.1 Introduction

Creating a Community Development Master Plan requires a thorough understanding of the City's *context* – the city's physical and cultural history. Many factors comprise the context of a city and can be categorized as follows:

- **Land** – The City's physical features such as its lakes and streams, hills and valleys, and forests and plains – those things which depict the city's environmental qualities.
- **People & Urban Form** – The City's cultural history, history of development, and history of settlement.

Each of these categories are discussed in further depth below and are followed by a demographic analysis, which further explores the context of The Colony's cultural history and present condition.

3.2 Land¹

In prehistoric times, the entire North Central Texas area – including The Colony – was covered periodically by inland seas. This area underwent a cycling of these seas retreating toward what is now known as the Gulf of Mexico and then returning,

¹ Sources:

<http://www.tarleton.edu/~range/Grasslands/Tallgrass%20Prairie%20%28Interior%29/tallgrassprairieInterior.html>

http://www.worldwildlife.org/wildworld/profiles/terrestrial/na/na0814_full.html

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/habitats/cross_timbers/ecoregions/blackland.phtml

<http://www.npsot.org/symposium2007/home/BlacklandPrairie.shtml>

http://www.worldwildlife.org/wildworld/profiles/terrestrial/na/na0814_full.html

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/habitats/cross_timbers/ecoregions/blackland.phtml

depositing eons of mud and sand across Texas. The result of this periodic inundation is a varied and fascinating soil profile under North Central Texas that ranges from limestone and sandy soils to highly plastic clay soils such as that found in The Colony.

The Colony is located in what is called the Blackland Prairie ecological region (unlike most of Denton County, which is in the Cross Timbers and Prairies ecological region). This region, which constitutes 6% of Texas' land area, was historically characterized by prairie grasses and clayey soils (of the order vertisol). These soils are considered to be highly fertile both for native vegetation and for agricultural uses. Because of their plastic nature, the soils shrink and swell with varying periods of rain and dry spells, which causes the soils to form deep cracks often extending several feet into the ground. Such a process allows organic matter to fall deep within the soil, boosting the soil's nutrient level. This process, however, has also been a detriment to many homeowners because of the damage to building foundations caused by this shrink-swell process.



The prairies of the Blackland Prairies were varied and remarkable, containing a multitude of grasses, flowers, and other plants blooming throughout the year and being subjected to regular prairie fires (either started by lightning or purposefully by Native Americans to aid in hunting) which helped increase the fertility of the region. An early settler once described the Blackland Prairies as "...the finest sight I ever saw; immense meadows 2 or 3 feet deep of fine grass & flowers. Such beautiful colours I never saw..." (Brook, 1848). Dominant native grasses of the original prairie (prior to settlement) included Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii gerardii*), Switch Grass (*Panicum virgatum*), Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*). Because of the fertility of this region and the high quality of the soil for agricultural uses (especially when irrigated), much of the native prairie lands were converted to farms during and after the settlement of Peters Colony in the mid 1800's.

In addition to forming fertile soils, the history of the Blackland Prairie also includes streams and topography. During the Pennsylvanian Period (320 to 286 million years ago), plate tectonic movement caused the formation of the Ouachita Range of mountains, which ran north-south along the Blackland Prairies from central Texas into Oklahoma. Through years of erosion, these mountains were worn to rolling hills and, as the inland seas had retreated and returned, depositing sediments, the remnants of the Ouachita Range were covered. The resulting byproducts of this erosion and sedimentation are the rolling hills seen in North Texas and underground oil, much of which was extracted in the early part of the 20th century.

Prior to the massive public works projects completed during the first half of the twentieth century there were no lakes or other large bodies of water present in North Central Texas. The primary source of water for animals and early inhabitants were the area's numerous creeks and, of course, the nearby Trinity River. Three such creeks flowed through present day The Colony – Stewart Creek, Office Creek, and Indian Creek – while a fourth creek (McWhorter Creek) flowed nearby through present day Lewisville, probably fed in part by rain and spring water flowing from The Colony. All of these creeks fed into the Elm Fork of the Trinity River, which flows southeast through Dallas, meeting the West Fork of the Trinity River, and eventually heads east of Houston emptying into the Gulf of Mexico by way of Trinity and Galveston Bays.

In the late 1920s, Lake Dallas was constructed on the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. This dam was located near the town of Garza (renamed Lake Dallas in 1929) running between the present-day locations of the US Army Corps of Engineer's Westlake Park (in the Town of Hickory Creek) and the City of Lakewood Village. In order to further address flood control, construction of the Garza-Little Elm Dam (now called the Lewisville Lake Dam) was begun in 1948 and completed in 1955 by the Corps. Upon completion, the Lake Dallas Dam was breached, creating the Garza-Little Elm Reservoir (now called Lewisville Lake). Through these and other improvements to the Trinity River Basin, a chain of lakes was constructed throughout the Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex to supply drinking water and provide flood control. Upon the completion of these projects, the threat of flooding was greatly reduced and additional habitat and recreation opportunities were created. The courses of Stewart Creek² and Office Creek were altered to flow into Lewisville Lake while Indian Creek and McWhorter Creek continue to flow into the Trinity River, south of the dam.

Today, the Lewisville Lake Dam creates a large reservoir used for various recreation activities, supports soil conservation, and is a drinking water source for many cities in the region, including Dallas, Denton, and The Colony. The surface area of the lake is approximately forty one (41) square miles, making it 2.6 times the size of The Colony's 15.8 square miles of city limits and almost one fifth of the land area of Denton County. The Colony is situated on the east shore of Lewisville Lake – in fact, almost twenty six (26) miles of the Lake's 183 mile shoreline are within The Colony's city limits. Another

² Stewart Creek does not directly flow through present day The Colony; rather, it enters a small cove of Lake Lewisville, which lies under Main Street near the Blue Sky Soccer Complex, just before entering The Colony city limits.

way to look at this is that The Colony has almost as much of its city limits as shoreline as it does city limits that are not shoreline (26.72 miles).

While the changes caused by the construction of the Lewisville Lake Dam are the most dramatic changes to the land and natural environment surrounding The Colony, there is another major change that has been occurring incrementally since the middle of the twentieth century. Just as the native prairies were slowly converted into agricultural land, changing the face of North Central Texas, these agricultural lands have been changed gradually but constantly into residential, industrial, and commercial lands (and typically in that order). As time progresses, the image of agriculture will most likely fade away from this landscape, being found only in small pockets or on the outskirts of the Metroplex.

3.3 People & Urban Form³

North Central Texas shows archeological evidence of human life dating back to the end of the last ice age. At the beginning of recorded history and prior to European arrival, this area, including the land from Kansas to San Antonio, was part of the territory of the Wichita tribe of Native Americans. The Wichita were a semi-nomadic tribe, living in villages from spring until fall and traveling, following game, from fall until spring. The Wichita's villages were permanent – that is, while they lived there only during the summers, they returned to the same villages each year. Though they lived in tepees while following game during the winter, their permanent shelters in the village were grass huts shaped like a beehive. These huts are recorded as being fifteen to thirty feet in diameter and able to contain ten to twelve beds each [cite].

French and especially Spanish explorers – Coronado being one of the more notable – traveled through Oklahoma and Texas in the 1700s, interacting with the Wichita, and though their routes probably did not pass through the North Central Texas area, their presence in the Wichita's tribal lands arguably affected this region. Specifically, it is argued that the presence of explorers and the early settlers of the plains states north of the Red River gradually caused the retreat of many Wichita into Texas (then a part of Mexico), eventually resulting in the largest presence of Wichita being centered around the present day city of Waco [cite]. The Wichita were gone from Texas by the mid 1800s, driven out of the newly formed republic to the United States' "Indian Territory" in present-day Oklahoma by the beginning of the 20th century. Today, the Wichita tribe has practically vanished – the last recording of the Wichita tribe was the 1937 Indian Census which listed only 385 tribal members.

In the early years of the Republic of Texas, it was decided that in order to ensure the longevity of the new nation, the vast territory of North Texas would need to be colonized rapidly. In order to do this, the Fifth Texas Republic Congress passed the "Land and Colonization Law" which allowed, in 1841, the nation to contract with William S. Peters

³ Sources:

<http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/wichita/wichitaindianhist.htm>

<http://www.texasindians.com/wichita.htm>

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/PP/uep2.html>

(an English immigrant to the United States) and his associates (some of them American, some English) to offer free land to settlers from the United States. In a format similar to the Mexican Empresario system, Peters and his associates (later known as the Texas Emigration and Land Company) were given responsibility to recruit settlers and administer the promotion and distribution of 16,400 square miles of land, which included all or part of twenty six (26) present-day counties.

While most of the colonists lived in small houses on farms and ranches, at least eighteen small communities were established in Denton County during the 1840s and 1850s. One such community was Bridges Settlement⁴, named after the family of John and Mildred Bridges, which was founded in 1843 and is said to be the oldest settlement in Denton County. The Peters Colony offices were moved to Bridges Settlement sometime in the mid 1840s and positioned on Office Creek. A small community formed around the Peters Colony office and was named Stewartsville after the company's principal investor Willis T. Stewart. Due to the practices of the Texas Emigration and Land Company and their agent (Henry O. Hedgecoxe), the colonists became disgruntled, protested the company's actions, and eventually raided the Peters Colony offices stealing and reportedly burning the company's records and driving Hedgecoxe out of the county. This event became known as the Hedgecoxe War. Afterwards, the legislature amended the Empresario contract to allow the landowners to file their claims and deal directly with the Texas General Land Office rather than through the land agent.

Other small settlements appeared through the 1800's including Stewarts Creek, Rector and the most successful – Camey Spur (formerly located in what is now The Legends development east of Bridges Cemetery). Each eventually faded away from existence though the area remained populated by farmers and ranchers. During 1972 and 1973, Fox and Jacobs, a residential land developer, purchased much of the land in present day The Colony and began building track houses. Many of the streets, as well as later parks, were named after the original settlers and landowners. The first houses were built in 1974 and the development, named The Colony by Fox & Jacobs, grew rapidly and had a population of over 5,000 residents by 1977. The residents voted to incorporate as a city in 1977 and chose to retain the name The Colony, named of course after Peters Colony. In 1987 the small lakeside community of Eastvale and The Colony voted to merge.

Much of The Colony's housing stock was built in the late 1970s and 1980s, but construction continued in the 1990s and 2000s with construction continuing today at The Tribute, Austin Ranch (a mixed-use development at the southern edge of the City), Stewart Peninsula, The Cascades, and The Legends. Commercial growth began significantly later for The Colony with much of the City's retail areas being developed in the 1990s and 2000s. The two main commercial corridors within the city are the north/south Farm-to-Market Road 423 (FM 423, also known as Main Street) and the east/west State Highway 121. South of SH 121, several corporate offices have been developed as part of the Austin Ranch Development. To date, several companies have located headquarters, offices, and distribution centers in this part of The Colony, including Edward Don, Inc (a restaurant supply company) and Pizza Inn.

In 2001, the Texas Department of Transportation began a project to convert the existing four lane divided State Highway 121 into a limited-access freeway. Because of shortcomings in funding and delays in schedule, the decision was made to build SH 121 as a tollway and the authority to construct and operate the facility was purchased from the State by the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) in 2007. Due to this transition and the redesign of certain aspects of the roadway to accommodate toll infrastructure, the completion date of the roadway is now January 2012.

As The Colony moves into the future, its urban form will be shaped largely by the City's Comprehensive Plan, completed in July of 2007. Key elements of this plan include managing growth in terms of its quality, quantity, location, and timing, encouraging development to be high-quality, denser, and sited in such a manner that infrastructure is used efficiently and views to the lake are preserved and enhanced. The Plan calls for more land devoted to non-residential uses (including commercial and industrial), redevelopment of older areas, and the implementation of urban design principles in order to create a "sense of place" for residents and improve quality of life.

The Comprehensive Plan intends to achieve these outcomes by implementing programs for the development of a Town Center and walkable commercial nodes, office parks and industrial parks, and specialty retail districts. Other steps to improve the quality of life in The Colony include working with the Texas Department of Transportation in reconstructing and redeveloping along FM 423 and encouraging waterfront redevelopment, including the new Shoreline Trail and commercial development.



Railmen working near Camey Spur

3.4 Demographic Profile

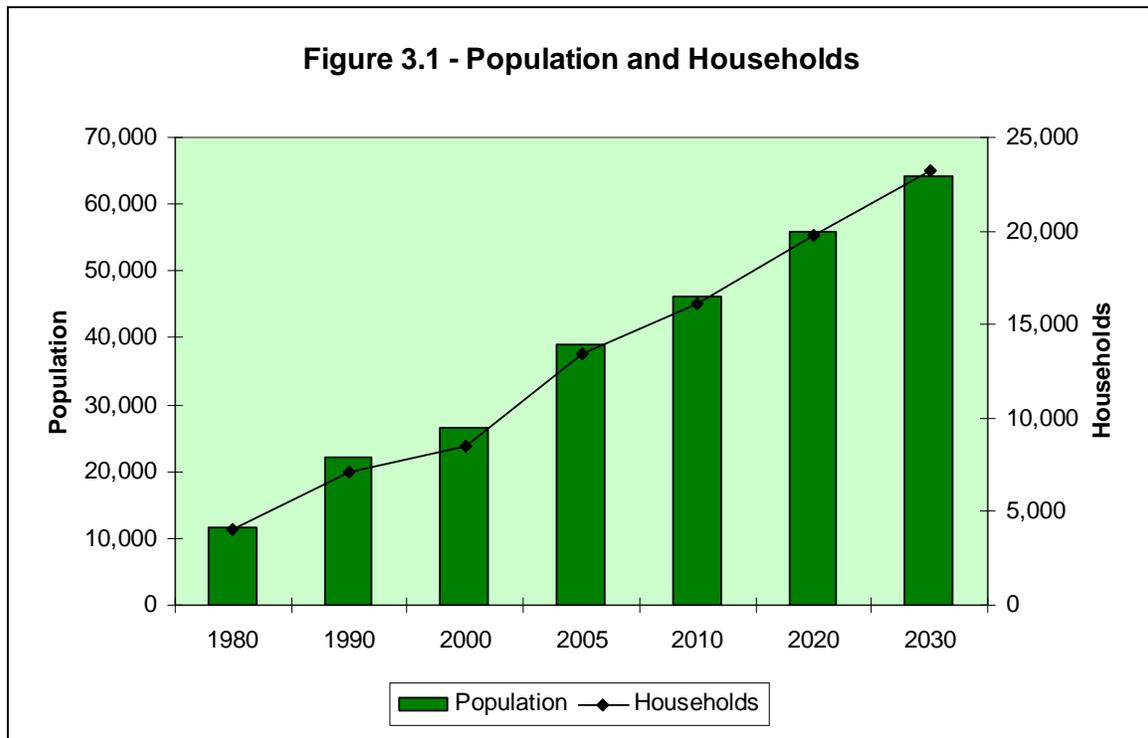
The following is a review of past and present demographic data, including population, housing, and employment growth forecasts for the City of The Colony. Understanding who lives in The Colony informs direction for future decisions and actions.

Table 3.1 Population History and Forecast 1970 - 2030								
	1970*	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030
Population	0	11,586	22,113	26,519	39,148	46,131	55,916	64,216
Households	0	4,006	7,151	8,462	13,462	16,141	19,806	23,199
Employment**	0	--	--	3,510	6,749	8,919	12,462	13,002

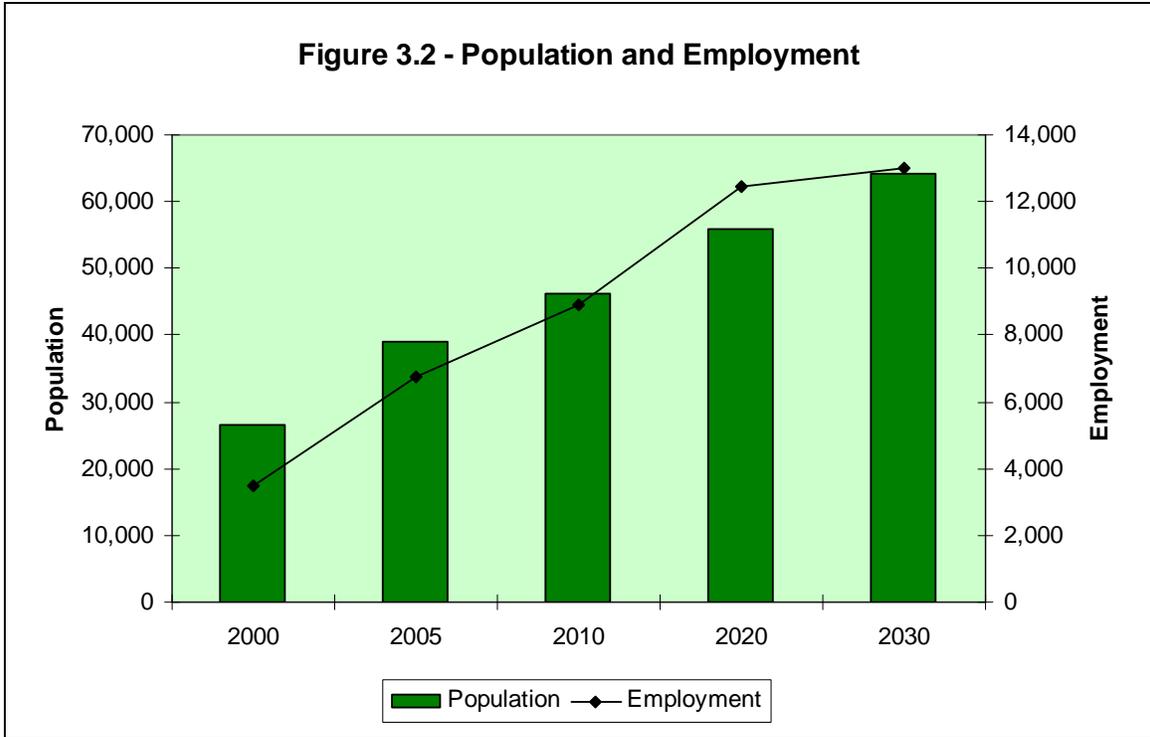
Sources: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/forecast/query.asp?thefield=citycode&thevalue=4242>
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>

*The Colony was incorporated in 1977.

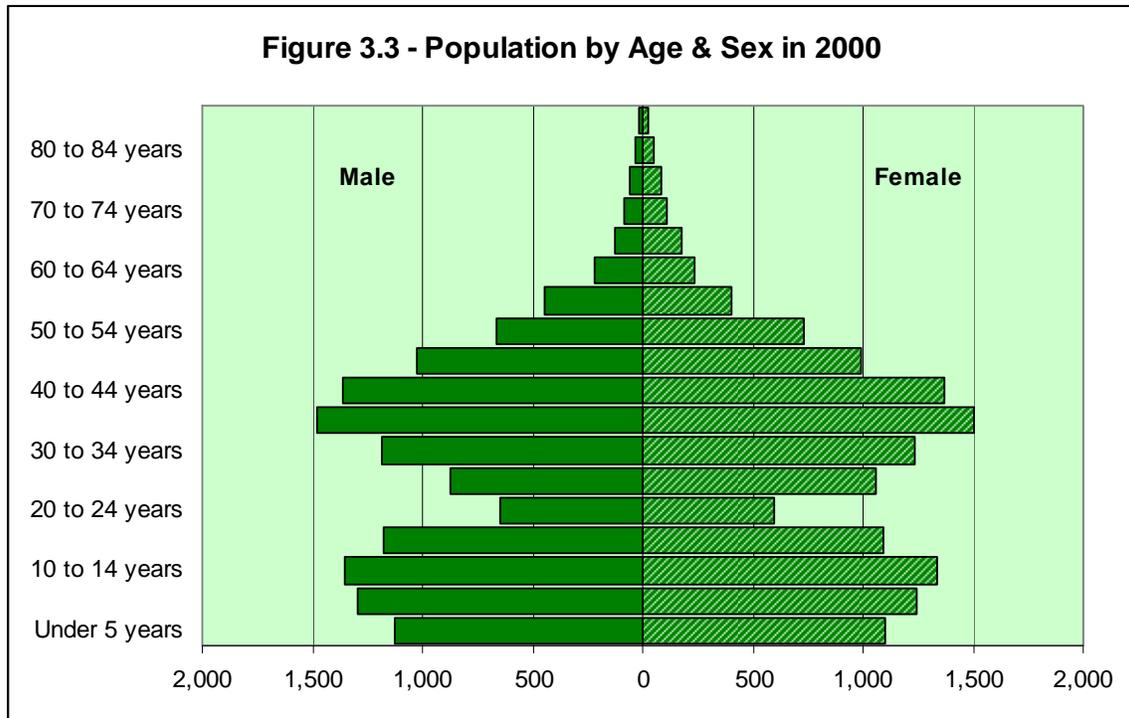
**Employment opportunities within the city, not total employees residing within the city (for this information see table 3.5)



Sources: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/forecast/query.asp?thefield=citycode&thevalue=4242>
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>



Sources: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/forecast/query.asp?thefield=citycode&thevalue=4242>
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>



Source: United States Census Bureau; Census 2000

**Table 3.2
Racial Characteristics
Year 2000**

Race	Percent
White Non-Hispanic	84.5%
Black/African American	5.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.6%
Asian	2.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Some other race	5.4%
Two or more races	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino*	12.7%*

Source: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/census/sf3/dp1.asp?Geo=City&Code=4242>

*Hispanic/Latino is considered an ethnicity, not a race by the US Census. This is the percentage of the total population that identify with the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

**Table 3.3
Educational Attainment by Sex
Year 2000**

Educational Level	Male	Female	Total
Less than High School Graduate	8.7%	10.0%	9.4%
High School Graduate (includes GED)	53.6%	60.8%	57.3%
Associate Degree	11.1%	7.8%	9.4%
Bachelor's Degree	20.9%	17.2%	19.0%
Graduate Degree	5.7%	4.3%	5.0%

Source: United States Census Bureau; Census 2000

**Table 3.4
Household Income, Housing Value, and Homeownership
Year 2000**

	Median / Average
Annual Household Income	\$64,080 / \$70,730
Value for Owner-Occupied Housing Units	\$95,700 / \$108,074
Gross Monthly Rent	\$986 / \$974
Number of Households	8,836
Homeownership Rate	82.2%

Source: United States Census Bureau; Census 2000

Table 3.5
Occupation of Employed Civilian Population Aged 16 Years and Over
(14,394 total employees)
Year 2000

Management, Professional and Related	37.2%
Service	9.3%
Sales and Office	34.4%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	0.1%
Construction, Extraction and Maintenance	9.7%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	9.4%

Source: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/census/sf3/dp3.asp?Geo=City&Code=4242>

Table 3.6
Industry of Employed Civilian Population Aged 16 Years and Over
(14,394 total employees)
Year 2000

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.2%
Construction	6.3%
Manufacturing	11.7%
Wholesale Trade	5.7%
Retail Trade	16.6%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	5.1%
Information	6.7%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing	8.6%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	14.5%
Educational, Health, and Social Services	12.2%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	5.5%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	4.2%
Public Administration	2.7%

Source: <http://www.nctcog.org/ris/census/sf3/dp3.asp?Geo=City&Code=4242>

Chapter 4

Guidelines



4.1 Introduction

Guidelines in the context of the Community Development Master Plan signifies the parameters which determine the way that the needs assessment, recommendations, and prioritization of improvements are carried out. In other words, these guidelines shape the entire Master Planning process. Specifically, the guidelines for the CDMP are Public Input and the Values and Goals that are uncovered during the Public Input process.

4.2 Public Input Process

No one understands the needs of The Colony more than the people that live and work here. Gaining the insight of the citizens is paramount to the Planning Team both for truly understanding the existing conditions of the City and for developing recommendations, which should reflect the needs and desires of the community. Public input informs the Planning Team what facilities are most needed, where key needs exist, and what level of priority should be assigned to various recommendations.

Developing the Public Input process revolved around understanding the importance and content of the necessary *information exchange* – that is, the information given to the public by the Planning Team and the information gained from the public – and the City Staff and Planning Team’s goals for Public Input process outcomes. The primary pieces of the information exchange are broken down as follows:

Information to the Public

- Advertising the Community Development Master Plan

- Explaining the CDMP process
- Explaining the Planning Team’s understanding of the project and of the City itself
- Depicting potential outcomes of the planning process.

Information from the Public – Feedback on the above items plus:

- Background information and perception of existing conditions
- Community values
- Wants and needs related to the five components of the CDMP (City Image & Beautification, Arts, History, Culture, and Parks, Open Space & Recreation)
- A community vision for the future of The Colony

The goals for the Public Input process outcomes are as follows:

- Develop “buy-in” and a sense of ownership for the CDMP
- Inform and encourage citizens to take action to improve their community
- Augment the Planning Team’s analysis of the city’s Existing Conditions
- Gain sufficient information to draft Goals, by which the entire CDMP is developed

The Public Input process was developed based on its merits for achieving the required information exchange and the desired process outcomes. Several methods were used – both quantitative and qualitative – during the process. The Planning Team conducted a review of a previously conducted community survey (the 2006 DirectionFinder[®] Survey), attended a community event and spoke with citizens (the 2008 Easter Egg Hunt), held two Focus Group meetings, organized an Open House, and distributed and analyzed a self-conducted questionnaire. Each of these methods, as well as their results, are described in the following pages.



4.3 Previous Public Input

While most of the Public Input methods utilized during the CDMP process occurred within the project timeline, a previously-conducted telephone survey was also analyzed by the Planning Team due to its relative timeliness and inclusion of questions relevant to community development.

4.3.1 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey

The 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey, conducted in June of 2006, was reviewed by the Planning Team for information relevant to the CDMP, including discussion of city image, beautification, arts, history, culture, parks, open space, and recreation. A major consideration of reviewing this survey is that it includes items not thought of as directly relevant to community development, such as fire and police services or transportation issues. Because of this, it is difficult to use the results of this survey to base community development decisions upon. Rather, the results of the survey inform and augment the rest of the Public Input process.

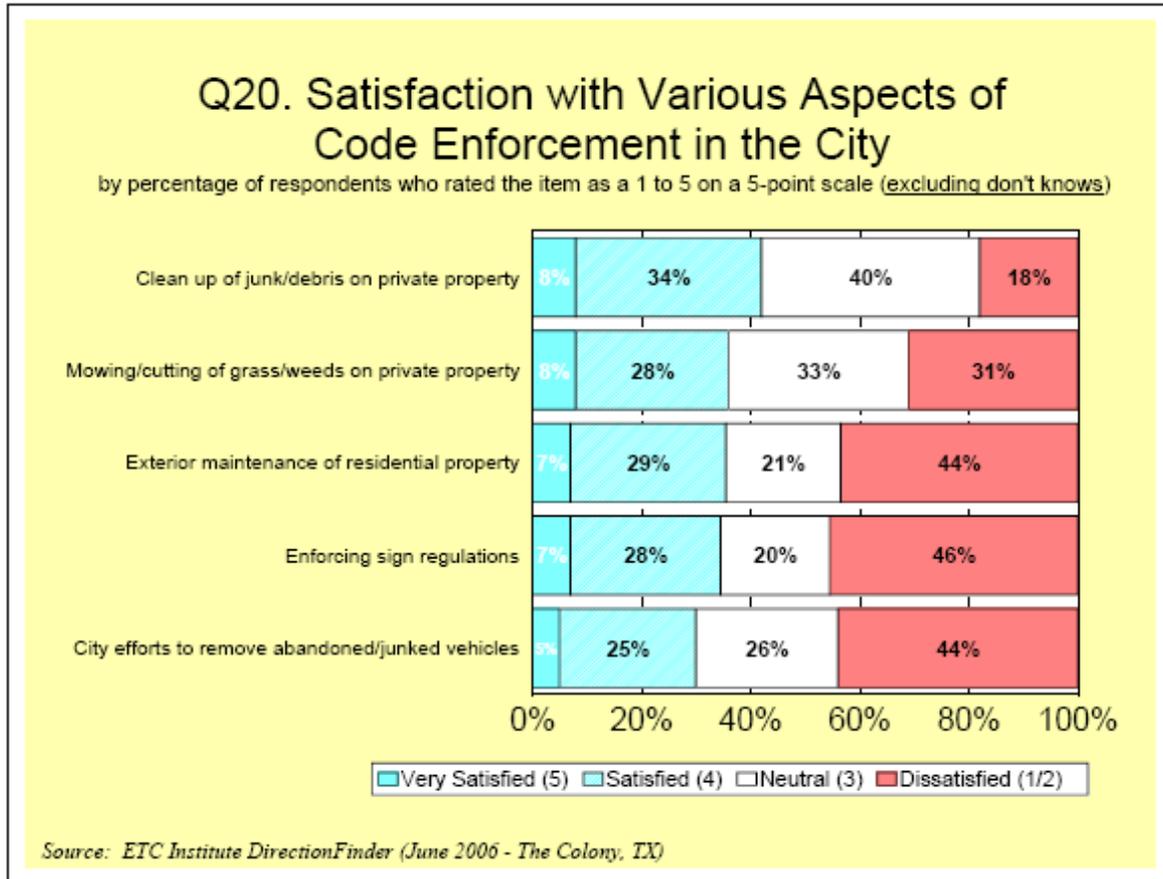
Several interesting results were produced by the 2006 survey, specifically related to city image, parks and recreation, and cultural arts. Citizens responded that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the City's library services (78% of respondents), parks & recreation facilities (72%), recreation programs (63%), and street and gutter cleanliness (60%). Citizens were dissatisfied with traffic flow across State highways (87% of respondents), the condition of city streets (67%) and public transportation services (59%).

Citizens were polled on their satisfaction with aspects of their "perception of the city." 59% of respondents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with quality of life in the city. Citizens were generally not as satisfied with other relevant aspects – respondents were very satisfied or satisfied 40% of the time with the appearance of the city, 31% of the time with the image of the city, and 14% of the time with cultural arts in the City.

Code Enforcement

Code enforcement was one issue in the survey and an important one to examine when considering community development; this is said because of the role that code enforcement plays in maintaining the physical appearance of The Colony, and therefore the City's image. While only 18% of respondents said they were dissatisfied with the City's code enforcement efforts relative to the clean up of junk/debris on private property, 57% of respondents said that this issue should receive the most emphasis (attention by the City) over the next two years – more than any other code enforcement category. Below is a more detailed look at these issues.

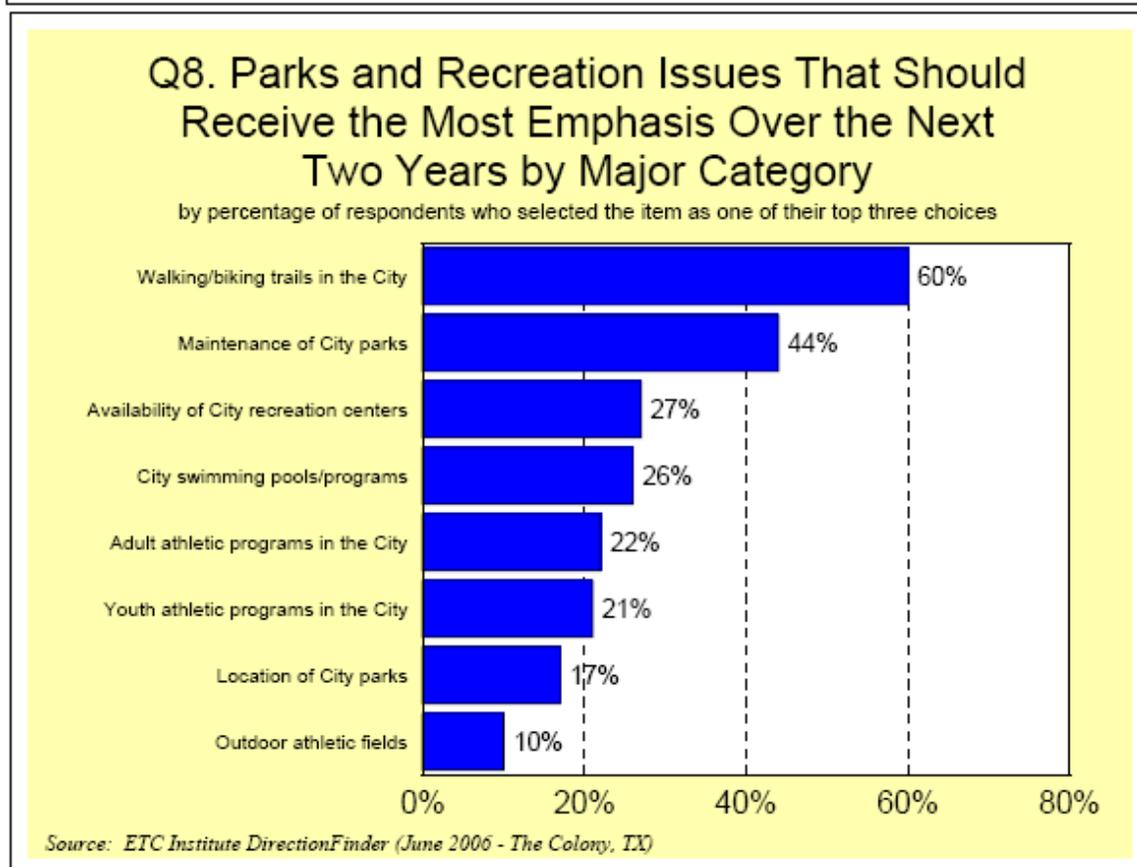
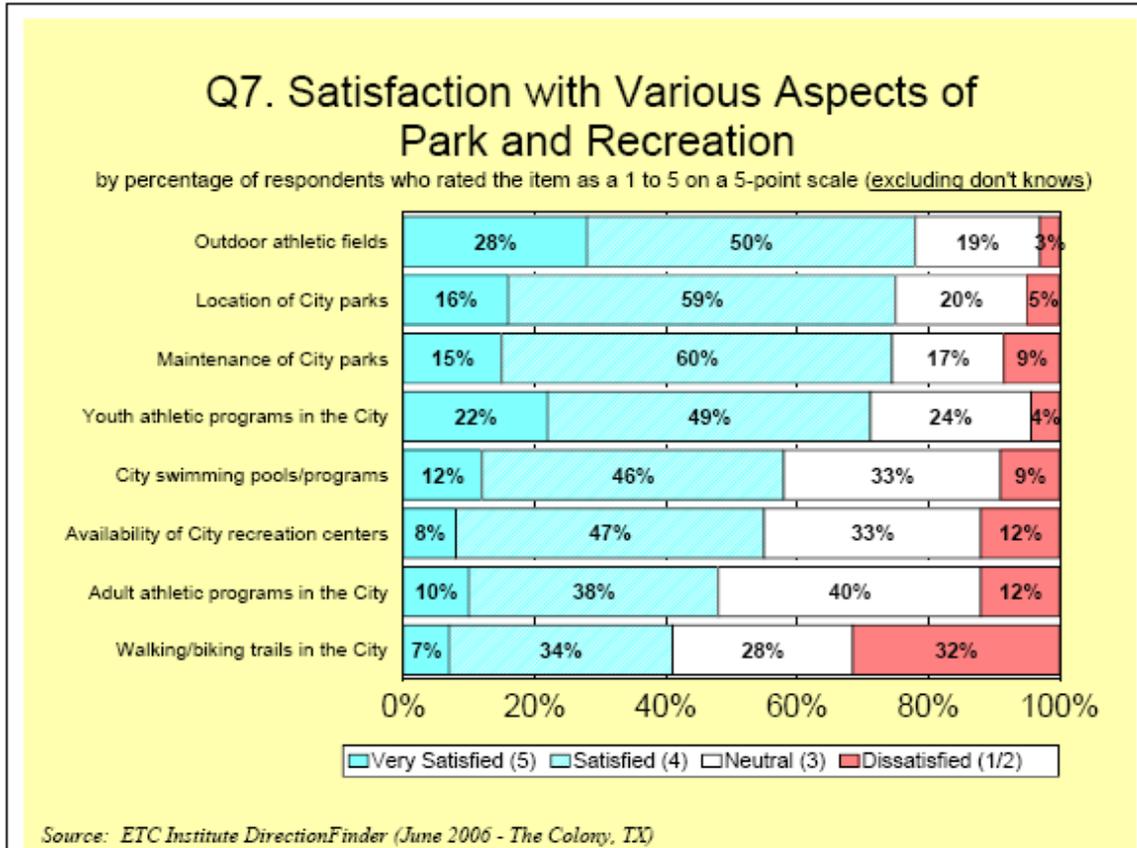
Figure 4.1 – 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey Results: Code Enforcement



Parks & Recreation

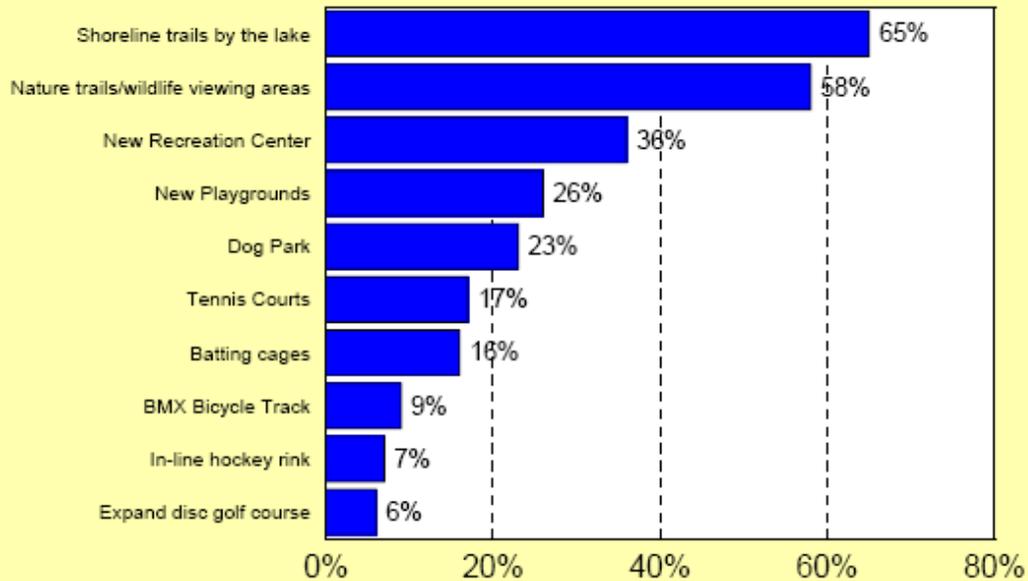
Four questions specifically addressed parks and recreation issues and therefore present some of the most useful information for the purposes of the CDMP. The results of these questions are explained in detail in the tables below, however, there are a few key results to discuss. The need for trails topped the list for each of the four questions – this is in line with trends seen across North Central Texas. The next-highest item in the list is the availability of recreation centers in the City and the need for a new recreation center. People responded that they are most satisfied with outdoor athletic facilities and only 10% of respondents said that this item should receive the most emphasis over the next two years.

Figure 4.2 – 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey Results: Parks & Recreation



Q10. Interest in Having The Following Parks and Recreation Facilities Being Completed by Major Category

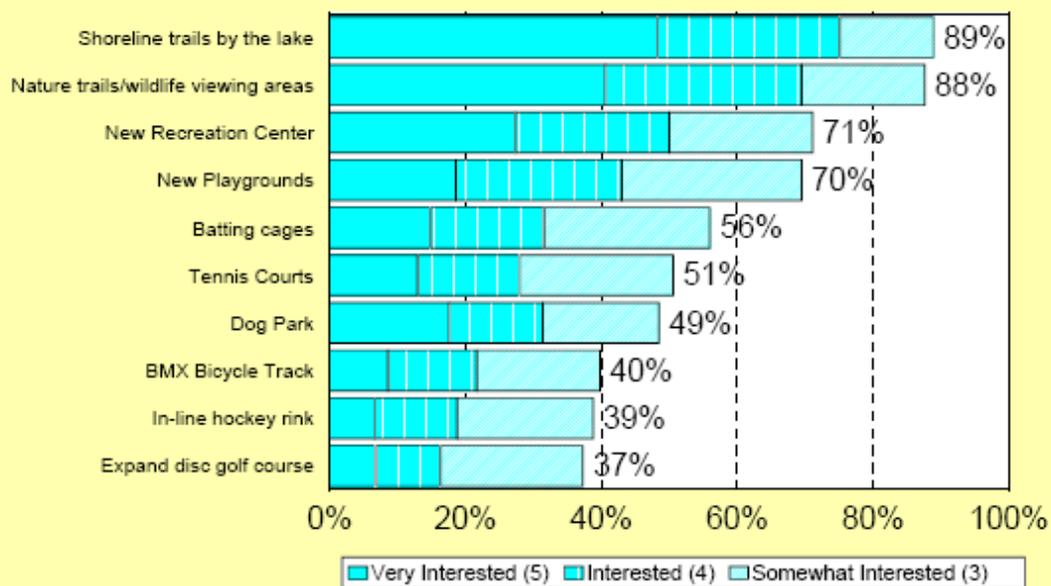
by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (June 2006 - The Colony, TX)

Q9. Levels of Interest in Having the Following City Park and Recreation Issues, Improved or Expanded

by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)

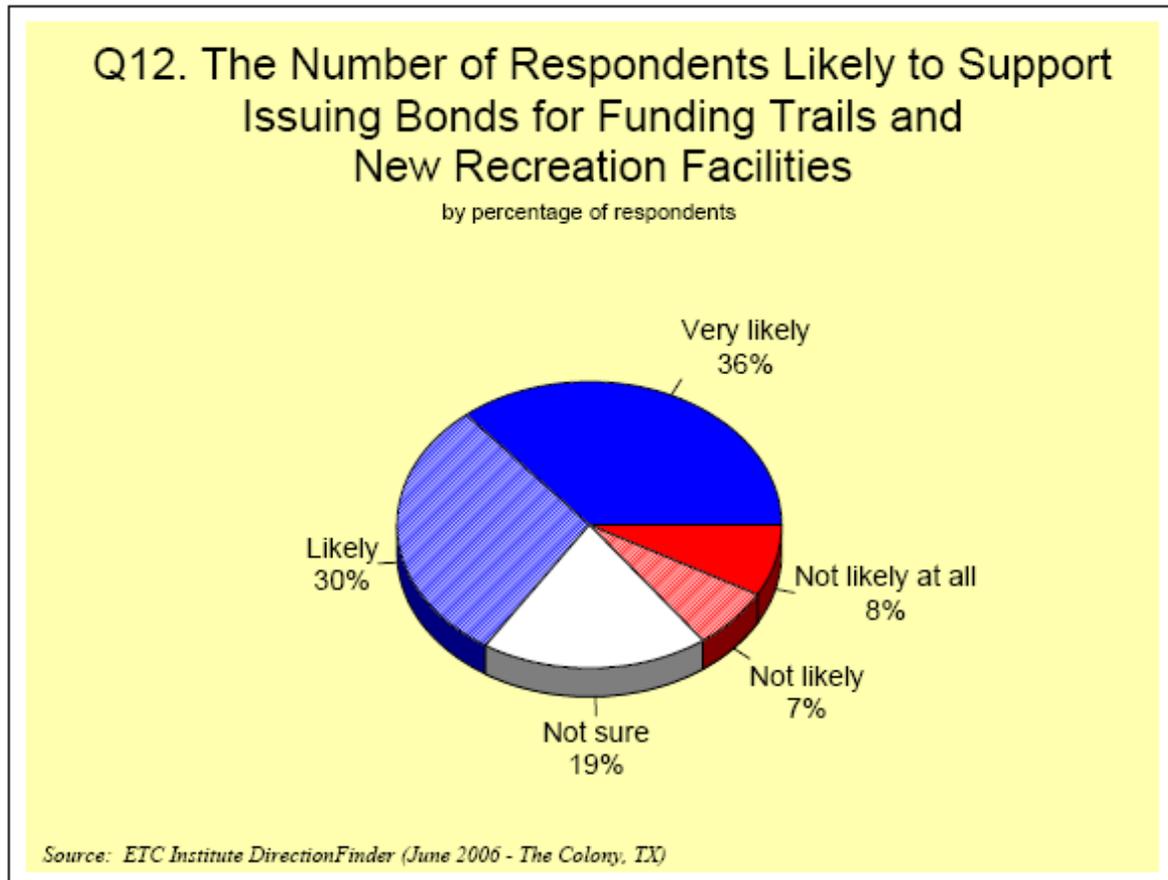


Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (June 2006 - The Colony, TX)

Funding Sources

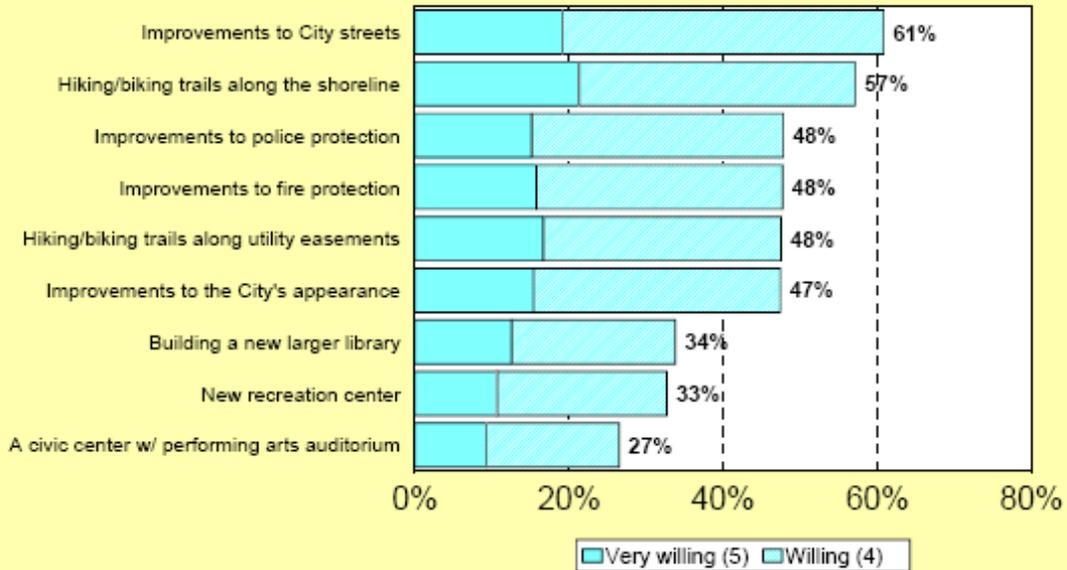
The citizens were asked their likelihood of supporting bonds and increased taxes to fund various projects within the city. **Overall, citizens were more supportive of bond funding for parks and recreation facilities than they were for tax increases for various parks and recreation and cultural arts facilities.** When asked how likely they were to support the issuing of bonds for parks and recreation facilities, 66% responded “very likely” or “likely.” Only 15% said “not likely” or “not likely at all.” When asked in a separate question how likely they were to support tax increases for trails, only 57% of respondents said “very likely” or “likely” for trails along the shoreline and 48% for trails along utility easements. However, since the same items were not present in both questions, a direct comparison cannot be made. Three items rated very low in the “tax increase” question – specifically, few people said they were “very willing” or “willing” to support tax increases for a civic center with a performing arts auditorium (27%), a new recreation center (33%), and building a new, larger library (34%).

