



**Harker Heights**  
Parks & Recreation  
*Creating Community*

# Strategic Plan

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2021-2024

Revised 1.21.21  
Approved by Parks Advisory Board on 2.1.21

## Our Vision

To Create Community through People, Parks, and Programs.

## Our Mission

To provide community enrichment opportunities through exceptional customer service and innovative programs, and by creating and maintaining attractive, safe, clean, accessible, interconnected parks and facilities.

## Our Values

- **Excellence** by striving to set the standard for quality programs, parks and services through leadership, vision, innovation, and dedication to our work.
- **Environmental Sustainability** by helping to protect, maintain and preserve our natural and developed resources.
- **Fiscal Accountability** by responsibly and efficiently managing the financial health of the department today and for generations to come.
- **Inclusiveness** by reducing physical, social, and financial barriers to our programs, facilities, and services.
- **Partnerships** by fostering an atmosphere of cooperation, trust and resourcefulness with our patrons, coworkers, and other organizations.
- **Customers** by interacting with people in a responsive, considerate, and efficient manner.
- **Safety** by promoting a safe and healthy environment for all who work and play in our parks, facilities, and programs.
- **Staff** by honoring the diverse contributions of each employee and volunteer and recognizing them as essential to accomplishing our mission.

# Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

## *Main Priority: Investing in Staff as Investment in Community*

Staff Development will take priority as our main goal. Before we can invest in the community, we must invest in those that are entrusted with the responsibility of 'Creating Community' through our parks and programs.

## *Our Goals as defined in the 10-Year Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan*

- **Accessibility**
  - Provide parks and programs that are available for all abilities, socioeconomic statuses, and ages
- **Sustainability**
  - Develop and enhance parks and recreation programs within the City that promote environmental awareness and place facilities and long-term recreation programming as a leading tenet for members of the community
- **Conservation**
  - Protection of open space, connecting children, adults, and seniors to nature and recreation, and engaging the community in conservation practices
- **Innovation**
  - Leading the community to improved health and wellness through cutting-edge programming and facilities

## **A. Staff Development**

### Goal #1: Review Organizational Chart and Recommend Updates

- Make recommendations on new positions based on research and needs

### Goal #2: Create Onboarding Program

- Develop specific Parks and Recreation-related orientation for new staff

### Goal #3: Continuing Education

- Research relevant certifications for staff in relation to assigned duties
- Increase involvement in TRAPS or NRPA trainings/webinars

### Goal #4: Participate in Regular Team-Building Activities

- Schedule regular activities with the intent of building cohesion and trust between members of the Parks and Recreation team

## B. Accessibility

### Goal #1: Make necessary improvements to ensure that facilities are ADA-compliant

- Make improvements to Kern Park Playground, Community Park Batting Cages, Purser Family Park Playground and Carl Levin Park Amphitheater to ensure ADA accessibility
- Construct Play-for-All Abilities park that incorporates facilities for special needs children

### Goal #2: Develop strategies to increase facilities in currently underserved areas with goals and approaches taken from “10-Minute Walk to a Park” campaign

- Adding Parks and/or recreation facilities in areas that are underserved or further than a 10-minute walk
- Educating citizens on the proximity of their homes to local facilities

### Goal #3: Work to increase accessibility of programs and facilities for low-income families

- Institute scholarship program and develop policies and procedures for awarding of resources
- Increase sponsorships that will fund scholarships
- Free Play initiatives in the parks

## C. Sustainability

### Goal #1: Research and implement Financial Support and Sustainability Strategy

- Utilize research and job knowledge to prioritize funds designated for Parks/Facilities/Programs
- Develop Recreation Programming Plan
- Increase recruitment of volunteers and retention of volunteers

### Goal #2: Decrease the percentage of assets that have reached or exceeded their identified life expectancy

- Develop Inventory Management plan
- Refer to Deferred Maintenance Log

### Goal #3: Develop “Sustainability Best Practices” for the Harker Heights parks system

- Research best practices from successful municipalities and facilities across the state and nation
- Develop Project Management Plan for staff
- Utilize NRPA data and research
- Develop plans for reducing waste in parks and facilities
- Education for staff and the public on sustainable practices

## D. Conservation

Goal #1: Develop strategies and park infrastructure that focuses on long-term protection of public space

- Identify and create plans for parks and green space in areas noted in 2020-2030 Master Plan
- Development of conservation strategies for green space
- Expansion of the “Get Outdoors (GO) Heights” program

Goal #2: Develop and implement strategies for protection of local wildlife and habitat, specifically the native plant and insect population

- Take the “Mayor’s Monarch Pledge” and institute procedures based on program requirements
- Install Native Plant Pocket Prairies throughout parks system
- Research and implement policies and procedures regarding safe pesticide/herbicide use

## E. Innovation

Goal #1: Research and implement new forms of communication in order to reach new patrons

- Utilize communication module on new registration software
- Reach people “where they are;” e.g. parks, roadways, commercial locations

Goal #2: Develop “Innovation in Programming” best practices for the Harker Heights parks system

- Research and implement “trends” in the parks and recreation industry
- Consistent review of past events/programming

Goal #3: Develop strategies for public sponsorship or partnerships in facilities and programming

- Updated sponsorship packet
- Procedures in marketing sponsorship opportunities to the community