

# City of Benbrook



The Parks and Open  
Space Master Plan  
October 2022



## **Acknowledgement**

The City of Benbrook *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* was prepared by the Public Services Department with input and direction from the Parks and Recreation Board. The Plan is a community supported document and intended to serve as a guide for the future park development in the City of Benbrook. We thank the following individuals for their guidance in the making of this plan.

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In addition, we would like to thank those who were involved in the process and to all the participants who completed the Survey. Their input and insight were vital in the development of the goals and objectives proposed in the plan.

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## CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

The City of Benbrook is located southwest of Fort Worth, Texas, in Tarrant County, and is part of the rapidly growing greater Dallas-Fort Worth area. Since its incorporation in 1947, Benbrook has grown from a village of approximately 600 people to a population of 24,520<sup>1</sup>. The City will continue to grow in the short term, but the lack of available land will greatly limit Benbrook's future population growth and subsequent need for additional parks.

In 2014, the City approved a boundary agreement with the City of Fort Worth that set Benbrook's municipal boundaries to just over 11.0 square miles. Except for 992-acres located within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), the City is landlocked. Timing of future ETJ development and possible park opportunities are unknown as the property owners solely control development of their property.

The *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* reflects this reality and shifts focus from growth and expansion of City parks to placing a higher priority on park maintenance and improvements, infill opportunities through the creation of pocket parks, the establishment of more trail/park connections, and installation of directional and informational signage.

*The Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is a designated "potential growth and service area" located just outside of a city's municipal limits. Every municipality in Texas is afforded an ETJ, based on its population, by the Texas Local Government Code.*

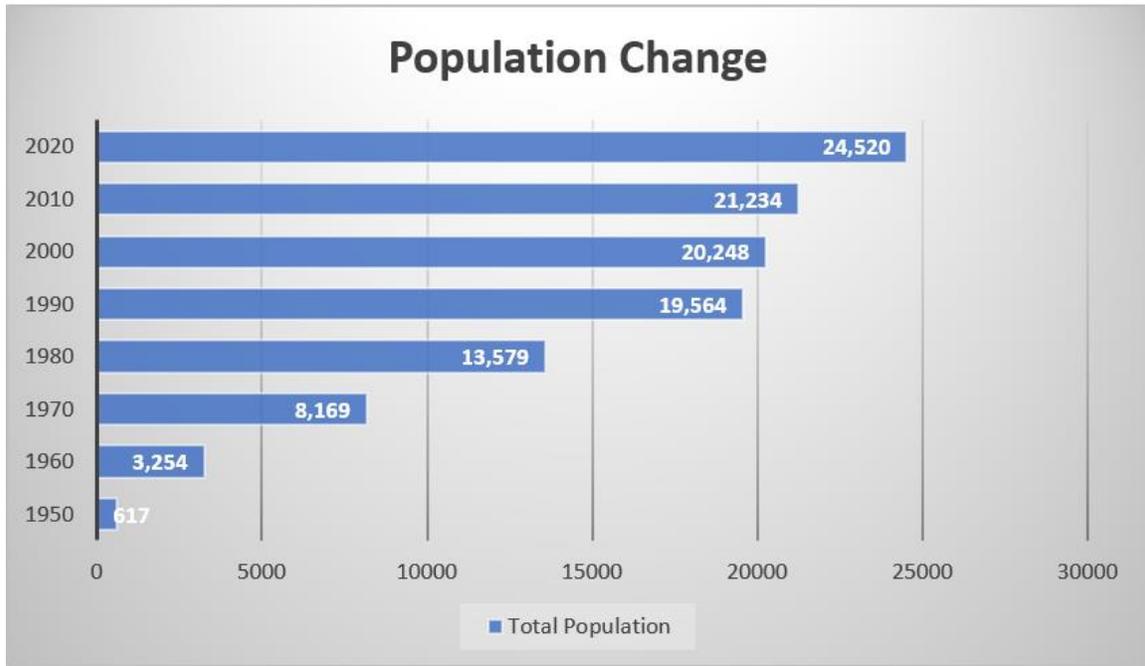
## CHAPTER 2 - Demographics

To ensure that Benbrook allocates an appropriate level of resources to its parks, it is important to understand the demographic and socioeconomic reality of its residents. Using data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau from the 2020 Census and 2020 American Community Survey, the following tables shown in this Chapter provide the City with basic characteristics of Benbrook residents.

