



CITY OF HORSESHOE BAY

PARKS MASTER PLAN

2022 – 2032

July 1, 2022

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PURPOSE

The City of Horseshoe Bay has spent the past ten years providing recreational opportunities for its citizens on several major projects utilizing the land the city owns, thus providing trails and play areas that are currently highly used. These improvements, combined with the many amenities provided by the Horseshoe Bay Resort (the Resort) and the various property owner associations, have opened up a variety of recreation opportunities for the citizens based on their ownership/membership in various organizations.

Attractions such as five golf courses, considerable tennis facilities, pickle ball courts, swimming pools, walking trails, hiking trails, a world class putting facility, marina, and water sports facilities are among the opportunities that the citizens have possible access to depending on their abilities for memberships.

High priority has not been placed on developing more recreational facilities in addition to the many afforded by the Resort and the various POAs. The City Council understands that not all park related needs are met by the Resort and the various POAs and that some citizens cannot afford to hold membership in the Resort or choose not to attain membership. Future defined needs have been identified through the City of Horseshoe Bay Long-Range Plan and a previous resident survey by the Parks Committee.

Therefore, the purpose of this plan is to provide guidance for the development and growth of recreational facilities and on future decisions concerning operations, capital improvement needs, and programs for the citizens of Horseshoe Bay for a period covering the next ten years. It should also be the driving factor in creating a supportive, harmonious relationship between the City of Horseshoe Bay, The Resort, and the Horseshoe Bay POA with a common goal of utilization of open space properties and the many facilities in the best possible manner for the good of all citizens of Horseshoe Bay and surrounding communities.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is to be on file with Texas Parks and Wildlife, as is required to qualify for additional points with respect to competing for and securing local park grants. The concept of a Master Plan, initiated by Texas Parks and Wildlife in 1994, directs local governments to complete local park and recreation master plans to be updated approximately every five years. The Master Plan is designed to guide local decision making through 2032 and be updated as appropriate. It is also the intent of the Master Plan to meet the Texas Parks and Wildlife requirements in order to secure grants in the future.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Horseshoe Bay is blessed with world class recreation facilities that are available within the resort community. A 2020 study by the City concluded that approximately 67% of property owners in the City were members of the Resort; therefore, many owners have access to these excellent facilities. The City has five golf courses owned by the Resort and many other amenities and a lot of vacant land from lots that have been sold with no residence.

Vital components of any community are open space, trails, recreation facilities, and play fields that are devoted to satisfying recreational needs. Other than land that is private property, most of the open space in the City is owned by the Horseshoe Bay POA. The HSB POA has limited funds to develop this open space and cooperation between the HSB POA and the City will be critical in meeting the recreational needs in the community.

The City is located approximately 40 miles northwest of Austin in the heart of Central Texas in the Highland Lakes region. The City's 8,000 full and part-time residents are increased exponentially during the high recreation season and holidays. The City lies on the south shore of Lake LBJ, in both Llano and Burnet Counties.

Currently the City recreational facilities are limited to Horseshoe Creek Trail and Martin Park, located close to the current City Hall. The Master Plan document will attempt to address the future needs of the community. Paramount in this process will be the identification of possible open space available for park use that is owned by other entities. Without cooperation from the Resort, Lower Colorado River Authority, POAs, private parties, and the City, there will be no land available for recreational use. Cooperation among all of these organizations has been excellent and is expected to continue.

This Master Plan provides the citizens of Horseshoe Bay with an assessment of community needs and summarizes local park and recreation priorities for the next 10 years. It is a guide for the City as it makes decisions on future park facilities and the possible development of a park system. This plan also serves as a basis for City officials to make applications for private, state, and federal funding in order to gain necessary resources for projects.