Figure 4.3 – 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey Results: Funding Sources



Q23. Level of Willingness to Fund a Tax Increase to Support Improvements in the Following City Services

by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)

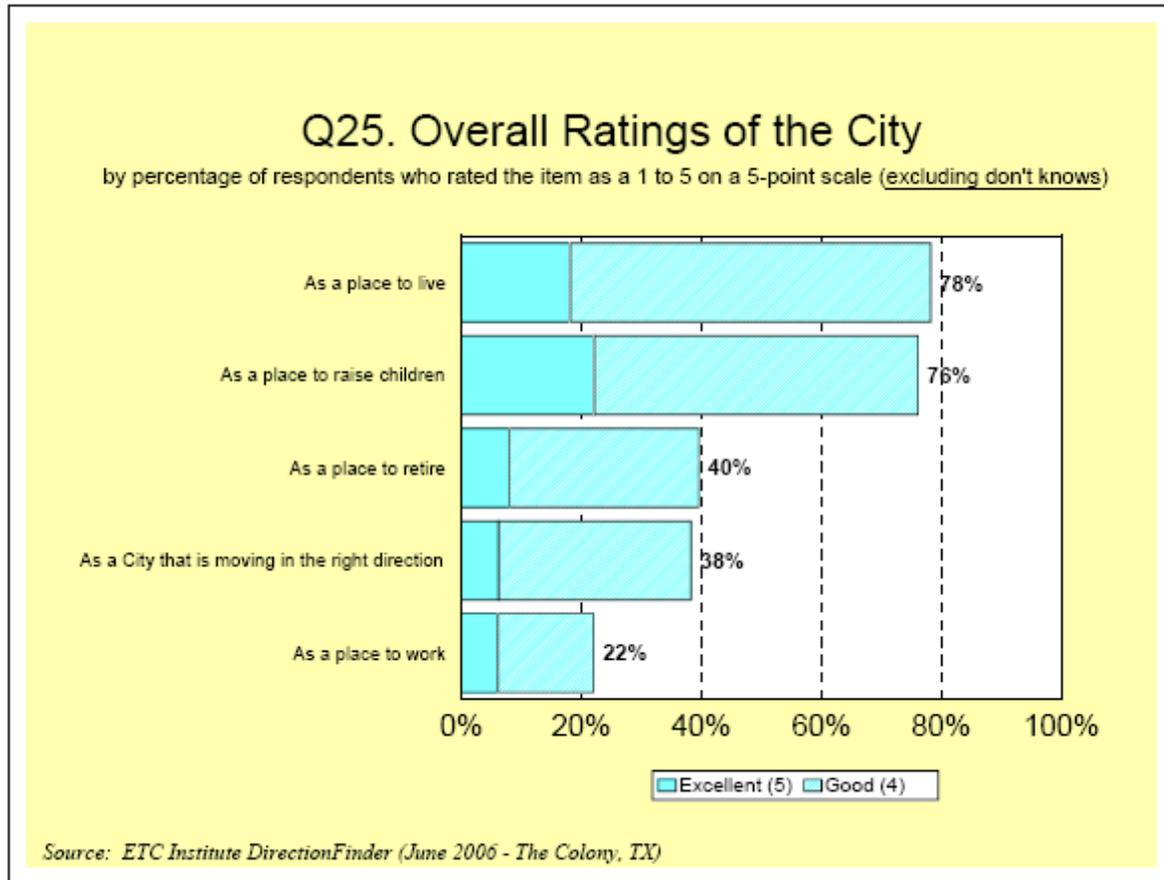


Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (June 2006 - The Colony, TX)

Overall Ratings

Finally, the public was asked to rate the city overall, based on several categories. The general results, further explained in the graph on the next page, were that people were generally positive about The Colony being a good place to live and a good place to raise children, but not a very good place to work or retire. In addition, only 38% of respondents rated The Colony “excellent” or “good” as being a city that is moving in the right direction. This last point should be granted special attention.

Figure 4.4 – 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey Results: Overall Ratings



4.4 Public Input Events

As discussed earlier, the Public Input process was designed based on choosing methods most effective in creating an information exchange between the public and the Planning Team and producing the desired outcomes of the process. Face-to-face interaction with the public is one of the primary means by which the Planning Team can accomplish these goals. For the CDMP, three types of Public Input events were held: face-to-face interaction at a large community event, small focus group meetings that create citizen dialogue, and a come-and-go open house to provide information to the broader public.

4.4.1 Easter Egg Hunt

On March 14, 2008, The Colony held its annual Easter Egg Hunt event at the Five Star Community Complex. This yearly event includes Easter egg hunting by age group as well as other City-sponsored activities. City Staff and the Planning Team identified this event as one that would provide considerable “traffic” of citizens – especially those with children – for face-to-face interaction. The Planning Team, in order to best record public input at this event, was present to answer questions, had a game for children to play, and administered and collected questionnaires. The results of this event were education to the public about the CDMP project and its process and 113 questionnaire responses (which are summarized later in this chapter).



4.4.2 Focus Groups

Two focus group meetings were held to identify the specific input and needs of various groups and organizations within the City. The first meeting, held on April 1, 2008, involved arts, civic, and cultural groups while the second meeting, held on April 8, 2008, involved representatives from youth athletics and sports associations. For each meeting, representatives from associations identified as being relevant to the topic were invited to attend, as was the general public.

At each meeting, participants were broken up into small groups of five to eight people and were asked about their values and needs. Specifically, people were asked what they believe is an important aspect of community life that should be present in The Colony (in other words, a value) and what they, their organization, or the City needs in order to be able to achieve those values or goals. Some very interesting responses resulted from these conversations and are summarized below. Of note is that at both meetings, each containing groups of people with arguably different goals, the values were almost

identical. What this means is that even though their ideas and methods for reacting to their values might be different, the value itself is the same or similar.

Below are the summarized values and needs collected at these two meetings:

Values

- Community Identity & Image
- Community Cohesion, Community Spirit & Community Involvement
- Family
- Youth & Children – Instilling Confidence, Teaching Life Skills, and Improving Health
- Public Health & Well-being
- Diversity – of Age, Ethnicity, and Background
- Education

Needs

- Community Center & Places for People to Meet
- Identity-giving Things
 - Signage
 - Sculpture / Art
 - Beautification Projects
- Town Center
- Economic Development
- Better Lake Access
- Local Activities & Festivals
- More Trails
- Improved Athletic Facilities
 - Improve Five Star Community Complex for Tournaments
 - More Softball Fields



4.4.3 Open House

Following the Focus Group Meetings, an Open House was held on April 12, 2008 at the Recreation Center. This event followed a loose format with several tables being arranged around the room. Each table focused on a different aspect of the CDMP and was staffed by a member of City Staff, the Planning Team, or a local expert on the subject. The

topics highlighted at the various tables were beautification, recreational amenities, parks, trails, and open space, and arts, history, and culture. There was also a general information booth, a children’s activity area, and two tables used by local organizations (Friends of The Colony Dog Park and The Colony Vintage Baseball).

Input was collected at this meeting through anecdotal comments, comments recorded on flip charts at each table, and by having people place dot stickers on a large print out of the draft goals for the CDMP (the final goals can be found later in this chapter) next to items that they agreed with. The comments recorded on the flip charts proved to be the most valuable recorded input that City Staff and the Planning Team were able to record.



There were many comments, some of them very specific and some of them more broad-brushed. Below is a summarized listing of some of the latter types of comments (all comments can be found in the appendix):

City Image:

- There is a need for a downtown center, which will help provide a small town feel.
- Develop entry monuments for the City.
- Allow neighborhoods to have their own identities while still tying into the City’s identity as a whole.

Recreation:

- Additional programming and activities are needed for children – especially those ages twelve and up.
- The Recreation Center needs to be updated and expanded and should include flexible use rooms, an indoor track, and a larger workout area.
- More adult activities and programming is needed (art classes and dancing were specifically mentioned).

Arts / History / Culture:

- The Library needs to be expanded and needs to accommodate the different needs of all the citizens of The Colony.
- Establish a “Community Corps” that can help build, maintain, clean up, and have activities around the community (target potential “at-risk” youth).

- More kids activities at various times during the week so that people don't have to leave The Colony.
- The City should provide more support for the arts – think big!
- Improve the amphitheater through the provision of shade, restrooms, sound equipment, accessibility, parking and loading areas and utilities.
- Provide public art outdoors.

Parks / Trails / Open Space:

- Lakefront opportunities are currently underutilized.
- Develop more trails closer to home.
- Create a unifying identity for the City's park system, such as through uniform signage.
- Provide more activities in Stewart Creek Park such as trails, pavilions, seating, and live performances.
- Install interpretive signage in Bill Allen Memorial Park that provides education on nature and the environment.

4.4.4 Summarized Results

Throughout the Public Input Events, the Planning Team heard many comments and received a considerable amount of input from the public. While there were many specific comments, concerns, and recommendations, there were specific themes that emerged through this input.

Develop a Town Center

Participants felt that it is important to create a downtown or town center in The Colony that will provide civic, recreational, and commercial services for the citizens. This would help to unify the city and encourage economic development.

Consolidate & Improve the City's Image

Participants spoke of the need to identify ways to define and announce the city's identity by physical means (such as through signage, public art, entry monuments, and so forth) and through improved interpersonal relationships among the citizenry (through improved community involvement and community spirit).

Expand Recreation Programming

There was continued mention throughout the process of the need to expand programming offerings, especially for youth and adults both in physical activities as well as non-physical ones. There were several mentions of programming to support the physical and mental health and well-being of citizens.

Provide Public Places

People mentioned the need to expand the Recreation Center and to provide space for flexible use (i.e. uses other than recreation such as arts classes, etc.) and to provide places for people to meet and have community with each other.

Educate Citizens

Education both formal and informal was mentioned repeatedly throughout the process, either in regards to what is good about The Colony (the quality of the schools), what is valued in The Colony, and what needs to be improved (specifically the capacity of the Library).

Engage the Community

The importance of an engaged, connected community came up often. Providing opportunities for youth to be incorporated into the life of the community through activities and volunteerism was one aspect of this. Another was the need to enhance community spirit across the City.

Support the Arts

Indoors and outdoors, visual and performing – citizens want to see greater support for the arts in The Colony. The broadest support was seen for public art outdoors, space for arts classes indoors, and improvements to the amphitheater at Bill Allen Memorial Park.

Focus on the People

Family, Children, Youth, and the diversity of The Colony’s citizens were constantly cited as some of the most valued things for citizens. Efforts of support and enrichment relative to the diverse array of people in The Colony should be made to ensure each group is fully served.

Embrace the Lake

The presence and opportunity that the Lake provides is undeniable. Many citizens feel the need to improve lake access and take advantage of the currently underutilized lakefront opportunities. Steps should be made to ensure that The Colony truly is the “City by the Lake.”

Develop Trails

There was much support and for developing more trails in the City, specifically those that are close to homes and connect with parks.

Improve Large Parks

Comments were gathered relative to the improvement of large parks within the city. Specifically Stewart Creek Park, Bill Allen Park, and Five Star Community Complex were mentioned. With each of these, the focus was on expanding the offerings of each park, rather than addressing any sort of problem with the park as it exists. Also of relevance is that the questionnaire (discussed below) identified that these are the three most visited parks in The Colony.

4.5 Questionnaire

In order to augment and normalize the information gathered during the public input sessions (and in order to collect input from those not interested in speaking aloud), a twelve-question questionnaire was developed and administered to the public. The questionnaire contained variations of the following questions:

- What parks & facilities in The Colony do you usually visit and why?
- Do you visit any parks or facilities in other cities?
- What recreational, cultural, historical, and artistic amenities are important to you and your family?
- If The Colony had safe pedestrian and/or bicycle routes connecting neighborhoods, schools, recreation areas, and civic areas, would you use these routes for non-work-related trips instead of driving?
- Would you use these trails for access to your workplace?
- How important is it to you that The Colony preserves natural areas such as along creeks, prairies, and wooded areas?
- Would you like to see local schools join with The Colony Community Development Corporation (CDC) to develop a program that encourages learning about and appreciation of various community issues?
- What should the goals of The Colony include?
- Overall, how would you rate various aspects of The Colony?

This questionnaire was administered at each of the Public Input Events for a total of 145 responses and was also distributed by the City through the monthly water bill mailing. This latter, City-wide method resulted in 755 individual responses which were mailed to City Staff. For statistical purposes, the results of these two questionnaire administration methods cannot be combined, but they do compare very closely with each other.



4.5.1 Questionnaire Results

As expected, the majority of the responses received at the Public Input events and through the water bill distribution was from residents of The Colony (95.2% for the Public Input events and 98.9% from the City-wide distribution)¹. The results of the total response submission (100% of the responses) for each survey distribution are related side-by-side in Tables 4.1 to 4.7.

Most Visited Parks

When asked what parks in The Colony people visited most often, the most often mentioned parks, in both the Public Input Events responses and the City-wide distribution, were the Five Star Community Complex, Bill Allen Memorial Park, and Stewart Creek Park. Other responses include neighborhood parks, golf courses, and indoor facilities (the Recreation Center and the Aquatic Park).

Table 4.1 Most Visited Parks in The Colony		
<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Rank	Percentage
Five Star Community Complex	1	38.6%
Bill Allen Memorial Park	2	12.4%
Stewart Creek Park	3	8.9%
<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Rank	Percentage
Five Star Community Complex	1	18.1%
Stewart Creek Park	2	13.2%
Bill Allen Memorial Park	3	5.3%

Use of Other Cities' Facilities

One of the important issues with the development of the CDMP is understanding what types of facilities citizens prefer. One way of accomplishing this is through asking citizens what facilities they use outside of The Colony and in what city they use such facilities. In both the Public Input Events responses and the City-Wide responses, the three most visited facilities outside of The Colony are Parks, Trails, and Performing Arts facilities.

¹ It is not known nor can it be assumed why people that are not The Colony residents responded to the questionnaire.

**Table 4.2
Use of Facilities in Other Cities**

<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Rank	Percentage	Most Common City
Parks	1	57.2%	Plano
Trails	2	36.6%	Plano
Performing Arts	3	25.5%	Dallas
Recreation Center	4	23.4%	Frisco
Art Galleries	5	20.7%	Dallas
History Centers	6	14.5%	Dallas
Other	7	9.7%	Plano
Civic/Senior Center	8	2.8%	Plano
<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Rank	Percentage	Most Common City
Parks	1	44.1%	Plano
Trails	2	29.2%	Plano
Performing Arts	3	26.5%	Dallas
Art Galleries	4	22.4%	Dallas
Recreation Center	5	15.7%	Plano/Carrollton
History Centers	6	13.5%	Dallas
Other	7	10.9%	(none)
Civic/Senior Center	8	5.5%	Carrollton

Important Amenities

In order to gauge the relative importance of the various recreational, cultural, historical, and artistic amenities currently present in The Colony and those that are potential future amenities, the questionnaire asked respondents to select from a list of amenities those which are most important to them and their families. As with other questions on the survey, the results from the Public Input Events and the City-Wide distribution were similar. What is of note, however, is that the most commonly cited amenities as being important are those which are more passive than active. In fact, in each instance, amenities that are decidedly athletics-oriented are not found toward the top of the list.

**Table 4.3
Importance of Recreational, Cultural, Historical, and Artistic Amenities***

<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Rank	Percentage	<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Rank	Percentage
Hike & Bike Trails	1	63.4%	Hike & Bike Trails	1	62.0%
Playgrounds	2	57.9%	Park Restrooms	2	57.3%
Park Restrooms	3	57.9%	Picnic Pavilions	3	48.4%
Spray Park	4	54.5%	Playgrounds	4	45.4%
Picnic Pavilions	5	53.1%	Rec. Center / Gym	5	45.3%
Outdoor Pool	6	48.3%	Natural Habitat	6	43.1%
Natural Habitat	7	45.5%	Outdoor Pool	7	40.5%
Soccer Fields	8	41.4%	Wildflower Plantings	8	36.4%
Rec. Center / Gym	9	41.4%	Botanical Garden	9	35.4%
Dog Park	10	40.7%	Shoreline Fishing	10	34.6%

**Forty six potential amenities were present for respondents to choose from. This list represents the top ten most chosen amenities from each questionnaire. The items highlighted in the medium green color are ones unique to that particular list (i.e., “Spray Park” was in the top ten for the Public Input Events results, but not for the City-Wide results).*

Trails

Respondents were asked their likelihood to use pedestrian / bicycle routes and trails for non-work trips if they were safe and connected neighborhoods, schools, recreation areas, and civic areas. Overwhelmingly, over three out of four respondents in both surveys said “yes.” The respondents were then asked their likelihood to use trails for access to their workplaces. A similarly large portion of the population said “no” to this. One likely reason is that many of The Colony’s residents do not work in The Colony and therefore most could not take trails to work.



Table 4.4 Interest in Trails in The Colony		
<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Yes	No
Would use trails for non-work trips	79.3%	20.7%
Would use trails for work-related trips	27.6%	72.4%
<hr/>		
<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Yes	No
Would use trails for non-work trips	73.9%	26.1%
Would use trails for work-related trips	16.6%	83.4%

Importance of Natural Areas

The importance of preserving natural areas – such as along creeks, prairies, and wooded areas – was another question asked as part of the questionnaire. Again, across both surveys, the answers were similar and show that the citizens of The Colony place a great deal of importance on the preservation of natural areas in the City. Specifically, in the Public Input Events responses, 89% of people said it is very or somewhat important to preserve these areas and in the City-Wide responses, 89.5% said it is very or somewhat important².

Table 4.5 Importance of Preserving Natural Areas in The Colony	
<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Percentage
Very Important	73.8%
Somewhat Important	15.2%
Not Important	2.1%
<hr/>	
<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Percentage
Very Important	67.9%
Somewhat Important	21.6%
Not Important	3.0%

² In the Public Input Events responses, 8.9% of the respondents did not answer this question. In the City-Wide responses, 7.5% of the respondents did not answer this question.

The Goals of The Colony

In order to generally gauge citizens' opinions on the direction that the City as an organization should be taking, citizens were asked their opinions on what the goals of The Colony should be. Participants were shown a list of potential goals and asked how strongly they agree or disagree that each should be a goal of the City. As with previous questions, results were similar between the two surveys, however, the City-Wide survey showed a much stronger level of support for many of the goals than the Public Input Events survey. Overall, the highest-rated goals include beautifying the City, improving the City's image, revitalizing parks, and attracting new businesses to The Colony.

Table 4.6
Opinions on Goals for The Colony

Goal	<u>Public Input Events Results*</u>	<u>City-Wide Results*</u>
Attracting regional recreation events	2.1:1	1.7:1
Encouraging better use of the lake front	2.5:1	6.7:1
Revitalizing parks	2.9:2	9.4:1
Beautifying the City	3.0:1	12.3:1
Developing new arts and entertainment facilities	2.1:1	2.0:1
Improving the City's image	3.5:1	8.0:1
Improving access to parks and open space amenities	2.3:1	4.6:1
Attracting new businesses to The Colony	3.0:1	7.0:1
Attracting new residents to The Colony	2.1:1	1.5:1
Developing historical / cultural facilities	1.3:1	1.3:1

**Agree:Disagree Ratio – the ratio of positive (Strongly Agree and Agree) responses to negative (Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The areas of strongest agreement are highlighted in medium green*

Rating Current Conditions

Finally, in an effort to compare peoples' preferences and opinions with current conditions, respondents were asked to rate The Colony in nineteen areas. Across both surveys, similar items were rated the highest and similar were rated the lowest. Areas that were rated the highest (that is, given high numbers of "Excellent" or "Good" responses) include Education/Schools, Friendliness and Hospitality, Housing, and Recreation. Areas that were rated the lowest (that is, given high numbers of "Poor" or "Very Poor" responses) include Employment Opportunities, Shopping, and Arts & Culture. Overall, the responses from the City-Wide survey were generally more neutral or more negative than those from the Public Input Sessions.

**Table 4.7a
Rating of Current Conditions in The Colony**

<u>Public Input Events Results</u>	Excellent / Good	Fair	Poor / Very Poor
Community Leadership	43%	36%	21%
Community Spirit	37%	39%	24%
Streetscapes	25%	40%	35%
Economy	16%	56%	29%
Education / Schools	47%	33%	20%
Employment Opportunities	17%	26%	57%
The Natural Environment	41%	39%	20%
Festivals and Events	43%	32%	25%
Friendliness and Hospitality	58%	27%	15%
Historic Preservation	20%	43%	37%
Housing	50%	33%	16%
Recreation	55%	21%	24%
Restaurants	23%	46%	31%
Service Clubs & Organizations	21%	55%	23%
Shopping	19%	33%	48%
Arts & Culture	18%	32%	50%
Age Appropriate Events / Venues	32%	41%	27%
Community Identity	32%	37%	31%
Community Appearance	30%	39%	31%

The three highest rated and three lowest rated items are highlighted in medium green.

**Table 4.7b
Rating of Current Conditions in The Colony**

<u>City-Wide Results</u>	Excellent / Good	Fair	Poor / Very Poor
Community Leadership	26%	43%	31%
Community Spirit	29%	40%	30%
Streetscapes	17%	33%	50%
Economy	18%	44%	38%
Education / Schools	54%	32%	14%
Employment Opportunities	11%	25%	65%
The Natural Environment	32%	42%	26%
Festivals and Events	29%	42%	29%
Friendliness and Hospitality	52%	32%	16%
Historic Preservation	18%	41%	41%
Housing	47%	35%	18%
Recreation	47%	34%	19%
Restaurants	16%	29%	55%
Service Clubs & Organizations	20%	48%	33%
Shopping	12%	23%	65%
Arts & Culture	11%	26%	64%
Age Appropriate Events / Venues	27%	37%	37%
Community Identity	17%	34%	49%
Community Appearance	17%	36%	46%

The four highest rated and three lowest rated items are highlighted in medium green.

Special consideration should be given to looking at the results for Festivals and Events, Recreation, Arts & Culture, Community Identity, and Community Appearance as these are five items particularly related to the CDMP (see the rows with yellow dashed borders in the two previous tables). In both surveys, some of these five items were highly rated while others were rated low. In this question, more than in prior ones, there was more variation between the two surveys.

Regarding Festivals and Events, respondents from the Public Input Sessions rated this item positively whereas in the City-Wide survey, the item received a more neutral response. One possible explanation is that many of the participants for the Public Input Session survey were attendees at the City's Annual Easter Egg Hunt, a Special Event itself. For Recreation, both groups gave a generally positive rating, but the City-Wide group had more "Fair" ratings than the other group.

Arts & Culture rated very low among both groups, earning it a position in the top three lowest rated areas of the City among both survey groups. The City-Wide group, however, rated Arts & Culture significantly lower than the Public Events group did.

Finally, Community Identity and Community Appearance both received rather neutral ratings from the Public Input Events group yet received decidedly negative ratings from the City-Wide group.

4.6 Summarized Public Input

Consolidating and comparing the input from the various components of the Public Input process – the 2006 DirectionFinder[®] Survey, the Easter Egg Hunt, Focus Groups, and Open House, and the Questionnaire – results in the creation of five main categories of input. These categories represent the thoughts and opinions of The Colony as a whole and should be viewed as the most consistent input gained throughout the Public Input process.

Image & Identity

The most common theme throughout the Public Input process was the need to improve the City's image and identity. This was a double-faceted issue that included the need to improve the physical image of the city through beautification, art, gateway features, and signage as well as the need to improve the identity internally and externally of The Colony and its citizens. This latter facet includes improving community involvement, community spirit, and the City's reputation. Both the 2006 Survey and the Questionnaire showed these items having very low ratings and in need of improvement.

Trails

As with image and identity, the continued provision of trails was something that was mentioned continually as an important improvement to make within the City. Often expressed was the need for these trails to connect schools, residences, and parks as well as the Lake and natural areas. In both surveys, this placed just under City image and identity in terms of importance.

Recreation / Community Center

The provision of a facility that provides expanded recreational opportunities, flexible use space, and places for people to gather was another high-importance item. This was apparent in conversations and input at the Public Input Events as well as through the 2006 Survey and the Questionnaire.

Lewisville Lake & Natural Areas

Because of its presence and the opportunities that it affords, the Lake and the natural areas that surround it and the creeks that feed the Lake were highly commented upon. The protection of and access to these areas are a high priority of the citizens of The Colony and rated as very important in the Questionnaire.

Youth, Families & Seniors

Providing opportunities for recreation and enrichment of the diverse population of The Colony was the last high-priority item that was common across all of the Public Input process components. Expanded programming offered through the city and the provision of facilities indoor and outdoor that meet the needs of the full cross-section of the population of the City are paramount to the citizens.



4.7 Values & Goals

From the Public Input process, the Planning Team is informed about the priorities and needs of the citizens of The Colony and can then create goals for Community Development within the City. Because the Public Input forms the goals, which then shape the entire CDMP, this becomes a plan directly guided by the citizens of The Colony.

Format & Method

The goals in this section are divided into five “Value Areas” which represent the broad statements describing what The Colony should be in the future. These can be seen as components of an overall vision for Community Development within the City. After each Value Statement, goals are listed which will help The Colony achieve each of the Value Areas. It is from these goals that decisions throughout the CDMP process are made, including performing needs assessments, setting target levels of service, making recommendations, and prioritizing recommendations.

4.7.1 Identity

The citizens of The Colony value a city-wide Identity – an image and a sense of community. An identity for The Colony should include a strong, clear vision, it should unite the city, and it should be visible. An identity announces one’s arrival to the city, yet is also present within the core of the city. The identity will reflect the culture and history of the community and should be represented in a unique and artistic manner. An identity incorporates Lake Lewisville as a destination and visual attraction, maintaining The Colony’s image as the “City by the Lake.”

Goals

- Make the City’s public spaces and buildings extraordinary & timeless to improve the physical form, quality, character, and image of The Colony.
- Develop a strategy for improving connectivity and access to the Lewisville Lake – one of The Colony’s greatest image-defining attributes.
- Pursue partnership opportunities to advance common planning initiatives, programs, and festivals to support economic development that will strengthen identity within the City.
- Ensure the solidarity of The Colony’s identity by having excellent maintenance and operation of parks, facilities, and streetscapes.
- Adequately fund identity-supporting projects / programs and support such projects and programs to a level that corresponds with their importance to the citizens of The Colony

4.7.2 Family & Community

The citizens of The Colony value children, families, and seniors. This focus on the family is important to the social structure and community of the city. This culture of family-orientation should support community, safety, and education in recognition of the spiritual, creative, and educational welfare of children, families, and seniors. Building the self confidence, self awareness, and self esteem of youth positions them to become better adults and the next generation of citizens.

Goals

- Connect families and neighborhoods with the surrounding community through public spaces and programs.
- Enlist the aid of individuals, families, and community organizations to maintain parks, facilities, and other public areas to a standard that reflects the value to the community.
- Support the intellectual, cultural, and artistic needs of The Colony's children, families, adults, and seniors.

4.7.3 Diversity

The citizens of The Colony value diversity – both of its citizenry and the physical city itself. Community involvement and the expansion of cultural and recreational activities should transcend the lines of gender, age, ethnicity, wealth, and physical and mental abilities. There should be a diverse array of activities accessible to all citizens of all backgrounds. It is important to meet the diverse needs of different citizens, but it is also important to bring these groups together. As the City has older districts and newer districts, so should there be a diverse array of opportunities for cultural, artistic, and recreational activity.

Goals

- Make the parks, recreation, and cultural arts system accessible to every citizen of The Colony – it should be well distributed throughout the City.
- Ensure that the system continues to meet the needs of the citizens of The Colony by providing varied recreational and cultural opportunities.
- Continually plan the parks, recreation, and cultural arts system and involve adequate citizen participation.
- Develop a community that offers a diversity of recreational, educational, social, cultural and community activities for all citizens in safe and pleasant environments
- Promote The Colony as a tourist destination that highlights the lake, sports facilities, and other amenities that draw in people from outside the community.

4.7.4 Health & Fitness

The citizens of The Colony value health and fitness. Opportunities for exercise, wellness, and recreation should be accessible to improve the public health of the city and to fight obesity in children, youth, and adults. Different types of opportunities should be provided to meet the health & fitness needs of differing user groups.

Goals

- Provide varied recreation activities that promote exercise opportunities for citizens of varying abilities and experience.
- Provide organized sports and athletics activities for those that prefer more structured exercise.
- Provide opportunities for mental and spiritual health development and maintenance / preservation.

4.7.5 Nature

The citizens of The Colony value the natural environment, which is most abundant along the shoreline of Lewisville Lake and along creeks and lowland areas that feed into the Lake. Natural open space is valued for its recreational use as well as its importance to the health of the city. The citizens value the preservation and accessibility of open space.

Goals

- Establish a strategy for the acquisition, preservation, and protection of open space, cultural landscapes, and natural resources.
- Utilize creek corridors, which are most representative of the natural landscape in this region, as areas of prime preservation.
- Activate citizens, interest groups, and businesses in preserving natural landscapes.
- Develop practices within the City that serve to protect and enhance the natural environment of The Colony for present and future generations.
- Provide adequate access to Lewisville Lake so that citizens can experience the lake and the natural areas surrounding it.

Chapter 5

Existing Conditions



5.1 Introduction

Planning for the future of community development in The Colony requires assessing and understanding the city as it exists today. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Planning Team has based the Community Development Master Plan on five components – City Image & Beautification, Arts, History, Culture, and Parks, Open Space & Recreation. Below each of these components are analyzed so that we might better understand what our baseline is in determining a direction for the future. First the state of City Image & Beautification is discussed, then Parks, Open Space & Recreation, and Arts, History & Culture (grouped together here because of their similarity).

5.2 City Image & Beautification

In the public input sessions (discussed in Chapter 4), *identity* was mentioned repeatedly as something that the community values, yet does not feel is well-established. Identity is important in terms of community cohesion, the physical character or appearance of The Colony, and the city's outward image – the combination of its community cohesion and physical character...in other words, the city's reputation. It is possible to identify elements of community cohesion and physical character or appearance through interaction with the citizenry and the Planning Team's experience within the city. However, assessing outward image would require interviewing people living in other cities on their opinion of The Colony. Therefore, community cohesion and physical character of The Colony are assessed below with the outward image to be inferred by the reader.

5.2.1 Community Cohesion

Several issues were unearthed through the public input sessions and the Planning Team’s review of the 2006 Citizen Survey. Many of these issues relate to “branding” issues while others relate to geographic constraints and divisions between citizens.

Branding

Three primary items related to community “branding” were often mentioned in the Planning Team’s work with citizen input and through the overall planning process:

- Citizens are not sure of what demonym¹ to use for themselves.
- The City recently updated its logo through a branding exercise.
- The Colony has very active youth sports associations and is the host to many regional athletic tournaments.

The issue of a City demonym was mentioned multiple times as a point of confusion among citizens – people are not sure if they are Colonists, Colonials, Colonites, Colowegians, or something else. Most assume that “Colonists” is the most reasonable demonym, but there has never been an official declaration of such a name. The adoption of a unifying name for citizens to refer to themselves as will help to achieve a footing for further strengthening community cohesion and should be a priority for the City.

In 2008, The City of The Colony updated its City logo to a more modern interpretation of the former logo. The new logo retains the sail boat and wave pattern present in the former logo while updating the colors and artwork to have a more modern appearance. What has yet to be seen, however, are the implications of this updated logo: How quickly will it replace the old logo? How will it improve the image of the City? How prevalent will it be throughout The Colony?

Lastly, the active youth sports associations and leagues form a culture within The Colony that serves a major role in fostering community cohesion. The Colony, more than most communities in North Central Texas, participates heavily in youth sports and hosts many athletic tournaments that draw participants and spectators from across the region and the State. As such, this youth sports culture can be seen as an identity-giving feature of The Colony.

Geographic Constraints & Divisions

Three primary items related to geographic constraints and divisions are present in The Colony that affect community cohesion:

- Many people are unsure of where The Colony’s city limits begin and end.
- The city is seen by residents as fragmented between neighborhoods.
- There are few venues for people to congregate or meet.

One of the issues that the Planning Team heard discussion of the most during the Public Input sessions was lack of understanding where The Colony’s city limits are located.

¹ A *demonym* is a word that denotes a people from a certain geographic location. Examples are: Americans, Dallasites, Fort Worthians, and Texans.

Many people commented when driving into the City, they were unsure of when they were in The Colony and when they were not. In fact, many people were unaware that Austin Ranch and The Tribute are located within The Colony's city limits.

There were many comments during the Public Input sessions that the City feels fragmented between neighborhoods. Specifically, it was mentioned repeatedly that neighborhoods like The Legends, The Tribute, and Austin Ranch feel completely separate from the other neighborhoods in the City, both in terms of neighborhood design and amenities and in terms of culture within the neighborhoods.

Another, though less related, geographic constraint is that people find there to be too few places for people to meet and/or congregate with each other. This is true for both a lack of public venues as well as a lack of private venues. The exception to this is outdoor pavilions, which are appreciated, but do not always serve the needs of the citizens because of a pavilion's intrinsic characteristics (outdoors, open to the elements, not climate controlled, etc.)

5.2.2 Physical Character or Appearance

As with community cohesion, several issues that impact or define City Image and Beautification were characterized as being a harbinger of the City's physical character or appearance. Multiple issues were introduced by participants in the Public Input sessions, but many were also uncovered during the Planning Team's research and conversation with City Staff and the CDC Board. Overall, these issues can be broken into five categories:

- Geographic Features
- Landmarks & Gateways
- Town Center
- Streets & Infrastructure
- Development & Private Property



Geographic Features

Perhaps more than any other geographic feature, Lewisville Lake is a prime identity-giving feature of the City. As The Colony enjoys so many miles of shoreline, there are some locations where this geographical feature is taken advantage of, through public access, views, and opportunities for exploration. However, access to and views of the Lake are not as abundant as they could or should be – it is possible to drive through The Colony and never catch glimpse of the Lake, though it constitutes half of the City limits. A second important geographic feature is the City’s multiple undisturbed creek segments with associated water and creek edge (riparian) areas. These corridors provide visual beauty and open space, as well as recreation possibilities.

Landmarks & Gateways

Physical landmarks help people to identify what city they are in and where they are in the city. These are often purpose-built by each city, homeowner association, or special district. In The Colony, there are several gateway landmarks that have been built by the development community to announce entry into the development (Austin Ranch, The Tribute, and The Legends are good examples of this). While these landmarks support the image of a particular subdivision or development, they do little to support the image of The Colony as a whole.



The primary issue is that there are not any unifying landmarks, branding icons, or wayfinding signs spread throughout the City that announce entry to The Colony or help people determine their location within the community. Specifically, the City has few gateway or entry features and, other than through street signs, major and semi-major street intersections are not easily recognized. Designed to address some of these issues, the Lakeside Arts Foundation has started a public art project called “Kaleidoscapes” which is based around the creation and placement of art-glass sculptures made by local artists as well as the general public.

Town Center

One clearly recognizable issue impacting the physical character of The Colony and therefore the City’s image is the lack of a recognizable downtown or town center. This

was an issue mentioned often in the Public Input sessions as well as one that has been identified in the 2007 update of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Not having a town center or downtown means that the city does not have as strong of a clear economic, civic, or recreational focus – something that is often a result of a town center / downtown.

Streets & Infrastructure

Ever present in peoples’ minds when considering the physical appearance of a city is the quality and character of the City’s streets and other visible infrastructure. The City has made recent improvements to the functional and aesthetic quality of some of its streets (and is undergoing additional improvements to others) and has updated or constructed new parks and their equipment. However, there are still pieces of infrastructure – including streets, park equipment, and lighting/utilities that are visibly dated and in need of updating and/or repair. Areas with older streets and light fixtures, for example, do not portray the same City Image as areas with new or updated streets. A related issue is the presence of street trees in the city – that is, trees along the public right-of-way – which greatly improve the appearance of any city. While there are many established, mature trees in The Colony due to the age of many of the City’s neighborhoods, there are few trees along public right of ways.



Development & Private Property

The quality and appearance of private property can have just as strong of an impact on a city’s physical appearance and character as that of public property. In the Colony, new residential and commercial development that is occurring is generally good-quality and provides attractive, up-to-date structures. There is, however, a significant percentage of the City’s housing stock that is in need of updating. Areas with a high amount of such housing stock also tend to be areas with higher code violation issues (including un-mown lawns and junk cars) – while it is only a small percentage of private property that regularly produce code violations, this was an issue of significant concern in the 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey.

5.3 Arts, History & Culture

Arts, history, and culture indirectly define who the people of The Colony are – where they come from, how they interact, and how they express themselves. The City, however, does not currently have programming in any of these three areas, although it

sponsors and provides a building (the Lakeside Arts Center) for the Lakeside Arts Foundation, Lakeside Community Theater, and affiliated organizations. An assessment of these three categories is below.

5.3.1 Arts

The arts have the strongest presence in The Colony of any of these three areas. While the City as an organization does not operate any arts programs, there are several non-profit groups that take on this role. One of these, the Lakeside Arts Foundation (LAF), is the most established and most visible arts program in The Colony. LAF offers classes for adults and children occasionally throughout the year.

Beyond visual arts, the performing arts are also supported in The Colony through the work of the Lakeside Community Theater (LCT), which also utilizes the Lakeside Arts Center. LCT produces live performances during a regular fall-through-spring season and features productions written by and starring citizens from The Colony and surrounding communities. For the 2008-2009 season, the LCT is producing five different shows, in addition to other, smaller events. While the LCT caters to adult actors, a recently formed theater group, The Colony Playhouse (TCP), predominantly serves children ages 6-18 and is open to any child in the community. In its first year, this organization produced two large-cast, full-scale productions and plans to produce four productions in the coming year. TCP is currently partnering with a local church for use of a youth building for the productions until a more permanent arrangement can be found. TCP plans to add more teen and young adult productions and programs in the near future as funding and space permit.

The LAF also participates with the Lakeside Summer Musical series and the Frisco Area Children’s Theater. Of course, arts programs (both visual and performing) are offered through Lewisville ISD, though these programs are not open to the general public, only to children enrolled in school.

A new public art program is being established in The Colony by the LAF in cooperation with the City. Called “Kaleidoscapes,” this program features community-built art in the form of pieces of scrap stained glass inserted into clear glass panels. The intent is to place these panels throughout the City to add to the amount of public art in the community and provide an ad-hoc wayfinding system.



Of note is that there is not a City-run arts program either for providing programming or for sponsoring events or commissioning arts projects. Many cities divert a percentage of funding (usually 1%) that would otherwise be directed toward public projects to arts projects such as public art along streets or in other public spaces like parks or civic centers.

5.3.2 History

As discussed in more depth in Chapter 3, there is considerable historical significance for the land in and around The Colony, including the area's natural history, the history of the Wichita tribes, and the history of Peters Colony. One of the most specific and most visible icons of the City's history is Bridges Cemetery, located in what is now The Legends subdivision. This location presents the most tangible evidence of The Colony's history, as it contains the graves of many of the area's first settlers. It is, however, closed to the public and is owned by a private development corporation (though it can be viewed through a chain link / wrought iron fence from Morningstar Drive and Chesapeake Drive). It should be noted that The Colony Parks and Recreation Department maintains Bridges Cemetery.

There are two primary ways by which the history of The Colony is being related to the public. The first is through the efforts of The Colony Historical Committee, which is the only historic-interest group active in the city. Their primary functions are to conduct research, develop a city archives, and to explore partnerships with the other groups in The Colony. The second way is through physical landmarks, such as Historical Park, located at the intersection of South Colony Boulevard and Blair Oaks Drive, which contains a historical marker describing the Hedgecoxe War and a gazebo. This park serves as a physical icon of The Colony's history, as does Bridges Cemetery.

5.3.3 Culture

As discussed earlier, one of the primary cultural activities for youth and their families in The Colony is youth sports and athletics associations. The Colony provides a high level of service for youth athletics, giving it a reputation as a sports town and helping it to win the title of "Sportstown for Texas" in 2003, given by Sports Illustrated and the National Recreation & Park Association. As The Colony has a high percentage of married-couple households with children (45% of married-couple households), it can be assumed that a large portion of the population is involved with youth sports and athletics in some way or another.

Public spaces provide places for people to interact and for cultures to be created and changed. The Community Center, which primarily serves senior citizens and is located in the former library building near the Recreation Center, is one of the only public spaces in the city for citizens to gather. Classes, exercise, dances, and meals for seniors are the primary activities occurring at the Center (a more thorough assessment of the Community Center can be found in the appendix). Another public space available in the City is The Colony Public Library, located at City Hall. The Library provides intellectual stimulation and lifetime learning services for the community through providing reference and

circulation services for the City. The Library, to a certain degree can serve as an impromptu meeting place for citizens.

Though not City-provided public facilities, religious institutions play a large role in the lives of The Colony's citizens. Currently, there are approximately twenty six (26) churches, temples, and other religious institutions of various creeds and denominations in operation in The Colony. Though no survey is present to estimate the percentage of the population active in religious endeavors, it can be anecdotally assumed that as with most suburban communities in Texas and the South a large number of people are regularly active in their churches, temples, or other religious pursuits. Many such institutions in the region provide not only spiritual services to their members, but also social and recreational opportunities.

5.4 Parks, Open Space & Recreation

5.4.1 Introduction

Because so many aspects of community development are related to the quality of the City's Parks, Open Space, and Recreation system, the assessment of the quality and quantity of these areas is given greater attention. A key part of the park planning process is to understand what park and open space facilities are currently available, and to assess the current condition of those facilities and whether or not they are addressing the current park and open space needs of the City. By comparing the available park facilities with the number of people that the parks system serves, the need for new or improved recreational facilities can be determined.

The City of The Colony currently has 28 existing parks which include 2 golf courses and 1 undeveloped park, dedicated to the provision of outdoor recreation facilities. These parks vary in size and character from the 0.5 acre Historical Park to large, multi use, recreational parks like Five Star West Community Complex that is almost 80 acres in size. Hidden Cove Park, deemed a Regional Park, is the largest, at 537 acres. The total acreage of all developed parks serving the citizens of The Colony is approximately 1,187 acres and includes nine (9) Neighborhood Parks, three (3) Community Parks, sixteen (16) Special Purpose Parks, and two (2) Regional Parks. Of these, one (1) Regional Park (Stewart Creek Park) also functions as a Community Park and a Neighborhood Park. Land dedicated to parks that are currently undeveloped totals 1.7 acres and includes one (1) Pocket Park, as shown on Table 3.1. Almost 1,886 additional acres are dedicated to nature areas and open space (1,187 acres are City-managed USACE Wildlife Management Areas).

Components of the Existing Parks Inventory

This inventory of existing parks reviews several aspects of each park in The Colony's system. These are:

- **Classification:** What is the purpose of a given park? Is it intended to serve a local neighborhood around it, giving children and young adults a place to play? Is

it intended to serve a much larger population, providing fields for organized league play? How was the park originally classified and is that classification still warranted today? The answers to these questions determine whether a park should be classified as a neighborhood park, a community park, a special purpose park, a regional park, or a linear park.

- **Location:** Where is the park located in relation to the population that it serves? Is it accessible?
- **Service Area:** What are the limits of the area served by each park? Are there any major thoroughfares or physical features that create barriers to accessing the park?
- **Size of the Park:** How big is the park? Is it large enough to adequately accomplish its intended purpose?
- **Amenities in each Park:** What does the park contain? Are the facilities appropriate for the type of park? For example, a ball field complex requiring a large amount of parking should not be contained in a neighborhood park, where the noise, traffic and nighttime lighting create a nuisance for residents of that neighborhood.
- **Layout:** Is the arrangement of facilities in each park appropriate?
- **Condition of the Park:** What is the general condition of the facilities in each park?
- **Natural Areas/ Sustainable Measures:** Does the park contain areas that are natural? Is maintenance effort minimized through limited mowing areas? Is water use for irrigation minimized by use of native plants with low water requirements?
- **Special Considerations:** Does the park provide facilities for the physically challenged that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act?

These issues are discussed in general in this chapter and are reviewed in detail for each of the existing parks in The Colony's parks system in the appendix. This inventory is developed from on-site reviews of each individual park by the Planning Team and reviews conducted by the City staff. At the end of this chapter, there is a map showing the location and classification of the existing parks in The Colony.

5.4.2 Park Classification

National and state guidelines identify three broad categories of parks, which are:

Local, Close to Home Parks are usually located within the community served by the facility, which includes mini/pocket parks, neighborhood parks and community parks. Trail corridors and connections, greenbelts, and – in some instances – linear parks may also be considered Close to Home Parks.

Regional Parks are usually located within an hour or two driving distance. Parks in this category serve a number of communities, and include regional metropolitan parks and regional park reserves.

Unique Parks may be either local or regional in nature. These parks can be defined as areas that are unique in some way, whether because of physical features or because of the types of facilities provided. Parks in this category may include linear parks, special use parks, or land conservancies.

Close to home parks provide day-to-day facilities for all ages and activities and are within walking or short driving distance (depending on the park's size and use) from where we live. "Close to home parks" is the most important category and is of the greatest need in The Colony today. Currently, eighteen (18) parks perform the close-to-home-parks role in The Colony and fall in four categories:

- Pocket Parks – like Historical Park and Wilcox Park;
- Neighborhood Parks – like Ridgepoint Park and Slay/Baker Park;
- Community Parks – like Bill Allen Memorial Park and the Five Star West Community Complex; and
- Trails & Greenbelts – like Taylor Street Greenbelt and the Park Loop Trail

To further explain the classification of parks, a description of the general types of parks and standards for each type follows:

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide the foundation for recreation in the *Local, Close to Home* park system. Ideally, they provide amenities and recreation space for the entire family, but are within easy walking or cycling distance of the people they serve.

The neighborhood park typically serves one large or several smaller neighborhoods. The ideal neighborhood park, generally five (5) to ten (10) acres in size, should serve no more than 3,000 to 4,000 residents per park. In The Colony, Lion's Club Park is a good example of a neighborhood park.

- Neighborhood parks should be accessible to residents who live within a one-half mile radius of the park. Ideally neighborhood park facilities should be located within a quarter mile radius of the residents who will use those facilities.
- Neighborhood parks are frequently located adjacent to elementary schools in order to share acquisition and development costs with the school district. Adjacencies of park and school grounds allow for joint use and sharing of facilities. It also lends itself to the community's involvement with the school grounds and vice versa, leading to a synergistic result that adds to the quality of life for everyone.
- Neighborhood parks are generally located away from major arterial streets and provide easy access for the users that surround it. A neighborhood park should be accessible without having to cross major arterial streets.

Size - The size of a neighborhood park may vary considerably due to the physical location of the park and condition of the site. An ideal size for neighborhood parks should be five acres or larger.

Location - If possible, neighborhood parks should be centrally located in the neighborhoods they serve. An ideal location, for example, is adjacent to an elementary school. Neighborhood Parks should be accessible to pedestrian traffic from all parts of the area served, and should be located adjacent to local or minor collector streets which do not allow high-speed traffic.