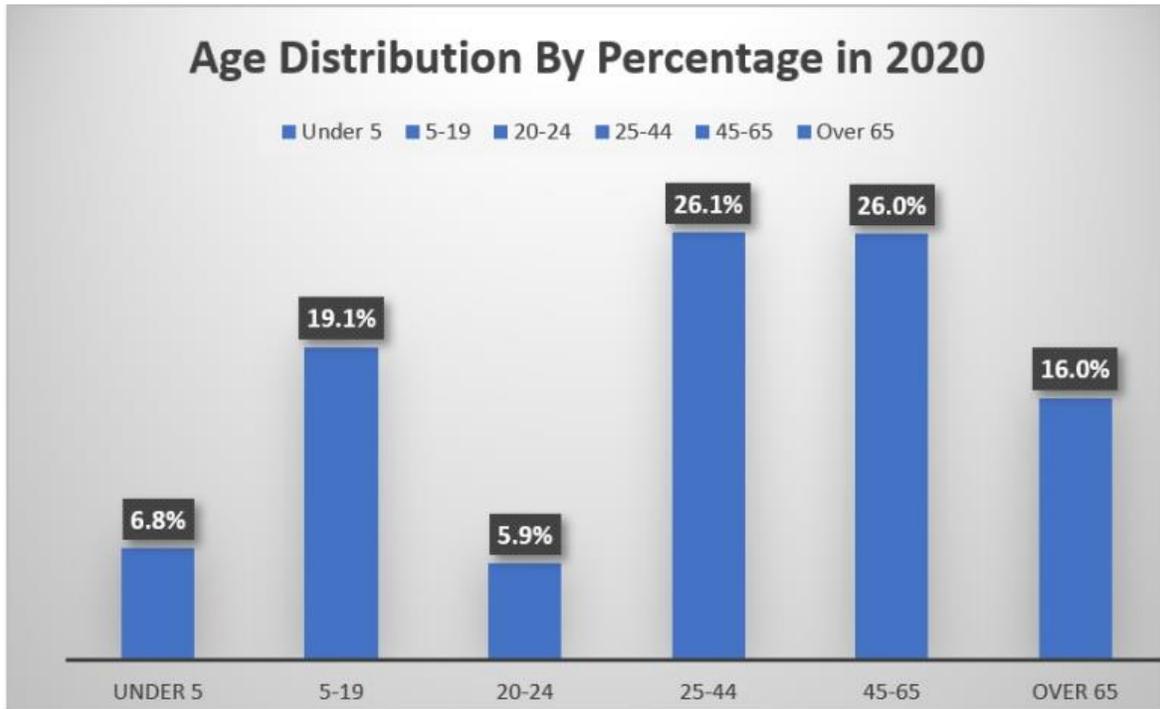
According to U.S. Census data, Benbrook's population has grown by 3,286 persons or 15.5% between the years 2010 and 2020. This was the largest ten-year increase to the City's overall population since the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1990, the City added nearly 6,000 persons or a 44% increase to its overall population in just 10 years. However, since 1990, Benbrook's population growth has been quite stable and has on average increased by approximately 0.9% annually.

Benbrook, TX Snapshot	
Total Population	<b>24,520</b> <i>Source: 2020 Decennial Census</i>
Median Household Income	<b>\$ 73,945</b> <i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	<b>41.3 %</b> (25+ years old) <i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>
Employment Rate	<b>66.8 %</b> <i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>
Total Housing Units	<b>11,160</b> <i>Source: 2020 Decennial Census</i>
Without Health Care Coverage	<b>15.0 %</b> <i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>

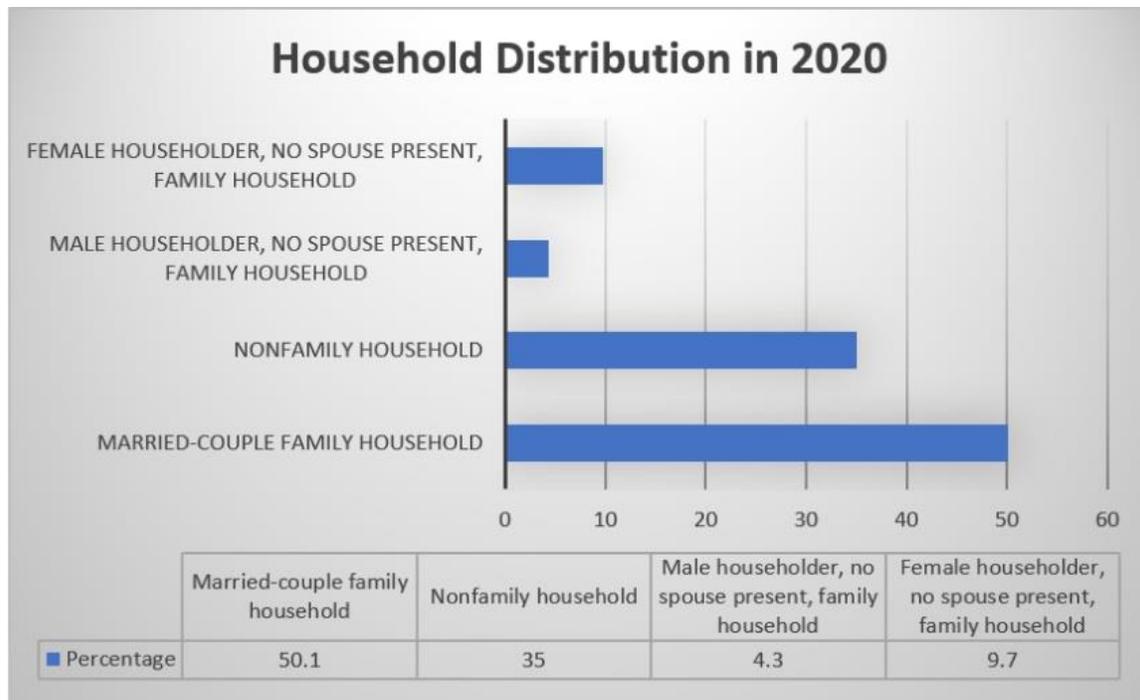
<sup>1</sup> Based on 2020 U.S. Census data.