There are numerous POA organizations within the City. They own a large amount of open space property and have developed some recreational facilities on them. The Horseshoe Bay POA is the dominant POA within the City, owning many acres of open space and various recreational facilities. Within this document are numerous suggestions to construct or upgrade existing facilities. It is clearly understood that the City would not be able to construct or upgrade any facilities unless ownership of the HSB POA property is transferred to the City or operated as a shared project with a mutual agreement in place. Currently, there is a good understanding between the two organizations that this is the best way to develop new and needed recreational facilities in the community for the good of all.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1 – Enhance the health and quality of life for citizens through supplementing park and recreational facilities that are available through the Resort and the various POAs. Emphasis should be on recreational needs that presently are not being met.

- Objective 1. Develop standards for the citizens of Horseshoe Bay with respect to recreational development. In the development of these standards, utilization of existing facilities open to the public in nearby communities such as Marble Falls should be considered.
- Objective 2. Develop and implement a plan including hiking trails. Hiking trail development should be a high priority, as the trail corridors already exist, for a minimum of three excellent opportunities.
- Objective 3. Continue to update existing park facilities at Martin Park and invest in several vest pocket parks (small open space parks) in the HSB POA area.
- Objective 4. Develop a standard for identifying city facilities, including standards for signage, buildings, and architecture.

GOAL 2 – Develop maintenance standards for existing park and recreational facilities and ensure future facilities receive like standards.

- Objective 1. Renovate and replace existing facilities to meet current standards for safety of users.
- Objective 2. Develop and implement an annual budget line item to ensure minor repairs, upgrading of current facilities, and maintenance of trails, as they are included in the system.
- Objective 3. Develop and support relationships with local groups, the Resort, LCRA, the POAs, and private individuals that will assist in maintaining present facilities and in future park programming opportunities as they arise.

GOAL 3 – Plan and develop new park and recreational facilities that are desired as depicted in accordance with the City's Long-Range Plan, recreation sections.

- Objective 1. Acquire or lease the necessary property and develop to provide hiking trails, picnic areas, possible dog park, and other recreation as addressed in the City Long-Range Plan and this document.

GOAL 4 – Develop and support a community effort to assist the City in park and recreation plans and development. Focus groups desiring recreational facilities can solidify and expedite both budgetary issues and volunteer issues in the development of additional facilities and maintenance of those facilities.

- Objective 1. Maintain the current citizen Parks Committee for advising the City on recreational issues.
- Objective 2. Produce and distribute brochures describing park facilities and information for visitors and citizens including the Resort.

PLAN PROCESS

The process for the Master Plan should incorporate several public meetings to ensure open communication about the process with citizens of the community. Utilization of the recent City Long-Range Plan will drive the initial process as facilities desired from the public.

The process to implement this Master Plan should incorporate the following:

- Initial approval from Parks Advisory Committee members
- Initial presentation to the City Council for comments/revisions
- Hold two public meetings concurrent with City Council meetings to allow for public comment
- Post proposed plan on the City Website and in local newspapers
- Establish a timeline for the public to comment on the proposed plan
- Revisions by the Parks Advisory Committee and the City
- Adoption by the City Council and implementation of the plan by the City

RECOMMENDED 10-YEAR RECREATION PROGRAM: COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Previous stakeholder interviews conducted in April 2020 with residents of Horseshoe Bay provided the following important insights:

- A majority of residents supported the City developing more land for parks and recreational areas outside of the resort's control. While resort amenities are plentiful, most are only available to members. At the time, 34% of residents surveyed were not members of the resort.
- At the time of the survey, 83% of full-time residents supported such development, as did 76% of part-time residents.
- Residents have asked for assets belonging to the community such as walking, bike, and golf cart paths, as well as parks, lifestyle, and recreational amenities, with an emphasis on options that allow for exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, while preserving the natural beauty of the hill country.
- In other areas of the country and the world, efforts to live healthier—the so-called Blue Zones concept—focuses on creating sustainable, long-term changes that improve the health of an entire community as well as future generations. According to Blue Zones, changing the way a community moves, eats, and connects requires working with local governments, businesses, the community, and civic organizations, something our community does naturally.
- Building a greater sense of community also surfaced in the surveys, with a majority (64% full-time residents/63% part-time residents) supporting the idea of a civic gathering place.