Facilities - Facilities generally located in neighborhood parks may include the following (items in bold are considered the most necessary components):

- **Playground equipment with adequate safety surfacing around the playground**
- Unlighted tennis courts
- Unlighted basketball courts and half courts
- **Active free play areas**
- Picnic areas with benches, picnic tables, and cooking grills
- **Shaded pavilions and gazebos**
- **Jogging and exercise trails**
- Security lighting

Parking – In general, the use of multi-modal trails and public transportation options should be encouraged to decrease dependency on automobiles. As deemed necessary, the exact amount of parking will vary based on the size of the park, the facilities it contains, and the number of users. Generally, depending on the carrying capacity of adjacent streets, parallel on-street parking may provide sufficient parking space. Opportunities to share parking may be beneficial to different yet compatible functions, such as libraries, schools, City buildings and the like.

Home Owner Association Parks – While not owned or maintained by the City of The Colony, HOA parks often provide amenities and opportunities for nearby residents similar to those provided by neighborhood parks. However, HOA parks are often smaller than City-owned neighborhood parks and it is important to remember that their continued presence and level of maintenance is not guaranteed.

Figure 4.1 illustrates a typical neighborhood park and some of the elements that the park might contain. Note that this is simply a typical arrangement, and each neighborhood park should be designed as a unique part of the neighborhood that surrounds it.

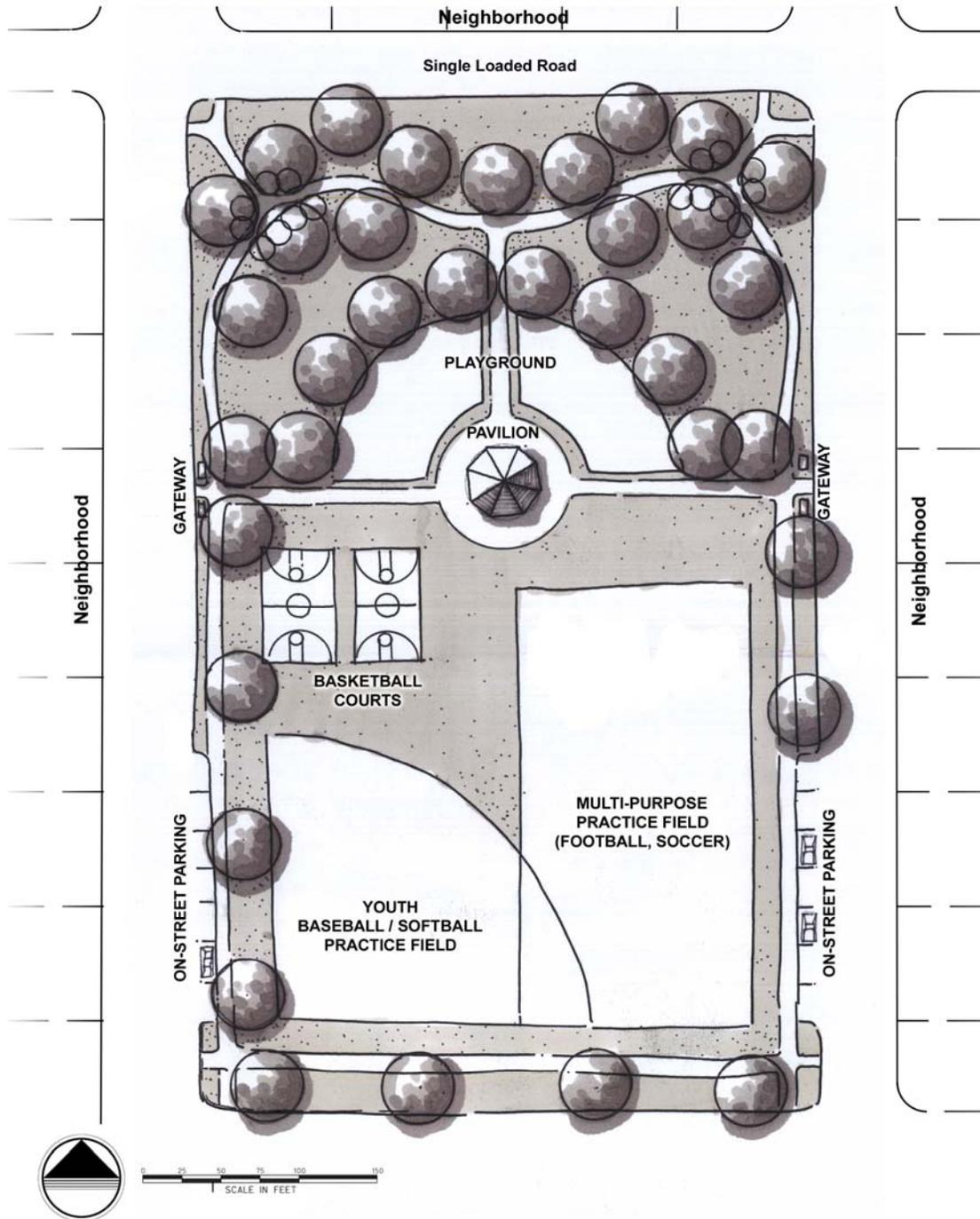


Figure 4.1 – Typical Neighborhood Park

Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks that serve a group of neighborhoods or a portion of a city. Community parks are usually reached by automobile, although residents adjacent to the park and trail users may walk or cycle to it, rendering them *defacto* neighborhood parks. A variety of recreational facilities are provided, including in some cases, lighted playing fields for organized sports, hike/bike trails and sufficient parking to accommodate participants, spectators, and other park users.

Size – The typical community park should be large enough so it can provide a variety of amenities while still leaving open space for unstructured recreation and natural areas. The park should also have room for expansion, as new facilities are required. A typical community park varies in size from 20 acres to over 50 acres.

Location – Community parks should be located near a major thoroughfare to provide easy access from different parts of the City. Where possible, care should be taken to provide adequate buffers to adjacent residential streets, minimizing noise and bright lights at night. A good option to be considered is “cut-off” lighting, which allows light patterns to be controlled, thus avoiding undesired lighted areas.

Facilities – Facilities generally located in community parks may include (items in bold are considered the most necessary components):

- **Playground equipment with adequate safety surfacing around the playground**
- **Active free play areas**
- **Picnic areas and pavilion(s)**
- **Unlighted practice fields for baseball, soccer, football, softball, etc.**
- Restrooms
- **Natural open space**
- **Jogging, bicycle and nature trails**
- Lighted ball fields, suitable for organized competitive events
- Lighted multi-purpose practice fields
- Recreation center (if appropriate)
- **Sufficient off-street parking based on facilities provided and size of park**
- Security lighting
- Other facilities as needed which can take advantage of the unique characteristics of the site, such as nature trails or fishing adjacent to ponds, swimming pools, amphitheaters etc.

Parking – This varies based on the facilities provided and the size of park. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a minimum of five spaces per programmed acre, plus additional parking for specific facilities within the park such as pools or ball fields. The specific amount of parking provided in each park should be determined by the facilities provided in that park. Even so, consideration should always be given towards the concept of “shared parking”, whereby parking may be shared with adjacent land use facilities e.g. schools, churches, City buildings etc. In order to offset

the surface water runoff and pollution from large areas of parking, it is recommended that serious consideration be given to the use of permeable paving combined with shade trees and bio-swales.

Figure 4.2 below illustrates a typical community park and some of the elements that the park might contain. Note that this is simply a typical arrangement, and each community park should be designed according to the specific needs of the community.

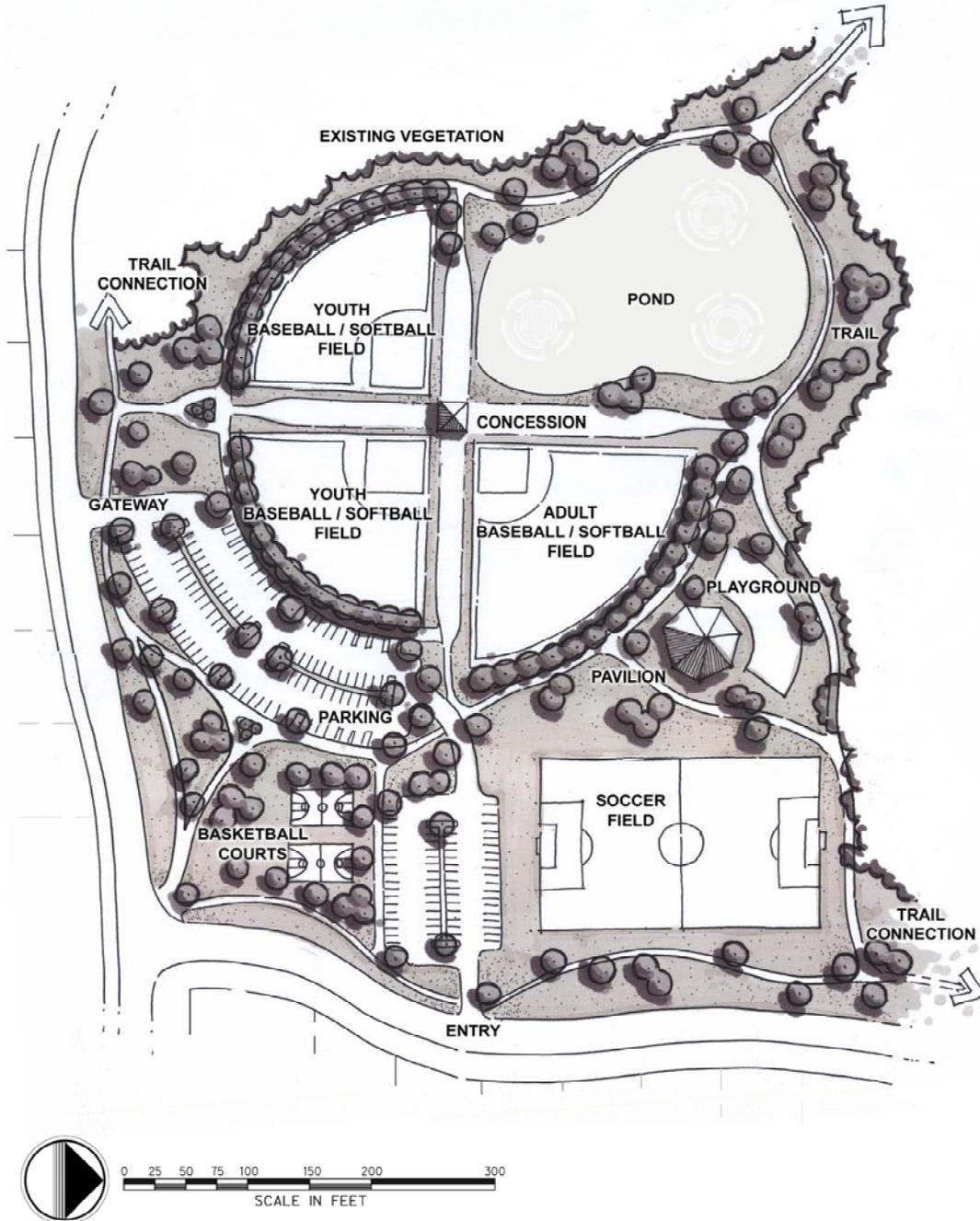


Figure 4.2 – Typical Community Park

Linear Parks, Greenbelts and Hike & Bike Trails

Linear parks and greenbelts are open park areas that generally follow some natural or man-made feature that is linear in nature, such as creeks, abandoned railroad rights-of-way or power line or utility corridor easements. Properly developed to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel, these parks can serve to link or connect other parks in the local system, as well as schools, libraries, and other major destinations. No specific standards apply to linear/linkage parks other than to be large enough to adequately accommodate the resources they follow. They can also serve as linear greenbelts, which preserve open space.

Hike & bike trails, often found in linear parks, serve to provide active and passive recreation as well as connections between parks and other destinations within the City. A trails system should be established to serve both recreation needs and as a means to alternative transportation choices and connections throughout the City. Such a system should provide each resident with quick and easy access to parks, retail, and employment areas.

Currently, the only designated greenbelt in The Colony is the Taylor Street Greenbelt, which does not contain a Hike & Bike Trail presently, though one is planned for this area as part of the 2004 Trails Master Plan.

Special Purpose Parks

Special purpose parks are designed to accommodate specialized recreational activities. Because the facility needs for each activity type are different, each special purpose park usually provides for one or more specific activities. Examples of special purpose parks include:

- Golf courses
- Senior Citizen Centers
- Athletic fields or complexes
- Nature centers or large natural preserves
- Swimming pool centers
- Aquatic Parks
- Pocket Parks
- Recreation Centers
- Tennis complexes
- Dog parks
- Skate parks
- Cemeteries
- Campgrounds / Camping Areas

Athletic complexes and public golf courses are two of the most common types of special purpose parks. Athletic complexes seek to provide fields for organized play in a location that can accommodate the traffic and noise that a large number of users can generate. Evening activities at athletic complexes necessitate high-power lighting that can become

a nuisance when the complex is located too close to residential areas. To address this, wide buffers should be placed around such complexes, lighting control should be addressed, and/or such parks should – in the future – be located adjacent to commercial or industrial areas. Athletic complexes should include sufficient fields so that leagues can congregate at one facility and not have to spread out in different locations across the city.

Pocket parks are small green gathering spaces ranging typically from 1/8 acre to 1 acre, though they can be as large (the largest in The Colony is four acres). Due to the size of this type of park, vehicular parking space is typically not provided. Therefore, pocket parks are accessed by pedestrian and bicycle means. Benches, fountains, landscaping, and other focal features such as public art are common items found in these parks. Size is not the key factor of the typical pocket park, but rather the quality of the landscaping and features that go into the park.

An additional type of special purpose park is a “special interest” park which typically is developed as a skate park, a dog park, or some other park designed to specifically accommodate a special recreational need. In a city the size of The Colony, a park of this nature will typically be the only one of its type in the City (i.e. only one dog park or only one skate park is typically developed).

Special purpose parks in The Colony are numerous and include several Athletic Complexes (BB Owens Park, East Lake Highlands Football Facility, Little League Complex, Turner Soccer Facility, Blue Sky Soccer Complex Austin Ranch Park, and Camey Park), Golf Courses (Stewart Peninsula and The Tribute), Pocket Parks (Historical Park, Greenway Park, Wilcox Park, and West Lake Highlands Park), a Multi-Purpose Park (Bridges Park) and the Hawaiian Falls water park.

Regional Parks

The term *Regional Park* refers to land that is dedicated as parkland due to its regional importance and relevance. This may be due to its natural characteristics including habitat, geological formations, and/or aesthetic beauty. Other reasons may be the role that the particular site plays in issues of regional importance: for example, water conservation, flood protection or historic memorial. The size of a regional park can vary from small to large, depending on the purpose and character of the site. There are two regional parks in The Colony: Stewart Creek Park and Hidden Cove Park. Although considered a Regional Park, Stewart Creek Park also serves the roles of a Community Park and a Neighborhood Park for west The Colony due to its location adjacent to neighborhoods.

Streetscapes

Streetscapes create experiences unique to a particular part of town, whether it is FM 423, an artery through a rural section like Plano Parkway, or a downtown pedestrian “mall”. It is effective to combine a pocket park along a streetscaped block, whether nestled into a retail area, or in a residential neighborhood, or even along a linear park such as a utility easement. Interestingly, streetscapes are not generally considered as part of a city’s park

system, as many standards were developed with parks being considered as completely distinct entities from the urban fabric. Additionally, park standards were developed as if available park land were infinitely available. Such is not the case in many cities, and even if it were so, many cities consider the real aesthetic and economic values in cultivating the attractiveness and pedestrian quality of their streets and the benefits such actions have for community development and improving city image. The beauty of a well landscaped street and the experience of traveling along it is that it may be repeated (uniquely to add to the diversity of neighborhoods) to knit together all parts of the urban fabric.

Locally renowned examples abound, like Fort Worth's Sundance Square or Grapevine's Main Street as well as many central corridors leading to the heart of a city's center or place of cultural importance. Such experiences are memorable, not for the carrying capacity of the street itself, but the importance given to people first as pedestrians and the sense of place that is uniquely celebrated. Streets are not only thoroughfares; they can become destinations in themselves. Streetscape opportunities may be identified by particular and strategically located streets that would add interest and appeal. These opportunities for streetscapes may be further enhanced by planning for occasional, associated pocket parks.

“Cities are for people, not for cars” is a philosophy that increases the appeal and functionality of a city, by providing multi-modal experiences for enjoying the public spaces that form a vibrant network of a city.

Nature Areas and Open Space

As with Streetscapes, the benefit and inclusion of places that are nature areas or un-programmed open space has been largely overlooked in the context of typical parks and community development master plans. Conservation and preservation are especially valuable as natural resources disappear in our cities and as natural habitat is wiped out. The value of walking through natural and historic places that have been left untouched is immeasurable. Such opportunities are rapidly becoming rare, and the identification and protection of such areas is urgently needed in most cities today. Cities that marshal the will and act quickly to conserve natural resources demonstrate foresight and resolve necessary so that future generations may enjoy something of beauty and timelessness.

Natural areas and open space are part of a city's resources that are its “natural gems.” The value of such land may have visual, historic and cultural appeal that imprints upon the visitor and creates a sense of place as well as of lasting memories. Wilderness, creeks, lakes and prairie or particular geologic formations or topographic change may all be considered elements worthy of protection, public access, and celebration.

As un-programmed space, there is the added benefit of these areas as “self-maintaining”. There may be the occasional need to check for hazards, but maintenance is generally not a significant factor. Presently, the acreage associated with nature areas and open space in The Colony constitutes over 60% of the total acreage in the parks system (or 34% if the

City-managed USACE Wildlife Management Areas are not considered). Whether or not the Wildlife Management Areas are considered, the fact is that those nearly 1,200 acres of land are present in the form of The Colony's shoreline on Lewisville Lake.

5.4.3 Park System Overview

The parks system in The Colony consists of a total of 28 parks totaling approximately 807 acres of developed land. An additional 480 acres of undeveloped land are dedicated to the expansion of existing parks (478.3 acres) and the construction of a new Pocket Park (Augusta Park, 1.7 acres).

Neighborhood Parks

The Colony has nine (9) Neighborhood Parks that constitute a total of 62.65 dedicated Neighborhood Park acres. Neighborhood Parks in the City may range in size from the 1.2 acres of Carr/Chapman Park to the 25.7 acre Scout Park. Existing neighborhood parks located next to an elementary, junior, or high school are Camey and Perryman Parks at Camey Elementary, Augusta Park at Stewart Creek Elementary and Lakeview Middle School, Bridges Park at Peters Colony Elementary and Griffin Middle School, and BB Owens Park at BB Owens Elementary. The Colony has a good starting ground in its overall geographic coverage with Neighborhood Parks and their service radii of ½ mile apiece. However, several neighborhood service areas still need to be addressed.

Home Owner Association Parks

Though these parks are not owned or maintained by the City, and are often not accessible for use by the general public, many of them provide similar amenities as a neighborhood park and are therefore important to document in the CDMP. There are currently ten HOA parks in The Colony and a total of 17.3 acres of HOA parks in The Colony ranging in size from less than a half acre to almost four acres. On average, these parks are an average of 1.7 acres in size – considerably smaller than typical neighborhood parks in The Colony. Because HOA parks perform a similar function to that of neighborhood parks, the 17.3 acres mentioned above is added to the 62.65 acres of city-owned neighborhood parks for the purposes of this analysis.

Community Parks

The Colony has four (4) Community Parks, although only one (Bill Allen Memorial Park) currently meets all of the requirements for a Community Park outlined earlier in this chapter. Community Park acreage in the City totals 198 acres, including 36 acres of nature preserve and open space. Of that total, 151 acres are developed and 6 acres are undeveloped and designated for future use. With a service radius of 1 to 2 miles, The Colony is making progress toward being well covered in Community Parks, provided improvement and expansion of the types of facilities are carried out at Five Star West Community Complex and the Municipal Community Complex.

Because of the amenities provided by community parks, they also serve as de facto neighborhood parks when dedicated neighborhood parks are not present. That is, they provide the amenities of a neighborhood park and therefore serve the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Special Purpose Parks

The Special Purpose Parks in The Colony range in size from the 0.14 acre Historical Park to the 450 acre The Tribute Golf Course. Special Purpose Park acreage in the City totals approximately 735 acres (of which 406 are developed, 295 are undeveloped, and 34 are natural / unprogrammed space). Special Purpose Parks are the result of a specific need or opportunity, and therefore do not have a prescribed service radius. In essence, this category of park is not intended to cover the City in its entirety.



Pocket Parks

In this Community Development Master Plan, Pocket Parks are included under the category of Special Purpose Parks. The Colony has four developed Pocket Parks, and one undeveloped Pocket Park² (which encompass seven acres – 3.5 developed and 3.5 undeveloped). In the future, the possibility exists to create a number of smaller spaces adjacent to various private and City owned facilities, particularly as part of a larger vision of streetscapes and perhaps in the creation of pedestrian malls and trail corridors. Features which are potential pocket park locations include City Gateways and Trailheads, according to their suitability.

Linear Parks, Greenbelts and Hike & Bike Trails

The Colony has one largely undeveloped Greenbelt, totaling 18 acres. The Taylor Street Greenbelt is located along a waterway and runs generally from the large power line easement to North Colony Boulevard. Opportunities for future Linear Parks & Greenbelts exist as a further development of the trails network, with particular attention to potential joint uses along the City's two main utility easements.

² Prior to the beginning of the CDMP project, there were several more parks in the City considered to be Pocket Parks. Now, some of these parks are considered to be Neighborhood Parks or Athletic Facilities. This change reflects a change in the way park type is classified, from a size-based classification to a function-based classification. It should also be noted that Pocket Parks, depending on location and amenities, can sometimes fulfill the roles of a Neighborhood Park.



Several Hike & Bike Trails are currently under development, including the Shoreline Trail (of which 3.9 miles are being constructed) and the Austin Ranch Trail (of which 1.5 miles are being constructed). Currently existing is the 0.5 mile Park Loop Trail which is located near the Five Star West Community Complex and is being expanded by an additional 0.5 mile north of Slay Baker Park.

Streetscapes

The Colony has opportunities to establish major gateways to the City, as well as significant streetscaping and beautification as a larger part of its park system and community development efforts. This attention to the overall experience of the City creates a unique sense of identity, pride, and cultural celebration. Existing examples of successful streetscapes can be seen elsewhere in the Metroplex. A good example is the public art streetscape in North Richland Hills: the Bedford-Eules Road Greenway.



The Bedford-Eules Road Greenway in North Richland Hills

Nature Area/Open Space

The City is fortunate to have tremendous resources and preserves in a number of its existing parks and in the Lewisville Lake shoreline. Nature Preserves and Open Space feature significantly in Dave Cowan Park, Scout Park, the Turner Soccer Facility, Hidden Cove Park, Wynnewood Nature Preserve, and the City-managed USACE Wildlife

Management Areas. Other parks such as Ridgepoint Park and BB Owens Park have portions which are protected natural preserves that deserve celebration.



Cemeteries

The Colony contains one cemetery – Bridges Cemetery. Cemeteries are typically not counted toward park acreage; such is the case in The Colony as the City maintains yet does not own Bridges Cemetery. However, cemeteries play an important role in defining the culture and history of a community as well as providing a sense of open space, specifically from a visual point of view. Bridges Cemetery especially fulfills the first of these two tasks being that it is the oldest known cemetery in Denton County and contains the graves of some of the first Peters Colony settlers.

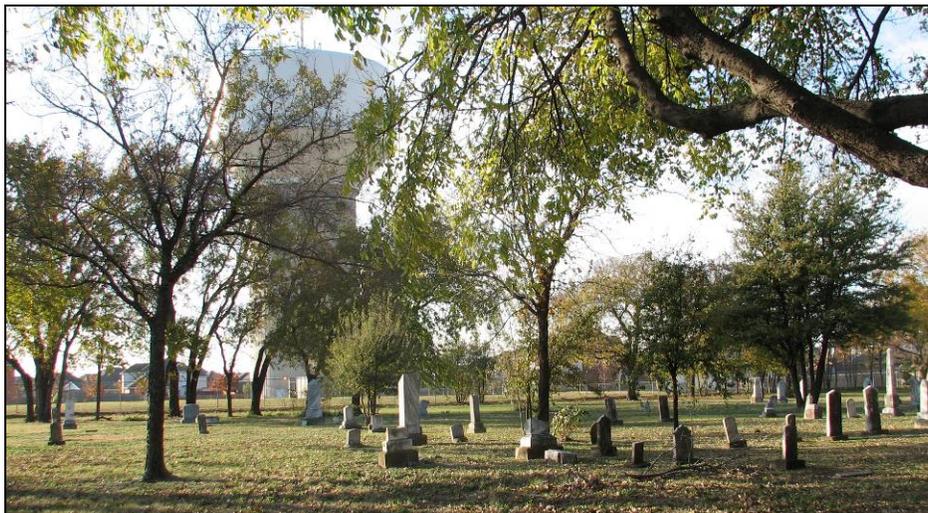


Table 5.1 Existing Park Facilities on the next page is a summary of park acreage and park facilities per individual park.

The existing park acreage per park category is summarized as follows:

Table 5.2 Summary of Existing Park Acreage per Park Category	
Park Category	Acreage
Neighborhood Parks	67.65
<i>HOA Parks</i>	17.3
Community Parks	198.14
Special Purpose Parks	759.77
Trails & Greenbelts	18.13
Open Space	1,325.41
Regional Parks	705.00
Recreation Facilities	6.13
Total	3,142.12



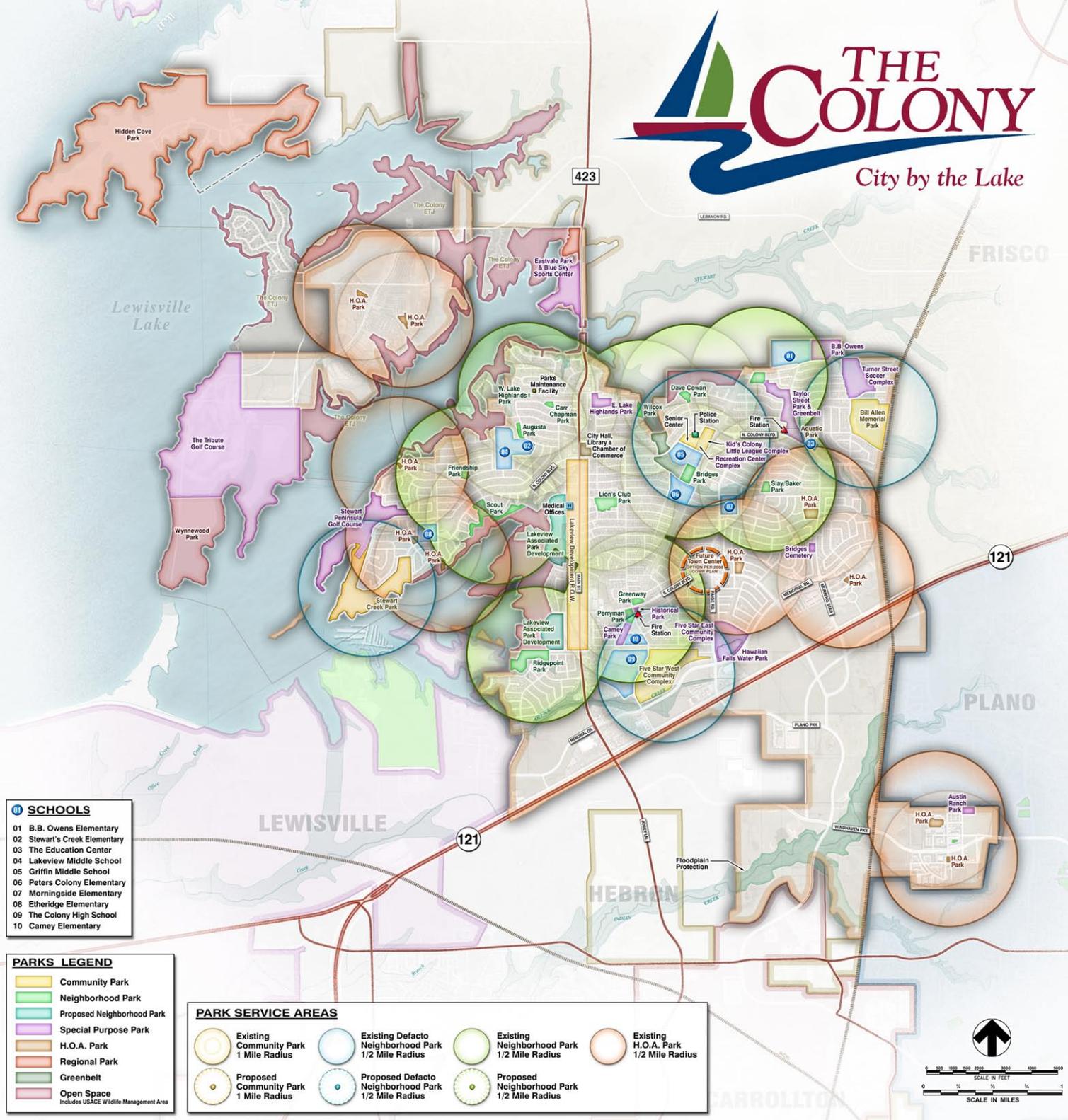
5.4.4 Facilities Review

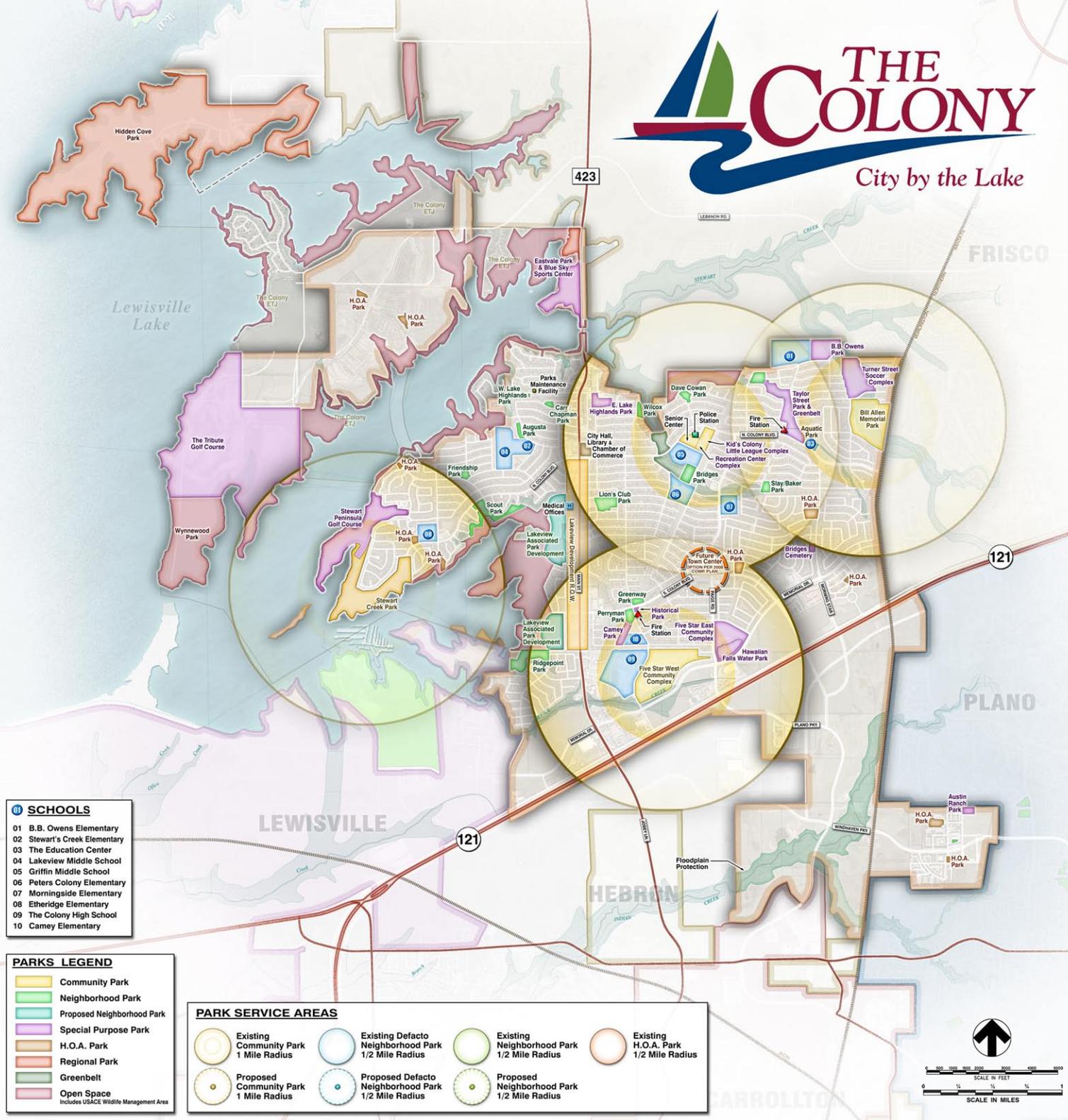
In the appendix, there is a detailed description of each park. The parks and parkland are discussed according to the categories of Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Special Purpose Parks, Linear Parks & Greenbelts, Regional Parks, and Indoor Recreation Facilities.

It is important to understand the spatial distribution of various park types within the City. Maps illustrate the location of all the existing developed and undeveloped parks and highlight the area that they service in The Colony. For neighborhood parks and community parks, which are the basic park types, service radii are shown to illustrate the areas that are best served by parks. Neighborhood parks are the primary type of close-to-home park in The Colony; they serve areas within a five to ten minute walk – a ½ mile radius. Community parks serve a broader population and are typically positioned so that everyone within the City is within a 5 minute drive of a park (within one mile of a community park). They also serve as a de facto neighborhood park for areas within ½ mile. The following maps are presented on the following pages:

- **Existing Neighborhood & DeFacto Neighborhood Parks**
½ mile radius – includes community parks as de facto neighborhood parks
- **Existing Community Parks**
1 mile radius







- SCHOOLS**
- 01 B.B. Owens Elementary
 - 02 Stewart's Creek Elementary
 - 03 The Education Center
 - 04 Lakeview Middle School
 - 05 Griffin Middle School
 - 06 Peters Colony Elementary
 - 07 Morningside Elementary
 - 08 Etheridge Elementary
 - 09 The Colony High School
 - 10 Camey Elementary

- PARKS LEGEND**
- Community Park
 - Neighborhood Park
 - Proposed Neighborhood Park
 - Special Purpose Park
 - H.O.A. Park
 - Regional Park
 - Greenbelt
 - Open Space
Includes USACE Wildlife Management Area

- PARK SERVICE AREAS**
- Existing Community Park 1 Mile Radius
 - Existing Defacto Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Existing Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Existing H.O.A. Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Community Park 1 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Defacto Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius



November 13, 2009

EXISTING COMMUNITY PARKS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

CITY OF THE COLONY, TEXAS

Chapter 6

Needs Assessment



6.1 Introduction

The Needs Assessment is one of the most critical components of the Community Development Master Plan. An assessment of the current state of The Colony’s parks system, recreation opportunities, city image, arts, history, and culture is vital so that deficiencies and needs can be identified and so that actions can be developed to address those deficiencies. It is also important to determine future needs relative to recreational trends and the changing needs of the City’s residents and to develop the necessary action plan to address these needs effectively.

A needs assessment is an analytical way of assessing what facilities, actions, and programs are most needed and desired by the citizens of The Colony and prioritizing actions to address these needs. The assessment of these needs is both quantitative and qualitative as is discussed in Section 6.2.

6.2 Assessment Methods

There are three techniques which are used to evaluate the current and future community development needs of The Colony. These techniques follow general methodologies accepted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for local park master plans and by the Department of the Interior for local park system Recovery Action Plans (RAP). These three techniques are as follows:

Standard-Based

Parks, recreation, and open space are the only subject areas that can be assessed by the use of standards. This is due entirely to the fact that standards or similar assessment methods do not exist for art, culture, history, or beautification.

The standard-based technique for parks, recreation, and open space uses standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in 1995 and target standards from benchmark cities in the surrounding region. These standards are based on park acreage (by park type) per 1,000 residents and by number of specific recreation amenities (such as basketball goals) per number of residents.

A target Level of Service (LOS) is developed for The Colony for park acreage and recreation amenities by adjusting the NRPA standards and the benchmark cities' target standards based on the unique attributes and characteristics of The Colony. This target LOS is then used to assess the surplus or deficit of park acreage at build-out population and various recreation amenities for The Colony today and the next five to ten years. This is in recognition of the fact that recreation facility needs change over time due to changing trends, demographics, and so forth whereas park acreage needs are relatively constant.

Demand-Based

This approach uses participation rates, league usage data, surveys, public input events, and questionnaires to determine how much the population uses and desires certain types of recreation facilities, park amenities, and activities for which land needs to be acquired, facility provision needs to be made, or programming needs to be provided.

Resource-Based

This approach is based on the usefulness of available physical resources to provide recreation opportunities. For example, the City's lakeshore and creek system provides opportunities for trail corridors.

All three methods are important in their own regard, but individually do not represent the entire picture. This assessment, and the recommendations resulting from it, uses findings from all three methods to determine what types of recreation facilities and park requirements are needed in The Colony.

Chapter 6A

Standard Based Needs Assessment

National guidelines and standards are based on demographic trends rather than specific local desires, requiring that they be fine-tuned to meet local conditions. It is important to recognize that national standards are simply guidelines or benchmarks that are intended to serve as a starting point for park planning (again, arts, culture, history, and beautification are all areas that do not have standards by which to perform this particular analysis). Each city has its own unique geographic, demographic, and socio-economic composition, and as such, the arbitrary application of national standards, as is often done, would not necessarily meet the needs of that particular community.

Standards exist and are applied in three primary ways:

- **Spatial or Park Acreage Standards** – These define the acres of park land needed and are usually expressed as a ratio of park acreage to population.
- **Facility Standards** – These define the number of facilities recommended to serve each particular recreation need. Facility standards are usually expressed as a ratio of units of a particular facility per population size. For example, a facility standard for basketball might be one court for every 5,000 inhabitants.
- **Development Standards** – These define the exact spatial requirements for a specific recreation area (such as a Neighborhood Park versus a Community Park). *These recommended standards are discussed in Chapter 5.*

6A.1 Acreage Standards

The Need for Park Acreage

Developing and applying a target Level of Service or “standard” for park acreage results in acreage standards for different types of parks and park land. Neighborhood Parks and community parks, however, are the primary park types to focus on as they provide close-to-home park space as discussed in Chapter 5. Additional acreage is required both in order to serve the existing and future population but also to allow for the development of additional Neighborhood and Community Parks evenly spaced throughout the City, with the goal of providing close-to-home parks within ¼ to ½ mile of each resident in The Colony.

On the map on page 5-19a, both Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks are shown with the ¼ mile and ½ mile service radii of a typical Neighborhood Park. The reason that Community Parks are included in this coverage analysis is that they typically contain the elements of a Neighborhood Park and thus function as *de facto* Neighborhood Parks. By inclusion of both park types in this study, the maximal coverage of existing “Close to Home” parks is depicted. Other types of parks such as Special Purpose or Linear Parks typically are not included in such a service coverage analysis. The reason for this is that each is unique and may only be found where a particular function or resource opportunity exists.

The overall goal is to provide **walking distance (¼ to ½ mile) service** to all residents, throughout the City of The Colony. The areas covered with the service radii are well served, whereas the areas that are exposed or not covered indicate the highest need for neighborhood type recreational facilities and parks.

6A.1.1 Park Acreage Standards

The purpose of spatial standards for parks and recreational areas is to ensure that sufficient area is allocated to allow for all the outdoor recreation needs of a community. They allow the City to plan ahead, so that park land can be targeted and acquired before it is developed. These spatial standards are expressed as the number of acres of park land per 1,000 inhabitants.

The NRPA-recommended spatial standards for cities in general are shown in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1
Park Acreage Guidelines Based on National (NRPA) Recommended Standards

NRPA Recommended Standards:	
Close to Home Parks	
• Neighborhood Parks:	1.0 to 2.0 acres / 1,000 population
• Community Parks:	5.0 to 8.0 acres / 1,000 population
Total recommended close to home parks per NRPA:	
6.0 to 10.0 acres / 1,000 population	
<hr/>	
Other City Wide Parks:	
• Special Purpose Parks:	Variable standard
• Linear Parks / Linkage Parks:	Variable standard
• Nature Preserves / Open Space:	Variable standard
• Regional Parks:	5.0 to 10.0 acres / 1,000 population

6A.1.2 Target Park Acreage LOS

The nationally recommended spatial standards as presented in Figure 6.1 above were adapted to develop target standards for The Colony’s particular set of needs. Target Levels of Service (LOS) were developed only for Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks because other park types – special purpose parks, linear parks, nature preserves, and regional parks – are only developed when the specific need or opportunity for such park is determined. These park land target levels of service for The Colony are presented in Table 6.1 and are summarized in Figure 6.2 below.

Figure 6.2
Park Acreage Target Levels of Service for The Colony

Close to Home Parks	
• Neighborhood Parks:	2 acres / 1,000 population
• Community Parks:	6 acres / 1,000 population
Total recommended close to home parks:	
8 acres / 1,000 population	

The city-wide recommended target LOS for The Colony is 8 acres per 1,000 population for Neighborhood and Community Parks. This falls within the NRPA’s recommended 6 to 10 acres per 1,000 population while being comparable to other cities in the region (for Neighborhood and Community Parks). It should be noted that The Colony has other types of parks that provide additional acreage of park land for the population. Table 6.1 on the following page displays this information and indicates that The Colony today has 48 acres of park land¹ and open space per 1,000 population. **However, there are only 7.1 acres of Neighborhood and Community park land per 1,000 population (including HOA parks); this is not sufficient to serve The Colony’s current park acreage needs.**

Table 6.1 Park Land Standards on the next page describes the acreage standards and resulting needs from 2008 until build-out conditions for each park category.

¹ The additional 40 acres per 1,000 population is comprised of land dedicated to special purpose parks (including golf courses), open space, and USACE Wildlife Management Areas along the shore of Lewisville Lake.



The Colony Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

Table 6.1 - Park Land Standards



Facility Type	N.R.P.A. Size/ Acres	Total Existing Acres	Current Level of Service	NRPA Target Standard (1)	2008 Target Level of Service (2)	2008 \approx 39,828 pop. (3)	Build-out (2030) \approx 80,500 pop. (3)
Park Category							
Neighborhood Parks	5 - 10 acres	85 acres (4)	2.13 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	1 - 2 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	2 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	80 Acres (surplus of 5 acres)	161 Acres (deficit of 76 acres)
Community Parks	According to function; usually 30 - 50 acres	198 acres	4.97 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	5 - 8 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	6 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	239 Acres (deficit of 41 acres)	483 Acres (deficit of 285 acres)
TOTAL		283 acres	7 Acres / 1,000 pop.	6 - 10 Acres / 1,000 pop.	8 Acres / 1,000 pop.	319 Acres (deficit of 36 acres)	644 Acres (deficit of 361 acres)
Special Purpose Parks incl. Linear Parks & Aquatic Park	Varies by function	766 acres (5)	19.00 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	Variable	No target	19 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	10 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
Natural Areas/Open Spaces	Varies by resource protection & opportunity	157 acres	3.94 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	Variable	No target	4 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	2 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
TOTAL		923 acres	23 Acres / 1,000 pop.			23 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	12 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
CITY PARK GRAND TOTAL		1206 acres	30 Acres / 1,000 pop.			30 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	15 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
Regional Parks (6)	Wildlife Management Area (USACE)	1187 acres	29.80 Acres/ 1,000 pop.		No target	30 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	15 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
Regional Parks (6) NRPA = Metropolitan	100 - 500+ acres	705 acres	17.70 Acres/ 1,000 pop.		No target	18 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	9 Acres/ 1,000 pop.
TOTAL		1892 acres	48 Acres / 1,000 pop.			48 Acres/ 1,000 pop.	24 Acres/ 1,000 pop.

Comparable adopted park land standards in other nearby cities.

- Waxahachie's adopted park land standards = **20 acres per 1,000 residents.**
- Prosper's adopted park land standards = **20 acres per 1,000 residents.**
- Lancaster's adopted park land standards = **23 acres per 1,000 residents.**
- Frisco's adopted park land standards = **13-19 acres per 1,000 residents.**
- Keller's adopted park land standards = **18 acres per 1,000 residents.**
- Rowlett's adopted park land standards = **17-25.5 acres per 1,000 residents.**

(1) 1995 NRPA standards.

(2) Standard allows The Colony to establish general target service levels.

(3) Population projections were provided by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (number is rounded)

(4) Includes HOA parks (17.2 acres)

(5) Total includes Additional Park and Recreational Facilities.

(6) Regional Parks: The Colony currently has no regional park standard established prior 2008.

Population Density

Population (39,828) / city acreage 10,048 = 3.96 persons per acre



6A.1.3 Existing Conditions in The Colony

The following figures relate the existing acreage of park by type of park, the target LOS for each park type, the target acres at build-out, and the acreage needed to meet the target LOS. The Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks sections include a discussion on the current spatial distribution of parks within the City.

Neighborhood and HOA Parks

The Colony currently has only half of the acreage for Neighborhood Parks needed for the projected build-out population (this includes considering HOA parks in this analysis):

Figure 6.3
Existing Conditions – Neighborhood Parks

Existing Acreage	85 acres
Current LOS	2.13 acres / 1,000 population
Target LOS	2 acres / 1,000 population
Target Acreage at Build-Out*	161 acres
Acreage to Acquire to meet Target	76 acres

Existing acreage is 53% of the target for build-out conditions
*Population of 80,500

Neighborhood Parks and HOA Parks in The Colony are relatively well distributed throughout the City. However, with a service radius of ½ mile each, only about half of the City is covered (see Map on page 5-19b).

When the service radius of neighborhood parks is applied to community parks that serve as de facto neighborhood parks, the service coverage increases significantly, although large areas are still left under served (see Map on page 5-19c)

Community Parks

The Colony currently has only 40% of the acreage for Community Parks needed for the projected build-out population:

Figure 6.4
Existing Conditions – Community Parks

Existing Acreage	198 acres
Current LOS	5 acres / 1,000 population
Target LOS	6 acres / 1,000 population
Target Acreage at Build-Out*	483 acres
Acreage to Acquire to meet Target	285 acres

Existing acreage is 41% of the target for build-out conditions
*Population of 80,500

Community Parks are fairly well distributed throughout the currently developed portions of The Colony. However, there are large areas in the northern (Wynnewood Peninsula) and southern (Austin Ranch Area) that are not well-served by Community Parks. In addition, as discussed in Chapter 5, improvements must be made to the Five Star West Community Complex and the Municipal Community Park in order for them to be fully considered Community Parks.

Special Purpose Parks

The Colony currently has a relatively high quantity of Special Purpose Park acreage per 1,000 persons compared to other cities in the region. Much of this can be attributed to the City’s past tendency to provide certain athletic facilities as stand-alone parks, rather than as part of a Community Park, which is the more common practice in this region.