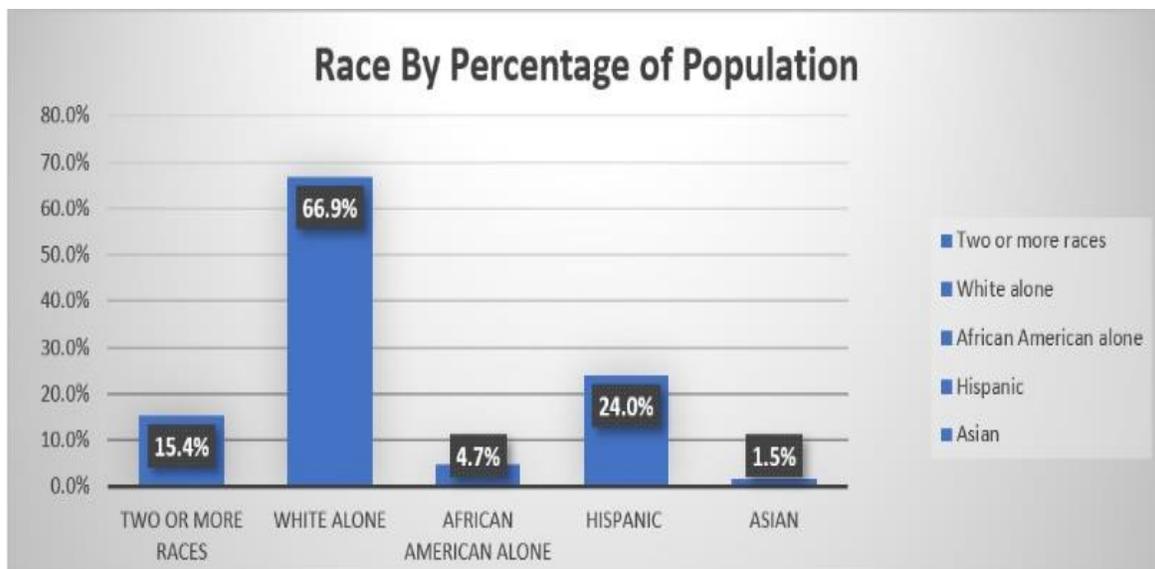
Source: US Census Data



Source: US Census Data



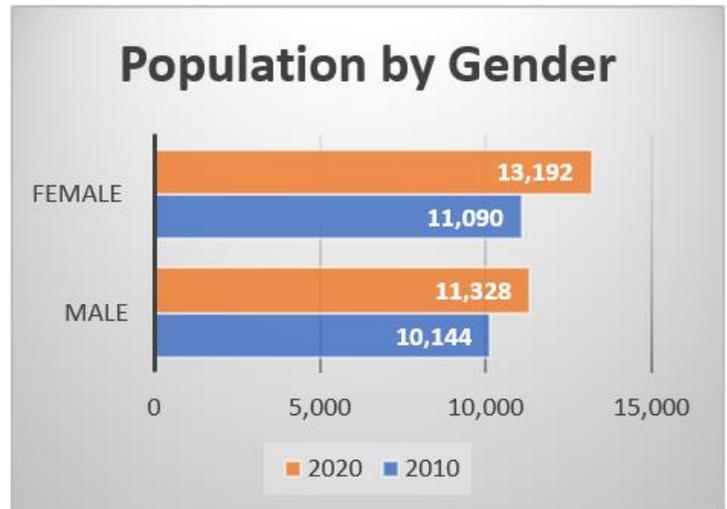
Source: US Census Data



Source: US Census Data

The key demographic findings for Benbrook residents are as follows:

- Approximately 26% of all residents are under 20 years of age.
- Approximately 50% of all households are married-couple family households.
- Approximately 16% of all residents are over 65 years of age.
- Residents are well educated with over 41% of the total population that are 25 years of age and older holding a Bachelor's Degree or higher.
- Female residents make up close to 54% of the City's total population.
- The median household income is just under \$74,000 per household.



Source: US Census Data

### CHAPTER 3 - Goals and Objectives

In addition to the City's adopted Core Tenets<sup>2</sup> that frame the City's fundamental policies and governance style, the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* serves as a blueprint or roadmap for future development of the City's park system. Benbrook is a fiscally conservative community that operates with a small park staff and budget. The goals and objectives were written with this in mind and do not include items that are not financially prudent. Goals are a broad statement of a desired community outcomes. Objectives are specific and measurable steps that decision makers can implement toward achieving a community goal.

**Goal 1: Restore and maintain the viability of the parks, trails, and open space system by investing and reinvesting in existing facilities.**

**Objectives:**

- Using a criteria-based system, establish priorities to replace and renovate existing playgrounds.
- Replace playground equipment at Castle Park and Robot Park.
- Renovate or replace segments of existing trails that have exceeded their useful life or deteriorated beyond repair.
- Strategically reinvest in the park system to preserve and protect existing infrastructure and to effectively plan for and efficiently develop new facilities.

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 2 of the City of Benbrook Comprehensive Plan 2020

**Goal 2: Provide new parkland facilities to meet park, trail, and open space needs in developing and redeveloping areas of the City.**

**Objectives:**

- As appropriate, survey residents and other users to determine needs.
- Leverage the use of fees collected in lieu of park dedication by seeking grants or other park and facility improvement funding sources.
- Pursue donation of land suitable for linear parks, but accept only those parcels with adequate street frontage and access.
- Consider establishing streambank setbacks and open space preservation requirements.
- Install landscaping at key entryways to the City and along selected street medians to create an attractive image.

**Goal 3: Improve the variety of park, trail, and open space opportunities available to the community.**

**Objectives:**

- Provide new park facilities where service levels fall below standards and the priorities established in the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan*.
- For new residential subdivisions, consider adoption of new regulation requiring developers to establish Homeowner Association (HOA) owned and maintained pocket parks when developing subdivisions less than 200 lots. (*e.g. require a 1/4 acre of parkland dedication with playground equipment per every 50 lots of residential development*).
- Work with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve access to Benbrook Lake.
- Monitor emerging trends in park facilities development both locally and nationally.
- Develop, fund, and implement future capital improvement programs consistent with the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan*.
- Encourage citizen input as it relates to park needs and incorporate data into updates.
- Update the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* as needed.

**Goal 4: Create a system of hike and bike routes/trails between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and business areas as an alternative to automotive transportation.**

**Objectives:**

- Ensure new routes and trail designs consider safety as its highest priority.
- Add signage at key locations to provide information about routes/trails and park amenities.
- Construct hike and bike trails, wherever possible, to connect residential areas with schools, parks, and business areas.
- Encourage developers to provide hike and bike paths and neighborhood parks within larger developments.

- Implement a plan that identifies and creates hike and bike routes/trails. The City will implement Complete Streets designs where practical.
- Implement a plan that connects the City’s hike and bike routes/trails to the Regional Veloweb.