GOAL 1: Update existing City plans for parks and open space

GOAL 2: Consider developing infrastructure and amenities that will provide more opportunities for a healthy lifestyle

GOAL 3: Create centers for public gatherings, entertainment, and socialization consistent with the “small town” atmosphere.

The 10-year recreation program listed on the following pages addresses each of these goals through recommendations made by members of the Parks Advisory Committee with input from additional citizen volunteers and the HSB POA.

RECOMMENDED 10-YEAR RECREATION PROGRAM

CURRENT FACILITIES

Martin Park:

- Current picnic shelter/restrooms
 - Not in good shape, restrooms are unsanitary and not recommended for long-term public use
 - Recommend upgrading this structure entirely either by removing and replacing with larger, handicap-accessible pre-fabricated structure (some options come with restrooms)
 - A pre-fab structure would be quicker to install and is more affordable
- Current play structure
 - Recommend upgrading/adding equipment using vendor GameTime, Inc. (<https://www.gametime.com/>),
 - Recommend expanding play area, including equipment for toddlers
 - Review options for younger children here:
<https://www.gametime.com/products/6-to-23-months>
 - Recommend mulch maintenance occur every three years (raked and fluffed regularly) which needs to be included in the annual budget (\$5,000 to \$10,000 per year and should increase as facilities increase)
- Current pickleball court
 - Recommend keeping, feature is used frequently
 - Recommend adding two additional pickleball courts, including one multi-use court (for example, nets on wheels could provide the option for a tennis court; basketball hoops could be installed)
- Current open greenspace
 - Previously, an exercise trail was set up in this area. Area is currently underutilized. Many residents are not aware this is part of Martin Park.
 - Recommend installing new exercise trail/course (for example areas to complete pull-ups, sit-ups, stretching)
 - Review possible options here:
<https://www.gametime.com/products/outdoor-fitness-equipment/adult-fitness-packages>
 - Recommend adding gravel trail along the creek with seating options, such as benches or picnic tables
 - Recommend adding signage to this area so residents know it is part of Martin Park
 - Recommend adding signage leaving the park and going onto Hi Stirrup directing people to the Slick Rock Hiking Trail

NEW/FUTURE FACILITIES IDEAS/PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Community Garden:

- An area where residents can be granted access and grow food and other plants
 - Possible location:
 - Acreage near water treatment plant near the Recycling Center (approx. 20 acres available in this area)

Dog Park:

- Possible location: 5-acre parcel that used to be a parking lot, near old power plant (off Ferguson Rd.)
 - Area could also include benches/picnic tables for pet parents and should include pet waste stations (no specific vendor recommended, however there are many options, including <https://dogwastedepot.com/>)
 - Per previous parks plan, dog park should include fencing, water, irrigation, trash receptacles, turf, signage, electronic gates, rules, strict control
 - **NOTE:** a private dog park located in Summit Rock for residents of that neighborhood could serve as an example for how to set up a city dog park

Pocket Parks Located Around the City:

- The HSB POA owns a great deal of parcels throughout the City that are ideal for small pocket parks.
- The City should consider participating in a partnership project with the POA to help with the creation of such parks when feasible.

New City Hall/City Center:

- Gravel trail along 2147 within this area that allows residents to safely walk to new City Hall from some of the nearby neighborhoods such as Slick Rock Creek, Escondido, Summit Rock, the Fairways
- Install pavilion/gazebo/public event space to include electricity and water fountains
- Install curving sidewalks/pathways/benches or other seating areas along with local artist structures/sculptures to create an art walk or create a historical walk that honors past city leaders and citizens
- Install demonstration gardens

Pedestrian Crosswalks Throughout the City:

- In areas where pedestrians frequently are at risk when crossing the road, consider painting pedestrian crosswalks and putting up signs alerting drivers to keep an eye out for pedestrians and be prepared to slow down (this is probably the most inexpensive way to accomplish this goal)
- Recommend a true pedestrian bridge near the low water crossing on Hi Mesa across from the campground/Slick Rock Trail

Trail along Horseshoe Bay West Blvd.