Figure 6.5
Existing Conditions – Special Purpose Parks

Existing Acreage	816 acres
Current LOS	20 acres / 1,000 population
Target LOS	No target
Resulting Acreage at Build-Out*	10 acres / 1,000 population**
<hr/> <p><i>*Population of 80,500</i> <i>**If no further acreage is acquired</i></p>	

Natural Areas / Open Space

The Colony currently has a relatively high quantity of Natural Areas and Open Space acreage per 1,000 persons compared to other cities in the region. This can partially be attributed to the specific resource opportunity within the City – Lewisville Lake has an extensive shoreline within The Colony and the various creek corridors in the City contain undevelopable floodplain. This figure also includes the acreage of the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ Wildlife Management Areas along the shore of Lewisville Lake, which the City has (as of 2008) agreed to manage.

Figure 6.6
Existing Conditions – Natural Areas / Open Space
(including USACE Wildlife Management Areas)

Existing Acreage	1,348 acres
Current LOS	33 acres / 1,000 population*
Target LOS	No target
Resulting Acreage at Build-Out**	17 acres / 1,000 population***

**Current LOS shown is the combination of the 3.5 acres per 1,000 population shown on Table 6.1 for Natural Areas / Open Space and the 29.8 acres per 1,000 shown for Regional Open Space (USACE WMA)*
***Population of 80,500*
****If no further acreage is acquired*

Regional Parks

The Colony currently has a relatively high quantity of Regional Park acreage per 1,000 persons compared to other cities in the region. The primary reason for the wealth of regional park acreage in the City is due to Hidden Cove Park – a former Texas Parks & Wildlife State Park that is now managed by the City and operated by a private corporation.

Figure 6.7
Existing Conditions – Regional Parks

Existing Acreage	705 acres
Current LOS	18 acres / 1,000 population*
Target LOS	No target
Resulting Acreage at Build-Out*	9 acres / 1,000 population**

**Population of 80,500*
***If no further acreage is acquired*

Summary of Acreage Needs

Considering Table 6.1, Figure 6.3, and Figure 6.4, The Colony needs to acquire or repurpose 361 additional acres of land. Neighborhood Parks require 76 additional acres and Community Parks require 285 acres.

Currently, additional land acquisition is not recommended for the use of Special Purpose Parks or Regional Parks. However, land of unique environmental value should always be acquired if it becomes available for the provision of Open Space for the community. It should be noted that land currently dedicated to Special Purpose and Regional Parks could be repurposed for the needs of Neighborhood and Community Parks (only if such repurposing is done while meeting the definition as to what constitutes such parks).

6A.2 Facility Standards

Facility standards and target Levels of Service (LOS) define the number of facilities recommended to serve each particular type of recreation need. They are expressed as the number of facilities per population size. The target LOS shown are based on comparisons with the national standard and other similar cities in Texas, as well as the actual number of facilities in The Colony and the amount of use each facility receives.

For the purposes of the Community Development Master Plan, only facilities operated by the City were considered in the development of these target LOS, though recreation facilities are provided by the Lewisville ISD². Special Purpose indoor facilities such as the Community Center, the Recreation Center, and the Aquatic Park are included and considered as a part of this Community Development Master Plan.

Current Levels of Service

The Current Levels of Service are expressed as the number of current recreation facilities per population size.

Target Levels of Service

The recommended Levels of Service for recreation facilities are specifically based on demonstrated needs, the actual number of facilities in the City, and the amount of use each facility receives. They are expressed as the number of facilities per population size. The Levels of Service are determined by the current needs, the community's recreation goals, and recognized standards. As with the acreage standards discussed in Section 6A.1, the facility target LOS figures are adjusted based on The Colony's unique recreation goals.

The target LOS for each type of facility is determined as a guide to provide the most basic recreation facilities to the community. The target timeframe for each facility is five years, or 2009 to 2014. The target LOS is the projected number of facilities based upon the target standard established for the City of The Colony.

Developing Target Levels of Service for Centers

As opposed to the development of target LOS for other recreation amenities (which is done through the comparison of national standards, the City's existing facilities, and the knowledge of current trends), the development of target LOS for recreation and senior centers occurs through the examination of benchmark cities.

Recreation Centers

The benchmarks for Recreation Centers were established by developing ratios of square footage for centers relative to the populations of benchmark cities (including Plano, Allen, Frisco, Keller, Coppell, and Farmers Branch³). Of the comparison facilities, all

² These facilities are not included because they are not considered to be openly accessible to the general public.

³ These cities were used for comparison because of available data on recreation center square footage and are not all considered to be cities comparable to The Colony.

included some indoor aquatics except one. Comparison numbers included both built and planned facilities for actual and projected populations. Results ranged from a low of 1,000 SF per 1,000 population for larger cities to a high of 1,400 SF per 1,000 population for smaller cities. An average of 1,200 SF per 1,000 population was used for the purposes of projecting The Colony's square footage needs for Recreation Centers.

Senior Centers

Senior facilities are not currently included in any standards that are accepted in the industry. Senior Centers typically transition from the reuse of vacated facilities until they have matured to the point of requiring centers designed specifically for the needs of senior citizens. The surrounding communities of Plano, Allen, and McKinney⁴ all have relatively new centers developed in the last ten years. The study relative to the population finds that the square footage size of the example cities *combined* equals 160 SF per 1,000 population. The typical size for a Senior Center is considered to be approximately 20,000 square feet (depending on programming components).

Other Centers and Facilities

Civic/Art Centers and Environmental Learning Centers also fall into the category of having no standards that are used in the industry. Because they are not very prevalent in the region, it is difficult to develop benchmarks for these types of centers.

Assessing Recreation Needs

The need for recreation facilities is based on comparisons with national standards and benchmark cities as well as the actual number of recreation facilities in The Colony and the amount of use each facility receives. Table 6.2 on the next page summarizes The Colony's 2008 Current Levels of Service and target standards for each type of facility.

Table 6.2: Recreational Facility Level of Service (LOS) on the next page describes a recommended target standard and level of service for recreation facilities expressed as a ratio of the number of facilities per 1,000 population.

⁴ These cities were used for comparison because of available data on senior center square footage and are not all considered to be cities comparable to The Colony.



Table 6.2

Recreation Facility Level of Service (LOS)

The Colony, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan



Facility Type	Existing City & School	NRPA Target Strd (1)	2008 LOS for 39,828	2008 Target LOS	Five Year Required addition at (~ 46,000 pop.)
Competitive Facilities					
Baseball	11 fields	1 / 5,000 pop.	1 / 3621 pop.	1/ 5000 pop.	9.20 ~ 9 Fields (need for 0 fields)
Youth Softball	2 fields	1 / 5,000 pop.	1 / 19914 pop.	1/ 6000 pop.	7.67 ~ 7 Fields* (need for 5 fields)
Adult Softball	2 fields	1 / 5,000 pop.	1 / 19914 pop.	1/ 6000 pop.	7.67 ~ 7 Fields (need for 5 fields)
Soccer	13 fields	1 / 10,000 pop.	1 / 3064 pop.	1/ 4000 pop.	11.50 ~ 11 Fields (surplus of 2 fields)
Football	2 fields **	1 / 20,000 pop.	1 / 19914 pop.	1/ 10000 pop.	4.60 ~ 4 Field (need for 2 fields)
Practice Facilities					
Baseball/Softball	2 backstop	n/a	1 / 19914 pop.	1/ 3000 pop.	15.33 ~ 15 Backstops (need for 13 backstops)
Multi-purpose Practice Fields	0 fields	n/a	0	1/ 5000 pop.	9.20 ~ 9 Fields (need for 9 fields)
Other Athletic Facilities					
Basketball Goals (Outdoor)	9 goals	1 / 2,500 pop.	1 / 4425 pop.	1/ 3000 pop.	15.33 ~ 15 Goals (need for 6 goals)
Tennis Courts	2 courts	1 / 2,000 pop.	1 / 19914 pop.	1/ 8000 pop.	5.75 ~ 5 Courts (need for 3 courts)
Sand Volleyball (Outdoor)	4 courts	1 / 5,000 pop.	1 / 9957 pop.	1/ 10000 pop.	4.60 ~ 4 Courts (need for 0 courts)
Racquet Ball	1 courts ***	1 / 20,000 pop.	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 20000 pop.	2.30 ~ 2 Courts (need for 1 courts)
Gymnasium (Indoor basketball, volleyball etc.)	1 Gym	1 / 20,000 pop.	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 15000 pop.	3.07 ~ 3 Gyms (need for 2 gyms)
Non-Athletic Facilities					
Paved Hike, Bike Trails	8.2 miles	n/a	1 m / 4857 pop.	1 m / 1500 pop.****	30.67 ~ 30 Miles (need for 22 miles)
Soft Surface Trails	2 miles	n/a	1 m / 19914 pop.	1 m / 3000 pop.	15.33 ~ 15 Miles (need for 13 miles)
Playgrounds	18 play units	1 / 1,000 pop.	1 / 2213 pop.	1/ 2000 pop.	23.00 ~ 23 Units (need for 5 units)
Fitness / Lap Pool	1 pools	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 20000 pop.	2.30 ~ 2 Pool (need for 1 pool)
Leisure Pool	1 pools	1 / 20,000 pop.	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 20000 pop.	2.30 ~ 2 Pool (need for 1 pool)
Family Water Park	1 centers	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 50000 pop.	0.92 ~ 1 Center (need for 0 centers)
Water Spray Park	1 park	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 30000 pop.	1.53 ~ 1 Parks (need for 0 parks)
Skate Park	1 skate parks	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 50000 pop.	0.92 ~ 1 Park (need for 0 parks)
BMX Park	0 BMX parks	n/a	0	1/ 50000 pop.	0.92 ~ 1 Park (need for 1 parks)
Horse Shoe Pits	4 pits	n/a	1 / 9957 pop.	1/ 10000 pop.	4.60 ~ 4 Pits (need for 0 pits)
Golf Courses	27 holes	n/a	1 / 1475 pop.	1/ 1400 pop.	32.86 ~ 33 Holes (need for 6 holes)
Disc Golf Course	9 holes	n/a	1 / 4425 pop.	1/ 2200 pop.	20.91 ~ 21 Holes (need for 12 holes)
Dog Parks	0 dog parks	n/a	0	1/ 40000 pop.	1.15 ~ 1 Park (need for 1 park)
Support Facilities					
Recreation Center	15,225 ft ²	n/a	382 ft ² / 1,000 pop.	1,200 ft ² / 1,000 pop.	96,600 Square Feet***** (need for 81,375 square feet)
Senior Center	6,725 ft ²	n/a	126 ft ² / 1,000 pop.	160 ft ² / 1,000 pop.	12,880 Square Feet***** (need for 6,155 square feet)
Civic/Arts Facility (Theater, Art Galleries, Meeting rooms, etc.)	1 center	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 40000 pop.	1.2 ~ 1 Units (need for 0 units)
Environmental Learning Center	0 center	n/a	0	1/ 30000 pop.	1.5 ~ 1 Units (need for 1 units)
Amphitheaters	1 units	n/a	1 / 39828 pop.	1/ 20000 pop.	2.3 ~ 2 Units (need for 1 units)
Pavilions/ Gazebo	12 units	1 / 2,000 pop.	1 / 3319 pop.	1/ 2000 pop.	23.00 ~ 23 Units (need for 11 units)

* A decimal need of 0.8 and higher is rounded to the next whole number.

(1) 1995 NRPA standards

** Currently 4, but two football fields will be lost due to the development of the Public Services Facility

*** Currently 2, but one racquet ball court will be lost due to the need for a classroom

**** With the high demand for trails in most cities, many adopt a standard of 1 mile per 1,000 population

*****At Build-Out

Note: Population figures were provided by The City of The Colony Planning Dept.

6A.2.1 Key Facility Needs

Table 6.2 on the previous pages shows deficits in the quantity of several recreation facilities in the next five years. These are discussed below in the same categories that these facilities are assessed in Table 6.2

Competitive Facilities

While The Colony is known for its competitive athletic facilities, there are deficiencies in two areas: Softball (both youth and adult) and Football. Additional fields for each are needed.

*Figure 6.8
Key Facility Needs – Competitive Facilities*

Competitive Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Youth Softball Fields*	5 Fields
• Adult Softball Fields*	5 Fields
• Football Fields	2 Fields

*Can potentially be shared use fields

Practice Facilities

There is a need in The Colony for additional practice facilities to meet the needs of existing and future league and non-league baseball, softball, soccer, and football use.

*Figure 6.9
Key Facility Needs – Practice Facilities*

Practice Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Baseball/Softball Backstops	12 Backstops
• Multi-Purpose Practice Fields*	9 Fields

*Fields designed for football and soccer practice

Other Athletic Facilities

Non-league use athletic facilities are generally lacking in The Colony. Outdoor Sand Volleyball is the only facility that will adequately serve the population in the next five years.

Figure 6.10
Key Facility Needs – Other Athletic Facilities

Other Athletic Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Outdoor Basketball Goals	6 Goals*
• Tennis Courts	3 Courts
• Gymnasiums**	2 Gyms
• Racquetball Courts	1 Court
*Three full courts, 6 half courts, or any combination thereof	
**Gyms should include at a minimum the striping, goals, and netting necessary for indoor basketball and volleyball	

Non-Athletic Facilities

The term “non-athletic facilities” constitutes many types of facilities that serve both passive and active recreation users. To better illustrate the facility deficiencies, they have been categorized further:

Trail Facilities

The Colony has a deficit of both paved and soft-surface trails. These are considered as separate facilities because each provides different user experiences. Paved trails exist in natural areas, developed parks, and along streets while soft surface trails are typically found in environmentally sensitive natural areas or in areas where these types of trails serve a special purpose (such as for mountain biking).

Figure 6.11
Key Facility Needs – Trail Facilities

Passive Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Paved Hike & Bike Trails	22 miles
• Soft Surface Trails	13 miles

Support Facilities

Support facilities include amenities that help Neighborhood and Community Parks meet the needs of the community. Playgrounds and Pavilions / Gazebos should be placed in every Neighborhood and Community Park. Larger parks can include multiple units while smaller parks (such as Neighborhood Parks) typically contain only one of each facility type. Due to its size and need for parking, amphitheaters are best suited for Community Parks.

Figure 6.12
Key Facility Needs – Support Facilities

Support Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Playgrounds	5 units
• Pavilions/Gazebos	11 units
• Amphitheater	1 amphitheater

Special Purpose Facilities

These facilities are those that are designed to meet specific recreational needs and serve specific user groups. They are considered to be special purpose needs because they provide a place for users to engage in types of activities that require special facilities and that would otherwise be incompatible with the design of the City’s parks system. Such facilities are often provided in (or as) Special Purpose Parks.

Figure 6.13
Key Facility Needs – Special Purpose Facilities

Special Purpose Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• BMX Park	1 park
• Golf Course Holes	6 holes*
• Disc Golf Course Holes	12 holes*
• Dog Parks	1 park

*Holes are used instead of courses because golf and disc golf courses can vary in number of holes (always multiples of nine). This information shows that the City will not require additional golf course holes in the next five years (because course additions occur in multiples of nine holes). The City will require a nine-hole disc golf addition over the next five years.

Aquatic Facilities

There is a deficit of aquatic facilities and pools in The Colony. Specifically, the City is lacking in indoor fitness / lap pools and in leisure pools. Leisure pools can be either indoor or outdoor (or a combination of the two), though national trends suggest that indoor leisure pools are preferable because they allow year-round use, including swimming, scuba instruction, water polo, and kayaking.

Figure 6.14
Key Facility Needs –Aquatic Facilities

Aquatic Facility Needs (2014 or 5 Year Target)	
• Fitness / Lap Pools*	1 pool
• Leisure Pools**	1 pool

*Indoor
**Either indoor or outdoor

Recreation & Senior Center Facilities

Based upon the projected 80,500 build-out population⁵ for The Colony, there is a need for **96,600 SF** of Recreation Center or Centers. While the current Recreation Center provides 15,225 SF of space, this space does not function well as a City-wide recreation center (it functions more as a neighborhood center); therefore, there remains a deficit of **96,600 SF** of Recreation Center space. This additional needed square footage could be addressed as an addition to the existing Center to provide one city-wide or regional facility or it could be addressed through the creation of another, similarly sized facility. Which ever option is chosen, the new Recreation Center space should include a minimum of two gymnasiums and one racquetball court (as shown in Figure 6.10).

One factor that impacts whether this is one regional facility or two or more smaller facilities is the geographic layout of the City boundaries. Based upon the boundary limits of the City, the Planning Team envisions a potential regional facility combining Recreation and Indoor Aquatics of approximately 75,000 SF to serve the central and southern areas of city with a more modest recreation facility located in the northwest region of the City sized at 30-35,000 SF.

Once again considering the projected 80,500 build-out population for The Colony, there is a need for **12,880 SF** of Senior Center. Comparing this with the square footage of the existing Senior Center, there is a deficit of **6,155 SF** of Senior Center space. This additional needed square footage could be addressed as an addition to the existing Center or as an expansion into the current Parks and Recreation Department Offices (which could provide approximately 2,275 additional SF). This would require the Parks and Recreation Staff to move to another location.

***Figure 6.15
Key Facility Needs – Recreation & Senior Center Facilities***

Recreation & Senior Center Facility Needs (at Build-Out)		
	<i>Need</i>	<i>Deficit</i>
• Recreation Center*	96,000 square feet	96,600 square feet
• Senior Center*	12,880 square feet	6,155 square feet

*Total area needed in one or more centers

⁵ Unlike using the 2014 population estimate, which is used to estimate the needs for other recreation facilities, build-out population is used for defining square footage needs for Recreation and Senior Centers. Build-out population is used in this instance because it is more efficient to work toward the final square footage goal rather than provide piecemeal expansions.

Chapter 6B

Demand Based Needs Assessment

Demand-based needs can be summarized as “what people want” and represents what is most desired by the unique population living within The Colony. Standard-based needs, on the other hand, depict what is needed based on a population number while resource-based needs depict what opportunities are available. Demand-based needs are expressed on a community-wide basis, by the needs of organizations that are active within The Colony, and national and regional recreation trends.

6B.1 Community-Wide Needs

The primary source for identifying community-wide demand-based needs is public involvement – that is, the public input events and questionnaire that occurred as part of the CDMP process and the 2006 DirectionFinder® Survey. A detailed review of these can be found in Chapter 4. The demand-based needs as expressed through community-wide public input can be categorized as follows:

Image & Identity

There is a need to improve the physical image of the City through beautification, art, gateway features, and signage as well as the need to improve the identity internally and externally of The Colony and its citizens. This latter facet includes improving community involvement, community spirit, and the City’s reputation.

Trails

Citizens of The Colony expressed a need to develop more trails within the City to serve as recreational amenities and as means to support alternative transportation. These trails should connect schools, residences, and parks as well as the Lake and natural areas. They should also connect residences to commercial areas so that users can walk or bike for shopping and dining trips.

Recreation / Community Center

The provision of a facility that provides expanded recreational opportunities, flexible use space, and places for people to gather is in great demand by the community. This was often expressed as one of the top needs throughout the public input process.

Lewisville Lake & Natural Areas

The protection of and access to the natural areas surrounding Lewisville Lake and the shoreline are a high priority of the citizens of The Colony. People expressed their desire to capitalize on the Lake’s recreational opportunities, its natural habitat and open space, and its ability to improve The Colony’s image and identity.

Youth, Families & Seniors

Providing opportunities for recreation and enrichment of the diverse population of The Colony is expressed as a significant need by the community. Expanded programming

offered through the City and the provision of facilities, both indoor and outdoor – that meet the needs of the full cross-section of the population of the City are paramount to the citizens. This includes expanding programming beyond league athletics, which is typically provided for children up to twelve years old, to meet the needs of user groups currently not fully served by the City.

6B.2 Organization Needs

At the onset of the Community Development Master Plan process, requests for information (RFI) were sent to all of the known athletic and cultural groups active in The Colony. These RFIs were designed to gain information about the size, organization, activities, and needs of the various groups within the City. Several groups expressed needs for the future growth and success of their organizations. Many of the same or similar needs were expressed by many groups; these needs are categorized below:

More Indoor Space

By far, the most mentioned need throughout all of the RFIs was some form of “we need more indoor space.” Often the requests were for both small and large meeting and multi-purpose rooms (there were requests for space of various sizes, ranging from small meeting rooms to space for 100 to 350 people). There were also requests for additional special-use space such as larger library facilities and enhanced space for theater productions.



Expand and Improve Athletic Facilities

Expanded and improved athletic facilities were mentioned as a need. Specifically, the need for an additional softball field at the Five Star Community Complex, pitching and batting cages, and improved upkeep and maintenance for the soccer fields at both Five Star and the Turner Street Soccer Complex were mentioned.

Provide Support

Several organizations referenced a need for support from the City from an operational point of view. These requests included help with background checks and First Aid and CPR training, increased funding, and additional paid staff.

Other Needs

Finally, there were needs that were expressed by single organizations. These include the need for an expanded, 36 hole golf course, a dog park, an intercity trail system, and additional aquatic facilities including outdoor activity stations, an expanded indoor pool, indoor recreational swimming amenities, and improved signage and landscaping at the Aquatic Center.

6B.3 Recreation Trends

Because we are such a mobile society today, the recreational offerings of a city play a large role in determining where people choose to reside. It is therefore important to understand regional and national trends in recreation and cultural amenities in order to ensure that The Colony can attract and retain residents into the future. Below are two groups of the most prevailing trends in recreation and culture today. These are expected to carry forward into the near future and to be relevant for the lifespan of this Community Development Master Plan.

Recreation Centers, Indoor Aquatics, & Community / Senior Centers

- A movement away from multiple smaller Recreation Centers to larger regional centers that are within 15-20 minutes travel time of its users is a current trend. This trend responds to increased diversity of programming that can be provided at these larger centers, while also being more convenient for families to recreate together, and increasing staff efficiency.
- There is a trend of combining dry side recreation with indoor aquatics for wellness and leisure activities. This again reduces initial cost and reduces continuing costs of staff and operations while providing more activity choices for visitors.
- Locating separate senior activity areas within a large Community Center is another trend. The senior component would generally have its own exterior entrance distinct from that of the recreation center. This would provide autonomy of the senior component while providing convenient access to the various opportunities in a recreation center including indoor walking track, warm water exercising and properly sized exercise areas.
- Many cities today are seeking a higher fee structure to help offset operational costs. We have seen this range from a 50-60% recapture rate all the way to a 100% recapture rate in the North Texas Region.

- University students today have elaborate recreation aquatic facilities at their disposal. This is the first generation coming out of the university that has expectations for cities to provide comparable facilities. Quality of life is an important component of their job search and residence decision and has influenced what new centers will provide.

Theater, Civic and Entertainment Venues

- There is an added emphasis today on the place of arts in our society. There are typically many common-interest citizens groups active in the arts (dance, theater, vocals, etc.) that do not typically have a sizable enough membership or audience within the community to justify dedicated or stand-alone facilities and therefore often use shared facilities. While there is a need and a benefit to providing facilities for the arts, survey data and the results of the public input process do not show a high-priority demand for a dedicated arts center. However, while the CDMP does not demonstrate the current need for a stand-alone arts facility, the feasibility of such a facility should be studied as part of an Arts Master Plan.
- To address the needs of citizen arts groups, partnering with other entities such as high schools, community colleges, or even other cities has proven successful.
- Providing a large meeting room in community centers with stage, lights, and sound systems to accommodate modest seating (200-300) are being provided in many centers today to partially address these needs.

6B.4 Prioritized Needs

Through reviewing the results of the Public Input Process and the Organization Needs and comparing these with current recreation and culture trends, a ranking of the demand-based needs can be created. The prioritization of this list was both quantitative and qualitative and combines the input received through various manners and methods throughout the planning process. This list does not contain all of the needs that were expressed through the Public Input Process, RFI responses, and the Planning Team's analysis – nor are they the only needs that will be addressed through this CDMP. Rather, they are prioritized as being the five most imperative needs in The Colony today.

**Table 6.3
Prioritized Demand-Based Needs**

	Rank
Improve the City’s Image	1
Construct a New Community Center that Includes Recreation, Cultural, and Civic Elements	2
Develop More Hike & Bike Trails	3
Update & Improve Neighborhood Parks	4
Ensure a Diverse Array of Programming and Resources for Varied Interests	5

Each of these high-priority needs relates to at least two of the Values and their respective Goals as described in Chapter 4 (most of these needs relate to all five of the Values). These top needs, along with the Values and Goals in Chapter 4 will form the basis of the Recommendations and Implementation Plan in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, respectively.

Chapter 6C

Resource Based Needs Assessment

In addition to determining needs based on standards and the demand of the citizens, a city's resources provide opportunities that can be viewed in the same way that other types of "needs" are. The fact that an opportunity is presented to the City often warrants actions be taken to protect and utilize this resource for the benefit of the community. For example, if a large, undevelopable piece of wooded land is available within the City, this becomes an opportunity for the protection of an open space and/or development of a nature preserve.

In The Colony, there are several resources that should be protected and/or adapted for recreational use. Each of these resources provide opportunities for the City in different ways. Some provide opportunities for open space protection and image enhancement while others provide recreational opportunities. The use of each resource should be approached individually, but all of the resources should be considered together as each impacts other resources.

6C.1 Lewisville Lake

Lewisville Lake is perhaps the greatest resource available to The Colony; indeed, it is the source of the City's identity as "The City by the Lake" as evidenced by the design of the current City logo. As discussed in detail in Chapter 3, the Lake provides a multitude of ecological and recreational opportunities and its shoreline constitutes approximately half of The Colony's city limits. In total, twenty six (26) miles of the Lake's shoreline fall within The Colony providing a great opportunity for further recreational development and access. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which manages the Lake, identifies a floodplain elevation limit which extends further inland than the Lake's typical shoreline. This floodplain elevation delineates the maximum level which the Lake's water level will reach in a flood event; development is restricted from this area, which provides a considerable amount of open space between the shoreline and existing and future development. This area provides habitat protection opportunities and the possibility for trails along the lake (such as the under-construction Shoreline Trail).



There are many opportunities provided by the Lake and the shoreline. The Lake itself provides both recreational and non-recreational opportunities. Water sports, including boating, sailing, skiing, and wakeboarding are very popular in North Texas and at Lewisville Lake in particular. The Colony currently has multiple boat ramps and one marina under construction (to open Summer 2009). Another opportunity are views toward the lake; developing and maintaining such views will build the City's Image, increase real estate value, and provides opportunities for quality of life-enhancing development such as entertainment, commercial, and restaurant areas with views toward the Lake. The shoreline of Lewisville Lake similarly provides many opportunities for the community, including water-related activities like shoreline fishing and canoeing and trails, which are a natural use of the shoreline due to its linear nature.

In 2008, the USACE confirmed an agreement with the City of The Colony to assign the responsibility of the management of almost 1,200 acres of Wildlife Management Area (WMA) along the shore of the Lake to the City. This new responsibility adds to the workload of the City Parks and Recreation Department, but provides the potential for additional accessible open space along the shoreline for the community. Indeed, such a resource is very unique for any city to have access to the quality and quantity of open space provided in the WMA. The land included in the WMA provides opportunities for many low-impact outdoor activities including wildlife observation, fishing, environmental education, adventure based recreation, and potentially eco-tourism (such as establishing and maintaining waterfowl habitat along the shoreline for birdwatchers).



6C.2 Indian Creek

In the southern part of the City near Austin Ranch, Indian Creek flows east to west into the Trinity River. The result of this creek flowing for millennia is the dramatic

topography changes that can be experienced when driving or cycling along Windhaven Parkway and Plano Parkway. Along with the topography change, there exists a multitude of native vegetation and wildlife in this area which create distinctive ecologic zones and a place unlike any other in The Colony.

The natural features and zones that make up this area extend into the City of Plano as well as Arbor Hills Nature Preserve; many of the participants in the Public Input Process expressed an interest in developing a similar park in The Colony.

Besides providing access to these beautiful areas, it is important to preserve and protect the Indian Creek basin and floodway in order to avoid excessive erosion and the destruction of this creek as well as the Trinity River, which Indian Creek feeds into.

6C.3 Wynnewood Nature Area

Wynnewood Nature Area, a 100 acre park on Wynnewood Peninsula in the northern part of the City, is one of the largest pieces of park land and open space in The Colony. While the vegetation in this area is considerably young (this area was farm land prior to the construction of the Lewisville Lake Dam and Reservoir) the area is generally covered with native trees and shrubs of various species. Mesquite trees are prevalent and while the vegetation in Wynnewood Park is not typical of a dedicated natural area, the park provides a unique open space that could also be partially developed as ball fields. That is to say, while the area is vegetated, the clearing of this vegetation would not be as ecologically damaging as the clearing of old-growth forest along a creek corridor.

Therefore, the Wynnewood Nature Area provides many opportunities for recreational use as open space, as potential ball fields, and for other, related uses, such as hiking trails, pavilions, and playgrounds. It should be noted that while there is little development near this area now (other than the Tribute Golf Course), the Tribute residential development, which is currently under construction, will place homes fairly near to this area.

6C.4 Utility Easements

Two of the most visible features in The Colony are the two utility easements (one of them electricity and one natural gas) that pass through the city in a roughly north-south manner. These easements, though arguably not the most attractive part of the City, provide opportunities for trail connections, trailheads, and “destination” parks (unique places along a trail that serve as “destinations” for people to walk to) along them. The 2006 Trails Master Plan already includes both of these easements as trail corridors, but additional opportunities for vegetation, site furnishings, and destination points exist.

6C.5 Bridges Cemetery

Bridges Cemetery – an important cultural destination within The Colony – can also be considered a resource or an opportunity for the community. This cemetery (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3) is one of the oldest in Denton County and the only cemetery in The Colony. It therefore inherently contains cultural and historical value for the community and provides opportunities for the education and celebration of The Colony’s

culture and the history that led to the development of the City as it is today. Efforts to provide visual or physical access to Bridges Cemetery can help add to the quality of life in the community but should be done in a careful, sensitive manner so as to avoid damage or degradation of the fragile nature of the cemetery.

6C.6 Utilizing Resources

Resources that provide opportunities for recreation and community development can be both natural (as is the case for Indian Creek and Wynnewood Nature Area) and man made (such as the utility easements). They can also blur the lines between the two; such is the case with the Lake, which is arguably man-made but also appears to be natural and provide habitat such as a natural lake would. As such, the use or development of each resource should be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the unique characteristics of each location and the opportunities that can be afforded without damaging environmentally sensitive features. However, it is important to approach the use and development of these various resources in a unified, coordinated manner so as to realize the best results from each.

6C.7 Conservation Development

One of the most effective ways to ensure the protection and effective management of natural resources like open space and creek corridors is through the method of Conservation Planning and Development. It is in essence a tool that ensures the protection of the character of the City, the protection of important ecological habitats, the protection of scenic views and landscapes and the economic sustainability by protecting the assets that add value and quality of life to the community. Conservation Planning and Development is a concept whereby developers are encouraged to implement “open space planning” and “conservation development” in which large tracts of land are protected by clustering development on smaller parcels of land, with the resultant open space a communal asset to be enjoyed by everyone. Access to the larger open space as an amenity consistently results in higher property values. Such an approach derives a result in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts. For further information on Conservation Development, reference the works of Randall G. Arendt including the books “Growing Greener” and “Conservation Design for Subdivisions.”

Chapter 6D

Beautification Needs Assessment

The Colony identifies itself as “The City by the Lake.” This phrase is the central branding idea or image for the City as an organization and for the community as a whole. While the idea exists, it needs to be expanded to meet the expectations of the community and to help improve the image of The Colony, which in turn can serve to attract new businesses and residents to the community.

The importance of expanding this idea in the community is apparent. Through the Public Input Process, the 2006 Survey, and previous surveys and public comments beautification and improving the Image of the City is identified as the greatest need in The Colony. As discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2, the City’s image is comprised of two components: 1) community cohesion or spirit and 2) the City’s physical character or appearance. Much of what comprises The Colony’s physical character or appearance is derived from the proximity of Lewisville Lake and other geographic features such as Indian Creek. However, some of the most visible and effectible factors in the quality of the City’s physical appearance are constructed places in the public realm such as streetscapes, parks and public buildings.

Improving the built environment through beautification is one of the most effective means by which to improve The Colony’s image and quality of life. Each piece of the built environment requires a unique approach to beautification – unique in that each piece requires a different design approach as well as a different regulatory approach – but, as with addressing the City’s resource-based needs, implementing beautification projects in a coordinated manner will yield the best results. As such, the implementation of components of each of the various items within this assessment will help to extend and knit together all parts of the community (albeit at various levels and stages).

6D.1 Streetscapes

Streetscapes – the streets, adjacent right-of-way, medians, and façades of structures that face the streets – are the most visible and most often seen part of any city, including The Colony. Adjusting and enhancing the appearance and character of these spaces is paramount to improving and shaping the City Image. Rather than merely improving the landscaping and site furnishings along roads (though this is unquestionably important), improving streetscapes requires looking holistically at the interface between the public realm (the streets) and the private realm (development).

6D.1.1 *Placemaking*

Streetscape planning and design is all about placemaking. The quality of the street experience and pedestrian focus tells much about the City’s values and creates positive expectations for development and lifestyles. The elements that enhance the aesthetics of a street environment are varied. Streets are in essence “corridors” that are enhanced by the creation of a recognizable rhythm, human scale elements at nodes of interchange,

focal points, balance between hardscape (paving) and softscape (plants) and the creative use of color and plant material to provide sensory delight and beauty. Well-chosen and well-placed art and sculptural pieces assist in creating places with a sense of wonder and excitement.

The manner in which people move along streets and the views that they experience leaves an impression that is either compelling and lasting or uninteresting and fleeting. The normal experience of our cities is primarily from within an automobile. As such, most of our cities are planned accordingly, and the arteries are planned for vehicle movement. What is lost is not only the human experience of moving from one place to another and the associated healthful benefits, but a lack of a human sense of place.

People need public spaces that enhance quality of life along with safe, public connections to physically access them. Other modes of transportation that provide more opportunity for social interaction include walking, bicycling, trolley, and even rail travel. The purpose is to identify and emphasize the unique elements along the way and find creative solutions to people's inherent need to "belong" and feel at home.

Well-executed streetscaping encourages shared experiences, by people in cars, by pedestrians, by cyclists, by people walking their dogs, and the like. The space utilized by cars on the road and pedestrians on sidewalks is defined by elements like trees, curbs, trellises, paving patterns, paving texture and building facades. The psychology of such spaces is of the utmost importance in providing a sense of safety and well being to the user. View corridors and sight lines, informal surveillance by shop keepers and pedestrians, way finding and informational signage are but a few of the many aspects of a streetscape that are considered when planning is done for the treatments and beautification of streets. Functions like bus stops, railway stations, and street side cafes are typical and natural gathering spaces that pose the opportunity for creative place making in a city environment.

People attract people – and well-conceived streetscape enhancements can lead to the revitalization of a city environment.

People attract people – and well-conceived streetscape enhancements can lead to the revitalization of a city environment. In fact, businesses flourish where people feel welcome and relaxed. As an example, bus stops combined with cafes, coffee houses, and newsstands meet the needs of commuters and provide a sense of community. Therefore, The Colony should consider placemaking as the basis of streetscaping and beautification because of the direct and indirect benefits that it has on community development, economic development, and quality of life.

6D.1.2 Town Center

The Community Development Master Plan supports the implementation of a Town Center at South Colony Boulevard and Paige Road as is recommended in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan describes the Town Center as a place which is "responsive to the changing climate of the city's retail environment and is

central and connected to several surrounding neighborhoods” with a mix of uses – including retail, entertainment, office, civic, and residential – housed in buildings that are “concentrated around core pedestrian areas” and are “oriented to the principal street frontages.” Pedestrian and bicycle access to the Town Center is vital and, as is discussed in the Comprehensive Plan, the City’s trails network should connect the Center with other neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The Comprehensive Plan mentions including civic uses in the Town Center but does not specify particular institutions and facilities to be located there. Civic and Governmental uses are central to an authentic downtown or town center as they introduce a sense of legitimacy and permanence to the Place while providing non-commercial reasons for people to visit the area. The Planning Team emphasizes the importance of including civic facilities in the Town Center because the inclusion of such use adds solidarity to the Place by making it the symbolic civic hub for the City. The Team further recommends locating civic facilities including a branch Post Office, offices for City Staff, and the City Hall in the new Town Center.

The benefits for beautification and community development of developing a Town Center are many. The immediate benefit is the replacement of tired, outdated shopping centers with a new commercial district surrounded by an already established consumer market. The civic purpose of the Town Center is great, ensuring a steady flow of visitors and a captive audience to enjoy amenities provided at the Town Center. Other benefits are that a well-designed Town Center will improve and interact with improved streetscapes and will help build a City-wide Image of high-quality design. Being civic in nature, the City has the opportunity to direct and influence the aesthetics of the Town Center to celebrate all that constitutes The Colony – its people, its location, its character, and its history. Finally, a Town Center will provide a commercial and civic “hub” or a focal point for the City – something that is currently lacking in The Colony.

6D.1.3 Main Street Corridor

The Texas Department of Transportation is currently in the planning stages of expanding Main Street (FM 423) to a six lane divided road within the next five years. This will increase traffic capacity and volume and will include the construction of sound walls and other mitigation techniques to reduce the negative impacts of the road on the surrounding community. As Main Street is one of the main commercial corridors in The Colony, it is imperative that the City meets regularly with TxDOT to coordinate the design to be both amenable to the traffic flow requirements set out by TxDOT and to incorporate aesthetic and functional design considerations that will benefit the community and surrounding commercial properties. A tool that helps to keep the human scale of a street in place is to consider a road like Main Street less as a thoroughfare and more like a welcoming destination in itself with a wealth of vibrant activity. The Comprehensive Plan outlines actions for maximizing the benefit to The Colony of the Main Street reconstruction project – the CDMP supports these actions as well as the depiction of commercial corridor nodes to be developed in coordination with the road reconstruction.

In the reconstruction of Main Street, it is important to ensure that placemaking is a foundation and component of its redevelopment and that the City has input on the design of the landscaping, sound walls, and other amenities (such as a sidewalks or trails) to ensure an aesthetically pleasing design is implemented. Furthermore, the coordinated redevelopment of commercial zones along Main Street at North Colony Boulevard and South Colony Boulevard should be coincident with the development of urban design standards. Such redevelopment of the corridor will further beautify the City and enhance the City's Image.

6D.1.4 Trees & Landscaping

One of the most effective manners in improving the beauty of a city is through the landscaping of streetscapes, public buildings, parks, and any other area under the City's influence. This is especially important along streets and in parks, which often receive less landscaping during their initial development.

Currently, many of the rights-of-way and medians in The Colony are devoid of trees and are simply landscaped with turf grasses. However, streets such as Morningstar Drive between Memorial Drive and Baker Drive enjoy quality landscaping that turn what would otherwise be merely a street into an enjoyable place to walk and a gateway to and from the surrounding neighborhoods.

The City should consider adopting a large and medium shade tree palette; a mixture of two or three tree species within each category (rather than utilizing a single species) along any given street is paramount. The reason for this is twofold: first, it offers protection against disease that has potential to destroy all of a particular species, so a mixture will mean that only one of every three trees, for example, must be replaced, rather than all of them. Secondly, it maximizes the year round effect of different blooming periods, so that careful species selection will yield a variety of appearance to the street trees, depending on the season. This, too, is something which refreshes, especially for drivers routinely traveling the same route. Such elements add a great deal of visual appeal, and enrich the experience for people using all modes of transportation.

6D.1.5 Gateways & Focal Points

Creating a sense of arrival when entering The Colony appeals to visitors and residents alike on the emotional and aesthetic levels. Providing a sense of arrival, through gateways and focal points throughout the City, will aid in 1) creating a positive identity for The Colony, 2) beautifying the City, and 3) providing landmarks that help people navigate the City. Developing gateways that are unique to The Colony can serve to celebrate the City's cultural and historic traditions.

Entry Monuments

Gateways are most effectively developed through the use of entry monuments – large stylized features often constructed out of stone, brick, and/or concrete. Entry monuments can be used throughout the City at different scales. Large monuments are desirable near major city entrances (such as along SH 121 and Main Street) while smaller monuments work effectively as neighborhood entrance gateways. Gateways can each be unique but

should follow similar design themes, so that the gateways form a cohesive, unified theme throughout the City.

Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage and City gateway locations are fundamental to a successful, pedestrian friendly and unique city. These elements not only provide a useful function, but also portray City character in an aesthetic manner, which reflects the City Image. Wayfinding signage can often double as an entry monument (and vice versa) or can take the shape of informational signs designed on the pedestrian-scale and automobile-scale. These signs guide people to various parts of the City, including parks, public buildings, and different neighborhoods.

Celebratory Intersections

Intersections, where traffic has slowed or stopped, are ideal places to add elements of identity and interest, such as architectural monuments and decorative paving, crosswalks and sidewalks. Recommendations for intersection urban design concepts include the following locations:

- Main Street at North Colony Boulevard
- Main Street at South Colony Boulevard
- Main Street at Memorial Drive
- Main Street at SH 121
- North Colony Boulevard at Paige Road
- South Colony Boulevard at Memorial Drive
- Memorial Drive at Morningstar Drive
- Plano Parkway/Paige Road at SH 121
- Plano Parkway at Windhaven Parkway

These locations were chosen based on streets that serve as major thoroughfares through the City, streets that connect The Colony with other cities, and the intersection's proximity and relationship with the City Limits.

6D.1.6 Streetscape Needs

While each component discussed in the sections above has its own unique needs, it is important to develop solutions for these needs in a comprehensive manner. Completing a Streetscape Master Plan that includes design standards, landscaping standards, and recommendations for adjacent development will aid in the implementation of streetscape improvements.

6D.2 Utilizing Art, Culture & History

Utilizing key components of art and The Colony's culture and history in beautifying the City will lend beauty, originality, and meaning to the City's beautification efforts.

6D.2.1 The Role of Public Art

Public art serves many purposes in the public realm. This ranges from simple beautification, to City branding, to aiding in wayfinding. Good examples of the way that

public art can impact City branding include the “Blueprints at Addison Circle” sculpture. This large, blue sculpture located in the center of the roundabout at Addison Circle has become an icon for the City of Addison and appears stylistically in many publications and on the City’s website. Similarly, such pieces of public art can aid in wayfinding and result in directions being given such as “turn left at the big sculpture” or “past the mural.”



Blueprints at Addison Circle – Designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh and Mel Chin. Photo by: Jay R. Simonson

The horse sculptures located at the intersection of Plano Road and Windhaven Parkway are a good example of public art in The Colony. These sculptures (privately built and maintained by Austin Ranch) serve to beautify the streetscape and are a clear wayfinding aid. While these have not become a branding icon for The Colony, they certainly have for Austin Ranch and they have helped develop an image for the “south of SH 121” / Austin Ranch area of The Colony.

6D.2.2 Celebrating History & Culture

As discussed in Chapter 3, The Colony has a unique history and ensuing culture to be celebrated and expanded upon. History and culture should both be addressed and celebrated through beautification efforts. Specifically, implementing themes that embody The Colony’s history and culture in public art, monuments, gateways, and wayfinding signage can help to portray the character and atmosphere of the community. It is also important to beautify and provide visual access to key areas that have historic and

cultural significance in the community, such as Bridges Cemetery and Office Creek (which was named after and flows near the former site of the Peter’s Colony Office).

6D.3 Creeks, Ponds & the Lake

As with all of North Texas, creeks are where the greatest level of biodiversity and – arguably – natural beauty exist. Creeks, along with ponds, have two primary purposes (also defined as “ecological services”) – that of providing habitat and drinking water to wildlife and providing drainage ways for rain and floodwater. It is important, therefore, to keep in mind these primary purposes when addressing the beautification of creeks and ponds.

6D.3.1 Creek Preservation

Preserving creeks in their natural state helps to reduce stream bank erosion and habitat degradation. Many creeks corridors have been cleared of undergrowth vegetation because some feel this is more aesthetically pleasing – such devegetation destroys habitat, increases water flow rates, and encourages erosion. The natural vegetation plays a large role in slowing the flow of water and anchoring the soil. Although this vegetation often catches litter during a flood, this is simply the undergrowth performing as it should and reducing the amount of litter that would otherwise end up in nearby ponds, rivers, and lakes. Natural vegetation also provides habitat to wildlife, which itself adds to the character and beauty of a creek environment.

6D.3.2 Proper Drainage Way Design

With increased development, drainage ways in addition to existing creeks must be designed and constructed to address increased runoff during rain events. Constructed drainage ways are quite often aesthetically unattractive and barren, but through proper design, they can be visually pleasing while performing better than their unattractive counterparts. Proper drainage way design includes many features, but the two key issues are the minimization of concrete and the use of proper vegetation.

Concrete lined drainage ways affect beautification in several ways. First, concrete as a measure to prevent erosion is typically regarded as aesthetically unattractive. It also invites graffiti and other vandalism. Concrete lined drainage ways also increase the flow rate of flood water causing increased erosion downstream and creating very dangerous conditions during and after heavy flooding.

Appropriate vegetation in drainage ways will improve their physical appearance while also improving their performance in erosion protection and water filtration. Many drainage ways built today are vegetated simply with turf grass. Under high-flow rain events, this grass does little to slow water flow or filter out pollutants. The most effective manner to vegetate a drainage way is by allowing the growth of tall, inundation-tolerant grasses along the center of the channel and woody shrubs and trees higher along the banks of the drainage way (for aesthetics and to anchor the soil). Such plantings will slow water flow and will filter out pollutants (which will limit pollutants from reaching Lewisville Lake, a source of The Colony’s drinking water).



Bioremediation

Beyond minimizing concrete and using proper vegetation, the next step in addressing drainage in an ecological, aesthetically pleasing, and efficient manner is the use of bioremediation techniques. These are techniques of constructing drainage features that mimic natural features. They help to slow water runoff, reduce erosion, and filter pollutants and include grassed swales, bioretention swales, and filter strips. Information on the design and performance of these bioremediation techniques can be found in the Stormwater Best Management Practice Design Guide: Volume 2 – Vegetative Biofilters manual produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

6D.3.3 Viewing Lewisville Lake

A beautification need for The Colony is to promote, celebrate, and access views toward Lewisville Lake. Establishing and developing such views through regulatory measures and development methods will increase the capability of the Lake in adding to The Colony’s unique character and a sense of beauty to the City. Means to achieve such views include the development of single-loaded roads that allow viewing the Lake while driving by – similar to “scenic roads.” Visual access to the Lake, when created in a sensitive manner will add greatly to the beauty of The Colony.



Chapter 7

Recommendations



7.1 A Vision for The Colony

As discussed in Chapter 1, having a vision for Community Development is paramount to the creation and implementation of a Master Plan for the future – a road map to guide future decisions and actions in a coordinated manner. In The Colony, this vision is a result of efforts by the Council, the CDC Board, City Staff, and the citizens involved with the Public Input process. Each of these groups has a different perspective but they all share common and aligned values for which they desire their City to grow. Along with these common values, there is a need by all groups to adopt and support a common vision for The Colony.