**Goal 5: Provide residents with safe, reliable, and accessible park equipment throughout the park system.**

**Objectives:**

- Inspect and maintain park equipment and facilities for safety.
- Add shade structures over picnic tables and benches, where appropriate.
- Identify and develop a long-range plan to replace all playground equipment that does not meet Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**CHAPTER 4 - Plan Development Process**

The *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* update process began in earnest following City Council’s adoption of the City of Benbrook Comprehensive Plan 2020 in February 2020. A key goal (Goal 3) of the Public Facilities section of this newly adopted plan recommended establishment of a new master park plan.

The Parks and Recreation Board (Parks Board), assisted by City staff, led the update process by meeting monthly to discuss the various elements of the plan. However, the update process was delayed for over one (1) year due to COVID 19 protocols implemented by Tarrant County Public Health.

The following methods were used to obtain resident’s recreational needs and desires data:

- A city-wide survey;

Timeline
<b>January 8, 2020</b> - Parks Board held 1 <sup>st</sup> workshop on Master Parks Plan update.
<b>February 9, 2020</b> - Citizen survey posted on City website.
<b>February 12, 2020</b> - Parks Board held workshop.
<b>March 11, 2020</b> - Parks Board meetings were stopped in adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols.
<b>April 13, 2020</b> - Citizen survey closed. The City received 517 survey responses.
<b>August 11, 2021</b> - Parks Board held workshop – 1 <sup>st</sup> workshop following lifting of COVID-19 safety protocols.
<b>September 13, 2021</b> - Parks Board held workshop.
<b>October 13, 2021</b> - Park Board held workshop.
<b>November 10, 2021</b> - Park Board held workshop.
<b>December 8, 2021</b> - Parks Board approved draft of Master Parks Plan update.
<b>April 27, 2022</b> - Public Open House held on draft Master Parks Plan.
<b>May 11, 2022</b> - Parks Board held final workshop.
<b>September 8, 2022</b> - Planning and Zoning Commission held public meeting on Master Parks Plan.
<b>October 20, 2022</b> - City Council held public meeting on Master Parks Plan.

- Existing park inventory and assessment review;
- Discussions with youth associations and other stakeholders;
- Public Input Meetings.

## CHAPTER 5 - Park Classification

A successful park system is made up of many different kinds of parks, which vary greatly in size and in function. It is important to be able to classify these different parks in order to assess whether residents' needs are being met. The park system classification includes community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, trail system and linear parks, open spaces, streetscapes and shared facilities.

### Community Parks

Community Parks are the largest park classification type. They range in size from approximately 25 to 1,000 acres and serve a radius of 1 mile or more. These parks typically provide recreation activities that serve residents well beyond the local community and are capable of hosting tournament competitions as well as festivals and other large gatherings of people. Community parks can also double as a buffer mechanism between park and other land uses. These parks should also have a varied topography and vegetation, some cleared spaces for active recreation, and preferably be located near a body of water such as a lake, river or creek.

Community parks amenities may include:

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Recreation Center            | • Playground Equipment           |
| • Tennis Courts                | • Nature Areas                   |
| • Sports Fields                | • Marina Facilities              |
| • Picnic Areas and Pavilions   | • Fishing Area                   |
| • Restrooms                    | • On-Site Parking Lots           |
| • Benches and Shade Structures | • Direct Access to Thoroughfares |

### Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are the backbone of the park system. They range in size from approximately 5 to 10 acres and serve a ¼ to ½ mile radius – an easily walkable distance. Ideally all residential properties should fall within the recommended distance of this type of park. Neighborhood parks provide a range of activities of interests to multiple age groups. Although the park size is still somewhat small, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggests keeping half of the site undisturbed to act as a buffer zone between the park and other uses.

Neighborhood Park amenities may include:

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| • Tennis Courts            | • Playground Equipment |
| • Picnic Areas & Pavilions | • Limited Parking      |

- Restrooms
- Benches
- Trails/Walking Paths
- Open Play Fields

### Pocket Parks

Pocket Parks are the smallest of all the park types, ranging in the size from 2,500 square feet to one acre. These parks are usually located within a ¼ mile walking distance of the area they serve, and provide limited recreational options. Due to their small size, they are usually located within residential subdivisions and multi-family apartment complexes, with little to no buffering between uses.

Pocket park amenities may include:

- Picnic Areas
- Benches and Shade Structures
- No Restrooms
- Playground Equipment
- Limited Walking Paths
- No On-Site Parking

### Trail System and Linear Parks

A trail system readily connects residents to other residents, neighborhoods, parks, schools, work and retail areas. Trails provide an alternative to driving and offer a safe and scenic way to walk or bike from nearly anywhere in a city to another. A key component of this system is to connect with other trail networks in the area including Fort Worth’s and the North Central Texas Council of Government’s (NCTCOG) Regional Veloweb.

Linear parks are areas developed for one or more modes of non-motorized, recreational travel, such as bicycling, walking and hiking. Also known as greenbelts, linear parks should be at least 50 feet wide and may consist of a trail constructed of paved or a more natural surface. These parks are generally left in a nature state, and usually follow built or natural corridors such as utility rights-of-way, roads, rail corridors, rivers and creeks. Ideally, linear parks should link other components of the park and recreation system, such as other parks, recreation centers or public gathering spaces.

Support facilities include trailheads, trail signage, and trail bridges:

#### Trailheads

Trailhead facilities may include such items as parking areas, restrooms, water fountains and trailhead kiosk signage. The kiosk can include a permanent map of the trail system to help guide users or it may also include literature that users can pick up that explain the trail system and park regulations.

#### Trail Signage

Trail signs may provide such information as directions, mileage and educational information. The trail should be measured in order to determine the length of the trail and any side trails. Distances should be rounded to the next tenth of a mile. Standard highway

signage identifying the trailhead must conform to the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Trail signs providing location, direction and mileage should have letters and numbers at least 1 inch tall. These signs should be made of materials that match the theme of the area or the park but be easily read.