- A walking trail along this road would be ideal. Many residents are not aware that the mowed space along the edge of the road is public. However, the City should check into sprinkler system requirements for homes located along Horseshoe Bay West.

- Signage should be installed to make residents aware of this. Also recommend installing a few areas along both sides of the road to include benches or rest areas.

HSB POA RECREATION PROJECTS

The City of Horseshoe Bay should consider collaborating with the POA on the projects listed below, when feasible.

POA Campground:

- For 2022-2023, the POA is budgeting to increase the picnic area and upgrade the restrooms.
- As part of the POA's three-year and five-year budgets, the POA is researching obtaining adjacent property to expand the number of spaces available for RVs and campers.

Slick Rock Hiking Trail:

- The POA agrees that cleaning up this hiking trail to make it more accessible is important. In the 2022-2023 POA budget, the POA is including funds to begin that project. This would include not only working on the existing trail, but also investigating creating a loop and adding signage so the trail is more readily identifiable.
- Clean-up and maintenance of this project is expected to extend into the future and is therefore also included in the three-year and five-year POA budgets.
- Current access to Slick Rock Creek trail
 - Recommend creating pedestrian bridge from other side of Hi Mesa where the low water crossing is so that residents walking along Hi Mesa can access the campground or trail on foot
 - Also recommend painting pedestrian crosswalk directly from campground across Hi Mesa and installing a sign that encourages drivers to yield to pedestrians
 - Recommend signage in campground area pointing to Slick Rock Creek trail and letting visitors know the trail is for public use
 - Once trail is expanded/complete, recommend posting a map near the trailhead showing hikers the route
- Slick Rock Creek Hiking Trail
 - Recommend expansion to create a loop leading from the campground down to the stables with a newly established trail back up toward the campground using available greenspace/POA space (**See Attachment 1**)
 - Recommend posting occasional signage along the trail to direct hikers to access points/prevent hikers from getting lost
 - Recommend installing a few benches along the trail so hikers may rest if needed

Fox Hollow Park:

- Fox Hollow Park Project is already underway, as the POA has ordered a survey to establish its boundaries.
- Included in the 2022-2023 POA budget is fencing around the exterior perimeter of the park, new playground equipment, upgrading picnic tables, and adding a half-court basketball area.
- Included in the three-year and five-year POA budgets is maintenance of Fox Hollow Park and research to install a water fountain at Fox Hollow Pond.

Pocket Park at Clayton Nolen/FM 2147:

- The POA has approached Ron Mitchell of the HSB Resort about the proposed plan about cleaning up the vegetation on the banks of the pond, trimming trees, establishing a walking trail, installing signage with usage rules, establishing a parking pad, and adding covered benches and picnic tables. Mr. Mitchell is considering this idea with possible limitations on the parking and picnic areas.
- The POA is budgeting for 2022-2023 the clean-up of vegetation, tree trimming, establishing the walking trail, and adding signage. The POA is including in the three-year and five-year POA budgets to maintain the park and/or for future development.

REGULATORY PROCESS

Current Regulations for Facilities

1. Martin Park Reservations
 - Maintain current reservation system via phone or email as noted on the website for Pavilion.
 - If traffic and interest in reservations increase, consider implementing online reservation system, if possible, on Horseshoe Bay city website.
 - If use/wear-and-tear on Pavilion becomes excessive, consider implementing minimal fee for reservations to help with upkeep.
2. Pickleball Courts
 - Current first-come first-served use, if needed implement a reservation system similar to the one used for the Pavilion.
3. GameTime Recommendations/Inspection Compliance
 - Parks Advisory Committee to review regularly if current structure is up to code with state requirements.
 - When considering additional equipment, Committee to ensure they meet current state requirements.