This vision for The Colony is based on the desire to be a city with a strong sense of community, a prevalent identity, a wealth of opportunities for all, and an embracing of Lewisville Lake, which gives the City its identity. This vision, along with the needs as identified by information gathered from citizens and discussed in Chapter 6, is what guides and informs the recommendations of this Master Plan. Each of the recommendations contained herein (as well as the prioritization of these recommendations) is measured and weighed against the intent and character of the vision,

so that each recommendation not only aligns with the vision, but supports and furthers the vision to the fullest extent.

7.1.1 Commitments for Community Development

Community Development requires **commitment**. It requires commitment from the Council, the CDC Board, and City Staff to make decisions in accordance with and strive toward the vision to improve The Colony for current and future residents.

With the multitude of choices available today, peoples' priorities when relocating to a new city is determined by the type of lifestyle they desire rather than a specific job. The question then becomes: How do we capture and attract this demographic to The Colony? It is through an understanding that quality lifestyles are not only about functional infrastructure, safety and education, but are often defined by the intangibles of mental well-being – including happiness, beauty, and a sense of purpose. Officials often shy away from such concepts, but when approached with an open mind and willingness to extend the boundaries of the conventional, true greatness can be achieved in communities through enlightened and committed leadership.

As a matter of City policy, The Colony is challenged and called upon to make a commitment to Sustainability, Quality, and Beauty for the City. Each of these are described and motivated as follows:

Commitment to Sustainability

Due to worldwide population growth (the world population officially transitioned from majority rural to majority urban in 2007) and the affects of pollution and over-development in a finite environment, the awareness of the importance of environmental stewardship is not a fad anymore, but is rather regarded as a necessity by most people today. Therefore, commit to developing and operating the City in a sustainable manner by doing the following:

- In areas of new development and redevelopment, strive to abide by and encourage the principles of new urbanism/traditional neighborhood development (TND), walkability, and denser developments to reduce emissions from auto travel and to encourage the use of alternative means of transportation
- In environmentally sensitive areas, encourage the practice of conservation development which identifies areas of unique environmental value and allows denser development in one part of a site while reducing development altogether in another, thereby retaining the same net developed units per acre while lessening the environmental impact.

- When developing new indoor facilities, utilize the LEED¹ rating system as a measure to rate the sustainability of structures. Many cities and other governmental agencies in America are committed to achieving LEED certification for public buildings and it is therefore becoming the standard. Developing new facilities in accordance with LEED will serve as a hallmark for the City’s commitment to sustainability.
- Similarly, apply measures of sustainability, such as those found in LEED, to the development of outdoor recreation and park facilities, as well as streetscape medians. Aim to achieve low energy and water consumption and use recycled, recyclable, or low-chemical materials. Plan for and install native vegetation, which requires less fertilizer and water, to give parks a native, natural appearance. Finally, develop maintenance programs that are sustainable and minimize the use of water and fertilizer and utilize low-noise and low-emission maintenance equipment.
- Through supporting sustainability and the “green” movement people assume a sense of purpose through actions described as “taking care of the earth”. Such commitment by a community is very powerful when encouraged by officials and supported by city leaders.

Commitment to Quality

Today’s young professionals and their families are drawn to cities by state-of-the-art facilities, community buildings, parks, and arts (both performing and visual) facilities. These people expect to find amenities and facilities in cities similar to what they experienced during their education at universities and colleges. Attracting and retaining residents, as well as businesses to employ and serve such residents, will depend on providing high-quality, state-of-the-art facilities in The Colony. For too long, it appears that residents of The Colony have settled for the mediocre or the “good enough” – today, The Colony needs to commit to quality facilities and programs by doing the following:

- Improve Quality of Life in The Colony by making targeted improvements to recreational and cultural amenities within the City and by providing unique experiences to residents.
- Provide quality facilities through renovating or constructing new recreation and community facilities designed to serve the entire population.
- Provide up-to-date, quality programming that meets the needs and expectations of changing trends among recreation users.
- Target facilities and programs to those in between young children and retired seniors. Provide services for teenagers, young adults, and adults without children.

¹ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a national rating system for the design, construction, and operation of buildings and sites. The system evaluates performance in five areas: sustainable site development, water conservation, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

- There is a change occurring in the services required by senior citizens. Due to the Baby Boomers nearing retirement age, the size of this population group is growing and their needs are changing. They are much more active than the previous generation of seniors and have higher expectations for facilities and programs.

Commitment to Beauty

It is an age old quest to define beauty – it is often found in the smallest and simplest of ideas and concepts, especially found in nature: a sunset, a view over quiet water, the appearance and change of fall color, spring flowers. However it is defined, all people deserve to have access to beauty – to live, work, and play in beautiful surroundings and environments. Therefore, commit to beauty – to providing attractive places for people to linger, to play, or to pass by. The impacts on mental well-being of attractive environments are great; therefore, commit to achieve beauty in The Colony by doing the following:

- Beautify public spaces throughout the City. Start with streetscapes, the most visible of public spaces, and then move to parks and public buildings. Landscape these areas, provide variation, install attractive furnishings, and generally improve their appearances. Do this in a coordinated manner across the City so that there is uniformity, but allow for uniqueness to shine through.
- Utilize architecture as a regional expression of culture and nature – develop new facilities and renovate existing ones utilizing good architecture. Architecture is often beautiful *because* it reflects the region and is sensitive to its subtleties. Do not build a building that could be in California or Delaware – build buildings that could only be in The Colony. Good architecture does not impose itself but is rather organically part of an overall pallet of form, color, and texture.
- Art is an intentional expression of beauty to be experienced visually, audibly, and emotionally. Support the arts in The Colony by funding arts programs and by providing quality space for the practice, production, and appreciation of the visual and performing arts. One art program to fund is the procurement and display of outdoor art in public spaces like parks and streetscapes.
- Develop beautiful, unique parks in The Colony. When developing new parks or renovating existing ones, commit to creating a place that is truly beautiful and unique. Do this by emphasizing landscaping, installing attractive, quality furnishings, and implementing art in the park.
- Develop and implement policy for the arts, beautification, and landscaping that specifically forwards these and other actions to achieve beauty for The Colony.

7.1.2 Achieving Uniqueness

Uniqueness is paramount to having a strong City image and community identity. The recommendations, actions, and policies contained in this CDMP – as well as actions taken externally to this Master Plan – should serve to not only support the vision, but also to set The Colony apart from the banal and apart from other surrounding communities.

Achieving this uniqueness will depend on specific ideas by which to base recommendations and future actions so that the steps taken by The Colony are distinctive to this City, this community, and this land. Forging these ideas, adopting them, and implementing their products will ensure the growth and development of The Colony as a community, a place to play, and a unique City in North Texas. The ideas most crucial to The Colony today are:

- Creating a strong, unified, and coordinated City Identity that includes physical landmarks, quality graphic standards for signage, and a quality higher than average for everything the City does. In addition, the enhancement and beautification of streetscapes and parks is vital to the formation of a strong, positive City Identity.
- The protection, enhancement, and recognition of Lewisville Lake, its Shoreline, and views toward it. Protect these areas against de-vegetation, erosion, and development that prevents access and ensure viewsheds remain open so that the natural beauty of the area can be seen and can reinforce the City Identity.
- Becoming a City connected by parks, trails, and greenbelts by which people can move throughout the community on foot or by bicycle. This network should also provide linkages for wildlife and ribbons of green that enhance physical and mental health for the City's residents.
- Provide state-of-the-art services and facilities to the City's diverse population that includes the amenities and programs required by the community.

The implementation of such ideas requires visionary leadership, whereby tools are used to identify, define, preserve and respect important natural and cultural features within the community and find ways to incorporate those creatively in the City. The direct results of the comprehensive implementation of improvements to the City that adhere to the vision and that stem from these four ideas will be higher property values, a more beautiful City, enhanced City Image, and a greater quality of life for citizens.

7.1.3 Community Development Master Plan Recommendations

This Chapter summarizes the findings of the Needs Assessment and recommends a series of Community Development actions to improve and expand The Colony's park system, sense of community, recreational opportunities, and quality of life. These recommendations stem from the vision outlined earlier and the uniqueness ideas discussed above – they address matters of City Policy, City Image and Beautification, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation, and Arts, History, and Culture. The recommendations should be implemented or initiated over the general life of this master

plan, which covers the next five to ten years (recommended items in this chapter are prioritized in Chapter 8, The Implementation Plan).

The recommendations fall into six (6) general categories:

- City Policy
Adopt City policies that will ensure the implementation of the vision for The Colony based on priorities established by citizen input and recommendations in this CD Master Plan. These are generally broad recommendations that relate to all aspects of the Community Development Master Plan.
- City Image & Beautification
 - Landmarks – Develop and establish standards for gateways and entry features.
 - Streetscapes & Public Spaces – Make tactical improvements to the quality and appearance of right-of-way and public space within the City.
 - Programs – Establish specific programs that address specialized aspects of City Image.
- Parks, Open Space & Recreation
 - Land Acquisition – Acquire land for future parks, park expansion, new recreation facilities, and open space including habitat protection where possible.
 - Park Land Dedication – examine the City’s park land dedication ordinance and refine it to meet the current needs of The Colony.
 - Natural Area Protection – Identify areas for protection and implement actions to acquire, protect, and provide access to these areas,
 - Trail Development – Develop trails according to the specific need and in order of priority.
 - Park Development – Develop parks according to the specific need and in order of priority.
 - Park Improvements – Implement key improvements to existing parks as described per individual park in Chapter 3.
- Recreation Facilities – Provide needed indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.
- Operations & Maintenance – Establish procedures and funding for effective operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.
- Arts, History & Culture
 - Programming & Activities – Identify gaps in programming and suggest future studies.
 - Physical Recommendations – Identify space both indoors and outdoors and suggest improvements to enhance usability.
 - Coordination – Develop Arts, History & Culture amenities in coordination with other public projects.

7.2 City Policy and Vision

Realizing the vision for Community Development in the Colony will require holistic action taken by the Council, the CDC Board, City Staff, and the citizens. Instigating such action will best be realized through a focused and dedicated shift of ideas and practice within the City as an organization. Therefore, certain broad-brushed recommendations for policy actions directed at achieving the vision and meeting the Uniqueness ideas (expressed earlier in Section 7.1.1) are needed.

The vision, established through comprehensive public participation, relates to the physical appearance, city image, parks, open space, recreation, arts, and cultural enrichment of The Colony. This vision of The Colony as a place with a strong, unique identity that embraces the Lake and provides state of the art services to its citizens demands changes in City policy. The following describes essential policies required for The Colony in order to make this Vision a reality.

Policy Issues include:

- Protection of unique cultural and natural landscapes
- Park land access and dedication
- Access to the lake
- Trail Development
- Image Enhancement
- City-wide Studies

7.2.1 Access to the Lake

Paramount to the success of the CDMP and the improvement of The Colony is physical and visual access to Lewisville Lake. Work toward achieving this goal by:

- Providing trails along entire shoreline
- Providing trail heads and other access points to the lake for every one mile of shoreline
- Holding more festivals/events at lakeside parks to draw people to the lake
- Developing more parks to have lake access (such as a trails system/access at Wynnewood Peninsula)
- As described and recommended in the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, efforts should be made to preserve the views of the lake from Main Street/FM 423. By providing appropriate guidelines for development along the corridor, the "City by the Lake" image can be strengthened.

7.2.2 Image Enhancement

Having a beautiful and reputable community is one of the more important and needed things for the citizens of The Colony. Provide a beautiful community for your residents by:

- Implementing Streetscape & Beautification improvements in a coordinated manner
- Providing quality, attractive facilities to residents
- Promoting the arts and enhancing cultural activities and programs within the community.

7.2.3 Citywide Studies

The Colony uses a number of policy documents that all future development should coordinate and comply with. These include the Comprehensive Plan, the Thoroughfare Plan, and the Trails Master Plan. It is important that the ideas and recommendations of these reports all be supported by overarching policies without causing conflict between various goals and objectives. Additional Citywide studies should be performed to coordinate various improvements with each other and with other Citywide plans and policy documents. These include:

- Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan
- Arts Master Plan
- Recreational Programming Study

7.2.4 Expand Programming

It was not within the scope of the CDMP to perform a recreation programming study, however the public input process and information gained through the review of previous studies reveals the need for expanded recreation programming within The Colony. It is therefore recommended that the City performs a Recreation Programming Study that specifically assesses the current state of programming offerings within the City (considering also leagues that operate within The Colony but are not specifically operated by the City) and makes recommendations for additional programming or adjustments to existing programming. This study should specifically assess the needs of various age groups in The Colony (including children over 12 years old, adults without children, and non-retired seniors) for programming that includes physical activity (such as aerobics, spin classes, or dance) and non-physical activity (such as art classes and book clubs). Most importantly, through the public input process it was determined that most of the citizens want programming that not only entertains, but also educates.

7.3 City Image & Beautification Recommendations

While City Image applies to both the visible characteristics of the City and the non-visible, abstract characteristics (such as the City’s reputation or what comes to mind when someone mentions The Colony), the root factor in determining the City Image is the appearance of the City. Therefore, beautifying The Colony is key in improving the City Image and eventually resident’s opinion of the quality of the City.

7.3.1 Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan

Develop a Beautification and Streetscape master plan for the entire City that includes the location and design of gateway features at major City entrances (such as FM 423, SH 121, Windhaven, Plano Pkwy), the coordination of signage, developing monument signs for every park in the City, and landscaping medians with trees, shrubs, seasonal color, and grasses. The City has an existing Beautification Plan which should be updated as a component of a combined Beautification and Streetscape Master Plan. Throughout the City, strive to establish a unique Brand for The Colony that establishes a presence in peoples’ minds.

7.3.2 Standards

To ensure that improvements are made in uniform quality throughout the City, develop standards for street and site furnishings in coordination with the Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan. These standards will apply to public spaces across the City, including streetscapes, parks, and public buildings. Utilize the standards to “build the brand” for The Colony, but allow enough flexibility that unique, high-quality exceptions can be made in special places when such an exception is warranted.

7.3.3 Specific Improvements

Visual improvements to public spaces within The Colony will serve to improve the City’s standing within the Metroplex and with its own residents. Two specific programs are recommended for The Colony:

Wildflower Program

Develop and implement a wildflower program along roads and streets which will allow seasonal color of natural quality to emerge during the spring and summer months. This is a low-cost, low-maintenance alternative to more intensive landscaping programs and serves as a good interim between what exists today and potential future landscaping. Reference the Texas Department of Transportation’s “Texas in Bloom” program and the City of Richardson’s wildflower program.

Public Art

The display of art in the public realm will help to beautify The Colony. Acquire and display public art – specifically sculpture – in public spaces such as parks, along roads, and outside and inside public buildings. In this plan we propose that 1.5% of the funding of all publically funded projects should be dedicated to the construction and installation

of art in the project. The artist and type of art to be installed should be reviewed by an Art Selection Committee (discussed in Section 7.7).

7.4 Parks, Open Space & Recreation Recommendations

7.4.1 Park Land Acquisition

With opportunities decreasing and costs increasing, there is a finite time to acquire adequate acreage (or reallocate acreage from existing parkland) that will meet the requirements for parks in the next 10 to 20 years and at build-out conditions. **Land acquisition should follow the needed acreage for build-out as outlined in Table 6.1 in Chapter 6.**

Acquisition/reallocation of land should be focused on the provision of neighborhood parks, community parks, linear parks, and the protection of habitat and open space. Land acquisition may include direct purchasing, park land dedication, the establishment of recreation and/or park land easements, purchasing of development rights (which means the purchasing of the right to develop from a property owner, with the sole intent of never developing the land but to place it in a conservation easement forever), and the involvement of Conservation Trusts (www.texaslandtrusts.org).

Desirable locations for park land area to be acquired/reallocated are shown on the Proposed Parks Maps, as described below:

The following describes the recommended acquisition/reallocation of park land per City Area:

Area I – Wynnewood Peninsula

Proposed parks situated in this area include three Neighborhood Parks, and two Community Parks.

Area II – City Core

Proposed parks situated in this area include two Neighborhood Parks and one Community Park.

Area III – South of SH 121

Proposed parks situated in this area include two Neighborhood Parks and one Community Park.

Citywide Land Acquisition

A summary of park land to be acquired, by City Area, is shown below:

Priority 1 Park Land Acquisition:

Neighborhood Parks* – 1 Citywide:

1. City Core: one park site

Community Parks – 1 Citywide:**

2. South of 121: one park site

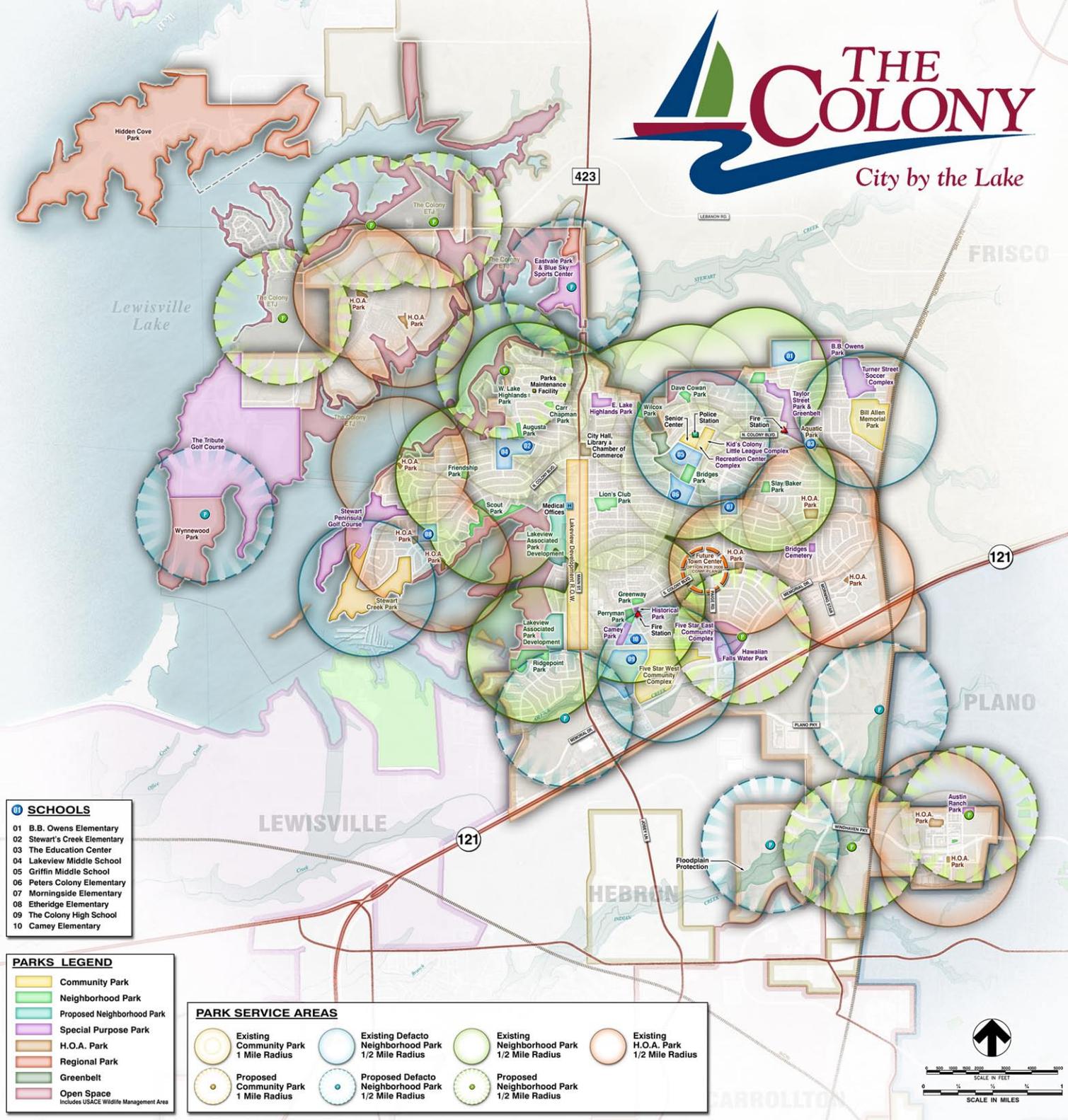
Other Park Park Land:

3. Indian Creek Nature Preserve
4. Fourplex Softball (acquire or reallocate land for this purpose)
5. Dog Park (acquire or reallocate land for this purpose)

*Five to ten acres, typically. See page 5 – 9 for a full description of requirements for neighborhood park development.

**Twenty to over fifty acres, typically. See page 5 – 12 for a full description of requirements for community park development.

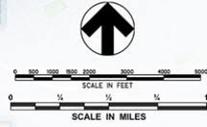
*The **Existing & Proposed Neighborhood & DeFacto Neighborhood Parks** and **Existing & Proposed Community Parks Maps** on the next pages illustrates the distribution of existing and proposed Parks.*

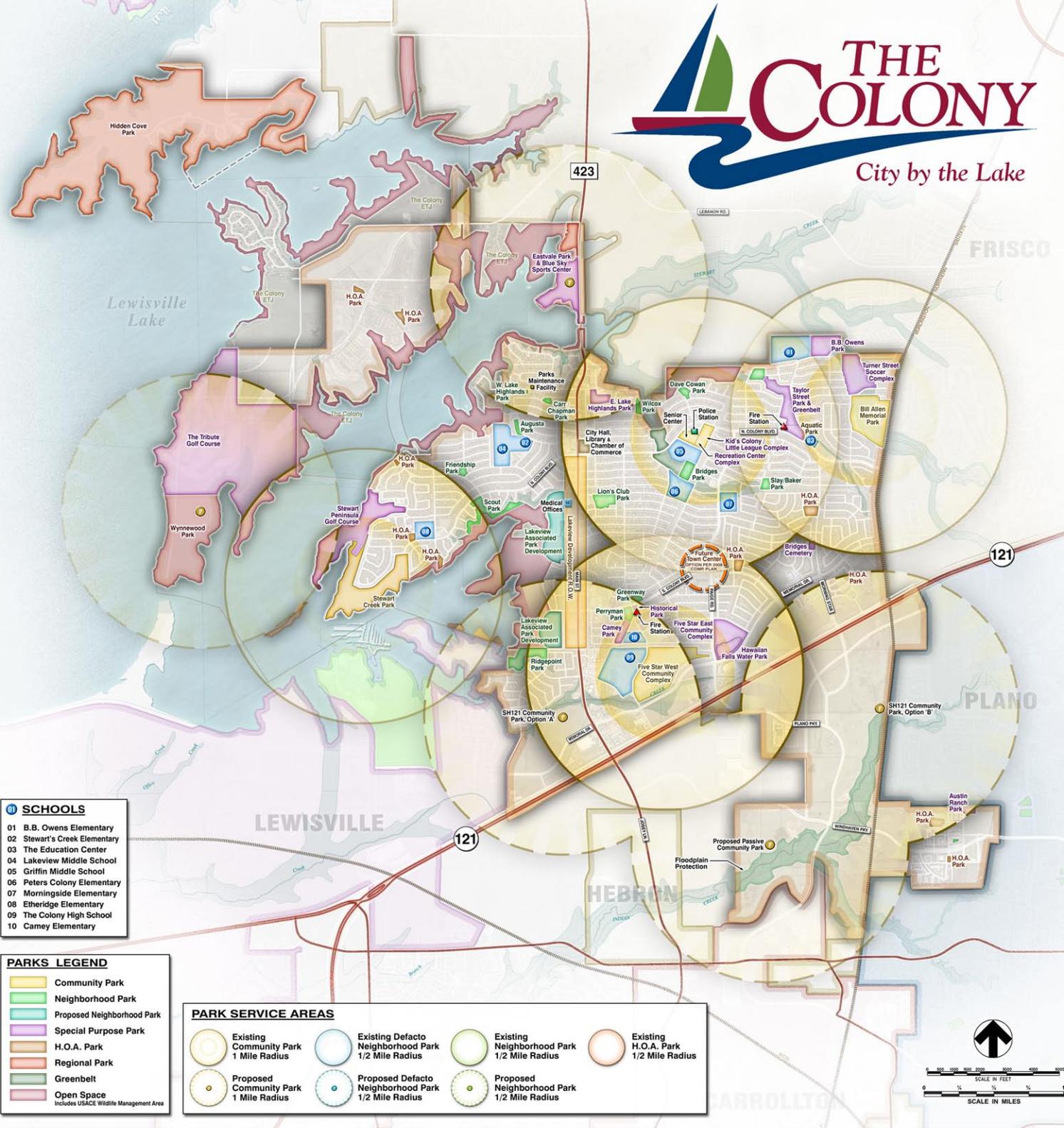


- SCHOOLS**
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 - 02 Stewart's Creek Elementary
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 - 10 Camey Elementary

- PARKS LEGEND**
- Community Park
 - Neighborhood Park
 - Proposed Neighborhood Park
 - Special Purpose Park
 - H.O.A. Park
 - Regional Park
 - Greenbelt
 - Open Space
 - Includes USACE Wildlife Management Area

- PARK SERVICE AREAS**
- Existing Community Park 1 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Community Park 1 Mile Radius
 - Existing Defacto Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Defacto Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Existing Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Proposed Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius
 - Existing H.O.A. Park 1/2 Mile Radius





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 - Proposed Neighborhood Park 1/2 Mile Radius



November 13, 2009

EXISTING & PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

CITY OF THE COLONY, TEXAS

7.4.2 Park Land Dedication

The City has a large amount of open space, especially in areas along the lake front. Even so, the park land is inadequate in certain areas of the City.

It is recommended that the Park Land Dedication Ordinance be revised to include the following considerations:

Basic principles

- Encourage all land and site features as identified in the recommended Resource Map to be set aside and ensure their protection and maintenance by the Home Owners Associations or through the involvement of a variety of Conservation Trusts in Texas that have as their aim the conservation of open space (see www.texaslandtrusts.org).
- Provide unimpeded public access to these identified and protected site features through a combination of trails, single loaded roads, and dedicated easements.
- Open space, parks and recreational areas required by the park dedication ordinance should NOT be restricted to the private use and enjoyment of the citizens of the particular development or subdivision.
- Utility easements should NOT be accepted as land dedicated for parks but should be made available for park and trail use where needed.
- In addition to the requirement that each park must have ready access to a public street, it is required that single loaded roads be established between a subdivision or part thereof and land set aside for park land and/or open space protected areas.
- Review and update Park Dedication and Park Improvement Fee in terms of Dwelling Units and Non-Residential Development to be in line with the standard used in the industry. A few examples follow:

Dwelling Unit Park Improvement Fee Comparison:

- Colleyville:	\$1,802 / DU
- Flower Mound:	\$789 / DU
- City of Lancaster:	\$1,400 / DU
- Grapevine:	\$1,135 average per lot
- Southlake:	\$1,200 per gross acre
- Coppell	\$1,285 / DU

Non-residential Park Improvement Fee Comparison:

- Southlake:	N/A
- Flower Mound:	\$1,000 / acre
- Grapevine:	N/A
- North Richland Hills:	\$1,000 / acre
- Colleyville:	\$800 / acre
- Coppell:	N/A

Park Dedication Comparison:

- Southlake:	1 acre / 40 DU
- Flower Mound:	1 acre / 25 DU
- City of Lancaster:	1 acre / 50 DU
- Grapevine:	1 acre / 50 DU
- Colleyville:	1 acre / 25 DU
- Coppell:	1 acre / 100 DU

The Colony currently determines Park Dedication Fees in Lieu of Land based upon the average per-acre value of the land within a development, rather than utilizing a set fee. The Park Dedication requirement is currently five (5) acres per 1,000 persons projected population (at the City's average persons per household figure of 3.1, this equates to 1 acre / 64.5 DU). While The Colony has an arguably progressive Park Dedication Fees in Lieu of Land rate, the Park Dedication acreage requirement is quite low. In addition The Colony accepts floodplain land at a ratio value of 1:3 compared to out-of-floodplain land, whereas many cities do not accept floodplain land as part of park dedication.

1) Revision:**a) Park Dedication**

1 acre / 50 DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently 1 acre / 64.5 DU)

b) Fee in Lieu of Land

\$500 / DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently: fee is based on the value of the property that is developed).

c) Floodplain land

Revise the allowance of 1:3 ratio to 1:15, or ideally, no acceptance of any floodplain land as part of park land dedication

2) **New:**

a) **Dwelling Unit Park Improvement Fee**

\$1,500 / DU

b) **Non-residential Park Improvement Fee (new):**

\$1,000 / acre

c) **Floodplain land**

Have all flood plain land protected with no reclamation allowed

7.4.3 Cultural and Natural Landscape Protection

The purpose of the protection of open space is to create a community-wide network of open space and natural preserves to allow for an interconnected network of community green spaces.

It is recommended that the City commits to the following:

- Preserve the community-wide network of protected open space as "linked landscapes";
- Create the City's resource inventory of cultural and natural landscapes (Resource Map).

Update the City's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to make provision for the implementation of the protection of the updated network of protected open space.

7.4.4 Trail Development

The Colony recently completed a Trails Master Plan that remains relevant to the needs of the City. It is generally recommended that the City continues implementing the existing Trails Master Plan while addressing new recommendations which the following section describes generally and specifically.

Prioritize Funding

Trails are of the highest priority for the Citizens of The Colony. Prioritize trails for funding so that there is always trail development occurring until the Trails Master Plan has been completely implemented. Utilize dedication fees for trail construction and dedicate a certain percentage of CDC funding for trail development each year.

Coordinate with Park Development

Implement trails as a part of all park development projects including park renovation. If the Trails Master Plan includes a trail passing through or adjacent to a park being developed or redeveloped, include the construction of this segment of the trail in the overall development project. Otherwise, strive to implement loop trails / walking trails in each new park project.

Lake Access

Utilize trails and trail access points to improve access to Lewisville Lake. The Shoreline Trail serves this purpose but continued access improvements through trails will ensure the prominence of the Lake in The Colony’s parks system and City Image.

Unique Experiences

Provide unique experiences along trails that include interpretive signage, interesting natural features, and scenic viewpoints. Incorporate art and furnishings (such as benches and trash receptacles) into trail corridors and trail heads. Developed theme trails such as an “art trail” that incorporates multiple pieces of sculpture along the trail or an “adventure trail” or “discovery trail” geared toward young children.

Additional Trails

In addition to the trails included in the existing Trails Master Plan, additional trail connections are recommended as part of the Community Development Master Plan. See the map on the following page for these additional trail connections.

Connections

Provide connections to other cities with the trails system. This is provided for in the existing Trails Master Plan, but being proactive in this venture is important. Coordinate with surrounding cities – particularly those currently undergoing trails master planning exercises (The City of Lewisville in particular).

*The **Existing & Proposed Parks, Trails & Beautification Map** on the next page illustrates the distribution of existing and proposed Parks.*

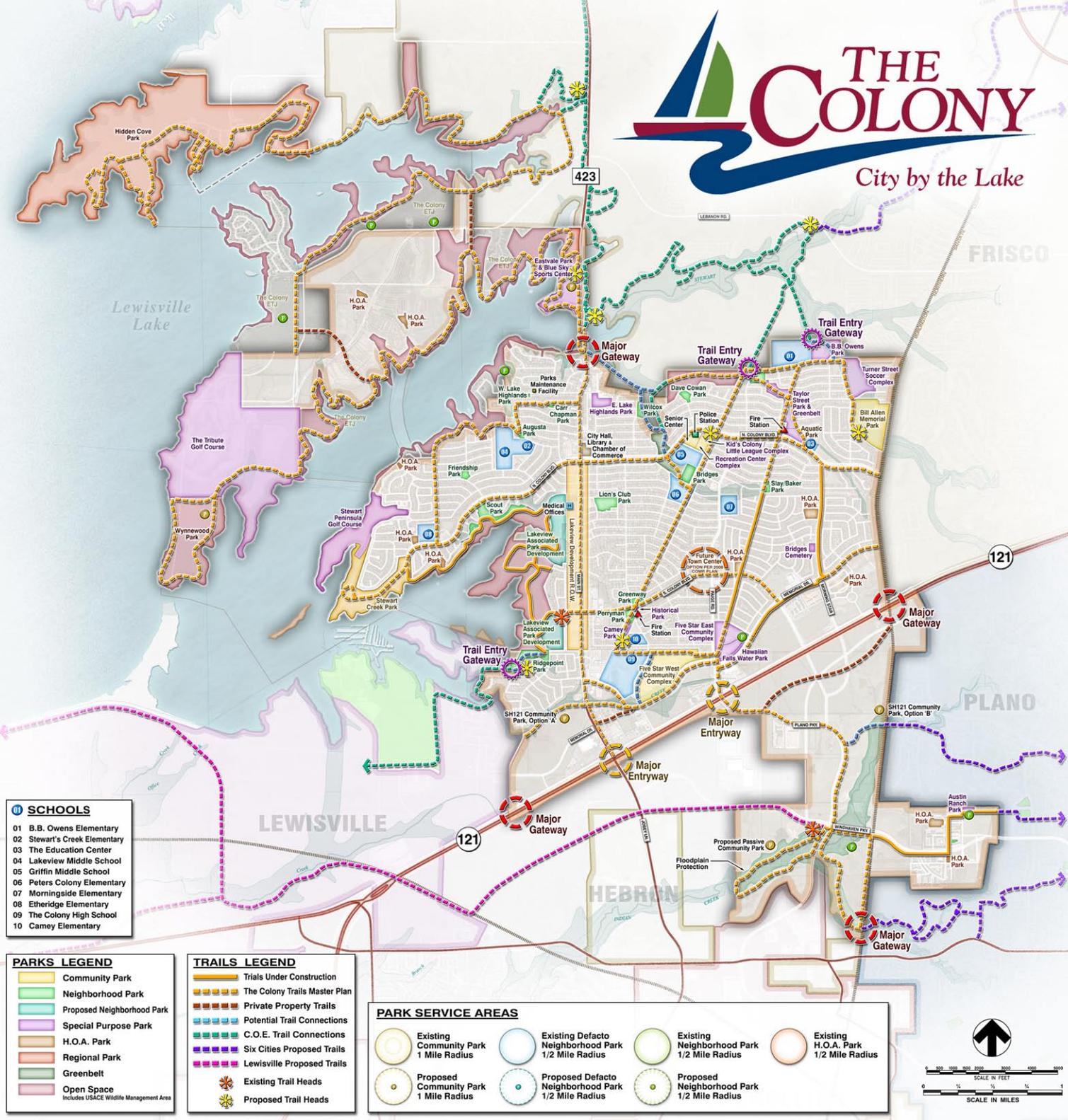
7.4.5 Park Development

The following section describes general, as well as specific, recommendations for park development in The Colony.

General Recommendations for Park Development

Key design points that should guide the design of every existing or new park in the City are recommended as follows:

- Each park should truly celebrate the history and culture of The Colony by incorporating historical plaques and features that allude to the neighborhoods around the park or the circumstances that caused the park to be created.
- Every park should include features for a wide variety of park users and levels of activity. Parks should be multi-faceted, without being over-programmed and over-filled with elements. Natural and un-programmed areas play a huge role in providing “breathing space” in a park and should be encouraged.
- Parks should incorporate art and should be an example of the sophistication of The Colony of today and tomorrow.



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Includes USACE Wildlife Management Area

- TRAILS LEGEND**
- Trials Under Construction
 - The Colony Trails Master Plan
 - Private Property Trails
 - Potential Trail Connections
 - C.O.E. Trail Connections
 - Six Cities Proposed Trails
 - Lewisville Proposed Trails
 - Existing Trail Heads
 - Proposed Trail Heads

- PARK SERVICE AREAS**
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- A design concept for each neighborhood park, incorporating children’s play areas, offering solar refuge with shade trees/ structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for open play, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Include all the basic facilities that make up a Community Park with specific reference to the programmed recreation facilities as identified in the needs assessment.
- The size of one individual Special Purpose Park may vary depending on the specific need and function.
- Linear Parks are ideal for hike and bike trails – as these parks may be associated with creeks, rail, or utility corridors, they provide connectivity to many destination points.
- Within nature areas and open spaces, provide low key facilities with generally passive uses.
- At Bridges Cemetery, work with owners to provide park facilities such as trails to connect with this valuable cultural resource.
- Encourage the golf course owners/operators to enroll in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP), which aims to establish environmental stewardship at golf courses.
- A single loaded road adjacent to all parks is advised in order to protect open space for purposes of informal surveillance and to prevent crime in areas that may pose danger for park and open space users.
- A transparent, wrought iron metal fence (or similar) between all residential lots and parks and/or open space should be required where a single loaded road is not possible.
- Shade should be incorporated into many features of every park. Playgrounds should be covered where feasible, and several covered picnic tables should be included in every park, no matter how small the park.
- All pavilion structures should consist of a multi-tiered roof system to prevent heated air from being trapped under the roof.
- Implement storm water bio-swales to allow for temporary retention of storm water in order to allow for infiltration and bio-filtration of run-off water before the excess water leaves the site.
- Community input should be welcomed and included in the design of every park in the City.
- Where required, provide park lights on photocells as an energy saving measure.

Parks are about green open spaces and trees. It is suggested that the City consider the following in terms of a planting strategy:

- Place preference on the application of drought tolerant landscaping and native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.
- Parks should continue to be developed and upgraded in order to reduce maintenance. Automatic irrigation systems attuned to plants with low water requirements should be a key component of all parks. Such systems are typically drip-irrigation systems, which the City has recently begun implementing in certain instances. As a water saving tool, the ideal is that no irrigation be provided at all; however, even native

plants require temporary irrigation for a period of at least two years to ensure effective establishment. When opted for, hand watering with gator bags should be done consistently and in ample quantities.

Implement Needed Recreation Facilities & Amenities

Using Table 6.8 in Chapter 6, identify needed recreation facilities and amenities and implement these when possible in new park development and in park redevelopment.

Use of Native Plants

One of the best ways for any community to express its regional uniqueness is to use plants native to the area. It is, after all, the natural surroundings, including native plants, that determine the unique and special quality of a place. Recognized by many this has led to the increased use of shade trees that are native to a specific area.

Curiously, few know and apply the use of small native trees – often because of a lack of knowledge and often because it is not readily available in the commercial nurseries.

It is recommended that The Colony makes a commitment to encourage the use of Texas small trees, including - but not limited to - Eve's necklace (*Sophora affinis*), Indigobush (*Amorpha fruticosa*), Mexican Buck Eye (*Ungnadia speciosa*), Mexican Plum trees (*Prunus mexicana*), Possumhaw trees (*Ilex decidua*), Texas Red Bud (*Cercis Canadensis var. Texensis*), and Rusty Black Haw Viburnum trees (*Viburnum rufidulum*).

For the same reason it is recommended that The Colony not overuse Crape Myrtles in its public spaces. Many communities plant the Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) ornamental tree for the very fact that it is drought tolerant. However, it is necessary to recognize that the Crape Myrtle is an exotic plant that is native to Southeast Asia.

The very fact of this being a practical, drought tolerant small tree with many blossoms and colorful bark has caused this tree to be overused extensively as the ornamental tree of choice from the western states of Florida and the Carolinas, across the country to California, making the planted landscapes of this immense area uniform and somewhat boring. In fact, it may be argued that this is one of many contributing factors that have affected the uniqueness of communities including our native wildlife that will less likely nest and find food in a Crape Myrtle.

For purposes of retaining and maintaining its unique North Central Texas character, it is recommended that the City continues to make a concerted effort to promote the use of native plants including trees, shrubs and grasses for both public and private use.

LEED for City Facility Development

It is recommended that the City consider the achievement of LEED certification for all future City facilities. Aspects that lend positive, measurable results include: on-site storm water management and permeable paving to prevent increased run-off; native plantings to reduce erosion, water consumption, and irrigation dependency; organic maintenance

programs to reduce chemicals and pesticides that infiltrate ground water and city utility and treatment systems; photocell systems for lighting to reduce energy costs; selection of sustainable materials (recycled and rapidly renewable resources) to use resources to maximum effect. Such results not only produce benefits for the environment, but for the owner and users as well.

7.4.6 Specific Recommendations for Park Development

When developing and redeveloping parks of various types, there are specific planning and design approaches relevant to each park type. These approaches should be followed in order to ensure great parks of uniform quality throughout the City.

Neighborhood Parks

General planning and design approach for neighborhood parks:

- Prepare a design concept for each undeveloped neighborhood park that incorporates children’s play areas offering solar refuge with shade trees/structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for open play, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities, and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Include the participation of neighborhood citizens in the design process.
- Provide good pedestrian access to all parks including signage and a wide, welcoming gateway.
- Develop parks adjacent to existing and future schools with easy access from the school grounds. Not only will this add to the quality of life for the community, but also funding is more likely available through collaborative action.
- Place preference on the application of native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.

The foundation of a healthy parks system consists primarily of neighborhood parks. A framework of small to moderate-sized neighborhood parks creates the backbone of a great parks system that offers unique experiences for users of all ages and abilities. In The Colony, there is a need to develop seven additional neighborhood parks (as discussed in Section 7.4.1 and per Table 6.1) – these parks should be developed using the above guidelines.

The needs assessment, together with an analysis of the existing parks system and public input, supports parks and neighborhood parks as priorities for development in the next five years.

Community Parks

General planning and design approach for community parks:

- Develop and implement a concept plan for each parcel of land acquired for the purpose of a Community Park.
- Include all the basic facilities that make up a Community Park with specific reference to the recreation facilities as identified in the needs assessment (refer to Chapter 5).

- In addition to the recreation facilities which are typical of a Community Park, incorporate children’s play areas covered with shade structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for non-athletic, leisure “free play”, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities, and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Provide support facilities such as restrooms, parking, etc.
- Provide signage and a uniquely designed gateway for each park.
- Place preference on the application of native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.

Community parks, as the name implies, support communities. They are important for providing all the features that one would expect to find in a neighborhood park, plus a number and variety of playing fields that support competition and league play. Due to their large size and the variety of activities they support, these are major investments in the parks and recreation system. As with neighborhood parks, there is a need to acquire land for the development of additional community parks in The Colony (five additional parks are needed – see Section 7.3).

In addition to the need to acquire additional land for new parks, there are two parks within The Colony that need improvements and additional amenities in order to fully function as community parks. These parks – The Five Star West Community Complex and the Municipal Community Complex – are of adequate sizes and locations for functional Community Parks, but lack amenities such as pavilions, areas for free play, picnic facilities, and open space (see the Individual Park Assessments found in Chapter 5).

Special Purpose Parks

The need for the development of special purpose parks arises in one of two instances: 1) there is a need for park space for a specific recreational use which cannot be accommodated as part of another park or 2) a piece of land becomes available for park development but will not support the functions of a typical neighborhood or community park. From this, three types of special purpose parks typically are developed: 1) athletic facilities (for league use or practice), 2) pocket parks (because of limited land availability), and 3) special interest parks (such as skate parks and dog parks). Because of this multitude of factors, the size of one individual special purpose park varies, depending on the specific need and function.

As a general recommendation, avoid developing special purpose parks when the recreational use can be combined with another community or neighborhood park. This will reduce maintenance costs and will allow shared use of space. As an example, rather than constructing a new park for practice fields, attempt to construct practice fields as part of a neighborhood park which can also utilize the open space provided by the fields.

General planning and design approach for special purpose athletic parks:

- Locate parks adjacent to non-residential uses to minimize light and sound pollution in neighborhoods

- Utilize full cut-off lighting to reduce light spillover into adjacent areas.
- Use drought-tolerant turf grasses, especially for practice fields, to reduce watering needs
- Provide adequate on and off street parking to reduce traffic congestion in the surrounding area/neighborhood.
- Include permanent restrooms when appropriate.

General planning and design approach for special purpose pocket parks:

- Develop pocket parks to serve the specific needs of the surrounding community.
- Minimum amenities for a pocket park include benches, a trash receptacle, shade, and a focal point, which can include a small playground, a fountain, a plaza, a gazebo, or a piece of public art.
- Some pocket parks can be developed as “tot lots” which contain small playgrounds and focus on young children.
- Some pocket parks can be developed as plazas with more hardscaping than is typical for a park.

General planning and design approach for special purpose special interest parks:

- Special interest parks should be developed and sited based on detailed public involvement to determine the specific characteristics and needs of the special interest that is to be accommodated in the park.
- Provide amenities that meet the needs of the unique use occurring within the park. Amenities that should always be included are benches, trash receptacles, and shade.

Special interests that rated relatively high in importance by the respondents to the questionnaire include a spray park, botanical garden and dog park.

Linear Parks

Linear parks are characterized by their linear nature, which makes them ideal for the implementation of hike and bike trails, which in essence become the “spine” of each particular park. Linear parks may be associated with creeks, railway or utility corridors, and are ideal to create connections between different destination points. Whereas trail development typically includes amenities like trail heads, rest stops, overlooks, benches and light fixtures, linear parks may include additional amenities and facilities e.g. picnic pavilions, playgrounds, basketball, and volleyball courts.

Linear Parks provide the opportunity for trail linkages and connections to other park and recreation facilities, schools, civic destinations and neighborhood to neighborhood alternative travel routes. Natural resources and open space/ natural habitat highlight the users’ experience of linear parks.

The development of linear parks is opportunity-based – that is, a linear park is developed whenever an appropriate piece of land, linear in form, is made available for development. A prime linear park opportunity for The Colony is the shoreline and wildlife management area along Lake Lewisville. The new Shoreline Trail passes through much of this land and will provide the impetus for the creation of a linear park in this location. Another opportunity for a linear park is found at the intersection of North Colony Boulevard and

John Yates Drive along the creek corridor. Being next to a main street in the center of town, this area is highly visible and ideal to be developed as a passive park with trees and walkways.

Natural Areas / Open Space Preserves

Natural resources and open space / natural habitat highlight the user's experience of parks. Preserving such resources and land is essential to maintaining a unique character in The Colony.

General guidelines for the preserving natural areas/open space include:

- Providing low intensity park development with generally passive uses within these earmarked areas.
- Developing educational signage pertaining to the value of native plants, cultural landscapes, and the different benefits of manicured and natural parkland, creeks, and drainage ways.
- Developing low-intensity trails (often unpaved) and designated access points so that users may experience these areas with minimal impact.

The Core acreage along the lakefront is ideal to be protected as Natural Area and Open Space Preserves.

Cemeteries (Non City Owned)

Cemeteries in any city have huge value in providing communities with a connection to the past. Cemeteries are often beautiful tree covered open space areas that are unique destinations in themselves. Trail connections to the non City owned Bridges Cemetery are recommended. Such connections may include informational signage and benches for quiet contemplation. Informational and education signage may refer to the history of the particular cemetery and its geographic context describing the surrounding cultural and historical qualities. To ensure success in providing access to the cemeteries, it is recommended that the City work closely with the relevant private entities and be sensitive to the historical graves.

Golf Courses

Evaluate the feasibility of the city partnering with the owners and operators to develop an organic program of maintenance at each golf course in response to similarly developed organic programs throughout the parks system in The Colony.

It is recommended to encourage the golf course owner to establish and enroll the particular golf course as part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP)². This program has the aim to establish environmental stewardship at golf courses.