#### Trail Bridges

Trail crossings of creeks involve a wide variety of opportunities. From placing large rocks in wet areas to building elaborate boardwalks, creeks provide opportunities for the trail builder to be creative. However, any bridge that is built must be structurally sound and built to withstand floods and the appropriate weight of the users.

#### Open Spaces

As our cities continue to grow, more and more of our natural habitats are being eliminated. The value of strolling through natural open space is very beneficial and can be difficult to measure. The opportunity to protect our natural resources and habitats is becoming rare, and for most communities and metro areas, urgency is needed in identifying and proactively protecting them for future generations.

#### Streetscapes

Streetscapes play an integral role in ensuring that residents have a positive perception of their city. Attractive streetscapes can greatly enhance one's experience when motoring on city streets, but it is even more pronounced when walking, jogging or cycling. A well-lit street with quality landscaping, clean, wide and even sidewalks feels safe and inviting. Whereas, a poorly maintained street and sidewalk with little to no landscaping and poor lighting has the opposite effect. Quality streetscapes not only add economic value to any neighborhood or commercial corridor, it provides the framework from which a city can build upon to connect different parts of a community together.

#### Shared Facilities

Shared facilities are parks and recreation facilities that are owned, operated, and maintained by entities other than the City of Benbrook. These entities include the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth Independent School District, U.S. Corps of Engineers and local churches and homeowner associations. Shared facilities can greatly expand the recreational opportunities afforded to the Benbrook residents.

#### City of Fort Worth Facilities

The City of Fort Worth has park facilities within and just outside the city limits of Benbrook. Memorial and Pecan Valley Parks are located within the Benbrook city limits and offer residents open spaces and access to the regional Veloweb. Z Boaz Park is located just north of Benbrook and offers residents a disk golf course, baseball fields and open spaces.

### Fort Worth Independent School District

The Fort Worth Independent School District has a number of schools that offer outdoor recreation opportunities for the Benbrook residents and are listed below.

- Waverly Park Elementary School
- Westpark Elementary School
- Benbrook Elementary School
- Benbrook Middle/High School
- Leonard Middle School
- Western Hills High School

### United States Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S.A.C.E. operate Benbrook Lake and they maintain multiple parks around the lake including:

- Bear Creek Park
- Holiday Park
- Longhorn Park
- Mustang Park
- Rocky Creek Park

### Local Churches

There are a number of churches within and just outside the Benbrook city limits that offer playground equipment and open space for the public to use and include:

- Benbrook Church of Christ
- Benbrook United Methodist Church
- Capstone Church Benbrook
- Christ The Redeemer
- Encounter Church
- First Baptist Church - Benbrook
- Heritage Baptist Church
- High Ridge Church
- Korean Central Church
- Redeemer Lutheran Church
- RFC Benbrook
- Tabernacle of Praise
- The Church at Benbrook
- Trinity Chapel Bible Church
- Trinity Hills Baptist Church
- Williams Road Baptist Church
- Wisdom Center

## CHAPTER 6 - Area and Facility Concepts and Standards

The Parks and Recreation Board used the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) widely referenced report named "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines"

(1995) as a guide to determine the level of service for the park system. The classifications and standards are guidelines and have not been used by the NRPA itself as policy. These standards should not be adopted in whole by Benbrook and are simply guides. Instead they should be adjusted according to the resources and needs of Benbrook residents.

The 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Report contains data from 925 park and recreation agencies. This report provided benchmarks on how cities compare to other cities across the United States. Key findings show that the typical park and recreation agencies should have 9.6 acres of park land for every thousand residents in the jurisdiction. Generally, agencies that serve fewer than 20,000 residents typically have 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents, compared to 12.2 acres per 1,000 residents at jurisdictions serving more than 250,000 residents. At the same time, agencies serving jurisdictions between 100,000 and 250,000 people have 7.9 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. Benbrook currently has 467.56 acres of park land, or 19.84 acres per 1,000 residents.

The Parks and Recreation Board also used the 2020 resident survey in order to better understand resident needs and desires.

#### Park and Maintenance Standards

The Parks Department is responsible for the daily maintenance, long-term upkeep, and as necessary, replacement of all park amenities located within Benbrook parks and trails. When replacing or adding amenities such as playground equipment, benches, tables and drinking fountains, the department looks to install high-quality products to minimize the long-term maintenance costs. Except for the Fire Department grounds, the Parks Department is also responsible for the ground maintenance of all other City properties.

## CHAPTER 7 - Inventory and Conditions of Existing Parks, Open Spaces and Trails

The members of Parks and Recreation Board and the Benbrook Parks Department independently visited each of the City's parks (see Appendix A) and ranked their amenities condition based on a differential scale of good, fair and poor. Each evaluator was given a list of amenities at each of the parks and was told to work independently of each other evaluating the listed amenities. The evaluation results are subjective because each person had a different perspective on the condition descriptions. The evaluation list also included an area for comments for each item. The description of conditions that are attributed to each of these assessment findings and evaluations are provided in Appendix D - Table 1.1 and Table 1.2, respectively.

As expected, the newer parks (Rolling Hills and Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park) had a higher percentage of good condition scores as compared to the oldest parks (Dutch Branch, Timber Creek and Twilight parks). The individual park evaluations are shown in Appendix D - Tables 1.3 to 1.8.