Future Regulations for Consideration

1. Electric Lightweight Vehicles/Bikes, Golf Carts, etc.
 - As the community evolves and grows, we will see many more visitors and residents using electric vehicles to get around the communities within the city. Rules and regulations regarding street access and licensing should be considered by the City.
 - All rules and regulations should be in compliance with current state (TXDOT) regulations.
2. Rentals & Age
 - With the increase in use of electric vehicles that become street worthy, we will possibly see an increase in companies that will rent these vehicles locally to visitors and residents
 - City should consider licensing/permitting these vehicles, which could be a possible revenue source for the City.
 - City should also age restrict use of these vehicles per TXDOT regulations.
 - A good boilerplate for this type of system is Port Aransas's annual licensing program for golf carts within the city.
3. Possible Provision for Cart Paths
 - If the use of these types of vehicles grows, the City should consider the possibility of adding corridors/“cart paths” for these vehicles to share the road with automobiles
 - These could be in conjunction with current bike paths, shoulders, etc.
4. TXDOT to Possibly Lower Speed Limit Corridor for Golf Carts
 - Based on current state regulations (TXDOT), the City should explore the possibility of lowering the speed limit on FM 2147 to 35 MPH to allow for all golf carts to be able to travel on the shoulder.
 - Recommendation is a set space that is based on population centers, etc. For example, from Thanksgiving Mountain on the North Side to Bay West Boulevard on the South Side of the city.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

This list of priority projects stands alone and is not in any priority order. It is not all-inclusive and can be modified at any time at the discretion of the City.

ADMINISTRATION PROJECTS

- Continue the Parks Advisory Committee to provide guidance and input to the City on its park system as established in the charter for the committee.
- Establish rules and regulations for the park system as it grows and the need for regulations arise.
- Design a Horseshoe Bay Parks logo for park signage and to delineate and separate the City-owned parks from the Resort, LCRA, HSB Nature Park, and the various POAs to avoid confusion with the public.
- Design, produce, and distribute a brochure for the public that describes and maps the recreational facilities available in the City to include all entities with facilities.
- Produce a brochure to make the public aware they may contribute to the City for construction and maintenance programs to enhance recreation for all via cash gifts, volunteer opportunities, and tax-deductible donations.
- Establish a procedure for Open Space designation for all parcels of land owned by entities that do not have current plans for other uses. Open space is very important in communities and Horseshoe Bay is very limited in open space opportunities.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PROJECTS

- Continue Martin Park upgrades to include handicap tables, grills, tether ball sets, and biannual replacement of landing surface for play structure.
- Ensuring adequate maintenance including weed control, tree branch pruning, and possible washout sites on Horseshoe Creek Trail.

ADOPTION

The Master Plan should be formally adopted by the City Council once approved through the full approval process, including public meetings and input.

Parks Advisory Committee Approval

____ Michael D. Widler, Chairman

____ Cindee Sharp, Member

____ Kara Dudley, Member

____ Linda Burling, POA Member

ADDENDUM I

CITY OF HORSESHOE BAY

PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTED SCHEDULE

- 2022 – 2023 Picnic Shelter Replacement (\$150,000)
- 2023 – 2024 Upgrade Play Structure adding toddler equipment
- 2024 – 2025 Add exercise trail equipment and surface/replace play mulch
- 2026 – 2028 Add two pickle ball courts/equipment
- 2026 – 2028 New City Hall Improvements to grounds
- 2029 Other remaining items (dog park, community gardens, etc.)

PROJECTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH POA

- 2024 – 2026 HSB Entry area Pond Park/trail
- 2026 – 2028 Slick Rock Trail Extension/loop