By their very nature, golf courses provide significant open spaces and opportunities to provide needed wildlife habitat in increasingly urbanized communities across North

² Find more information at <http://www.auduboninternational.org/programs/acss/golf.htm>

America. At the same time, golf courses are called to address environmental concerns related to the potential and actual impacts of water consumption and chemical use on local water sources, wildlife species, and native habitats. The ACSP for Golf Courses seeks to address golf's environmental concerns while maximizing golf course opportunities to provide open space benefits. This highly-regarded education and assistance program promotes participation in comprehensive environmental management, enhancement and protection of existing wildlife habitats, and recognition for those who are engaged in environmentally-responsible projects.

7.4.7 Additional Considerations for Park Development

Trails and Trail Gateways

Trails are part of all parks and add connectivity to the parks system as a whole. The Citywide Trails Master Plan identifies future trails and trail connections, and this Community Development Master Plan includes additional proposed trails that will enhance connectivity to parks, schools, and neighborhoods as well as cultural landscapes and natural resources within the city. The Colony's trail network should afford connections to surrounding cities' trails, as well as including along the edge of Lake Lewisville.

Trail Gateways are features which not only provide identity, but also may serve as places for useful directional and informational signage, drinking fountains and waste receptacles, as well as restrooms at major trailheads, especially in high use community parks.

Park Signage

The Colony should adopt a name branding system of park signs. Such identifiable features will add to a sense of place that is unmistakably The Colony. As new parks are developed and existing ones renovated, it is important to include updated park signage for each park. The City currently has a standard sign design; however, consider monument-style signage that blends signage with art when renovated or developing a park.

Tree Plantings

Tree plantings should be done citywide on an annual basis to ensure the longevity of established, mature shade trees. This strategy goes beyond what is planned for the individual park development; rather, it is an adjunct program which is designed to invest in the value of the parks with young trees that balance the loss of mature trees to natural disaster, disease, and age. By providing an annual tree planting program, the parks' futures are ensured with what will in their own time become mature shade trees for the enjoyment of future generations.

Park Renovation

Similar to an annual tree planting program, park renovation is an investment in the value of parks and is important in providing amenities that are safe and reflect current interests and needs. Before engaging in renovation, consider the elements for the particular park

type described in Sections 7.5.1 through 7.5.8 and develop a master plan for each park to provide a clear and coordinated plan for development. **It is recommended that one park per year be renovated, for the first five years.**

7.4.8 High Priority Existing Park Improvements

Individual Parks

Recommendations are made for each park in the City's park system. These are general master plan level recommendations, and are intended only to define the magnitude of the improvements for each park. **Each park should be programmed and master planned as it enters the design phase, and extensive area citizen and user group input should be included in the design process.** Specific facility improvements per individual park are recommended in Chapter 3.

City wide

The following City-wide key improvements to existing parks are recommended during the next 10-year period.

Renovation of existing parks

- Ensure that all improvements meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements.
- Increase shade in all parks by planting additional trees where practical.
- For additional landscape improvements, place preference on the application of native plantings including trees, wildflowers and grasses.
- Provide shade structures at the children's play areas where feasible.
- Provide adequate funding.

Park Signage

- Develop a branding concept for the City's signage, to be applied consistently at all of the existing and future parks; a well-conceived and designed signage theme will add to the unique identity and character of The Colony.
- Based on the branding concept, develop and install identification, informational, interpretative, and directional signage at all City parks.
- Install additional directional signage throughout the City.
- Provide funding to adequately support the design and maintenance of signage.

Park Maintenance

It is recommended that the Parks Department continue to play an active role in implementing a holistic and sustainable plant management program throughout the parks and grounds. Continue to implement appropriate practices to promote a healthy soil, micro-fauna and root system of all plants. An example includes organic maintenance through ample compost applications. Emphasize native and naturalized plants that are better adapted to the The Colony and North Central Texas region.

Wi-Fi Access

Access to the Internet in parks is popular in many cities. Consider providing Wi-Fi access in Community Parks.

Wi-Fi (pronounced “why-fy”) is short for *wireless fidelity*, which allows the user to connect to the Internet without the need for hard-wire cabling. Wi-Fi enabled computers use radio technologies to send and receive data within the range of a base station or *hotspot*, which is a connection point for a Wi-Fi network.

7.5 Recreational Facilities Recommendations

7.5.1 Indoor Recreation Facilities Recommendations

Existing Recreational Facilities

Full reviews of each of the City’s existing facilities can be found in the Appendix in Section A1.6.

The Colony Recreation Center

Due to its age and condition assessment, if this facility continues to be the recreation center we would recommend a minimal approach that would include painting and new flooring in selected areas. The reason for this recommendation is twofold. If major renovations are done, one, response to the numerous code violations will be required which will, two, start to equate to 75% to 85% of cost of a new facility. Therefore, the long term thought process of having a goal of a new facility in lieu of continuing to spend large amounts of money on a facility that does not currently, or in the future meet the needs of the community.

Lakeside Arts

Renovation is not an option in our opinion due to the existing condition of the facility. The structure itself is not conducive to the types of activities currently occurring at this center, the building finishes have generally exceeded their lifespan, and the building itself has several accessibility issues.

Community Center

We would recommend relocation of the Parks Department and conversion of that space to Senior Center uses. Budget for this should be in a range of \$300,000 – 400,000 project cost.

The Colony Aquatic Center

The prior study completed by Councilman-Hunsaker & Associates in 1999 is still valid. We would recommend the City look to replace/repair only major maintenance requirements and eventually construct a new facility to provide indoor aquatics for both wellness and leisure aquatic programming. A decision on how the existing Aquatic Center compliments the recommended facility should be a discussion topic at that time.

Recreational Facility Development

In order to serve the community recreation and aquatic needs for population projections, the consideration of the following actions is recommended.

Recreation/Indoor Aquatics

Construct a facility that serves as a regional center for the city. This would allow multiple programming to occur for entire family interests. See the attached program for a typical facility that would address the capacity of needs up to 60-65,000 in population and project budget for facility. When a city decides to proceed with an in-depth analysis of citizen desires and preferences with a citizen survey and public meetings dedicated specifically to the recreation center will help set exact priorities for such a center. The budget estimated for this is **\$19,830,000**.

If the indoor aquatics were a component to be phased in later, the budget for the recreation center only without indoor aquatics would be approximately **\$15,980,000**.

Art Related Facilities

Art related facilities should be considered as partnering opportunities and therefore the scope of such a facility should be based upon size requirements of such partners.

Existing Recreation Center

Could be converted to other uses including community meeting space, expanded senior center or perhaps demolish and replace. Budgets are indeterminable at this time until proper planning direction is determined.

Community Center

Relocate the Park Staff from the center and renovate for expanded senior uses. Budget is between **\$300,000 – \$400,000** for such use.

Project budgets expressed are all inclusive including construction, furniture, fixtures and equipment, professional fees and contingencies. The quality of the recommended facilities are considered to match that of surrounding cities.

7.5.2 Facilities Development

The City's 2006 Survey, questionnaires, public meetings and other relevant data form the basis to determine the most accurate and inclusive assessment of overall parks and recreation needs and to identify the needs for specific recreation facilities. Data from sports leagues, incomplete facilities from previous recreation facility studies, trails master plans, citizen input at public meetings, and recreation trends were included in this assessment. Table 7.1 prioritizes the overall parks and recreation facility needs for The Colony, based on facility standards combined with citizen, staff, and consultant input.

Table 7.1
Prioritized, Overall Parks and Recreation Facility Needs

Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs in Order of Priority

1. Hike and Bike Trails
2. Renovate and Update Existing Parks*
3. Natural Habitat Protection
4. New Outdoor Pool

Indoor Recreation Facility Needs in Order of Priority

1. New Community Center with Recreation/Cultural/Civic Elements
2. Senior Center** Expansion / Move PARD Offices
3. Renovate Aquatic Center
4. Indoor Pool at new Recreation Center

*Particular attention should be given to updating Playgrounds

**Currently referred to as the "Community Center"

7.6 Operations and Maintenance Recommendations

Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

Table 7.2 The Colony Parks and Recreation Operational Budget *			
General Fund	Fiscal Year 2006/2007 (Actual)	Fiscal Year 2007/2008 (Budget)	Fiscal Year 2008/2009 (Budget)
Total General Fund Budget	\$19,447,797	\$20,517,962	\$22,555,178
Parks and Recreation	\$754,305	\$881,864	\$868,566
Admin, Recreation & Athletics	3.88%	4.30%	3.85%
Park Maintenance	\$1,029,193	\$1,061,476	\$1,098,189
Park Maint / General Fund	5.29%	5.14%	4.87%
Personnel	13	14	14
Aquatics	\$344,603	\$348,580	\$356,218
Aquatic / General Fund	1.77%	1.70%	1.58%
Community Center	\$126,109	\$140,041	\$147,199
Community Center/ General Fund	0.65%	0.68%	.65%
Total Parks & Recreation Budget	\$2,254,210	\$2,431,961	\$2,470,272
Parks & Recreation/General Fund	11.59%	11.85%	10.95%
Revenue Funds			
Parks and Recreation	\$388,635	\$405,455	\$348,755
Expenses	\$2,254,210	\$2,431,961	\$2,740,172
Revenue/Expenses	15%	17%	14%
Aquatics	\$157,101	\$169,125	\$169,500
Expenses	\$344,603	\$348,580	\$356,218
Revenue / Expenses	46%	49%	48%
Community Center	\$141,765	\$141,438	\$143,480
Expenses	\$126,109	\$140,041	\$147,199
Revenue / Expenses	112%	101%	97%
Other Funds			
Community Development Corp (4B)	\$1,819,566	\$1,455,000	\$1,533,000
Expenses	\$1,228,776	\$1,734,345	\$1,176,557
Revenue / Expenses	148%	84%	130%
Special Events Funds	\$157,439	\$73,550	\$198,450
Expenses	\$84,175	\$135,882	\$204,005
Revenue/ Expenses	187%	54%	97%
Lake Parks Fund	\$144,734	157,920	157,920
Expenses	\$124,130	232,741	231,760
Revenue/ Expenses	117%	68%	68%
Hidden Cove Park	75,684	53,000	53,000
Expenses	70,000	50,000	50,000
Revenue/ Expenses	108%	106%	106%

* Source: The Colony Parks Department

**Table 7.3
Comparison of Overall Park Expenditures Relative to General Fund³**

City	Overall General Fund	General Fund per Capita	Park Expenditures including recreation	Percent of General Fund	City size in Acres
The Colony (2008) 39,850 population	\$22,555,178	\$566	\$2,470,172	11%	8,345
Coppell (2007) 39,508 population	\$43,674,074	\$1,105	\$6,705,764	15%	9,561
Duncanville (2008) 38,793 population	\$23,438,513	\$604	\$2,937,029	12.5%	7,232
Carrollton (2008) 120,553 population	\$78,674,670	\$653	\$10,711,586 ⁴	13.6%	23,424
Frisco (2009) 102,225 population (budgeted)	\$75,400,711	\$738	\$8,592,834	11.4%	44,800
Hurst (2009) 38,750 population (budgeted)	\$31,541,995	\$814	\$4,494,569 ⁵	14.2%	6,336
Lewisville (2008) 92,850 population	\$61,200,434	\$659	\$5,758,215 ⁶	9.4%	27,072
Mansfield (2009) 62,000 population	\$36,037,082	\$581	\$1,978,277 ⁷	5.5%	23,360
North Richland Hills (2008) 65,750 population	\$38,983,678	\$593	\$2,771,201 ⁸	7.1%	11,648
Plano (2008) 260,900 population	\$223,319,551	\$856	\$23,011,871	10.3%	45,824
Average		\$713		11.2%	

- The above nine cities are regarded as the benchmark cities for The Colony, based on factors that includes size, city government and location.
- The following is noticeable from the above table:
- The Colony’s General Fund per Capita, is 20% below the average of \$713 as compared to the Cities above.
- The Colony’s Parks and Recreation Budget as a percentage of the overall General Fund, is about equal that of the average of the other benchmark cities.

³ Data source: individual city adopted budget or comprehensive annual financial report. Some population data from the Census Bureau’s 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

⁴ Culture and Leisure budget; excludes library

⁵ Community Services budget; excludes library and facilities maintenance (citywide)

⁶ Park and Leisure Services Dept. budget; excludes library

⁷ Community Services budget; excludes communications & marketing, family counseling, building maintenance, library, and cultural services.

⁸ General Fund expenditures only

The following table illustrates the per capita expenditure for parks compared with the benchmark cities.

Table 7.5 Comparison of Overall Park and Recreation Expenditures (including special or performance funds)			
City	Population	Budgeted / Actual Park Expenditures ⁹	Per Capita Expenditure
The Colony	39,850	\$4,132,494 ¹⁰	\$104
Carrollton	120,553	\$16,846,586 ¹¹	\$140
Coppell	39,508	\$12,135,035 ¹²	\$307
Duncanville	38,793	\$4,080,284 ¹³	\$105
Frisco	102,225	\$17,243,834 ¹⁴	\$169
Hurst	38,750	\$7,242,334 ¹⁵	\$187
Lewisville	92,850	\$7,806,404 ¹⁶	\$84
Mansfield	62,000	\$7,118,181 ¹⁷	\$115
NRH	65,750	\$16,132,328 ¹⁸	\$245
Plano	260,900	\$26,990,409 ¹⁹	\$103
Average			\$156

- The per capita expenditure of the overall park and recreation expenditures (including special or performance funds) of The Colony is 33% lower than the benchmark cities average of \$156.

⁹ See Table 7.3 for detailed information

¹⁰ Includes General Fund, Community Development Corporation Fund, Special Events Fund, Lake Parks Fund, and Hidden Cove Park Fund

¹¹ Includes General Fund and Capital Improvement Fund

¹² Includes General Fund, Recreation Development Corporation Fund, and Recreational Programs Special Revenue Fund

¹³ Includes General Fund, portion of the 4B Fund, and Park Bonds budgeted for 2008-2009

¹⁴ Includes General Fund and Capital Projects Fund

¹⁵ Includes General Fund, Park Donation Fund, and Community Services ½ Cent Sales Tax Fund

¹⁶ Includes General Fund, Recreation Fund, and portion of the 4B Fund

¹⁷ Included General Fund and Parks Facilities Development Corporation Fund

¹⁸ Includes General Fund, Park and Recreation Facilities Development Fund, Aquatic Park Fund, and Golf Course Fund

¹⁹ Includes General Fund, Golf Course Fund, and Recreation Revolving Fund

Table 7.5
Comparison of Overall Park and Recreation Expenditures
(excluding special or performance funds)

City	Population	Budgeted / Actual Park Expenditures ²⁰	Per Capita Expenditure
The Colony	39,850	\$2,470,172	\$62
Carrollton	120,553	\$10,711,586	\$89
Coppell	39,508	\$6,705,764	\$169
Duncanville	38,793	\$2,937,029	\$76
Frisco	102,225	\$8,592,834	\$84
Hurst	38,750	\$4,494,569	\$116
Lewisville	92,850	\$5,758,215	\$62
Mansfield	62,000	\$1,978,277	\$32
NRH	65,750	\$2,771,201	\$42
Plano	260,900	\$23,011,871	\$88
Average			\$82

- The per capita expenditure of The Colony’s overall park and recreation expenditures (excluding special or performance funds) is 24% lower than the benchmark cities average of \$82.

²⁰ See Table 7.3 for detailed information

Parks and Recreation Personnel

Table 7.6 Parks Department Acreage and Personnel Comparisons					
City	Overall Budget (1)	Total Park Acres	Overall Budget/ Park Acre (closest 100)	Number of Personnel (FTE) (2):(3)	Total Park Acres/ Staff Member
The Colony	\$1,098,189	1,938(4)	\$567	14	138
Carrollton	\$10,711,586	988	\$10,842	40 ²¹	24.7
Coppell	\$6,705,764	533.3	\$12,574	9	59.3
Duncanville	\$2,937,029	234.46	\$12,526	12 ²²	19.5
Frisco	\$8,592,834	1,330	\$6,542	54.75	24.3
Hurst	\$4,057,183	290	\$13,990	25	11.6
Lewisville	\$5,758,215	873	\$6,596	45	19.4
Mansfield	\$1,978,277	737	\$2,684	19.7	37.4
North Richland Hills	\$2,771,201	741	\$3,739	13.9	54.3
Plano	\$23,011,871	3,830	\$6,008	137	28
Average (excluding The Colony)	\$6,762,215	1,264	\$7,586	52.48	40

- (1) Budgets and staff levels for general comparison purposes only. Maintenance of non-park areas such as medians is not included but does impact staff levels.
- (2) Excludes Indoor recreation and /or golf course staff.
- (3) Includes parks facilities.
- (4) Excluding USACE land additional to City parks.

Staff Levels

The Colony Parks and Recreation Department budget and staff levels per park acreage are shown in Table 7.6 above. In comparison with benchmark cities, The Colony’s budget is much less than the average and the park acreage per staff member is much higher. The main reason for this is the amount of lake related USACE land which is managed by PARD.

²¹ Also excludes tennis center personnel.

²² Includes horticulture personnel.

Parks Operations and Maintenance Program

In order to ensure future effectiveness and efficiency of the City's parks operations and maintenance programs, the following is recommended for consideration as and when the need arises:

- Continue funding for an **operations center** to professionally manage all parks, athletic fields, municipal grounds, median, and right of way maintenance.
- Continue funding **new signage in accordance with standardization of all park name signage**.
- Continue the practice to **standardize informational signage** in all parks (i.e., park operation hours, lease ordinance, rental information, no motorized vehicles, etc.).
- **Continue to manage athletic fields** for safety of participants and to maximize utilization of athletic field resources.
- The City should invest in **automated athletic field lighting** for facilities to maximize utilization of athletic field resources; such lighting should be as far as possible be on timers and on photocell.
- The City should adopt a policy of **minimal interference or maintenance of natural areas** and open space. The goal should be to preserve these areas in their natural state for which a public awareness campaign should be developed.

Parks Operations and Maintenance Facility

The Colony's Parks Maintenance facility should contain the following:

- EPA approved storage facilities for Chemicals and Pesticides
- Above ground fuel storage and fueling station
- Small engines service area and parts storage
- Irrigation parts storage
- Wash rack for cleaning mowing equipment
- Office space for supervisory staff
- Break room and restrooms for department staff
- Parking for staff vehicles and City vehicles
- Storage for seasonal items such as Christmas Decorations, Banners, etc.
- Covered storage for all motorized equipment
- Storage bins for bulk storage of soil amendments
- Greenhouse for propagation and holding of bedding materials

Other parks operations and maintenance issues include:

- The City should continue to develop a plan to implement native plant material with low water requirement in all landscape situations where possible.
- The City should implement an annual tree planting program in all parks to provide for additional shade, to phase the cost for these trees, and to ensure healthy grouping of old and young trees together.

- The City should weigh the cost benefits of establish a tree farm versus purchasing trees for the propagation of trees native to North Central Texas. These trees are adapted to the local climate and soil conditions and will result in superior tree cover, shade, and drought tolerance.
- The City should implement a practice of producing compost whereby tree and plant clippings are chipped and mulched for re-use as compost on all City property. The purpose is to implement an integrated and organic maintenance approach for the entire City that minimizes reliance on chemicals and pesticides.
- Although the City already has an automated irrigation system, it should study the benefit of investing in a City wide irrigation system that is a computerized central control system radio linked for the efficient management of irrigation.

7.7 Arts, History & Culture Recommendations

Because of the importance of socially-oriented activities and events in reinforcing community development for The Colony, specific recommendations geared toward the non-physical side of community development are needed. As they share intrinsic qualities and have interrelated functionality, arts, history, and culture are not given separate recommendations in this section. Rather, these recommendations span the lines between these three subject areas and serve to advance the offerings of each.

Develop an Arts Master Plan

It is recommended that The Colony develops an Arts Master Plan for the entire City. Involve the Cultural Arts Board and the Community Development Board as well as the Parks and Recreation Department in the master plan process. This master plan should include an analysis and recommendations public art and the display and performance of other types of art. This master plan should include general themes and ideas for public art to be located in public spaces such as parks and streetscapes and should identify funding opportunities.

Create an Art Selection Committee

An Art Selection Committee – dedicated to the selection and procurement of qualified art pieces for public projects – should be created out of citizens and should include liaisons from the CDC Board, Cultural Arts Board, and City Staff. This committee should be given the responsibility of seeking out artists and art pieces to be featured in public projects, should identify funding opportunities, and should determine the location and type of art for specific projects.

Festivals & Events

The Colony’s festivals and special events – such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt, the Liberty by the Lake events, and Holiday in the Park – serve as the backbone for cultural happenings in the City. It is at these events that the most people participate in any type of programming offered by the City. It is recommended that the City commit to improving each of these events each year and adding additional festivals and special events whenever appropriate and as funding becomes available.

Physical Recommendations

Space for Programming

It is important to provide adequate space for arts, cultural, and history programming in conjunction with existing and new facilities. When renovating the existing Recreation Center and Community Center and when constructing a new Recreation Center, provide flexible use space that can accommodate classes, lectures, and performances of varying types. Potentially, dedicated studio space could be accommodated with specialized storage and equipment to meet the needs of specific types of programming.

In a new Recreation Center, provide a large, flexible use room that can accommodate larger events and performances. Such a room would have a stage, a room behind the stage, sound and light equipment, a hard flooring material (wood, tile, or commercial-grade carpet with a fixed or movable wooded dance floor), moveable chairs and tables, and moveable walls.

Art in Public Spaces

As part of the Arts Master Plan, develop a Public Arts Policy as an instrument to provide and display art that is public and free on a citywide basis in parks, along streets, and at public buildings. Aside from parks and recreation facilities provision, the public spaces of a city speak volumes about the quality of life in a city and its values and aspirations. Therefore, beautifying said spaces with art will not only improve the attractiveness and uniqueness of an individual park, but will improve the City's overall image.

There are many more reasons for the acquisition and display of public art; art has a tremendous potential to add additional layers of meaning to the landscape, it can encourage contemplation as a manner of passive recreation, and it also will set The Colony apart as a City that appreciates quality of life for its citizens.

The following images depict the creative use of public art in various settings by other cities in the states of Texas, California and Washington.



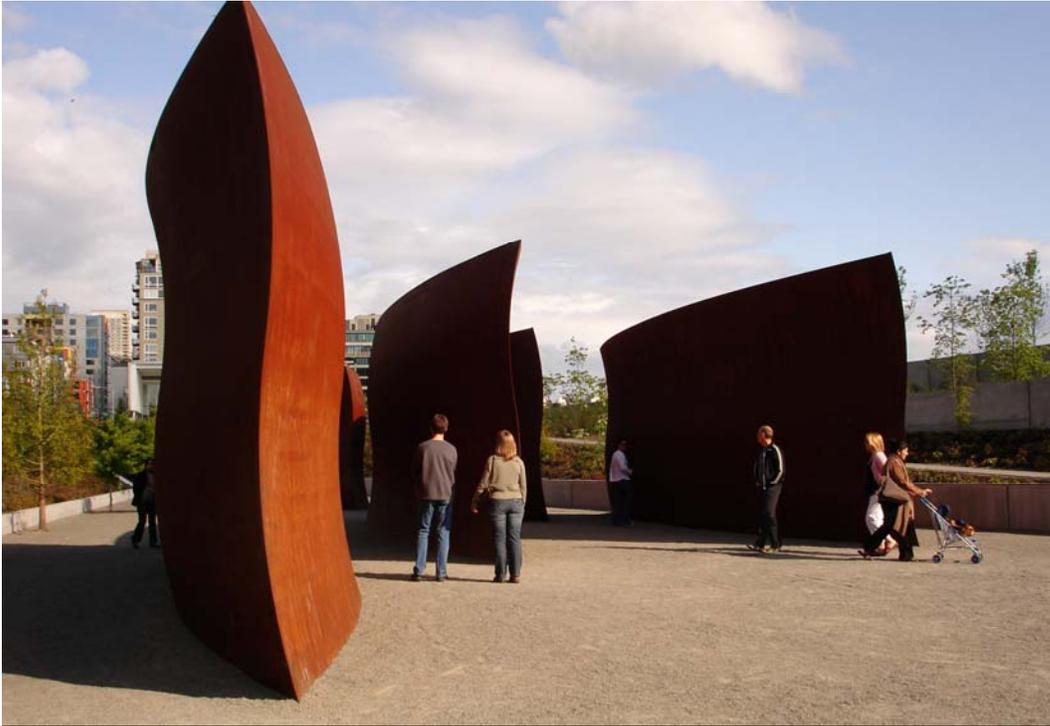
Port promenade - San Diego, CA



Children's Museum of Art - San Diego, CA



Bellevue Downtown Park - Seattle, WA



Olympic Sculpture Garden – Seattle, WA



The Colony, Texas



Transit Station – Seattle, WA



Transit Station – Seattle, WA



Seattle, WA

Chapter 8

Implementation



8.1 Introduction

The aim of the Community Development Master Plan is to provide a “roadmap” to fulfill the vision for the City. This chapter prioritizes the recommendations and identifies potential sources of funding. Prioritization is based on information received from public input as well as from the needs assessment pertaining to facility and acreage standards shown in Chapters 6.

The criteria used to prioritize the park, recreation and other facilities needs in The Colony are as follows:

- Level of need based on citizen input (demand based need);
- Level of need based on standards assessments (standard based need); and
- Opportunities for recreation facilities and parks based on existing physical conditions in The Colony (resource based need) e.g. Lake Lewisville.

8.2 High Priority Facility Needs

Prioritization of facility needs involves a process that weighs a number of factors. Particularly, such factors include current trends, regional trends, citizen input, City staff, CDC Board and Council input, as well as Planning Team consultant input, all considered along with target standards. The citizen input, while offering direction and guidance, does not alone produce a resultant list of priorities. The citizen

responses are tempered by consideration of other factors that impact each facility choice. This process seeks to arrive at the best assessment of need and response for The Colony and its citizens taken as a whole. For this reason, it is important to understand that the survey results tables do not directly correlate with the overall, citywide ranked priorities.

A summary of key facility needs in The Colony based on facility standards and citizen input (in order of priority ranking) includes:

Overall Community Development Priorities

Priorities for Outdoor Facilities

1. Hike and Bike Trails
2. Renovate and Update Existing Parks*
3. Natural Habitat Protection
4. Acquire / repurpose acreage for new parks
5. New Outdoor Pool

Priorities for Indoor Facilities

1. New Community Center with Recreation/Cultural/Civic Elements
2. Senior Center** Expansion / Move PARD Offices
3. Renovate Aquatic Center
4. Indoor Pool at new Recreation Center

*Including Playgrounds, Restrooms (at Community Parks only) etc.

**Currently referred to as the "Community Center"

In order to meet the current and long term need for recreation and community facilities, adequate land is required for that purpose. The need for additional land is supported by citizen demand and the target standard level of service. In addition, a good portion of the City's existing park land is natural habitat and not developable for meeting the facilities needs. However, it is also true that land is a finite resource and especially of limited availability in a city once it nears build-out conditions as is the case with The Colony. Quality land for athletic and recreation facilities is furthermore in competition with the need to develop land for profit making. For this reason, the acquisition of land is very important for community development in The Colony. In addition to the outright acquisition of land by the City, two additional tools for achieving adequate space for needed park facilities include repurposing existing park land (such as an underutilized open space) to accommodate a needed facility and amending the Parkland Dedication Ordinance to achieve an adequate dedication of land through development.

Hike and bike trails top the list of **outdoor recreation facility** priorities, correlating with the questionnaire results and the larger regional high priority need of communities to exercise and have alternate transportation corridors through the use of hike and bike trails.

The highest priority for **indoor recreation facility** needs is a new community center with amenities that allow for recreation, cultural and civic events.

8.3 Action Plan: Prioritized Task List

Recommendations and Implementation of the Community Development Master Plan

The Community Development Master Plan prioritizes the findings of the Needs Assessment and recommends a series of actions to improve and expand The Colony's community facilities and amenities including parks. The recommendations should be implemented or initiated over the general life of this master plan, which typically covers the next 5 to 10 years. However, the master plan also includes other longer range recommendations.

An implementation strategy is recommended to address the City's key recreation and community development needs over the next five years and longer. These actions include many of the high priority facility needs listed above. Recommendations are ranked in one of the three categories listed below.

- **Priority 1 Tasks** - List of top priority items to be completed or initiated typically over the next five years.
- **Priority 2 Tasks** - List of recommendations to be completed in typically five to ten years.
- **Priority 3 Tasks** - List of recommendations to be initiated typically in ten or more years.

Table 8.1: Prioritized Task List on the next page summarizes the basic actions and tasks required in the short- and long-term future in order for The Colony to reach the most critical of the target goals as established in the Community Development Master Plan

**Table 8.1
Prioritized Task List**

City of The Colony Community Development Master Plan

Priority	Action	Additional Acreage	Facility Type	Estimated Cost for Preferred Improvement Level (2009 Dollars)	Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost (dollars per year)	Main Source of Funding	CDC/City Assumed Cost (1) (does not include maintenance costs)	Additional Resources
Policy Actions CIP = Capital Improvement Program; includes Bond Funding								
Priority 1								
1	Thoroughfare Master Plan Revision - Revise the Thoroughfare Master Plan to substantially incorporate the existing Trails Master Plan and the future Bicycle Route Master Plan			\$0			\$0	Engineering Department, Public Works
1	Park Land Dedication Ordinance Revision - Revise the Park Land Dedication Ordinance to meet regional standards (see report pages 7-31 and 8-6)			\$0			\$0	Planning Department, Parks Department
1	Floodplain Ordinance Revision - Revise the Floodplain Ordinance to disallow all reclamation of the floodplain at build-out conditions.			\$0			\$0	Engineering Department
1	Arts Selection Committee - Form an official Arts Selection Committee of citizens from the local arts community to select artists for commission and to approve public art pieces.			\$0			\$0	Cultural Arts Board
1	City Engineering Standards Revision - Revise the necessary City documents to allow for porous/pervious paving for parking areas.			\$0			\$0	Engineering Department, Planning Department
Subtotal Policy Actions: Priority 1				\$0			\$0	
Total Policy Actions				\$0			\$0	
Land Acquisition/Reallocation								
Priority 1								
1	Eastvale Neighborhood Park - Acquire about 5 acres for new neighborhood parks in the Eastvale neighborhood in order to improve service levels in that part of the City.	5 acres	Neighborhood Park	\$300,000		CIP, Grant Funding	\$300,000	Land Reallocation, Private Donations
1	Southside Community Park - Acquire between 30 and 50 acres (with only 10 out-of-floodplain acres) for 1 passive future community park in the southern portion of the City near Indian Creek. (10 acres acquired through parkland dedication; 20 through mandatory floodplain dedication)	30 acres	Community Park	\$1,800,000		Park Land Dedication, Floodplain protection/mandatory donation	\$0	Land Reallocation, Grant Funding, Private Donations, LISD Partnership
1	Indian Creek Nature Preserve - Acquire 50 acres for a Nature Preserve along the Indian Creek area in Austin Ranch (in conjunction with future Neighborhood Park in this area). Floodplain land is calculated as \$10,000 per acre.	50 acres	Regional Park / Nature Preserve	\$3,000,000		Floodplain protection/mandatory donation	\$0	Park Land Dedication, General Funds
1	Fourplex Softball Location - Identify 8 to 10 acres of land to be acquired / reallocated for a Fourplex Softball Complex	9 acres	Special Purpose Park	\$540,000		CIP, Land Reallocation	\$0	General Funds
1	Dog Park Location - Identify land to be acquired / reallocated for a dog park	5 acres	Special Purpose Park	\$300,000		CIP, Land Reallocation	\$0	General Funds
Subtotal Land Acquisition: Priority 1		149 acres		\$5,940,000			\$300,000	
Priority 2								
2	Neighborhood Parks - Acquire about 15 to 30 acres for 3 future neighborhood parks (in the northern portion of the City on Wynnewood Peninsula) through park land dedication (5 - 10 acres per park acquired as development occurs).	22.5 acres	Neighborhood Park	\$1,350,000		Park Land Dedication	\$0	LISD/LEISD Partnership
2	Northside Community Parks - Reallocate between 100 and 140 acres for 2 future active community parks (50 - 70+ acres per park); one at Wynnewood Park and the other at Eastvale Park.	70 acres	Community Park	\$4,200,000		Land Reallocation	\$0	US Army Corps of Engineers
2	Park Maintenance Facility - Acquire 5 acres for the establishment of a park maintenance facility including a tree farm.	5 acres	Special Purpose Support	\$300,000		CIP	\$300,000	Land Reallocation, Private Donations, General Funds, Other City Departments
Subtotal Land Acquisition: Priority 2		97.5 acres		\$5,850,000			\$300,000	
Priority 3								
3	Five Star East Neighborhood Park - Reallocate 5 to 10 acres of land at Five Star East (near Hawaiian Falls) for a neighborhood park (to be pursued as the new Activity Center is developed).	5 acres	Neighborhood Park	\$300,000		Land Reallocation	\$0	
3	Neighborhood Parks - Acquire about 5 to 10 acres for 1 future neighborhood park (in the southern portion of the City) through park land dedication (5 - 10 acres per park acquired as development occurs).	7.5 acres	Neighborhood Park	\$450,000		Park Land Dedication	\$0	LISD/LEISD Partnership
3	121 Community Park - Acquire between 50 and 70 acres for a future active community park in along the SH 121 corridor as per the options show on the Proposed Community Parks Map.	70 acres	Community Park	\$4,200,000		CIP	\$4,200,000	Land Reallocation, Grant Funding, Private Donations, LISD Partnership
3	BB Owens Expansion - Acquire 5 to 10 acres of unused LISD land to expand BB Owens Park	10 acres	Community Park	\$600,000		LISD Partnership, CIP	\$600,000	Land Reallocation, Grant Funding, Private Donations
?	Additional Land Acquisition as Needed - Acquire additional land for Special Purpose Parks or Open Space as the need or opportunity arises	variable	Special Purpose Park / Open Space	variable		CIP	variable	Park land dedication, Private Donations, LISD Partnership
Subtotal Land Acquisition: Priority 3		92.5 acres		\$5,550,000			\$4,800,000	
Total Land Acquisition		339 acres		\$17,340,000			\$5,400,000	
Trails & Trail Amenities								
Priority 1								
1	Trailhead Bathroom Facilities - Stewart Creek Park		Hike and Bike Trails	\$80,000	\$1,200	CIP	\$80,000	Stewart Creek Park Development Funding
Subtotal Trails & Trail Amenities: Priority 1				\$80,000	\$1,200		\$80,000	
Priority 2								
2	Austin Ranch Neighborhood Park - Acquire about 3 acres to expand Austin Ranch Park for trailhead amenities.	3 acres	Neighborhood Park	\$180,000	\$2,700	CIP, Grant Funding	\$180,000	Private Donations
2	Park Loop Trail - Electric Easement North		Hike and Bike Trails	\$750,000	\$11,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$750,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations
2	Hike and Bike Trails - Develop 3 miles of trail (1 mile of per year) at \$650,000 per mile.		Hike and Bike Trails	\$1,950,000	\$29,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$1,950,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Transportation Funding
2	Hike and Bike Trails - Develop 5 miles of trail (1 mile of per year) at \$650,000 per mile.		Hike and Bike Trails	\$3,250,000	\$48,750	CIP, Grant Funding	\$3,250,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Transportation Funding
Subtotal Trails & Trail Amenities: Priority 2				\$6,130,000	\$91,950		\$6,130,000	
Priority 3								
3	Trail Heads and Trail Gateways - Reallocate between 2 and 4 acres for 2 future trail heads and gateways. Optionally co-locate trailheads with neighborhood parks	3 acres	Hike & Bike Trails	\$180,000	\$2,700	Land Reallocation	\$0	CIP, Grant Funding, Private Donations
3	Trail Heads and Trail Gateways - Acquire or reallocate between 3 and 9 acres for 3 future trail heads and gateways. Optionally co-locate trailheads with neighborhood parks	6 acres	Hike & Bike Trails	\$360,000	\$5,400	CIP, Land Reallocation	\$0	Grant Funding, Private Donations
3	Austin Ranch Trail - Extension along Plano Parkway toward SH 121.		Hike and Bike Trails	\$750,000	\$11,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$750,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations
3	Trail Heads - Develop 2 trail heads at yet-to-be-determined locations at \$400,000 per unit.		Hike and Bike Trails	\$800,000	\$12,000	CIP	\$800,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Transportation Funding
3	Scout Park Trail Head - Develop 1 trail head with parking at Scout Park for \$200,000		Hike and Bike Trails	\$200,000	\$3,000	CIP	\$200,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations
Subtotal Trails & Trail Amenities Priority 3				\$2,290,000	\$34,350		\$1,750,000	
Total Trail & Trail Amenities				\$8,500,000	\$127,500		\$7,960,000	
Public Space Development and Improvement								
Priority 1								
1	One Neighborhood Park - Develop 1 new neighborhood park in the Eastvale neighborhood at \$750,000.		Neighborhood Park	\$750,000	\$11,250	CIP	\$750,000	Private Donations, CDBG Funding
1	Carr/Chapman Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Develop Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect), replace the playground (for an estimated \$75,000), and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
1	Dave Cowan Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Develop Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect), replace the playground (for an estimated \$75,000), and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
1	Friendship Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Develop Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect), replace the playground (for an estimated \$75,000), and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
1	Wilcox Park / Pocket Park Improvement - Develop Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect), replace the playground (for an estimated \$75,000), and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
1	Kids Colony Playground Addition		Special Purpose Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
1	Historical Parks Development		Special Purpose Park	\$150,000	\$2,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$150,000	Private Donations, Texas Historical Commission
1	Parking Lot - Pave the parking lot at the North Colony Blvd Little League Fields		Special Purpose Park	\$212,000	\$3,180	CIP	\$212,000	Planned Development Expansion

**Table 8.1
Prioritized Task List**

City of The Colony Community Development Master Plan

Priority	Action	Additional Acreage	Facility Type	Estimated Cost for Preferred Improvement Level (2009 Dollars)	Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost (dollars per year)	Main Source of Funding	CDC/City Assumed Cost (1) (does not include maintenance costs)	Additional Resources
1	Image Enhancements Projects - Make \$25,000 worth of image enhancement projects per year (ongoing)		Beautification	\$50,000	\$750	CIP	\$50,000	Private Donations, Grant Funding
1	Spray Grounds - Develop 1 spray ground at an existing park (Historical Park or Kids Colony)		Special Purpose Park	\$175,000	\$2,625	CIP	\$175,000	Private Donations
1	Tree Planting - Implement a focused tree planting program at \$50,000 per year for public spaces (ongoing)		Citywide	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations, Texas Forest Service
1	Wildflower Program - Implement this program along roads and streets for seasonal color and interest at a cost of \$10,000 per year (ongoing).		Citywide	\$20,000	\$300	CIP, Grant Funding	\$20,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Eastvale Park / Community Park Development - Develop this park pending the completion of a master plan and as demand requires (by leasee)		Community Park	\$4,000,000	\$60,000	Bluesky Sport Center	\$0	
1	Signage - Develop directional and informational signage throughout the City as per the future Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan (ongoing)		Citywide	\$500,000	\$7,500	CIP	\$500,000	Private Donations
Subtotal Public Space Development and Improvement: Priority 1				\$6,457,000	\$96,855		\$2,457,000	
Priority 2								
2	Three Neighborhood Parks - Develop 3 new neighborhood parks (in the northwestern portion of the City) at \$750,000 per park as development occurs in the Wynwood area.		Neighborhood Park	\$3,000,000	\$45,000	Park Improvement Fee	\$0	CIP, Private Donations, LISD/LEISD Partnership
2	Taylor Street Park & Greenbelt Development - Develop Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect), add a playground (for an estimated \$75,000), and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix page A-41).		Linear Parks	\$500,000	\$7,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$500,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations
2	Develop a Dog Park - Develop a dog park on existing park land		Special Purpose Park	\$175,000	\$2,625	CIP	\$175,000	Private Donations
2	Develop a Community Garden - Develop a pilot community garden at Augusta Park. Specific garden size and distribution will need to be determined independently		Special Purpose Park	\$50,000	\$750	CIP	\$50,000	Private Donations, LISD Partnership, Texas Master Gardeners, Faith-based Organizations
2	North Colony Municipal Complex / Community Park Improvement - Make improvements pending the completion of a master plan for this park and as per Individual Park Assessment in the report Appendix page A-17. (Excludes Little League Complex and Kids Colony improvements)		Community Park	\$500,000	\$7,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$500,000	Private Donations
2	Stewart Creek Park / Community Park Improvement - Make improvements pending the completion of a master plan for this park and as per Individual Park Assessment in the report Appendix. (Excludes other park improvements listed in this table)		Community Park	\$500,000	\$7,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$500,000	Private Donations
2	Four Plex Softball Facility		Special Purpose Park	\$3,250,000	\$48,750	CIP, Grant Funding	\$3,250,000	Private Donations
2	Bathroom Facilities - Bill Allen Memorial Park		Community Park	\$80,000	\$1,200	CIP	\$80,000	Private Donations
2	Bill Allen Memorial Park / Community Park Improvement - Make improvements as per Individual Park Assessment in the report Appendix.		Community Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
2	Southside Community Park Development - Develop this park pending the completion of a master plan as development occurs and demand requires.		Community Park	\$2,000,000	\$30,000	CIP, Park Improvement Fee	\$1,250,000	Grant Funding, Private Donations
2	Public Art - Provide for environmental and outdoor art in parks and open spaces (ongoing or project percentage based).		Citywide	\$80,000	\$1,200	CIP, Grant Funding, HOT	\$80,000	Private Donations, LAF Volunteer Efforts
Subtotal Public Space Development and Improvement: Priority 2				\$10,235,000	\$153,525		\$6,485,000	
Priority 3								
3	Austin Ranch Park Expansion - Expand Austin Ranch Park to make it a neighborhood park by installing play equipment, a pavilion, and other amenities as per the Individual Park Assessment in the report Appendix page A-24.		Neighborhood Park	\$75,000	\$1,125	CIP, Grant Funding	\$75,000	Private Donations
3	Five Star East Neighborhood Park - Develop one new neighborhood park at a cost of \$750,000 (to be developed concurrently with the new Activity Center)		Neighborhood Park	\$750,000	\$11,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$750,000	Private Donations
3	Lion's Club Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Perform needed improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix page A-6).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
3	Scout Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Add a playground (for an estimated \$75,000) and perform additional improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix page A-10).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
3	Slay/Baker Park / Neighborhood Park Improvement - Perform needed improvements (see recommendations as per Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix page A-12).		Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
3	Five Star Community Complex / Community Park Improvement - Make improvements as per Individual Park Assessment in the report Appendix (page A-16).		Community Park	\$100,000	\$1,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$100,000	Private Donations
3	Wynwood Park / Community Park Development - Develop this park pending the completion of a master plan and as demand requires.		Community Park	\$4,000,000	\$60,000	CIP, Grant Funding	\$4,000,000	Private Donations
3	121 Community Park Development - Develop this park pending the completion of a master plan as development occurs and demand requires.		Community Park	\$4,000,000	\$60,000	CIP, Grant Funding	\$4,000,000	Private Donations
3	West Lake Highlands / Pocket Park Improvement - Make improvements to this park as per the Individual Park Assessments in the report Appendix page A-39 (unless the Eastvale neighborhood park is developed).		Neighborhood Park	\$75,000	\$1,125	CIP, Grant Funding	\$75,000	Private Donations
3	One Neighborhood Park - Develop 1 new neighborhood parks (in the Austin Ranch/southern portion of the City) at \$750,000 as development occurs.		Neighborhood Park	\$750,000	\$11,250	Park Improvement Fee	\$0	CIP, Private Donations, LISD/LEISD Partnership
Subtotal Public Space Development and Improvement: Priority 3				\$10,050,000	\$150,750		\$9,300,000	
Total Public Space Development and Improvement				\$26,742,000			\$18,242,000	
Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities								
Priority 1								
1	Bridges Cemetery Improvement - Improve the historic Bridges Cemetery to allow more visibility and better access to this location			\$150,000	\$2,250	HOT Funds, Grants	\$150,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, LISD Partnership, Bond Funds, Texas Historical Commission
n/a	Sport Fields - Accounted for in the development and improvement of community parks.					CIP, Grant Funding		Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, LISD/LEISD Partnership, Bond Funds
n/a	Support Facilities - Playgrounds, Pavilions, Picnic Facilities, Park Restrooms etc. are accounted for in the above park development and improvement.					CIP, Grant Funding		Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, Bond Funds
Subtotal Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities: Priority 1				\$150,000	\$2,250		\$150,000	
Priority 2								
2	Activity Center - Develop a new Activity Center with Recreational/Cultural/Civic Elements. This Activity Center shall include a large multi-purpose/ball room which can host performing arts activities (See Chapter 7).			\$10,000,000	\$150,000	CIP, Grant Funding	\$10,000,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, LISD Partnership, Bond Funds
2	Park Maintenance Facility - Develop the future parks operation and maintenance facility (See Chapter 7).			\$2,000,000	\$30,000	CIP	\$2,000,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
2	Five Star Storage and Maintenance Facility (Alternative option to separate maintenance facility listed elsewhere in this table)			\$750,000	\$11,250	CIP, Grant Funding	\$750,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, Bond Funds
2	Expand Senior Center - Expand the existing Senior Center to include the space currently occupied by PARD offices. This will require relocating the PARD office. (\$350,000 to renovate existing building, \$200,000 for new PARD office space)			\$550,000	\$8,250	CIP	\$550,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
Subtotal Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities: Priority 2				\$13,300,000	\$199,500		\$13,300,000	
Priority 3								
3	Outdoor Pool - Develop a new Outdoor Leisure Swimming Pool on existing park land. Consider colcoating with the proposed new Activity Center.			\$1,500,000	\$22,500	CIP, Grant Funding	\$1,500,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, LISD Partnership, Bond Funds
3	Renovate Aquatic Center			\$1,500,000	\$22,500	CIP	\$1,500,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, LISD Partnership, Bond Funds
3	Little League Fields Renovation			\$3,000,000	\$45,000	CIP, Grant Funding	\$3,000,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, Bond Funds
3	Turner Soccer Complex Renovations			\$650,000	\$9,750	CIP, Grant Funding	\$650,000	Capital Improvement Funds, TPWD Outdoor Grant, Private Donations, Bond Funds
Subtotal Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities: Priority 3				\$6,650,000	\$99,750		\$6,650,000	
Total Development of Recreational and Maintenance Facilities				\$20,100,000			\$20,100,000	

**Table 8.1
Prioritized Task List**

City of The Colony Community Development Master Plan

Priority	Action	Additional Acreage	Facility Type	Estimated Cost for Preferred Improvement Level (2009 Dollars)	Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost (dollars per year)	Main Source of Funding	CDC/City Assumed Cost (1) (does not include maintenance costs)	Additional Resources
Consultancy Studies								
Priority 1								
1	Beautification & Streetscape Master Plan - Develop a Beautification and Streetscape master plan for the entire City that includes the location and concept for gateway features at major City entrances, the coordination of signage, developing a monument sign standard for parks in the City, and landscaping medians with trees, shrubs, seasonal color, and grasses. (see Chapter 7).			\$50,000		General Fund	\$50,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Arts Master Plan - Prepare a master plan, which should include an analysis and recommendations public art and the display and performance of other types of art. This master plan should include general themes and ideas for public art to be located in public spaces such as parks and streetscapes and should identify funding opportunities.			\$50,000		General Fund	\$50,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Community Gardens Master Plan - Develop a Master Plan that addresses the conceptualization, implementation, operations, maintenance, and marketing of Community Gardens. The Master Plan will give guidance to the Pilot Community Garden at Augusta Park and will include performance measures to give guidance to the development of additional Community Gardens in the future.			\$30,000		General Fund	\$30,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Bicycle Route Master Plan - Prepare a comprehensive City wide Bicycle Route Master Plan utilizing streets and roads as a complimentary study to the City's existing Trails Master Plan.			\$75,000		General Fund	\$50,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Stewart Creek Park Master Plan			\$30,000		General Fund	\$30,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
1	Eastvale Park Master Plan - By leasee			\$30,000		Bluesky Sport Center	\$30,000	
1	Community Development Website - Improve the website as part of the Community Development Corporation marketing strategy. The website should provide information to the public about new and ongoing community development projects (ongoing).			\$5,000		General Fund	\$5,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
Subtotal Recommended Studies: Priority 1				\$270,000			\$245,000	
Priority 2								
2	Wynnewood Park Master Plan (in coordination with leasee)			\$30,000		General Fund	\$30,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
2	Recreational Programming Study - Perform a study to better identify the indoor & outdoor recreational programming needs in The Colony and strategies for meeting these needs.			\$50,000		General Fund	\$50,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
2	BB Owens Park Master Plan			\$30,000		General Fund	\$30,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
2	Bill Allen Memorial Park Master Plan			\$30,000		General Fund	\$30,000	Capital Improvement Funds, Private Donations, Bond Funds
Subtotal Recommended Studies: Priority 2				\$140,000			\$140,000	
Priority 3								
3	Lion's Club Park / Neighborhood Park Master Plan - Develop a Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect).		Neighborhood Park	\$20,000		CIP, Grant Funding	\$20,000	Private Donations
3	Scout Park / Neighborhood Park Master Plan - Develop a Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect)		Neighborhood Park	\$20,000		CIP, Grant Funding	\$20,000	Private Donations
3	Slay/Baker Park / Neighborhood Park Master Plan - Develop a Master Plan for the park (created by a Registered Landscape Architect)		Neighborhood Park	\$20,000		CIP, Grant Funding	\$20,000	Private Donations
Subtotal Recommended Studies: Priority 3				\$60,000			\$60,000	
Total Development of Recreational and Maintenance Facilities				\$470,000			\$445,000	
Priority 1 Expenditure				\$12,817,000			\$3,152,000	
Priority 2 Expenditure				\$39,575,000			\$29,525,000	
Priority 3 Expenditure				\$30,810,000			\$28,770,000	
Summary Actions and Expenditures								
Total Land Acquisition		339 acres		\$17,340,000			\$5,400,000	
Total Expenditure: Trails & Trail Amenities				\$8,500,000			\$7,960,000	
Total Expenditure: Public Space Development and Improvement				\$26,742,000			\$18,242,000	
Total Expenditure: Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities				\$20,100,000			\$20,100,000	
Total Expenditure: Consultancy Studies				\$470,000			\$445,000	
Total Expenditure for all Priority Levels				\$73,152,000			\$52,147,000	

Note: Costs shown are 2009 values at a pre-design level, and will vary as more detailed design occurs. List is for guidance in planning, and not all items may be implemented.