### Dutch Branch Park - Community Park (408 Acres)

At 408-acres, Dutch Branch Park is the largest park in Benbrook. The park is located at the southeast corner of Benbrook Blvd and Winscott Road. The park is part of the larger Benbrook Lake flood control property, owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). Due to a long-term lease agreement with the Corps, the City is authorized to construct and maintain the park amenities located within the park. The City also manages several private concessionaire businesses (Par 3, the Benbrook Stables, the Benbrook Marina, and PowerPlay Racing)



*Castle Park playground structure - Dutch Branch Park*

operating on park land. Amenities include a golf driving range, Par 3 golf course, batting cages, putt-putt golf course, horse stables and equestrian riding and related activities, and marina and boat repair. Fort Worth Independent School District is a new concessionaire and they operate a baseball field, softball field and tennis courts for the school district.

The park includes nine youth baseball, softball and t-ball fields, a sand volleyball court, two playground areas, concession stand, four large pavilions that can be rented, fishing area, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, soccer fields, multi-use fields, restroom facilities, walking track, a full-service YMCA, duck pond, and large parking lot. This park is the most used of the parks and hosts many special events including: Heritage Fest, a Christmas tree lighting and fireworks show, a monthly farmers market, and various other charity events and activities.

### Rolling Hills Park - Neighborhood Park (4.7 Acres)

Rolling Hills Park is Benbrook's newest neighborhood park. It is located near the intersection of Rolling Hills Drive and Trail Ridge Drive. The park includes a large pavilion, restroom facilities, covered playground, swings, nature trail, walking track, workout equipment, basketball court, sand volleyball court and a parking lot.



*Playground – Rolling Hills Park*

### Timber Creek Park - Neighborhood Park (16.8 Acres)

Timber Creek Park is Benbrook's oldest neighborhood park and is located near the intersection of Park Drive and Mesquite Trail. The park includes a community garden where residents can rent garden space to grow vegetables and help maintain the rest of the garden. The park includes a large open space, tennis courts, basketball court, covered picnic table, covered playground area, swings and a parking lot. A pedestrian bridge allows people to access the park from across Timber Creek which borders the north side of the park.



*Shade Structure – Timber Creek Park*

### Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park - Pocket Park (1.1 Acres)



*New Equipment – Dittrich Park*

Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park (formerly South Benbrook Park) is Benbrook's newest park. The park is located at the intersection of Mildred Lane and Cozby Street West and was created through a partnership between the City and Benbrook United Methodist Church. The church, having unused property they had to maintain, worked out an agreement with the City for installation of new public pocket park on the property. The church owns the land but the City owns, operates, and maintains the facilities. Park amenities include: a covered playground, walking track, picnic tables and swings. On-street parking is also available.

### Twilight Park - Pocket Park (1.3 Acres)

Twilight Park is located near the intersection of Twilight Drive South and Twilight Drive West. The park includes a covered playground, swings and picnic tables. A creek runs through the middle of the park essentially splitting it into two parts. A pedestrian bridge allows users to access both sides of the park.



*View of Access Bridge – Twilight Park*

### Mont Del Park - Pocket Park (1.7 Acres)

Mont Del Park is located at the intersection of Mont Del Drive and Park Lane. It is a unique park because the main feature is the duck pond. The park also includes benches to view the pond.



*View of Pond – Mont Del Park*

### Team Ranch Park - Open Space (34 Acres)

Team Ranch Park is located near the intersection of Benbrook Blvd and Loop 820. It is an undeveloped park and will remain undeveloped due to the steep terrain and a creek that runs through it. The nature trail could be developed in the park but parking would be limited to on-street parking in the neighborhood located on the north side of the park.

### Pecan Valley Park - Open Space (156 Acres)

Pecan Valley Park is located near the intersection of Winscott Road and Lakeside Drive. It is unique area because the land is owned by the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the area is maintained by the U.S. Corps of Engineers, City of Benbrook, City of Fort Worth and Tarrant Regional Water District. Each entity has specific areas that are mowed a few times per year. Part of the park is designated prairie grass which requires the grass to grow wild with limited mowing. The other areas are designated wild flower areas which limits mowing.

### Benbrook Trail System

The Benbrook Trail System includes concrete sidewalks, asphalt trails and bike routes. The ultimate goal is for the trail system to connect residents with the parks, businesses and the Regional Veloweb. Dutch Branch Park has a trail connection to the Regional Veloweb. Users can connect to the Regional Veloweb in other locations using bike routes and streets in both Benbrook and Fort Worth. The current and future trail system is shown on Appendix B.

### Streetscapes

The City has made a large investment in landscaping along Benbrook Blvd and RM 2871. The landscaping includes landscaped medians, landscape nodes at various intersections and landscape beds along other sections of the streets.

## CHAPTER 8 - Needs Assessment and Identification

The Needs Assessment establishes the type and quantity of park land or facilities required to meet the needs of the City of Benbrook currently as well as in the future when Benbrook reaches build-out population. The City used several methods while gathering information regarding the needs of the park system. First, the Parks Board developed a Community Interest Survey to determine if the City was meeting the community's needs. Second, the City met with key stakeholders, including: youth associations, Fort Worth ISD, US Army Corps of Engineers,

concessionaires, parks staff and other stakeholders. The City also held a public open house and several public meetings as stipulated by City Charter.

### Demand

The City of Benbrook's 1998 Plan included the results of a citizen's survey indicated that a new recreation center, fitness center, exercise equipment and basketball courts were their highest priorities. Additional parks in the northern and western areas of the City were also high on the list.

Since the 1998 survey, the City has partnered with the YMCA to construct a full-service facility that offers an indoor swimming pool, basketball courts, workout areas and fitness class areas. The City has also constructed Twilight Park in the northern end of the City, Rolling Hills Park in the western end of the City and Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park in the central portion of the City.

In April 2020, Parks Board and staff developed a Community Interest Survey. The City received over 500 survey responses back from residents. The feedback obtained in the survey is essential to understand the community's opinions on parks, recreation and facility needs while establishing the City's vision for the future.

Public comments were varied and addressed a wide range of park and recreation issues and needs. Respondents ranked the replacement of playground equipment at Castle and Robot Parks, improved lake access, adding of shade structures, hike and bike trails, directional/informational signage and natural areas as top priorities. The inclusion of a dog park also ranked high, but was not supported by the Park and Recreation Board due to the lack of staffing and maintenance resources necessary to operate such a facility. Appendix C - Tables 1.1 through 1.10. provide a general summary of responses.

## CHAPTER 9 - Plan Implementation and Action Plan

The needs assessment has been calculated from data standards from NRPA guidelines in order to establish a benchmark for the City of Benbrook.

### Implementation Strategies

Various options are available to decision makers when implementing the recommendations presented in this *Parks and Open Space Master Plan*, including: land acquisition, parkland dedication ordinance, conservation easements, financing operations and maintenance, joint use facilities, park improvements, American Disability Act (ADA), signage, security, park view/lighting and park development.

### Land Acquisition

The purchase or donation of parkland (fee simple, by easement, or other conveyance) transfers all or some ownership property rights to City for a defined park, open space and trail development purpose. Donations of land may be considered a tax-deductible charitable donation.

### Parkland Dedication Ordinance

The City of Benbrook has adopted regulations that require parkland dedication at the time of new residential development based on the number of residential dwelling proposed. Developments creating 200 or more new residential dwelling are required to establish parkland at a rate of one acre per 100 dwelling units. Developments creating less than 200 lots are required to pay a “cash-in-lieu” of land dedication fee.

### Conservation Easements

A conservation easement allows developers to set aside land for conservation reasons, such as the preservation for wildlife and riparian corridors within the City.

### Financing Operations and Maintenance

The City of Benbrook currently funds its park operations and maintenance through the General Fund, which is approved by City Council each budget cycle. Another common funding method is to reassign a percentage of sales tax revenues to the park system. While this is an effective and dependable funding mechanism, other programs funded through sales tax revenues would see a decline in their funding.

Another method of revenue generation is through user fees, which are most appropriate when parks are used for:

- Special events;
- Entry controlled facilities such as recreation centers, skate parks, bike tracks, swimming pools, etc.; and
- Ballfield facilities with centrally organized play.

Impact fees is another funding mechanism wherein a one-time charge is assessed to a developer to pay for their proportionate share of the cost of the streets, parks, schools and other facilities necessary to serve their new developments. A portion of the funds collected would be applied toward the new park and trail facilities that are to be developed in order to meet the needs of new residents. The following criteria should be considered should the City adopt an impact fee for any park facility development:

- Statutory limitations;
- Other funding options;
- Availability of plans and data;
- Current levels of service;
- Political support; and
- Revenue potential.

The amount of the fee must be clearly linked to the added service cost and maintenance of the facilities. The City must make local policy decisions relating to facilities, methodology, exemptions, offsets, benefit area and percent cost recovery.

### Joint Use Facilities

Partnerships between public/private entities and the public/school districts for joint-use facilities is an advantageous route to be used to further augment the City's park system. This type of agreement between the City and the school system is advantageous to both parties as it can maximize the efficiency of the operations and maintenance costs of each entity.

### Park Improvements

Park Improvement is vital to ensure that the facilities accommodate the citizens as well as exceed their expectations in a park system.

The recent public survey results indicated that the following improvements are needed in the City parks:

#### Replace Castle Park and Robot Park Equipment

Much of the equipment in Castle Park and Robot Park have exceeded their life expectancy and should be replaced. The Parks Board recommends that Castle Park equipment be replaced with an updated themed-system that is inclusive for all ages and that Robot Park equipment be replaced with an updated themed-system that is inclusive for younger children. The Parks Board also recommends replacing the existing obstacle course equipment with an updated obstacle course.

#### Add Shade Structures at Parks

The Parks Board recommends adding shade structures to picnic tables and benches in the various parks across the City. The shade structures will allow families to use the various parks year-round.

#### Improve Benbrook Lake Access

The United States Corps of Engineers owns all the land surrounding Benbrook Lake and the City leases a portion of the land for Dutch Branch Park. Lake access in Dutch Branch Park is at Baja Beach through an access-controlled gate or at Benbrook Marina.

The Parks Board would like to explore the possibility of turning Baja Beach into an extension of Dutch Branch Park by removing the access-controlled gate and making it more aesthetically pleasing by adding landscaping, picnic tables and bird-watching stations.

#### Additional Hike and Bike Trails

The Parks Board recommends improving the trail connections to destination points throughout the City and the Regional Veloweb, and to continue efforts to obtain trail grants as they become available.

#### Natural Areas

The Parks Board recommends making better use of the natural areas in the various parks across the City. Dutch Branch Park and Rolling Hills Park have natural areas that can be improved to allow better access for the public.

#### American Disability Act (ADA)

ADA standards require that all buildings and facilities are accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities to the greatest extent practical. This means that all new and altered buildings and facilities should be in conformance with the appropriate design standards. It also means that a sufficient number of existing buildings and facilities should be modified to ensure that programs can be provided in an accessible location.

#### Signage

A good park signage system performs multiple functions and can: effectively convey information, encourage learning experiences, communicate park rules, and help to improve the overall image of the park. Signage can be targeted to certain areas or used thematically throughout the park.

As many residents are unaware of the location of all City parks or their amenities, the Parks Board recommends adding wayfinding/informational signage along City trails and in other key areas of the City. This would be especially helpful at Dutch Branch Park and Rolling Hills Park, two of the City's largest parks, where interior park signage would assist people to find the various park amenities.

#### Security

The posting and enforcement of rules and regulations within parks ensure that visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience while visiting City parks. The City also encourages the implementation of Park Watch programs to increase safety and a sense of belonging and community among the citizens.

#### Park View/Lighting

There are multiple creative options that ensure the lighting of City parks are both aesthetically pleasing and provide the necessary security visitors expect. Solar lighting can function as a sustainable measure to provide safety to citizens using the parks. Solar lighting is cost effective and will save the City dollars over traditional park lights when installed in new or existing parks.