Land costs are estimated at an average of \$60,000 per acre.

Land costs shown are general estimates intended to establish allowances and will vary. Grants and donations may reduce the cost of each item significantly.

(1) This includes all costs that are the responsibility of the CDC and the City. The reduction in CDC/City-assumed cost provided by bonds, grants, etc. are not accounted for here.

Cells highlighted in this color are items currently on the CDC/City's Comprehensive Improvement Plan

Action Plan - The Action Plan (see **Table 8.1: Prioritized Task List**) recommends the basic actions and tasks required in order for The Colony to reach the goals for community development as outlined in Chapter 4 (Section 4.8) based on values expressed through a process of public participation. The Action Plan also reflects the actions as recommended in Chapter 7. It maps out the immediate tasks at hand, together with the costs attached.

Based on the implementation strategy, the short and medium term implementation actions are shown as the Action Plan below.

The listing of the projects is categorized as follows:

1. Land Acquisition and Repurposing
2. Trails & Trail Amenities
3. Public Space Development and Improvement
4. Development of Recreational & Cultural Facilities
5. Consultancy Studies

Prioritized Task List Priority 1 Action Items			
	Units	Estimated Cost (2009 Dollars)	CDC/City Assumed Cost*
Land Acquisition and Repurposing	149 acres	\$5,940,000	\$300,000
Trails & Trail Amenities		\$80,000	\$80,000
Public Space Development and Improvement		\$6,457,000	\$2,457,000
Development of Recreational and Cultural Facilities		\$150,000	\$150,000
Consultancy Studies		\$270,000	\$245,000
Total Priority 1 Expenditures		\$12,817,000	\$3,152,000

**The CDC assumed costs basically includes all costs that are not covered by land conveyance through city ordinances. The reduction in CDC/City-assumed cost provided by bonds, grants, etc. are not accounted for here.*

Consider the following notes when reviewing the Action Plan:

- **Order of Sequence** – The sequence is based directly on the recommended importance and need for each action. However, some actions may involve fund-raising or requirements that are more complicated, and may take longer to occur. In that case, other actions may be easier to accomplish sooner, but should not diminish the need for the higher priority actions.
- **Funding possibilities** - The Action Plan includes current assumed levels of funding from the ongoing Capital Improvement Projects. The sale of certificates of obligation will generate additional funds and is strongly recommended. The

Action Plan is a guide, but may vary as specific needs or opportunities within the City occur. Other potential funding sources are noted, but are not secured. Rather, they should be considered as possibilities for further pursuit.

- **Projected Costs** - The projected costs per project are intended to establish a concept and reference of the magnitude of what is needed. These estimates are made prior to any designs or detailed concepts being developed, and will vary as more detailed design occurs.
- **Suggested Time frame** - The projected time frames are intended to establish a sequence to actions.

Land Acquisition

A comparison of the recommended acreage acquisition with the acreage needs at build-out population of 80,500 reads as follows:

Table 8.2 Acreage Acquisition for Close to Home Parks Compared to Acreage Required		
Park Type	Recommended Acreage Acquisition	Acreage required at build-out population*
Neighborhood Parks	43	76
Community Parks	180	285
TOTAL	223	361
Special Purpose Parks	74	Variable

* Acreage required per target level of service additional to 2009 existing acreage - See Table 6.1

Park Dedication and Development

As much as residential and non-residential development may increase the City tax base, new homes and commercial development add pressure on the need for parks, recreation facilities and open space. Consequently many cities have park land dedication and park development fees in place to ensure that the burden to provide parks and recreation facilities are shared with the developer community. The following recommends both a revision of the Park Dedication Ordinance as well as new measures:

1) Revision:

a) Park Dedication

1 acre / 50 DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently 1 acre / 64.5 DU)

b) Fee in Lieu of Land

\$500 / DU - single family AND multi-family residential units (currently: fee is based on the value of the property that is developed).

c) Floodplain land

Revise the allowance of 1:3 ratio to 1:15, or ideally, no acceptance of any floodplain land as part of park land dedication

2) New:

a) Dwelling Unit Park Improvement Fee

\$1,500 / DU

b) Non-residential Park Improvement Fee (new):

\$1,000 / acre

c) Floodplain land

Have all flood plain land protected with no reclamation allowed

Implementing the Action Plan with Vision

A large amount of funding is required to accomplish the goal of the Action Plan, but with vision, commitment, and a concerted effort to secure funding from available sources, many of the recommendations can be accomplished.

The very purpose of this Community Development Master Plan is to provide the City of The Colony with the vision to motivate the citizens of City of The Colony to support, participate, and collaborate with park development, recreation, cultural and historical programs.

8.4 Funding Strategies

Different community development projects will require different funding strategies. While improvements to existing parks and most connective sidewalks can be built with local funds, other parks, open space, trail, cultural and historical projects may be able to contend for state or federal funds, although the level of these funding sources has decreased significantly in recent years. This section provides brief descriptions of these funding implementation assistance opportunities.

8.4.1 City Generated Funding Sources

General Fund Expenditures are primarily used for improvements or repairs to existing parks and facilities. Typical general fund expenditures are for smaller repair and replacement efforts.

Bond Funds are primarily targeted for new facilities. Bond funding for parks and recreation, especially land acquisition, has proved very successful in the State of Texas in recent years. The Colony has as yet not called for any bond program, and is encouraged to consider this avenue to secure additional funding for parks, recreation, cultural and historical facilities.

Utility Partnerships can be established for utility easement trails. This partnership typically does not involve monetary contributions. However it does include use agreements for easements held by utility companies.

Water Utility Bill Contributions – residents of the City can choose to add a small amount to their water collection bills to fund park improvements. In demonstrated foresight, The Colony City Council recently approved the \$1.00 donation a month check box to be added to the residents' water bills as a contribution for City beautification.

Half Cent Sales Tax Funds – The Colony Development Corporation manages the funds that derive from the City's Half Cent Sales Tax to be used for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, and improvements required or suitable for use for sports, athletic, entertainment, tourist, convention, and public park purposes and events, including but not limited to Community Centers, and Hike and Bike Trails, as well as the promotion or development of new or expanded business enterprises; and maintenance and operating costs associated with any of the above projects that are publicly owned and operated.

Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) - can be used for historical and cultural facilities to promote tourism.

Park Donations Funds - can be used for applicable projects, equipment, and general facility improvements.

Park Development Fee Funds – This funding is a revenue source that many cities require from developers in addition to park dedication fees.

Tree Restoration Funds – The source of such a fund is a city that levies fines against developers for removing quality trees for development. The revenue generated is often used to plant trees and to irrigate city properties.

8.4.2 Governmental Grant Sources

A variety of grant sources exist, but three general sources account for most of the major potential sources of grants for parks in Texas. These include programs administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the Department of the Interior through the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program. The following is an overview of major grant programs.

TPWD - Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) funds the following grants:

1. Outdoor Recreation Grants (TPWD)

This program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with a population less than 500,000 **to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas**. There will be two funding cycles per year with a maximum award of **\$500,000**. Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, MUDs, river authorities, and other special districts. Projects must be completed within three years of approval. Application deadlines are **January 31st** and **July 31st** each year (the master plans submission deadline is 60 days prior to application deadline). Award notifications occur 6 months after deadlines.

2. Indoor Recreation (Facility) Grants (TPWD)

This program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with a population less than 500,000 to construct recreation centers, community centers, nature centers and other facilities (buildings). The grant maximum will increase to \$750,000 per application. The application deadline is July 31st each year (with master plan submission deadline 60 days prior to application deadline). Award notifications occur the following January.

Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants (TPWD)

The CO-OP grant helps to introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. This is not a land acquisition or construction grant; this is only for programs. Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, municipalities, counties, cities, and other tax-exempt groups. Minimum grant requests are \$5,000 and maximum grant requests are \$50,000. The application deadline is February 1st and October 1st with awards on April 15th and December 15th.

The purpose of the Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) is to expose participants to environmental and conservation programs as well as outdoor recreation activities.

Recreational Trail Grants (TPWD)

TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and currently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants (the contact number for motorized trail grant funding availability is 512-389-8224). Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors. Application deadline is May 1st each year. Download Recreational Trail Grant Application:

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants (TPWD)

TPWD administers the Texas apportionments of LWCF through the Texas Recreation Park Account. If an entity is applying for an Indoor Grant, Outdoor Grant, or Small Community Grant, TPWD may consider the application for LWCF funding. No separate application is required.

Regional Park Grants administered by TPWD

This grant program was created to assist local governments with the acquisition and development of multi-jurisdictional public recreation areas in the metropolitan areas of the state. It allows cities, counties, water districts, and other units of local government to acquire and develop parkland. The program provides 50% matching fund, reimbursement grants to eligible local governments for both active recreation and conservation opportunities. Master plans submission deadline is 60 days prior to application deadline. Grants are awarded yearly by TPW Commission when funds are available. There is no ceiling on match amounts, but grant awards are dependent on the number of applicants and the availability of funds. Past recipients for the Regional Park Grant have ranged from \$750,000 to \$1,200,000. **This program is currently inactive, but may be reinstated in 2009.** In the past deadlines were held on January 31 of each year.

National Park Service (NPS) Programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR), which provide funds for parks and recreation. Congress appropriates both funds. Typically, the funding sources have supported traditional parks rather than linear systems. The FY 2008 land and water conservation fund apportionment came to \$23,133,400. Of this amount, funding for the State of Texas exceeded \$1.2 million in 2008.

The President's budget for FY 2009 proposed zero funding for LWCF State grants. However, for the first time in the program's history, legislation has been enacted

which insures that regular LWCF appropriations will be supplemented by proceeds from certain oil and gas leases in the Gulf of Mexico. Section 105 of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GMESA) designates 12.5 percent of the proceeds from leases in Areas 181, 181 South and the 2002-2007 planning areas to be dispensed to the States in accordance with Section 6 of the LWCF Act. These funds will remain available until expended as opposed to the 3-year time frame for regular LWCF apportionments. In the early years, LWCF proceeds from these Gulf leases are expected to be quite modest.

Environmental Protection Agency can provide funding for projects with money collected in pollution settlements.

Sustainable Development Funding Program

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Sustainable Development Funding Program was created by its policy body, the Regional Transportation Council, to encourage public/private partnerships that positively address existing transportation system capacity, rail access, air quality concerns, and/or mixed land uses. By allocating transportation funds to land use projects promoting alternative transportation modes or reduced automobile use, NCTCOG and its regional partners are working to address mounting air quality, congestion, and quality of life issues.

The program is designed to foster growth and development in and around historic downtowns and Main Streets, infill areas, and passenger rail lines and stations. To support this effort, the Regional Transportation Council designated \$41 million in 2009 for sustainable infrastructure and planning projects throughout the region. Deadline to Submit Grant Application: October 2, 2009. Types of projects include:

Infrastructure:

An infrastructure project is a construction project that provides public infrastructure in the public right-of-way and can be used to support private vertical development. Examples include pedestrian amenities, landscaping, intersection improvements, lighting, street construction, traffic signalization, etc.

Planning:

Planning projects include market, housing, and economic analyses, transit station planning, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning, General Planning (subdivision regulations, creation of new code/zoning regulations, master planning, updates to pedestrian and/or bicycle plans, etc.), and others.

Regional Transportation Council Partnership Program

Through the Local Air Quality Program, NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council will fund transportation projects that address the new air quality standard, including traffic signal timing, trip reduction, air quality outreach and marketing programs, vanpool programs, bicycle/pedestrian regional connections, high-emitting-vehicle programs, diesel freight programs, off-road construction vehicle emissions reduction programs, park-and-ride facilities, and other air quality strategies.

Transportation Enhancement Program funds available

Through the Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program, the Texas Department of Transportation has made funds available during 2006 for construction of non-traditional transportation projects such as bicycle routes, pedestrian safety, and landscaping of transportation facilities. NCTCOG reviewed the projects within the Metropolitan Planning Area for eligibility, ranked the projects, and provided the state-required Letter of Transportation Improvement Program Placement.

The Program provides monetary support for transportation activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the transportation system. Funding is on a cost reimbursement basis, and projects selected are eligible for reimbursement of up to 80% of allowable cost. This funding program is not available on a yearly basis, but intermittently only, often in 5 year periods apart. The next opportunity for funding under this program will be in 2010.

8.4.3 Other Private and Quasi Private Funding Sources

Partnering with Developers and Private Land Owners is possible by implementing park land dedication rules, whether voluntary or mandatory. Such an ordinance provides a vehicle for development of parks, open space, and trails as land is developed in a city. The Colony has such an ordinance in place and needs to be updated on a regular basis as recommended in Chapter 7 of the Community Development Master Plan. The purpose of an up-to-date dedication ordinance is to ensure sufficient funding so that tangible park improvements can be made, rather than token improvements.

Other Foundation and Company Grants assist in direct funding for projects, while others exist to help citizen efforts gets established with small seed funds or technical and publicity assistance. Before applying for any grant, it is crucial to review *The Foundation Directory* and *The Foundation Grants Index* published by the Foundation Center to learn if a particular project fits the requirements of the foundation.

Grants for Greenways is a national listing that provides descriptions of a broad spectrum of both general and specific groups who provide technical and financial support for greenway interests.

An ***“Adopt-a-Park Program”*** could be developed to provide a consistent process for private and commercial donors to contribute to the development of specific parks in The Colony. The donations would be recognized at the applicable park by methods of signage, plaques or naming rights to a particular donated feature. Even a modest amount raised annually by area homeowners’ associations can replace old trash receptacles, provide new benches, or pay for the installation of trees.

Sponsorship through Businesses is a means to secure funding through businesses operating in The Colony. Entities can contribute through a Foundation (once

established) or directly support Community Development Corporation Board construction or programming efforts.

Partnerships with Interest or Volunteer Groups that are typically non-profit organizations keenly interested in particular subjects e.g. aesthetics, theater, art, and human interaction with nature including wildlife and native plants. Such Volunteer Groups are often willing to contribute time and energy free of charge for the betterment of public spaces within a city. Examples in The Colony include park clean-up and playground maintenance activities.

National Endowment for the Humanities

As part of its *We the People initiative*, the NEH has a grant program designed to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for humanities activities that explore significant themes and events in American history, thereby advancing knowledge of the founding principles of the United States in their full historical and institutional context.

Grants may be used to support long-term costs such as construction and renovation, purchase of equipment, acquisitions, and conservation of collections. Grants may also be used to establish or enhance endowments that generate expendable earnings for program activities.

Because of the matching requirements, these NEH grants also strengthen the humanities by encouraging nonfederal sources of support. Applications are welcome from colleges and universities, museums, public libraries, research institutions, historical societies and historic sites, public television and radio stations, scholarly associations, state humanities councils, and other nonprofit entities. Programs that involve the collaboration of multiple institutions are eligible, as well, but one institution must serve as the lead agent and formal applicant of record. Application information is available at:

<http://www.neh.gov/grants/grants.html>

Texas Historical Commission

Certified Local Government Grants

Certified Local Government (CLG) grants provide funding to participating city and county governments to develop and sustain an effective local preservation program critical to preserving local historic resources. These grants can be used for local historic preservation projects, including surveys of historic properties/districts, preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and other community-based preservation projects. Other examples of eligible projects for CLG funding may include the following activities:

1. All CLG grants require a local cash match budgeted on a one-to-one (dollar for dollar) match equal to a 50-50 ratio for the total cost of the project. Proposed projects utilizing all or partial matches of verifiable in-kind services and/or goods may also qualify as long as the local match equals a 50-50 ratio

- for the total cost of the project. Only non-federal monies may be used as a match, with the exception of Community Development Block Grants.
2. Cities and county governments that have been individually "certified" by the National Park Service as CLGs (prior to the time of their grant application) are eligible to apply for CLG grants. County CLGs may apply to assist non-CLG cities within their jurisdiction. CLGs may also partner together to facilitate larger projects such as public workshops or hiring a consultant to perform services for multiple CLGs. The grants may also be sponsored by CLGs by delegating a third-party organization such as another unit of local government, a commercial firm, a non-profit entity or educational institution to administer it. The contributed services of the third party to the CLG may be counted toward the matching share requirements of the grant.
 3. CLGs may apply for CLG grants in the spring of each year, and they are usually awarded in the following fall. Applications for the FY 2010 grant cycle are due Friday, June 5, 2009.

Typically, grants range from \$2,000 to \$30,000.

More information is available at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/gracglg.shtml>

Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grants

Eligibility: historic structures, archeological sites, archeological curatorial facilities, and heritage education projects.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) awards grants for preservation projects from the Texas Preservation Trust Fund (TPTF). Created by the Texas Legislature in 1989, the TPTF is an interest-earning pool of public and private monies. The earned interest and designated gifts are distributed yearly as matching grants to qualified applicants for the acquisition, survey, restoration, preservation or for the planning and educational activities leading to the preservation of historic properties, archeological sites and associated collections of the State of Texas. Competitive grants are awarded on a one-to-one match basis and are paid as reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred during the project. Applications will be available early each year.

The TPTF grant cycle is typically once a year. The next grant cycle is for the fiscal year 2010 grant cycle and information will be posted on this web site when funds become available.

The Texas Main Street Program

The Texas Main Street Program, part of the Texas Historical Commission's Community Heritage Development Division, helps Texas cities revitalize their historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts by utilizing preservation and economic development strategies.

The program began in 1981 and is affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Texas Main Street Program is among the most successful downtown revitalization programs in the nation, and has assisted more than 140

Texas cities through the program. The program has resulted in the private reinvestment of more than \$1.3 billion in Texas downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts, the creation of more than 23,000 jobs and the establishment of more than 5,900 new businesses.

The annual application process for Main Street cities includes a Letter of Intent filed in mid-May of each year and an application deadline on the last working day of July. The next round of applications will be accepted Friday, July 31, 2009, for the program beginning January 1, 2010. For copy of the application guidelines, the contact number is 512-463-6092.

Texas Heritage Tourism Partnership Grants

Government and nonprofit organizations within active Texas Heritage Trails Program regions can apply for matching grants when funds are available. Grants are used for heritage tourism-oriented projects such as interpretation, signage, publications and web sites, curriculum development, educational programs, and workshops and training. Grants are one-to-one with in-kind and/or cash matches.

More information the following number may be called: 512-463-2630.

American Association for State and Local History

The Save Our History Initiative

AASLH is a partner of HISTORY ® on the Save Our History Initiative. HISTORY ® created Save Our History (SOH) to support local history education and historic preservation efforts in communities across America.

Over the past four years, the network has awarded nearly \$1 million in grants to fund partnerships between schools and local history organizations on student-driven community preservation projects, distributed free educational resources to 60,000 teachers reaching approximately 1.8 million students, hosted SOH teacher training sessions, and honored dozens of teachers and students for their commitment to local history education and preservation.

Guidelines, entry forms and rules are available online at www.saveourhistory.com. Entries are due June 5, 2009.

8.5 Policies & Ordinances

Ordinance Support for Trail System Development

Utilization of the existing Park Land Dedication Ordinance is an important tool to assist in the implementation of a City wide trail system. Trail corridors can be integrated into developments as the development goes through the platting process. Land for trail corridors can be donated in a fashion similar to the dedication of land for traditional parks, and each adjacent development can be required to construct its portion of the overall trail system, or other trails that connect to the main trail network.

Community Development Corporation Board

All revisions to the Community Development Master Plan require a recommendation from the Community Development Corporation Board and approval of City Council. City Staff should present significant changes in the Community Development Master Plan and provide brief summaries of annual updates to the documentation. This will provide the CDC Board with comprehensive information to assist with development decisions.

Joint Planning with the neighboring Cities of Lewisville, Frisco, Little Elm, Plano, Hebron and Carrollton

Establish joint planning efforts with these neighboring cities to provide additional options to address recreation needs in The Colony, especially trail connections across city boundaries and along Lake Lewisville.

Joint Planning with Lewisville ISD

Establish joint planning review sessions with Lewisville ISD to allow for coordination of facilities usage and development.

Joint Planning with Denton County

Continue joint planning efforts with Denton County to provide additional options to address recreation needs in The Colony.

Specific Policy Actions

(See also Paragraph 7.2 City Policy)

1. Pro-actively search for parklands to target for acquisition, prioritized each year over the next five years.
2. Establish a City Ordinance that requires a minimum of 80% compliance for single loaded roads (roads with development along one side only, with park land on the other) along all future parks, buffers, floodplains, and open space. Single loaded roads allows for accessible parks that are safe and inviting. Safety is generally achieved by the informal surveillance provided by the residents overlooking the park.

3. Establish a City Ordinance that requires transparent metal (or cast iron) fences in lieu of solid wood fences along private properties bordering parks, trails, creek corridors, and open space so as to contribute to a sense of openness and safety.
4. Adopt policies, which emphasize the importance of the preservation and protection of the City's tree cover in addition to and complementary with the City's tree ordinance.
5. Adopt policies, which emphasize the importance of the preservation and protection of the City's creek system in addition to and complementary with the City's creek ordinance.
6. Plan ahead to protect and preserve the City's 100-year floodplains at build-out conditions, including a buffer of up to 20 to 50 feet beyond the floodplain.
7. Establish a City Ordinance that mandates the donation of floodplain lands along creeks and other water bodies (e.g. Lake Lewisville). Such land is not developable, yet provides habitat and corridors of movement for fauna and the opportunity for use as open space, greenways, and trails (see Paragraph 7.2; Recreation and Drainage Easements)
8. Establish a City Ordinance that mandates no reclamation of any floodplain land for purposes of residential and non-residential development.
9. Continue to work directly and continuously with Lewisville Independent School District, so as to acquire lands for neighborhood parks in conjunction with school district property acquisitions and to develop park facilities that can be used jointly by school children and residents.
10. Identify school sites that may be developed jointly with the school district as publicly accessible parklands. Potential projects include a jointly built natatorium and the joint use of land at B.B. Owens Elementary School for practice facilities.
11. Establish a formal process and agreements for working directly and continuously with the private sector and City departments that can assist in acquiring park lands or in jointly developing facilities. These include the City's Engineering, Public Works, and Development Services Departments; schools; private entertainment providers.
12. Endorse the park to population ratios established by this Community Development Master Plan to guide the acquisition and development of parks in all sectors of the City. For neighborhood and community parks, these are 2 acres and 6 acres per 1,000 population respectively.
13. Require all new development adjacent to existing or proposed trails in the Community Development Master Plan to provide connections to both existing and

proposed trails to ensure that everyone in the City is within walking distance of a trail that links with the overall City Trail network.

14. Establish standards for developing land adjacent to linear park corridors. These include helping to fund linear parks, providing pedestrian connections to the parks, minimum amounts of landscaping along those corridors, and signage regulations adjacent to or within the linear park corridors.
15. Continue to ensure that adequate maintenance personnel are provided to take care of parklands in the City. Expect and provide an exceptional level of care.
16. Endorse the need for the preservation of open space throughout the City.
17. Pursue alternative methods of funding park system and programming improvement, such as partnerships with non-governmental entities, grant funding sources, establishing “Friends of...” organizations, and contracting out programs or operations. Consider these and other methods only where feasible and financially sound.

Other City Plans

The success of the Community Development Master Plan implementation goes hand-in-hand with other City plans and ordinances e.g. Trails Master Plan; Comprehensive Plan; Flood Prevention Ordinance; and Thoroughfare Plan. The Community Development Master Plan concepts and ideas to be addressed by these documents include the following:

1. Comprehensive Plan:
 - Single loaded roads;
 - Transparent metal fencing; and
 - Protection of unique features in the City.
2. Flood Prevention Ordinance:
 - Creek corridor protection; and
 - No platting allowed further to the creek than the edge of the 100 year floodplain.
 - No reclamation of floodplain land.
3. Thoroughfare Plan:
 - Creek crossings should make allowance for 11 to 12’ free board below bridge to allow for under-bridge trail connections, which is important to consider for any future bridges and the upgrade of existing bridges.
 - Adopt and include the entire Trails Master Plan into the Thoroughfare Plan as alternative transportation routes.
 - Ensure adequate ROW acquisition for safe and effective design of roads and trail corridors.

8.6 Community Development Marketing Implementation

The benefits of parks and recreation facilities and programs to the citizens of The Colony are significant. Using park and other city facilities can lead to a healthier and satisfying life style. In turn, better park facilities can lead to an improved perception of the City and the **quality of life** features it provides. The marketing plan for parks includes two key areas, which are:

- **Understanding** the target market and the needs of that market, **and addressing areas of key needs**, and
- **Promoting** facilities and programs offered by the department or affiliated entities.

Promotion of Facilities and Programs

A plan to “market” facilities, programs, and events should be a key component of the continued growth and expansion of The Colony. From the City’s perspective, marketing essentially refers to getting the word out and letting the residents of The Colony know about key facilities and programs that are available. Promotion is extremely important in that it communicates the value of the services that the City is providing to residents of The Colony.

The Community Development Corporation is encouraged to continue including the following components in their marketing plan:

- Distribution of promotional materials, including flyers and seasonal newspaper inserts;
- Three seasonal recreational programming brochures (Fun Times).
- A regularly updated internet website;
- Periodic presentations to the City Council regarding community development projects;
- Regular promotional events; and
- Periodic public announcements and special features on local radio and television to discuss new features and programs provided by the Community Development Corporation Board.

Web site enhancement – many cities today are relying on sophisticated websites to promote facilities, programs, and special events. The Colony’s website is functional and provides information similar to most cities. The Community Development Corporation Board should strive to enhance its website constantly as technology advances. The website should be interesting, dynamic, and to some degree have new features periodically that keep it up to date.

The web site could include web pages on the following items (some of these are already on the website, but could be re-arranged to provide a more dynamic promotional tool for the Community Development Corporation Board):

- ***Existing parks – facilities available within each park.*** Information from the Community Development Master Plan document can be added to the website for a quick description of each park. Include 360 panoramic views from specific locations in parks.
- ***Planned improvements*** – Continue to provide information on planned improvements, including a copy of the overall master plan summary in a downloadable format.
- ***Special facilities*** – Continue to provide information on meeting rooms, fitness facilities, gymnasiums and aquatic areas; include hours of operation and cost, special events, and photographs of the facilities.
- ***Athletic, cultural and historical information*** – Continue to assist associations in establishing their own sites, and provide links to those sites.
- ***Upcoming events*** – Continue to provide information on upcoming events.
- ***Programs that are currently being offered*** – Continue to provide information on programs offered by The Colony.
- ***Rental information*** – Continue to provide rental rates and pictures of each facility. Outdoor pavilions can also be included on the web site.
- ***Contact and Comment section*** – Continue to provide location for contact information as well as a place for citizen comments.

8.7 Plan Updates

The 2009 The Colony Community Development Master Plan is a guide to be used by the City to develop the existing system for future needs over the next 5 to 10 up to 25 years. There will be changes that occur during the time frame of this plan:

- Population may increase more rapidly than projected;
- The community may indicate a special need for a facility not listed in the recommendations; and
- Development of recommendations will occur.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department stipulates the following for park master plans: *“The park, recreation, and open space master plans must cover at least a ten year period after which a completely new plan is required. Plans must be updated every two years to remain eligible. As a minimum, updates should include a summary of accomplishments, new public input, most recent inventory data, and updated needs, priorities, and new implementation plan. Demographics, population projections, goals and objectives, standards, and maps should also be updated if appropriate. Priorities should be updated as high priority items are accomplished and lower priorities move up. A new resolution is not required when updating priorities; however if priorities are revised or change, a new resolution adopting the new priorities, is required.”*

A review and update of this Community Development Master Plan by City staff should be conducted every two years or when a significant change does occur. These

updates can be published in short report format and attached to this Community Development Master Plan for easy use. Four key areas for focus of these periodic reviews are as follows:

Facility Inventory - An inventory of new facilities should be recorded as well as any significant improvements of facilities controlled by Lewisville/Little Elm Independent School District or the City's public/private partners.

Facility Use - Facility use is a key factor in determining the need for renovation of additional facilities. Updates on participation of City facilities should be prepared annually with data from each organization. Changes in participation of those outside the City limits as well as the citizens of The Colony should be recorded.

Public Involvement - As mentioned previously, this Community Development Master Plan reflects 2008 population and attitudes as expressed by the citizens of The Colony. However, over time, those attitudes and interests may change as the City changes. Periodic surveys are recommended to provide a current account of the attitudes of the citizens and additional direction from the public on issues that may arise.

Action Plan - As items from the action plan are implemented, updates should be made to this prioritized list to provide a current schedule for City staff.



Appendix 1

Individual Park Assessments

A1.1 Neighborhood Parks

Carr / Chapman Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 4515 Carr Street

Size of Park: 1.2 acres

Comments – This park primarily is composed of un-programmed space surrounding a playground / pavilion / basketball court complex. The play equipment in the park is aged, yet the pavilion is new. The park feels very open because of the large amount of un-programmed space and sparse tree vegetation, yet the single-loaded roads with houses facing on the opposite side help to define the edges of the park. The pavilion – having only one table – is mostly underutilized.



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 playground with one swing set, 1 monkey bars, and 1 slide
- 1 pavilion
- 1 basketball half court

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Carr / Chapman Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Sidewalks from Carr and Chapman streets should be extended, through the park, to the intersection.

- An additional table should be installed in the pavilion and seat walls should be placed along the pavilions edge to serve as additional seating for picnics and for watching basketball.
- Consider replacing the pavilion roof with a multi-tiered roof in order to prevent the build-up of heat which can render the pavilion unusable.
- Extend electrical service and lighting to the pavilion in order to increase demand for pavilion rentals and to increase perceived safety within the park at night.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Additional trees should be planted around the park, specifically at the intersection of Carr and Chapman to serve as a monument or focal area for the park and near the existing amenities to provide shade.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When adding vegetation to the park, species which are native or adaptive should be chosen to limit the need for irrigation and reliance on fertilizer and pesticides.

General

- Prepare a master plan layout for implementation that addresses the efficient programming of the site, the creation of a sense of place, circulation, walkways, a sense of arrival (gateways), focal points, and plantings for shade, texture, and color.

Dave Cowan Park	
Type of Park:	Neighborhood Park
Address:	5004 South Colony Boulevard
Size of Park:	5 acres

Comments – Dave Cowan Park is located in an attractive and unique setting; the varied topography, which slopes gradually from south to north, the adjacency of single-loaded roads and houses with open fences (rather than stockade fences), and the view to the creek corridor to the north create a visually interesting backdrop for the park. Additionally, because the



northern border of the park is longer than the southern border, the space that the park occupies acts as a visual gateway to the Corp of Engineers floodplain land beyond the park.

Though there are these many positive features, this park does not present a sense of organization. Specifically, access to the varied areas of the park is not clearly defined through sidewalks or paths. In addition to making many of the park's amenities non-accessible for the disabled, this presents a feeling that the playground, pavilion, and volleyball court were positioned in the park randomly. Further adding to this sense of disorganization, the trees within the park were not planted in a logical or natural manner; rather, in many instances they were planted in straight lines in the middle of a large open space. Typically, for aesthetic reasons in parks, trees are either planted in clusters or, if planted in straight lines, are planted along a fence, street, promenade, or some other linear feature.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 one-tier roofed pavilion with two picnic tables and two BBQ grills
- 1 volleyball court
- 1 playground with two slides, climbing bars, and swing set

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Dave Cowan Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a "perfect world" scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Design and construct a network of accessible sidewalks that connect each of the park's main programmed spaces to help build coherency within the park.
- Renovate or replace the aging playground equipment, replace the gravel in the playground with an accessible and safer material such as wood fiber, and ensure that vegetation does not encroach on the playground area.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- When new vegetation is planted (including trees and shrubs), special attention should be paid to using natural patterns and groupings. That is, trees should be planted in natural clusters, rather than in straight lines unless when a walkway is to be emphasized for its linearity.
- Take advantage of the adjacent creek corridor to the North by positioning any future pavilions or benches to face this area. Additionally, provide pedestrian access to this creek corridor if possible.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation, fertilizer, and pesticides.

General

- The creek corridor space north of Dave Cowan Park could potentially serve as a trail head for the proposed East/West Connection¹ which could potentially connect Dave Cowan Park with Wilcox Park and North Colony Boulevard Park. Efforts should be made in advance to coordinate the design of the trail with park improvements to provide access between the park and the trail.
- Develop and implement a master plan layout that organizes the park with good access and circulation and provides a destination for recreation, fitness, play, and relaxation. Park features should include a multi-tier roofed pavilion, up-to-date playground, walkways, gateways, and shade trees.

Friendship Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 4160 Newton Street

Size of Park: 1.7 acres

Comments – Friendship Park occupies a large, easily accessible parcel of land bordered by three single-loaded streets (Malone Avenue, Newton Street, and Keys Lane) and, on two sides, by houses. While the park enjoys a large amount of available land, it lacks a sense of organization or “place” owing partly to the arrangement of its amenities and a scarcity of trees and shrubbery which



leads to a feeling of vastness and emptiness. In some instances, the proximity of houses helps to appease this empty feeling; specifically, one house does not have a fence around its backyard, which helps make the park feel more open and less like a canyon. However, because of its accessibility, its proximity to many houses and two schools, and the possibility for pedestrian connections between neighborhoods, Friendship Park is an important part in The Colony’s park system.

Much improvement could be made to this park with updating and repairing its amenities (new playground equipment and repair or removal of tether ball pole) and adding trees and/or shrubs to help define edges and spaces within the park.

¹ As proposed in the 2006 Trail Master Plan

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Pavilion housing five picnic tables
- 1 BBQ grill
- Open field
- 1 Playground with a swing set, jungle gym, and merry-go-round
- 1 basketball half court

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Friendship Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Play equipment is aged and outdated. Some of it should be removed and replaced with a different type of equipment (i.e., merry-go-round) and some should be repaired and refurbished.
- The pavilion should be updated to be more inviting. Ways to accomplish this include removing some of the picnic tables and locating them under nearby shade trees, repairing cracked pavement, replacing the aging BBQ grill, and replacing the pavilion covering with a more effective two-tiered design.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Plant trees, shrubs, and other vegetation throughout the park in an organized manner to help define the edges and spaces within the park and to provide shady spaces for park users.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When planting vegetation, utilize native, drought-resistance species, thereby reducing or negating the need for irrigation. When over-seeding the turf grass, use low-water seed blends that include Buffalo grass.

General

- The location of this park makes the area prime to serve as a focal point for the neighborhood that includes places for neighbors to meet and connections for pedestrians passing through – efforts should be made to take advantage of this characteristic.
- Develop a master plan layout for implementation that addresses the efficient programming of the site, the creation of a sense of place, circulation, walkways, a sense of arrival (gateways), focal points, and plantings for shade, texture, and color.

Lion's Club Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 4800 Nash

Size of Park: 4.6 acres

Comments – The effectiveness of this park as an open space within a neighborhood is enhanced by the adjacency of single-loaded roads and open fences surrounding the park. The established, mature trees surrounding the pond provide shade and visual interest in the park and present interesting spaces within the pond area. One characteristic that one cannot ignore when visiting this park is



the large number of ducks and geese that are always present here. This adds a unique characteristic to the park, but also results in the area surrounding the pond being covered in feathers and feces. Specifically, the pavilion is ailed by this condition which, no doubt, decreases the demand for its use by the general population. Taking measures to keep the pavilion clean will improve its demand for rentals.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Pond
- 1 Playground (with two swing sets)
- 1 Large pavilion
- 1 Parking lot (white rock)

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Lion's Club Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a "perfect world" scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The white rock parking lot should be replaced with a paved parking lot.
- There is currently a chemical toilet in the park. If restroom facilities are needed in this park, the chemical toilet should be replaced with a permanent, more aesthetically pleasing restroom facility.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Adding an aeration system to the pond will help resist algae growth and mosquito breeding. This can be done through the use of a fountain or something less extravagant like a simple bubbler.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Consider pervious paving for the future upgraded parking lot. Pervious paving, as opposed to traditional, impervious paving, will reduce the level of runoff produced by the parking lot.

General

- There are several poorly-placed utility boxes located in the large grassy area on the north side of the park. These should either be moved to allow for more use of this space or screened for better aesthetics in the park.
- Prepare and implement a master plan that includes a trail loop, park gateway features, and additional plantings.

Perryman Park	
Type of Park:	Neighborhood Park
Address:	4930 South Colony Boulevard
Size of Park:	2.4 acres

Comments – Perryman Park is one of four parks located at the intersection of South Colony Boulevard and Blair Oaks Drive. Because of its proximity to these two rather busy streets, this park takes on a different character than is typical for a neighborhood park (as do the other three parks at this intersection). Much of this park is located underneath the large power transmission lines that cross the city, which also affects the park’s character.



Present in the park is very modern playground equipment that is designed for a range of children ages, which is an advantage as this park is located so closely to Camey

Elementary which occasionally uses this park². In addition, the Education Center Charter School also uses this park on occasion because of its high-quality playground equipment. Finally, the park is largely compliant with ADA accessibility guidelines (except for the parking lot) which enhances the park's sense of continuity and organization.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 Playgrounds
- 1 Pavilion
- 1 BBQ grill
- 1 Sand volleyball court
- 1 Parking lot

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Perryman Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- This park considerably lacks support facilities. Specifically, the park would benefit greatly from the addition of shade structures, benches, a drinking fountain, and a restroom. These items were mentioned by users from the elementary and charter schools as needed at this park during a field visit.
- The parking lot is not well-defined and is unpaved. It is recommended that the lot be paved and striped; paving this parking lot will also allow it to become ADA-compliant.
- The pavilion in this park is quite aged and should be renovated or replaced.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- There are few trees (none of which are mature) in this park. The planting of more trees would help to provide shade to the playground area and help to buffer some of the noise from the adjacent roadways.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Consider permeable paving for the future upgraded parking lot. Permeable paving, as opposed to traditional, impervious paving, will reduce the level of runoff produced by the parking lot.
- For future plantings, consider native plants with low water requirements.

General

- The proximity of high-traffic streets and large power lines (the humming from these power lines is audible) negatively impact this park. Efforts should be taken to minimize the impacts of these issues on the park through screening, buffering, and selective location of future amenities.

² According to a Camey Elementary teacher spoken to in the park during the field visit.

Ridgepoint Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 4401 Standridge Drive

Size of Park: 14.5 acres

Comments – Ridgepoint Park has one of the most beautiful settings of all the parks in The Colony – it is at the end of a single-loaded road, near the shoreline of Lake Lewisville, and is surrounded by riparian



vegetation including cottonwoods, willows, and bald cypresses. Currently, only a portion of the park is developed, but across the site different experiences are provided by the changes in terrain and a line of trees that divide the park in two.

One portion of the park (which contains the pavilion and playground – both of which are state of the art and ADA accessible) has a very calm feeling to it. This area feels like a room within the park that is enclosed by the surrounding trees. There are sounds of cottonwoods blowing in the wind and occasional motor boats passing by. The other portion of the park has a much more expansive feeling, has great views of the lake, and is bordered on one side by houses with open fences. This portion is also much windier, but is still relaxing.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Pavilion
- 1 Playground
- 1 Parking lot

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Ridgepoint Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Develop a trailhead for the future Shoreline Trail that provides a gateway between the park and the trail, as well as rest areas.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- The natural vegetation on the site has great environmental and aesthetic value. As many of the species as possible should be preserved in further developing this park, especially the cottonwoods and bald cypresses.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- There are several drainage ways that pass through the park. Most of these are in their natural state, but one has been mowed-over. All drainage ways should be allowed to exist in their natural state in order to slow the flow of water, thereby reducing erosion and filtering pollutants from the water.

General

- Implement the previously developed master plan for implementation that includes walkways, connections to the future Shoreline Trail, additional native plantings that blend in with the existing riparian vegetation, and picnic areas with lake views. Make changes to the master plan to include volleyball, basketball, and changes to the Shoreline Trail connections.

Scout Park

Type of Park:

Neighborhood

Address:

4177 North Colony Boulevard

Size of Park:

5.7 acres

Comments – Scout Park is unique in that it is the only neighborhood park in The Colony bordered by houses facing the park *and* the shoreline. Additionally, North Colony Boulevard – a main collector street through this part of the city – runs along the edge of the park opposite the lakeshore. Considering all of these factors, this supports Scout Park as being a prime gateway from the city to the lake, both visually and physically as the future Shoreline Trail will pass by Scout Park.



The focal point of the park is clearly the pond with the water fountain, waterfowl, and aquatic plant species. The strength of this focal point is fortified by the topography within the park which slopes down toward the pond like a bowl. Because of the lack of fences bordering the park, Scout Park has a feeling of being one of the most inviting and accessible parks in the city – a feeling which will only increase once the Shoreline Trail is completed.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 covered picnic tables

- 2 BBQ grills
- Scout ceremony area with three flagpoles
- Pond with fountain

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Scout Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The use of this park could increase with the addition of a playground.
- One or more pavilions will add to the charm and use of the park.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- The pond presents an opportunity to display aquatic plant species to park users in an easy-to-access manner. An environmental education program could be started that uses the pond to inform people about the various aquatic plants native to the Lewisville Lake area, the region, or to Texas.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- The drainage swale should not be mown over as it currently is. Rather, it should be allowed to vegetate with native or adaptive grasses which will help slow the flow of water through the swale, help filter out pollution from water, prevent erosion, and provide visual interest.

General

- When the Shoreline Trail is completed, this park will serve as a de facto trailhead. For maximum benefit, preparations should be made to improve the functionality of this park as a trailhead, including a gateway, trail connections through the park, shaded rest areas with drinking fountains and trail maps. Additional parking for trailhead users must be considered.
- Prepare a master plan layout for implementation that emphasizes the lake adjacency, responds to the topography of the site, and celebrates this park as a prime destination in The Colony.

Slay / Baker Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 5600 Baker Drive

Size of Park: 2.6 acres

Comments – This park, while relatively undeveloped, enjoys a prime location along one of the city’s two utility easement corridors. In its current state, the park has a modern playground and a basketball half court – both of which are ADA-accessible – and a large amount of open space. In addition to the utility easement, the park is surrounded by single-loaded streets, the sides and backs of houses (some with open fences), and an alleyway.



Currently, the park contains few trees, only one of which is mature, and is visually marred by the power lines which pass through the park. Because of its location and adjacency to the utility easement, this park could serve as a trailhead, neighborhood gateway, and a major node along the planned Park Loop Trail³.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Playground (modern all-in-one unit)
- 1 Picnic Table
- 1 Basketball half court with bench

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Slay / Baker Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- This park could benefit greatly from having a multi-tier roofed pavilion. As most other neighborhood parks have smaller pavilions, a larger pavilion (forty to sixty feet in diameter) might be appropriate.

³ As proposed in the 2006 Trail Master Plan

- Efforts should be made to coordinate park improvements with the construction of the Park Loop Trail. Potential improvements include constructing sidewalks that lead to where the trail might pass, planting shade trees in strategic areas so that they will be more mature when the trail is actually developed, and installing drinking fountains and benches that can serve both trail and park users.
- Power lines should be re-routed so that they do not pass through the center of the park – this can also be achieved by moving the power lines under ground. If neither of these options are feasible, at least the guy wires should be screened with plantings or some other treatment as the guy wires pose a tripping hazard because of their location within the center of the park.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- There is a considerable amount of un-programmed open space within this park. This in itself is not negative, though this open space would benefit from additional landscaping to better define its edges. Trees and shrubs, as well as areas of native grasses can be used for this purpose.
- With heat a prime factor in the North Texas climate, plant many shade trees as a matter of priority.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.

General

- Prepare and implement a master plan for the park that emphasizes trail connections, native plantings, and the appropriate location of a multi-tier roofed pavilion.

A1.2 Community Parks

Bill Allen Memorial Park

Type of Park: Community Park

Address: 5900 Carroll

Size of Park: 48.8 acres

Comments – Bill Allen Memorial Park is one of the most diverse and visually appealing parks in The Colony. It contains many amenities, including a nine-hole disc golf course, an amphitheater, trails, picnic areas, a playground, a basketball court, a pavilion, and an exercise area designed specifically for those with physical disabilities. The park also benefits from established trees, varied topography, and a creek corridor running through the middle of the park.



The park is surrounded by single-loaded roads on three sides, houses, and a railroad track. The creek divides the park into two zones – one with the disc golf course, picnic areas, and most of the other park amenities and one with the amphitheater, a pond, and a large, open, un-programmed field.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Amphitheater
- 1 Basketball court
- 1 Handicapped exercise area
- 1 Playground
- 1 Nine-hole disc golf course
- 1.1 Miles of trails, sidewalks, and pathways
- XX Picnic tables
- 1 Pond with a fishing pier

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Bill Allen Memorial Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The trees near the disc golf course should be pruned on a regular basis to ensure the usability of the course. Trees which hang too low into the greenway of each hole prohibit the use of that hole.
- An additional nine holes should be added to the disc golf course. In addition to requests for this in citizen surveys, there is room in the park for an additional nine holes and a full disc golf course can act as a regional destination.
- While the amphitheater facility is very agreeable, there is no shade or shelter provided which limits its usability on hot or windy days. This facility should be examined to determine if a shade structure or other sort of shelter is suitable.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- The wooded areas are both visually attractive and important in providing wildlife habitat. Use interpretative signage to educate the public on the value of natural areas in an urban environment.
- Adding an aeration system to the pond will help resist algae growth and mosquito breeding. This can be done through the use of a fountain or something less extravagant like a simple bubbler. In addition, the pond itself could benefit from dredging.
- Creek channel stabilization improvements should be made as soon as possible for infrastructure security and to preserve the creek as a natural resource.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- This park is prone to flooding as was evidenced by the damage – especially to the playground – seen in the fall of 2007. Special considerations for this situation should be made; in addition to ensuring that permanent damage to amenities does not result from minor flooding, minimum chemicals for landscaping, cleaning, or repair should be used as these chemicals will easily enter the creek during a flood event, therefore entering The Colony’s drinking water supply. Additionally, flood-proof trash receptacles should be used for the same reason.

General

- The creek is in a state of imbalance with high vertical banks eroding with each small and large flood occurrence, which is typical of urbanizing creeks until a new equilibrium is reached.

Five Star West Community Complex

Type of Park: Community Park

Address: 4100 Blair Oaks Drive

Size of Park: 79.6 acres

Comments – This park is the crown jewel of The Colony’s athletic recreation system. It is one of the best maintained and most expansive parks of its kind in the region. In addition to providing fifteen lighted playing fields of various types suitable for league use, this park also has a 1.2 mile walking trail that loops around the fields, playgrounds, and a veterans’ memorial.



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 6 Lighted soccer fields
- 2 Lighted football fields
- 6 Lighted baseball fields
- 1 Lighted youth softball field
- 2 Concession/bathroom complexes
- 1.2 Mile walking trail
- 3 Shade pavilions
- 3 Paved parking lots
- 2 Playgrounds
- Multiple sculptures

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Five Star West Community Complex. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The walking trail is very scenic and comfortable on the northern edge of the park when it runs adjacent to the landscaped berm. The rest of the walking trail should be improved to this level of quality. Additionally, this trail would be more useful if it was better connected to the walkways in the interior of the park – i.e., those that connect the ball fields.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Additional shade trees should be planted in key areas to provide shade and visual interest without interfering with the game fields (such as along the creek corridor).

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Across the entire site, the turf grasses are heavily mowed. On the date of the site visit, maintenance workers were mowing areas that appeared to have been mowed only days earlier (this includes non-playing field areas such as drainage ways and space between fields). This practice reduces the amount of moisture that the grasses hold, demanding more irrigation than would be needed if the grass was allowed to grow longer. Also, the amount of emissions from the mowers is greatly increased due to this extra mowing.
- Develop and implement a planting plan whereby native grasses are established in unused areas so that mowing is limited to the minimum necessary.

General

- N/A

Municipal Community Complex
Type of Park: Community Park
Address: 5151 North Colony Boulevard
Size of Park: 24.77 acres

Comments – The Municipal Community Complex as it is today contains the Recreation Center, Kids Colony, the Skate Park, and the Little League Complex. As it stands, this is not a complete community park, but due to its size and location, it has the underpinnings of a successful community park, provided certain additional amenities are implemented. Also located in this area is The Colony Police Department headquarters which will soon be undergoing expansion.



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- Kids Colony (playground)
- 1 Skate park
- 1 Basketball full court
- Little League Complex – 4 competitive baseball fields (two lighted), 1 competitive softball field (lighted)
- 3 Backstops
- 5 Covered picnic tables

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Municipal Community Complex. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- In order to provide the full offering of amenities typical of a community park, a pavilion should be added to this park. Because of the location and the intensity of use that the Recreation Center, Kids Colony, Skate Park, and Little League Complex receive, a large pavilion is called for.
- To further improve this park’s capabilities as a community park, a loop-style jogging/walking trail should be constructed that will provide park users a ¼ mile or so long area to exercise.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- One of the most lacking amenities in this park is large open areas for active free play. Specifically, the Kids Colony and the Skate Park are located in the center of what would otherwise be large open areas for active play. Efforts should be made to ensure that the interstitial space between these uses is adequate for free play by addressing any existing areas of uneven ground and drainage issues. As such, care should be taken in placing a pavilion so that it is in a usable location, but does not obstruct open space for free play.
- While there are trees near the Police Department and in Kids Colony, the park overall feels very open. Landscaping, including the planting of trees is necessary in order to help define space within the park, provide visual interest, and give shade and wind protection.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.
- Consider permeable paving when expanding parking and constructing new amenities to limit run-off.

General

- N/A

A1.3 Special Purpose Parks

BB Owens Park

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – League Use

Address: 5700 Squires

Size of Park: 20 acres

Comments – The adult softball fields in this park are very well maintained – second only in quality to the baseball fields at Five Star. The park also enjoys proximity to a school yard, a wooded area, and a single-loaded road, all of which add to the park’s visibility and visual character. There is a laser tag facility located in the wooded east end of the park that contains a series of trails, wooden



barricades, watch towers, and ponds. Paintball is specifically restricted at this location, but there are obvious signs that use of paintball guns does occur in this area.

The primary issues with this park are the location of the service facility on site and the under-use of the wooded edge of the park. The culmination of these conditions is that brush, logs, and unused supplies are piled in front of the wooded edge making this area look unsightly.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 softball fields (lighted)
- 1 parking lot
- 1 restrooms/concession complex
- 1 pond
- 1 service facility

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for BB Owens Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Operations of the service facility should be reviewed to ensure that waste and unused supplies are properly disposed of or stored in an area other than the edge of the wooded area. Where possible, some of the maintenance equipment/facilities should be moved to a less conspicuous location.
- Some of the support facilities at this park need to be restored, including the appearance of the lighting system and the score box.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Careful examination of the pond nearest the baseball fields is necessary. The bank of this pond is close to being breached because of erosion along the adjacent stream bank. Overall, the pond would benefit from being dredged and cleaned and methods to improve water quality, such as by adding a fountain, are necessary. In short, this pond should be made into an amenity.
- The wooded area on the north and east side of the park present an opportunity for nature trails with interpretative signage that provide information on local flora and fauna, such as the pair of birds of prey that was seen hunting in the park.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Erosion of the stream bank should be examined in a regional context as well as locally for this park. Efforts should be made to reduce stream bank erosion, which will help reduce the impacts of flooding.

General

- There is a great potential at this park to utilize the adjacent creek corridor as an environmental learning area and/or as part of the proposed trails network that would connect this park to the Turner Street Soccer Complex and to potential trails in neighboring Frisco.
- Explore a partnership with the Lewisville Independent School District for expanding the softball fields into the adjacent, unused school property.

East Lake Highlands Football Facility

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – League Use

Address: 4800 E. Lake Highlands Drive

Size of Park: 12.2 acres

Comments – This park is hidden from general view as it is located between a residential area on two sides, a wooded creek area, and the City Public Works facility. The site feels enclosed due to the surrounding backs of houses with stockade fences (facing two sides of the site) and the dense wooded edge (facing one side). That is, three of the sides of the park area are bordered by a hard,



visually-impenetrable edge. In addition, the side of the public works facility facing the park is a work yard with outdoor storage and gravel piles. These areas are decidedly industrial in use, which differs from the nature of the park, the wooded edge, and the surrounding neighborhoods. As such, this park also functions as a buffer between the neighborhoods and the public works facility. Of note is that the public works facility is in the process of being expanded. As such, one of the two football fields at this park will be removed to accommodate this expansion. The amenities in the East Lake Highlands Football Facility, including the storage shed and bleachers, are showing their age. The culmination of the location of this park, its adjacencies, and the condition of its amenities tend to make it feel uninviting.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 youth football fields (one lighted)
- 1 concession stand / restroom
- Multiple steel bleachers
- 1 Storage building

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the East Lake Highlands Football Facility. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The amenities on the site should be renovated – this includes the, storage shed, and concession / bathroom building. Each of these should be repaired and repainted as needed.
- Bleachers should be sheltered from the sun and the wind as applicable to enhance spectator enjoyment.
- The Parking lot needs to be more defined, preferably through permeable pavement and striping.
- Views of the public works facility's work yard and gravel piles from the park should be screened through the use of vegetation or non-transparent fencing

Natural Resources/Open Space

- The wooded edge should be improved through selective clearing to a) provide a more open feeling in the park, b) provide trail access to the creek corridor, and c) give a more natural feeling to the wooded area.
- The park lacks shade trees which should be planted both as a shade-providing and space-defining device.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.
- Consider permeable paving when resurfacing the parking lot to limit run-off.

General

- The lighting for the lighted football field could be considered invasive by the surrounding neighborhood. Lighting should be updated in such a manner that the light is focused down toward the ground by means of full cut-off devices, rather than dispersing into the neighborhood.
- Encourage adjacent property owners to replace the solid wooden fence with wrought-iron, or similar semi-transparent fencing, thereby providing them with visual access to the park space which will lead to informal surveillance of the park, making it safer and less isolated.

Turner Soccer Complex

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – League Use

Address: 5900 Turner Street

Size of Park: 26.7 acres

Comments – This facility enjoys good adjacency from surrounding pieces of land that help to define the park’s character and improve its visibility. On one side there is a wooded area, on another there is a wooded creek corridor, on another a road with parkland on the other side, and finally one side is



bordered by a residential area. Rather than the houses backing up to the park, however, the streets run perpendicular to the site and their ends are open to the park which allows for transparency and easy access from the neighborhood.

In its current state, this park provides little active use to its neighbors because the use of the soccer fields is restricted to league use and there are few facilities that are otherwise available. Even passive use by neighbors is restricted as there are no walking paths or other basic amenities such as benches or picnic tables.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 4 Lighted soccer fields
- 1 Concession / restroom complex
- 1 Unpaved parking lot

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Turner Soccer Complex. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Develop amenities for use by non-league-associated users, such as picnic areas along the creek corridor, walking trails, and a pavilion.
- There is potential for a trail connection along the creek under Turner Street that would connect this park to Bill Allen Memorial Park.
- The large-scale lighting for the soccer fields might not be compatible with the surrounding residential areas. Efforts should be made to ensure that the light is

directed toward the fields with full cut-off devices and light pollution into the neighborhood is eliminated.

- Most of the park is not ADA-compliant. Efforts should be made to rectify this situation by installing smooth pathways and accessible parking.
- The unpaved parking lot is not well-defined. It should be paved with a solid surface. For sustainable purposes, consider permeable paving instead of an impervious surface.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- There are many mature trees along two sides of the park, but none on the other two sides. Additional plantings along these two edges will help to define space within the park and to improve the park's appearance.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Consider pervious paving for the future upgraded parking lot. Pervious paving, as opposed to traditional, impervious paving, will reduce the level of runoff produced by the parking lot.
- For all new plantings, consider species that are native and drought-resistant to minimize the need for irrigation and chemical fertilizers.

General

- N/A

Austin Ranch Park

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Recreational Use

Address:

Size of Park: 3.3 acres

Comments – Austin Ranch Park is a small facility located near its namesake, the Austin Ranch mixed-use development. Currently the park is considered a special purpose park because the only facilities present are an unlighted soccer field and a segment of the Austin Ranch Trail. This park, due to its size and location could serve as a neighborhood park for the Austin Ranch mixed-use development given that additional amenities were implemented.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 soccer field (unlighted)
- Connection to the Austin Ranch Trail

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Austin Ranch Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Identify additional amenities including play equipment, picnic tables, benches, and a pavilion that can expand the park’s services and make it a neighborhood park.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Implement additional landscaping around the perimeter of the park, especially along Arbor Hills Way. Also, plant shade trees throughout the park to provide shade, wind breaks, and visual interest.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.

General

- Because of the unique population that lives in the surrounding Austin Ranch mixed-use area (younger, many singles, many without children) identify unique amenities (including “play equipment”) that can serve the needs of adults as well as children. An example could be boulders of various sizes and pieces of public art that double as play equipment or things that can be climbed or sat on. As a reference, the rock outcroppings at Central Park in New York City serve as an “adult playground” but are also popular among children.

Camey Park	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – League Use
Address:	4800 Alta Oaks Lane
Size of Park:	6.2 acres

Comments – Camey Park is one of four parks near the intersection of Blair Oaks Drive and South Colony Boulevard. It appears to be very underutilized as the two soccer fields are not properly striped, one field has only one goal, and none of the goals have netting. As there is nothing else in the park other than one set of bleachers and two trash cans, this park does not function as much more than open space in its current state.



The most obvious distraction, both visual and audio, is the overhead power transmission lines.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 Unlighted soccer fields (practice)

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Camey Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The soccer fields need much attention to be usable including striping, updated or repaired goals, and netting.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Planting trees, shrubs, and groundcover will help to differentiate between this park and Perryman Park to the north. This will help organize space and make the parks more attractive.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When planting additional species, choose ones that are native, which will reduce the need for fertilizer and irrigation.

General

- Develop a master plan for implementation that includes updated soccer fields, walkways, additional plantings, and the connection of this park with Perryman Park.

Eastvale Park / Blue Sky Sports Center

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Leased

Address: 7801 Main Street

Size of Park: 59.1 acres

Comments – The Eastvale Park / Blue Sky Sports Center complex is located on a geographically unique peninsula which provides a high ratio of shoreline access to land area. Presently, the park itself is a dichotomy – the half closer to Main Street is the location of the well-maintained Blue Sky Sports Center with its new indoor soccer building and its three manicured outdoor soccer fields while the other half of the park is overgrown and decaying. In this half of the park there exist parking lots, a boat ramp, abandoned restrooms, an abandoned water well, and picnic areas that are completely

underutilized and/or in disrepair. The road leading to this portion of the park is overgrown, with approximately half of the width of the road being overtaken by grass.



Currently there are plans for the construction of a hike and bike trail within the right-of-way of FM 423 (Main Street). As this park is located very near Frisco, there exists the opportunity to use this park as a trail connection / trail head at the northern edge of the city.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- Indoor soccer complex
- 3 irrigated, lighted outdoor soccer fields
- 1 one-lane boat ramp
- Picnic area
- Bathrooms (abandoned)

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Eastvale Park / Blue Sky Sports Center. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Access to the underutilized half of the park should be restored and improved.
- The existing boat ramp should be replaced with one that meets modern boat launching standards
- The picnic area should be restored for daily use by park visitors and shade should be provided, either through the use of shade trees or shade structures, for some of the picnic tables.
- The restroom building should be either completely renovated or removed.
- There is potential for short walking trails along the end of the peninsula.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Currently underutilized land toward the end of the peninsula should be maintained to provide visual interest for park users.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Though the soccer fields are irrigated with water from the lake, alternatives should be explored for ways to reduce water consumption during drought conditions, including the use of drought-tolerant grasses.
- Drainage swales on the site should not be mown over as they currently are. Rather, these should be allowed to vegetate with native or adaptive grasses which will help slow the flow of water through the swales, help filter out pollution from water, prevent erosion, and provide visual interest.

General

- Develop a master plan layout for the existing underutilized portion of the park that includes a pavilion, playground, picnic facilities, fishing jetty, shoreline access, trails and gateways. This master plan should include an implementation plan, as well.

Stewart Peninsula Golf Course	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – Leased
Address:	
Size of Park:	63.2 acres

Comments – The Stewart Peninsula Golf Course is a privately managed facility on USACE land that is leased to the City and then subleased to the concessionaire. This nine-hole course is located directly north of Stewart Creek Park along the Lewisville Lake shoreline affording excellent views toward the lake. While only a nine-hole course, the Stewart Peninsula Golf Course is a well-regarded course and has been rated as the second best course in Texas in 2008 by the Dallas Morning News.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Nine hole golf course with club house

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Stewart Peninsula Golf Course. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- N/A

Natural Resources/Open Space

- N/A

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Adopt sustainable maintenance and management practices through initiating the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses at this facility.

General

- N/A

Five Star East (Hawaiian Falls)

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Leased

Address: 4400 Paige Road

Size of Park: 29.17 acres

Comments – Though technically the same park, there are essentially two parks on this site – one is the existing Hawaiian Falls water park and the other is the currently undeveloped (but future) civic/recreation center. This park benefits from being surrounded by single-loaded roads on all sides which improves its visibility, though, two of these roads (Memorial Drive and Paige Road are medium to high traffic roads).



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- Hawaiian Falls Water Park which includes
 - 4 Pavilions
 - 2 BBQ Grills
 - 3 Concession buildings
 - 1 Bathroom
 - Wave pool
 - Lazy river
 - Multiple water slides
 - Water playground

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Five Star East (Hawaiian Falls). Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- N/A

Natural Resources/Open Space

- In its current state, the creek is mostly unattractive because of its un-natural character. Care should be taken to ensure that the creek is allowed to return to a more natural state. This includes not mowing near the creek edge and either screening or removing some of the concrete along the channel.
- There are currently several large piles of fill dirt located in the undeveloped portion of the park. These should be removed from the site, graded into the existing ground plane, or shaped into more attractive berms.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- In addition to improving aesthetics, allowing the creek to return to a more natural state will help to prevent erosion and improve pollution filtration.

General

- Develop a master plan for future implementation that includes the civic/recreation center, walkways, additional plantings, and natural areas along the creek. Developing this plan now will allow the plating of trees before the rest of the site is developed. This will ensure that the trees are more mature once the civic/recreation center is developed.

Wynnewood Park & Tribute Golf	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – Leased
Address:	
Size of Park:	450 acres

Comments – This piece of park land has two very unique uses. On the one hand is Wynnewood Park, a very large natural area of former farmland. On the other hand is the Tribute Golf facility, a large golf course modeled after traditional Scottish Highlands golf courses like Saint Andrew’s in Scotland. The Wynnewood Park nature area is not a developed park and currently does not have any designated access points, amenities, or preservation programs. This area consists of former farmland, as previously stated, that has begun to return to its natural state through the return of native (and nonnative) grasses and trees. Mesquite trees are prevalent in this area, which also contains artifacts of the land’s past life as farm land, including an abandoned cellar near the intersection of Tribute Golf’s driveway and Boyd Road.

Tribute Golf, in order to more closely resemble the traditional Scottish Highlands golf course that it was modeled after, utilized many native and adaptive species of shrubs and grasses. The course has a very natural appearance as a result of this and fits in well with the surrounding landscape. This is a unique golf experience not only for residents of The Colony, but for people all over the region and even the State. The course is currently 18 holes, but will be expanding in the near future to a total of 36 holes.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Eighteen hole golf course with club house

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Wynnewood Park & Tribute Golf. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Develop a trail network through Wynnewood Park that allows people to experience nature and solitude while being able to be active. Properly address historic sites within the park by either creating destinations out of them for trail users or aligning the trails to avoid sensitive archeological sites.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Ensure the protection and preservation of the natural areas of Wynnewood Park. Even though this land is not in its natural state, per se, it has a quality that is unique and valuable and can be used to express the history of The Colony while demonstrating nature’s way of reclaiming developed land.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- N/A

General

- Develop and implement a master plan for Wynnewood Park that addresses preservation issues, trails, trailheads, parking, and other amenities.

Bridges Park	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – Multi-Purpose
Address:	6600 Miller Drive
Size of Park:	18.1 acres

Comments – This park serves the function of housing the city’s only public tennis courts. The park also contains a baseball field and is adjacent to a middle school (and its football field) and an elementary school. Both the tennis courts and the baseball field are aged, but are visibly well-



maintained. The baseball field has two new shade structures for spectator seating. There is a drainage way which runs along the southern edge of the park and is the location of the only vegetation (other than mown turf grass) in the park. A good portion of this park is located underneath the large transmission lines. The edges of the park are not well defined, other than the single-loaded road adjacency on the east side of the park.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 Tennis courts
- 1 Baseball field
- 1 Parking lot (white rock)
- 1 flag pole
- 1 monument

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Bridges Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- There is a slab of concrete where restrooms were formerly located. This site could be used for a covered seating area with benches.
- While the tennis courts and baseball field are well-maintained, they should be analyzed to determine whether they should be updated.
- This park is currently not ADA-accessible. Efforts should be made to construct accessible paths to each of the park’s amenities, paths connecting to nearby sidewalks or other points of access, and accessible parking spaces.
- The existing white rock parking lot is poorly defined and has a shabby appearance, this should be replaced with a paved parking lot.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- This park could benefit greatly from additional tree and shrub plantings – currently, such vegetation only occurs along the drainage way. Additional plantings will help to define space within the park and provide shade and wind protection.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When constructing a new parking lot, pervious paving materials should be given preference as they will reduce run-off.

General

- N/A

Historical Park

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Pocket Park

Address: 5000 South Colony Boulevard

Size of Park: 0.5 acres

Comments – One of the four parks at the South Colony Boulevard / Blair Oaks Drive intersection, Historical Park is the oldest park in The Colony. Positioned on a small corner of land directly adjacent to the fire station, this park fits the definition of a pocket park due to its size. However, because of its small size and lack of active amenities, this park is probably not used very often and serves more as additional open space than as a location for active recreation (although this park is consistently a key starting/ending point for parades and is the host site for the Christmas Spectacular).



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Gazebo
- 1 Historical marker
- 1 Time capsule

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Historical Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The gazebo and sidewalk leading to the gazebo are both aged and decaying. The gazebo should be renovated (including replacing warped/cracked boards and repainting) while the sidewalk should be replaced as it is cracked and very narrow.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Additional plantings in the park will help to improve its appearance and its role in carbon sequestration.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.

General

- Add electrical service in order to facilitate the Christmas Spectacular
- Provide additional and improved pedestrian access and connections to the other parks located around the intersection of South Colony Boulevard and Blair Oaks Drive including wide and dedicated cross walks. For safety, visibility and user friendliness, consider constructing the cross walks with a material in color and texture different from the road surface, e.g. clay bricks.

Greenway Park

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Pocket Park

Address: 5004 South Colony Boulevard

Size of Park: 3.76 acres

Comments – One of the four parks at the South Colony Boulevard / Blair Oaks Drive intersection, Greenway Park is impacted by the same issues as the others: visual and audible nuisances from the nearby streets and power lines. The visibility of the park does benefit, however, from the single-loaded road adjacency and the overall character of the park is improved by the adjacency of a creek, though this creek has not been allowed to exist in its natural state.



The park itself consists of a handful of semi-mature trees and a monument dedicating the park. Other than this, the park is currently undeveloped, though a historic Denton County bridge is slated to be moved to this location.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Monument

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Greenway Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- This park is in a position to serve as a focal point and trailhead for the planned Park Loop Trail.⁴

Natural Resources/Open Space

⁴ As proposed in the 2006 Trail Master Plan

- Allow the creek to return to its natural state by limiting mowing along the creek edge. This will increase the aesthetics of the creek corridor and will help to limit erosion by reinforcing the stream bank.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

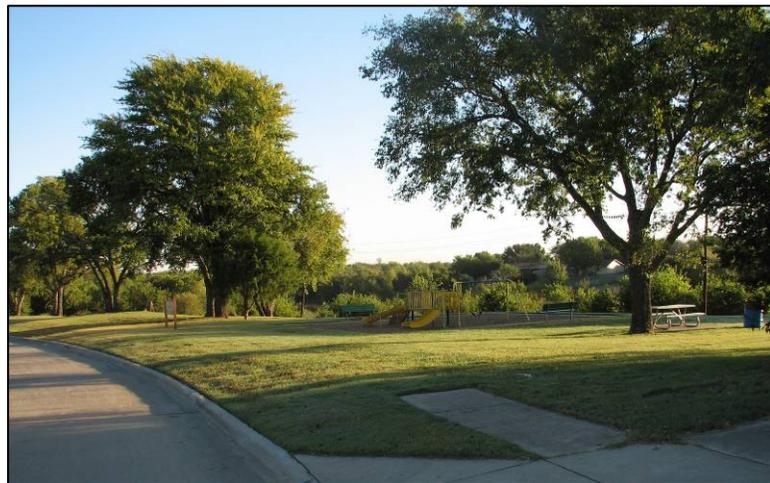
- Ensure that the drainage way passing through the park is allowed to remain in a natural state – this will reduce erosion and increase pollutant filtration from the water.
- When new vegetation is planted, species that are native and drought-resistant should be chosen to minimize the need for irrigation.

General

- Develop and implement a master plan for park development that includes additional plantings, pathways that link the street with the historic bridge, and seating areas. This park, due to its proximity to other, traditional parks (parks that have playgrounds, a gazebo, etc.) might be a candidate for the development of a more reflective, introspective park with passive recreation rather than active.

Wilcox Park	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – Pocket Park
Address:	7214 Wilcox Drive
Size of Park:	1 acre

Comments – While significantly smaller than desirable for neighborhood parks and having only the most basic of amenities, this park has special qualities that make it feel larger and more interesting than its actual size and facilities would suggest. The park is situated on a topographically varied site that is above and facing



toward a wooded creek bed; so while the park itself is merely one acre, many more acres are visible from the site, which makes the park feel much more expansive than it truly is. These views help to define the park and add to an introspective feeling and a sense of reflection for park users. In addition, the wooded edge provided by the creek corridor and the tree-lined single loaded street, both of which bookend the park site, help to define the edges of the park while still being transparent enough to not feel enclosed. The creek edge is strongly

defined – that is, there is very little natural transition between the dense, riparian vegetation lining the creek and the manicured turf of the park itself.

This park is unique to The Colony – no other park within the city enjoys the topographic variation, views, *and* proximity to a creek bed of Wilcox Park – and as such, should be treated uniquely.

Of note is the seemingly “vigilante” landscaping which has occurred at this park – there are planters (made out of terra cotta-colored automobile tires) and potted plants, a statuette of an angel, and consumer-grade water hoses along the wooded edge of the site. These items illustrate a sense of ownership by neighboring residents of the park.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 playground unit (for toddlers)
- 1 un-covered picnic table

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Wilcox Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Continue and widen the sidewalk leading from the south end of the park both into the site to connect with the playground and picnic areas and along the street under the shade of the established trees to connect with the residential areas north of the park. This will help make the site accessible for the disabled and more inviting for passers-by.
- Provide additional benches in both shady and sunny areas that look out over the views toward and across the creek corridor.
- Implement an ecology education program in this park, which might include informative signage or tree-leaf rubbing stations.
- The potential exists to add a pavilion in this park that would house two or three picnic tables – because of the special nature of this park, a pre-manufactured pavilion should not be used. Rather, a custom-made pavilion that responds to the topography of the site and is designed to blend in with the color, shape, and character of the park should be provided if a pavilion is deemed necessary.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Avoid mowing portions of the park area adjacent to the creek corridor to help restore this wooded edge to a natural state and to support wildlife habitat (including that of birds).

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When needed, new plants should be chosen that are native to the region, which require little-to-no irrigation and have no reliance on fertilizers and pesticides.

- As much as the linearity of the creek lends itself to trails, the creek corridor also acts as an important wildlife corridor and should be sensitively managed as such.

General

- There is a very good potential for trail connections at this park location. A partnership with the City of Frisco – which has jurisdiction over the land (which is owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers) adjacent to this park – should be explored in order to run trails along the creek corridor south to North Colony Boulevard and on to the Recreation Center and north to connect with trails in Frisco.
- Part of the beauty and definition of the park is reduced because of the over-head power lines that run north-south along the eastern edge of the park, right along the wooded edge of the creek. These power lines should be moved elsewhere or located under ground to allow the full beauty of this park to be seen.

Augusta Park	
Type of Park:	Special Purpose Park – Pocket Park
Address:	?
Size of Park:	1.7 acres

Comments – This park is currently undeveloped. The land to be occupied by this park consists of a linear open area bounded by a wooded ravine (on LISD property) on two sides, a single-loaded street, and Stewart’s Creek Elementary School. In addition to the elementary school, there is also a middle school nearby. It appears that students from one or both of these schools often visit the wooded ravine, which is suggested by litter and the arrangement of rocks and logs as seating areas.



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- N/A

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Augusta Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- In the development of this park, attention should be paid to connecting the two adjacent schools and adjacent neighborhood through the park by use of trails.
- In the development of this park, consideration should be given to connecting the park to the nearby lakeshore via a trail.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Develop an interpretative system of trails and signage that will educate the public about the value of natural open space, wildlife habitat, erosion prevention, and carbon sequestration for the sake of environmental preservation, but also for improved quality of life and human health.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- In the development of this park, species should be chosen which are drought tolerant, thereby negating the need for irrigation.
- Place preference on native plants that are well-adapted to the local climate, provide wildlife habitat, and provide nutrition opportunities for wildlife (in terms of flowers, leaves, bark, etc.).
- Enhance the edge of the wooded area by creating a wide un-mown buffer planted with native grasses and wildflowers.

General

- In the development of this park, efforts should be made to partner with the nearby elementary school to develop facilities usable by both students and other park users.

West Lake Highlands Park
Type of Park: Special Purpose Park – Pocket Park
Address: 4526 West lake Highlands Drive
Size of Park: 0.14 acres

Comments – This tiny park situated on a standard 130’ by 50’ single-family house lot contains a playground and a basketball half court. These two amenities combined take up almost all of the usable space in this park, which most likely serves only the surrounding neighborhood, as no



parking is provided.

Often, such small parks are looked upon in a negative light, because they have no room for expansion and cannot serve the same number of people as a five to ten acre park. However, such parks are often valued by those who live near them as they provide close-to-home recreation and a place to meet neighbors.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 playground with one slide, one swing set, and one merry-go-round.
- 1 basketball half court
- 1 picnic table

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for West Lake Highlands Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The picnic table should be secured to the ground so that it cannot be moved around in (or out of) the park.
- Lighting should be installed, not so that people can use the park after dark, but in order to allow neighbors to monitor the park’s use and improve its security.
- The play equipment should be updated or refurbished. Merry-go-rounds, for instance, have been found to be quite dangerous – this should be replaced with a more up-to-date piece of play equipment.
- For accessibility and safety, the gravel in the play area should be replaced with wood chips or a comparable substitute and the sidewalk should be extended to reach the playground, basketball court, and picnic table.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- N/A

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- The drainage swale should not be mown over as it currently is. Rather, it should be allowed to vegetate with native or adaptive grasses which will help slow the flow of water through the swale, help filter out pollution from water, prevent erosion, and provide visual interest. In order to be effective, this should be implemented as an overall strategy for roads with no curb and gutter after conducting the necessary hydrology and hydraulic analysis.

General

- N/A

A1.4 Linear Parks & Greenbelts

Taylor Street Park & Greenbelt

Type of Park: Greenbelt

Address: 7500 Taylor Street

Size of Park: 23.13 acres

Comments – Perhaps the most unique and most notable characteristic of Taylor Street Park & Greenbelt is that it is The Colony’s only linear park or greenbelt – stretching approximately seven times longer than it is wide – other than the de facto linear parks created by the main utility easements crossing through the city. The park is surrounded by three types of adjacencies: single-loaded roads, alleys with garage access, and alleys with out garage access but having gate access into backyards. This park poses a great opportunity for The Colony, but in its current state is considerably under-utilized.



This park is lacking in three major areas; the first of these is the lack of an ADA-compliant network of sidewalks or pathways throughout the park. As in other parks, it is important to provide accessible pathways throughout the park to both provide access opportunities for all users but also to help bring organization to the programmed spaces within the park. The second issue area is vegetation within the park. Currently, the vast majority of vegetation is mown turf grass and there are few trees within the park. There exists a great opportunity to provide diverse, visually-stimulating areas of vegetation within the park that can also help to lower maintenance costs, reduce erosion, and improve property values of the surrounding neighborhoods. Finally, the park overall has an untidy appearance, largely due to the lack of vegetation and aged and inadequate facilities within the park. Specifically, the baseball diamond area could benefit from various repairs – the backstop and seating areas around the field need repairs and improvements and the white rock parking lot is pot-holed and poorly defined.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 1 Baseball field (unlighted)
- 1 Parking lot (white rock)

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for Taylor Street Park & Greenbelt. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- The baseball diamond area needs to be renovated to be a viable part of the City’s parks system. Specifically, the fencing should be completed around the field and repaired where necessary, seating should be repaired and shaded, and the parking lot should be paved and spaces should be delineated.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- The creek corridor should be allowed to return to its natural state of vegetation – this process could be aided by adding plantings in key areas. Allowing natural vegetation to be restored along the creek edge will provide both a visually-stimulating character to the creek, but will also help to limit erosion of the creek bank by slowing the flow of water and reinforcing the bank itself.
- In other areas of the park, trees, shrubs, and groundcover should be planted in key areas to add to the visual interest of the park. These areas will also provide shade and improve the park’s ability to provide carbon sequestration.
- The creek corridor should be treated as an opportunity to provide habitat for wildlife and trail access to natural un-programmed areas.
- Develop and implement a master plan that emphasizes creek restoration, natural plantings, and trail access (including a trail head).

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- Place emphasis on native plantings that support wildlife and restore the ecological functionality of the creek corridor. Additionally, as a drainage-way passes through this park, species which are non-invasive should be used, as the creek will carry plant seeds to other areas, aiding in dissemination.

General

- The proposed East/West Connection Trail is designated to pass through this park⁵; efforts to develop this trail and to improve this park should be coordinated to save time and cost.
- The adjacent water well visually impacts this park – efforts should be made to screen the view of this facility from the park.

⁵ As proposed in the 2006 Trail Master Plan

A1.5 Regional Parks

Stewart Creek Park

Type of Park: Regional Park

Address: 100 Cottonwood Springs Circle

Size of Park: 65 acres

Comments – Stewart Creek Park is a mid-sized regional park located on Stewart Peninsula, making it a convenient location for many of The Colony’s citizens. The park offers several opportunities for day-use activities, including boating, fishing, and picnicking. While there are many facilities existing in the park, there is ample opportunity to add additional facilities which, as entrance to this park is fee-based, will help attract users to the park.



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- 2 Playgrounds
- 1 Pavilion
- 42 Picnic tables
- 1 Ball field
- 1 Sand volleyball court
- 4 Horseshoe pits
- 28 BBQ Grills
- 1 Restroom/shower complex
- 2 Parking lots
- Boat ramp and courtesy dock

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Stewart Creek Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Re-examine the purpose and function of this park. Specifically, determine whether the park should remain day-use only or allow overnight camping.
- Make changes and provisions that will allow Stewart Creek Park to excel as a special event venue.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Additional plantings throughout the interior of the park will help to define space, improve the park’s appearance, and provide shady areas for picnics and resting.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When planting additional plants, ensure that native species are used – this will reduce the need for irrigation and fertilizer.

General

- It is noticeable that some neighbors to the park have erected transparent wrought iron fences with gates that provide direct access to the park. This should be encouraged as it is regarded as a benefit to the City in that it affords informal surveillance of the park and can add to a sense of “custodianship” by the neighbors.
- Develop a master plan for implementation that includes a park gateway, additional facilities, additional plantings, walking trails, improved access to the lake, and improved infrastructure.

Hidden Cove Park	
Type of Park:	Regional Park
Address:	20100 Hackberry Park Creek Road
Size of Park:	537.4 acres

Comments – Formerly a State park, Hidden Cove is the largest and most diverse park in The Colony. It is located on land owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers, leased by The Colony, and subleased to MarineQuest, which operates the park. There are many day-use and overnight amenities in this park that provide visitors with many opportunities for recreation.



There currently are plans for the development of a marina by MarineQuest at this park.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- Full-service camping sites
- Primitive camping
- 2.2 Miles of soft-surface trails
- Cabins
- Dining/event hall
- On-site store and watercraft rental facility
- Boat ramps and courtesy dock
- Ball fields
- Playgrounds
- Swimming beach
- Day use picnic area
- Pavilions

Recommended Park Improvements:

The following improvements are recommended for the Hidden Cove Park. Some of these improvements are more easily achieved than others; this list describes a “perfect world” scenario for park improvement.

Programmed Space/Support Facilities

- Many of the park’s amenities required repairs after the flooding in 2007. To prevent damage to future amenities, they should be flood resistant and/or placed at a high enough elevation that they will not be flooded.

Natural Resources/Open Space

- Although a man-made facility, the lake is an important “natural” resource that allows for the establishment of natural habitats for wildlife. The water edge should be treated as sensitive habitat whereby native plants are encouraged to attract birds and to act as an erosion protective measure.

Sustainable Sites/Ecological Services

- When upgrading the park, ensure that the materials used are sustainable in nature – that is, that they are either made of recycled materials or are themselves recyclable and that they do not emit any toxic chemicals which would wash into Lake Lewisville (the area’s drinking water source) during rain events.

General

- Develop a master plan for implementation that includes the marina and overall upgrades and updates to the park in general. With updated facilities, this park has the possibility of becoming much more of a regional destination.

A1.6 Individual Facility Assessments

The Colony Aquatic Center

Address: 5580 North Colony Boulevard
4 Pools: Enclosed 6-lane heated lap pool
Outdoor leisure pool
Outdoor wading pool
Outdoor “Splash Zone!”

Comments – The Aquatic Park dates from 1986 and has evolved over time. It is the city’s only municipal pool and is therefore the flagship water venue, aside of course from the lake. It is well-used and has grown in capacity and offerings since it opened. The “Spray Zone!” is a relative new component, but is showing signs of age due to faded finish. Relatively new “dry” amenities include sand volleyball, and additional shade areas. Pride of ownership is apparent in the overall cleanliness and organization of the facility.



Colorful and artistic murals within the buildings show similar evidence. These additions have maintained a sense of newness for the venue over time and have served the facility well. The enclosed pool is heated to serve the community year-round. It is not a truly indoor pool as it does not

offer air conditioned space. In the summer season, it is opened up and relies primarily on natural ventilation to maintain comfort.



The above average attention to detail within pool area is attractive and inviting. Notable observations include the care of the landscaping, the deck and coping finishes and stonework.



These observations stand in contrast to those of the parking lot, approach and the evolution of the buildings. Over time, the structures serving the pools have been infilled and retrofitted with a quality of construction not in keeping with that of the original buildings. Mechanical retrofits have been done in a somewhat haphazard manner. Some are exposed to the elements, shortening their life span. Others are in inhabiting lean-to structures also not in keeping with the quality of construction of the original buildings. A wood-framed and sided garage has been added to

provide secure storage. Casualties of this evolution have been substantial loss of curb appeal and some shade for those queuing. Concessions have evolved to vending machines occupying the main pavilion.

The entry sequence is somewhat claustrophobic due to the undersized spaces patrons must pass through. The low ceilings add to this problem of scale and user comfort. Ventilation and air quality issues are apparent in the locker room as evidenced by rusting equipment. We suspect that the facilities are undersized for the increased offering of amenities. Generally, increased capacity means increased fixture counts. A review of fixture count requirements with contemporary health and building codes is recommended.

Recommendations:

In general, the facility has been maintained with a well-planned effort to extend the life and appeal of the facility. This 20+ year maintenance and repair approach with occasional minor upgrades has reached the point of diminishing returns in industry standard terms.

A comprehensive study of this facility was performed in 1999. Now almost a decade later, that study remains largely valid in terms of concept. At the time, three options were proposed for consideration: repair, renovate, and replace. The repair option has essentially been the approach since then and presumably represents the ongoing method of operations until substantial funding becomes available. Proper inflation factors should be applied to the probable costs in the 1999 study with respect to considerations for renovation or replacement. Rapid growth in The Colony will soon outpace the ability for this pool to adequately serve the community.

The Colony Community Center

Address: 5151 North The Colony Boulevard
Size: Approximately 12,000 SF, single story

Comments – This building is the former city library. It was renovated in approximately 2002 to house the Senior Center and Parks Administrative offices. The Senior Center comprises approximately 2/3 of the building, leaving approximately 1/3 for administration. Of the



buildings toured, this one appears to be the newest. It is certainly the most recently renovated. It appears to be in generally good repair and to be well-maintained. A sense of pride in ownership is obvious among staff and patrons. The facility shares parking with the police station and recreation center. Anecdotal comments on the tour seem to indicate adequate parking for the current use.

Though not solely dedicated to senior programming, this is the chief public use of the structure. Programs currently operating here include various classes, low-impact exercise, dances, meals-on-wheels preparations, and serving of pre-prepared meals at the facility. A canopy at the front of the building provides a sheltered approach for two accessible parking stalls. It appears this area may have once served as a covered drop-off drive lane. An accessible route from parking to front door has been added with the renovation. Staff comments at time of tour were generally favorable in terms of the use of the space. There are some awkward circulation paths for both patron and staff functions and inefficiencies in use of some of the spaces.

The parks administration component houses a small reception area, a couple of offices, small conference room, work room, limited storage space and staff toilets. While a comprehensive accessibility review is not in the scope of this assessment, it was observed that the front door is not accessible to the disabled, who would have to be let in through the senior center and into a back door. Like the attached senior center, the space has been recently renovated and appears in good general repair.

Recommendations:

Given the significant growth occurring and anticipated in The Colony, it is not reasonable to expect both Parks Administration and the Senior Center to coexist in this structure long term. We would recommend that administration be moved to another location to allow for the Senior Center to have full use of the building. A more comprehensive interior renovation of the interior would allow not only for more space, but a more efficient use of the space. This would allow for both increased capacity and increased programming capability for the senior center.

Lakeside Arts Center

Address: 6301-B Main Street
Size: Approximately 4500 SF, single story

Comments – This building was formerly the Senior Center and is now being used for varied programming. Ad hoc renovations have converted the former senior activity room to a performing arts room. Likewise the former meeting room has become a crafts room and the former crafts room a lobby. A wing on the back of the building houses a meeting room with kitchenette and its own restrooms. This wing also serves as a sort of “green room” for performers. Primary users of the facility are the theatre group, though the local American Legion and others use the meeting room. Parking is shared with a neighboring county building, which is why the primary uses for this building tend to happen outside business hours. The building has poor visibility from Main Street and is difficult to find. It is bounded by significant topography and residential adjacency immediately to the north.



The structure itself is a manufactured metal building clad on three sides by brick. It appears to be structurally sound. It has a very low roof, making for correspondingly low ceilings in the rooms. The structure of the wing is wood-framed and in poor condition, especially at the “connector” piece between main building and wing. The ad hoc nature of the layers of addition/renovation work makes the quality and adherence to codes and standards something that should be reviewed in detail. Finishes have exceeded their life spans. Equipment was not evaluated, but general observations hold little optimism for their longevity or fitness either. The flexibility of the theatre group to make use of the space is remarkable. Their pride of ownership is obvious despite the nature of the building having little to do with their practical needs.



While a comprehensive accessibility review is not in the scope of this assessment, it was obvious to the observer that none of the toilet facilities meet accessibility standards. Compliance would essentially require reconstruction of these rooms, including moving walls to enlarge them.

Recommendations:

In general, this facility was not designed and is not fit for the uses currently inhabiting it. With respect to this structure's value to the Parks Department, we foresee two options: replacement and disposition. Renovation is not really an option due to the nature of the existing conditions and because the building is owned by Denton County, not the City. It would undoubtedly be more cost effective to "start over" than to try to retrofit what is there. The challenge for rebuilding is determining what to build. Given the site constraints described above, the best use for this site may not be a valuable one. A best-case scenario might be a rentable evening meeting space. A comprehensive due-diligence effort on the site is warranted before making any determinations in this regard.

This brings us to the option of disposition. It may be of more value to simply demolish, sell, or otherwise release the facility. For example, would the county have any interest in this parcel? Would another city department have a use for it?

The Colony Recreation Center

Address: 5151 North The Colony Boulevard
Size: Approximately 14,500 SF, single story

Comments – Constructed in the mid-1980's, this building is the city's only municipal recreation center. It is therefore the flagship in terms of serving the community needs in terms of indoor programming. It shares parking and a covered walkway with the police department. Anecdotal comments on the tour seem to indicate adequate parking for the current use.



The building consists of a manufactured steel-frame building (the gymnasium) with brick cladding on most sides and an addition wrapping about 35% of the perimeter. About half of the total enclosed area is the gym. There is also an 800 SF exterior courtyard off of the front meeting room. Other functional spaces include a multi-purpose room (a converted weight room), two racquetball courts, game room, a small office area, control desk, public toilets and separate locker rooms with toilets and showers.

While a comprehensive accessibility review is not in the scope of this assessment, a number of accessibility violations were observed in the toilet and locker rooms, at the control desk, at required exits from the gym, and at doors and floor transitions. Likewise, an in-depth code study is not in the scope of this assessment. However some unusual conditions were observed with respect to what is typically seen in assembly occupancies.

It would be prudent to examine the egress widths required by the contemporary code, along with the potential requirement for a sprinkler system.



The gymnasium provides a full-court basketball field of play, dividable by curtain into two smaller courts (for a total of six basketball goals). It is also striped for volleyball. The synthetic flooring provides for multi-purpose programming well beyond typical ball-court play. Minor seating capacity is provided with “tip-n-roll” bleachers. Dedicated gym storage is not available, so perimeter deck space is cluttered with various gym appurtenances. Lighting and air

conditioning upgrades appear to have been made over time, though light levels appeared low even for recreational play and the air conditioning approach is not appropriate to the building use. No natural light enters the room. The building envelope appears to be lightly insulated and probably does not meet current energy codes.

With the exception of a few areas that have obviously seen some recent retrofit, the overall health of building finishes was poor. Most have exceeded their life cycle and need replacement. Some locations need replacement with more appropriate and durable materials. For example, the drywall in the corridor outside of the racquetball courts has obviously been patched a number of times and should be reconsidered. At the time of the visit, some of the plumbing fixtures were not in working order. Water damaged ceiling tiles were observed in the multi-purpose room.

Recommendations:

Growth in The Colony will soon outpace the ability for this center to adequately serve the community. The overall health and level of amenity in this structure point to two options. Option 1 would be a complete renovation and addition. Option 2 would be replacement. The site appears to have capacity to accommodate either option. Determination of which option is best for The Colony will require further study and definition of the city’s ultimate financial and service goals and timelines.

Ongoing Plan Maintenance

Future CDC Work Plans and Project Lists