## CHAPTER 10 - Funding Sources

This section identifies ways of funding the recommendations of the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan*. The future park improvements listed in the Plan represent a significant investment in the parks system preparing for the future growth over the next five (5) years. Recognizing the importance, the Parks and Recreation Board and staff will be committed to finding ways of funding the needs listed in the Plan. Furthermore, the Parks Department will continue maintaining City parks in order to meet the high standards that are expected by the community.

The sources listed below are various ways to fund the improvements:

## General Fund

Taxpayer dollars, utility license fees, business license fees, interest income and miscellaneous revenues are deposited in the General Fund. The General Fund primarily funds the parks' operations and maintenance. In addition, General Fund dollars are used to support other services such as police, fire as well as community development and administrative support services.

## Bonds

Bonds are a common source to fund construction, restoration acquisition of land and rights-of-way and pay for related professional services. Bonds are usually supported by property taxes or other local revenues and are typically approved by the voters.

## Local Park Grants

Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) assists communities across Texas with recreation needs and park activities. TPW offers 50% matching grants on a reimbursement basis to eligible applicants. Once funded, all grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, be properly maintained, and open to the public.

Also, TPW administers the National Recreation 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 reimbursement grants can be up to 80% of the project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and a maximum award of \$400,000 for motorized (off-highway vehicle) trail grants. 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.

## Private Grants and Foundations

Private grants and foundations provide money for a wide range of projects. The vast majority of these grants are to non-profit organizations. The Parks and Recreation Board should encourage community support for such non-profit groups to help fund park improvements. These grants often fund unique projects or projects that demonstrate extreme need.

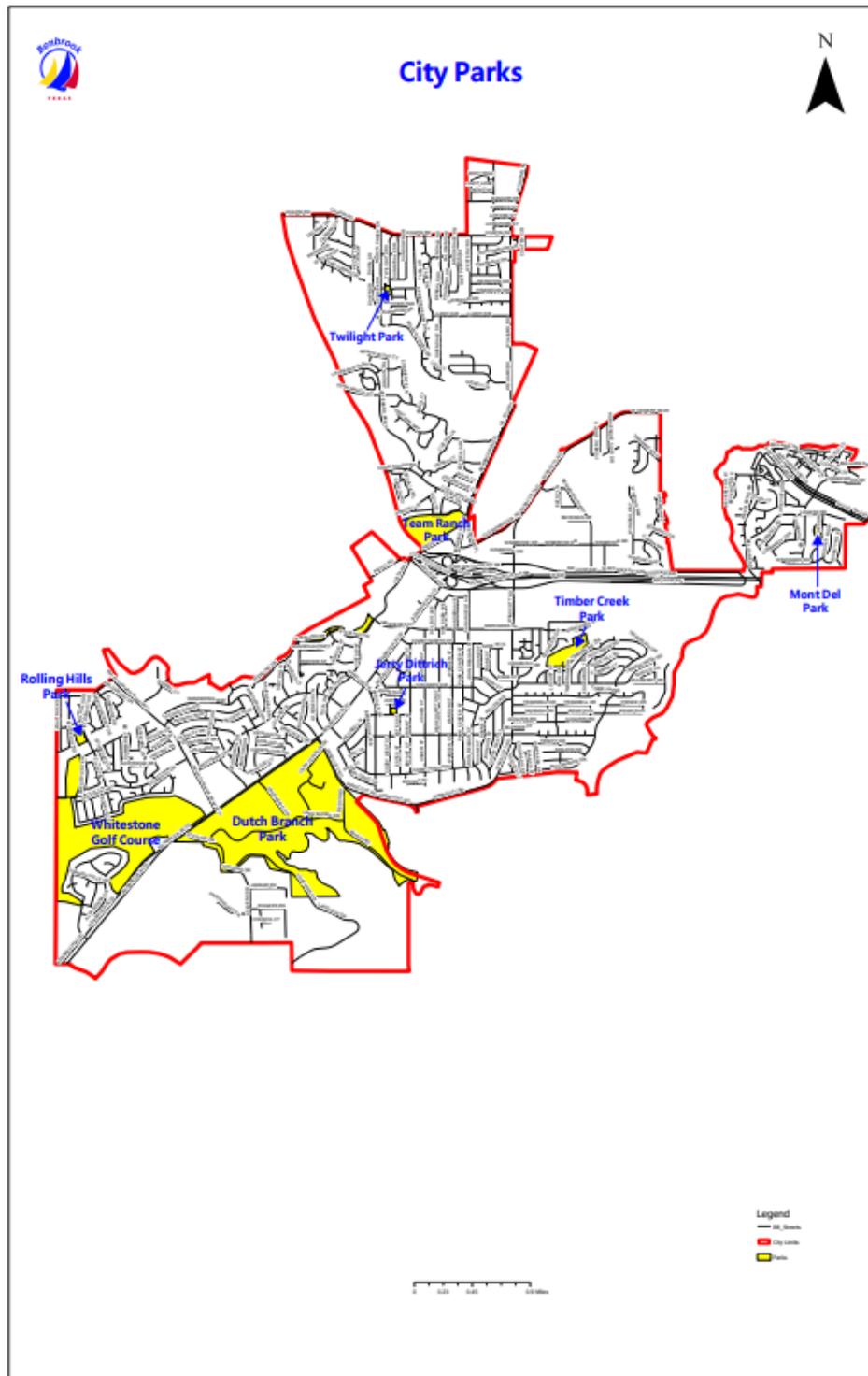
## Donations

Donations of labor, land, materials or cash by service agencies, private groups or individuals is a popular way to raise money for specific projects. Service agencies often fund small projects such as picnic shelters or playground improvements or they may be involved in larger aspects of park development.

## Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

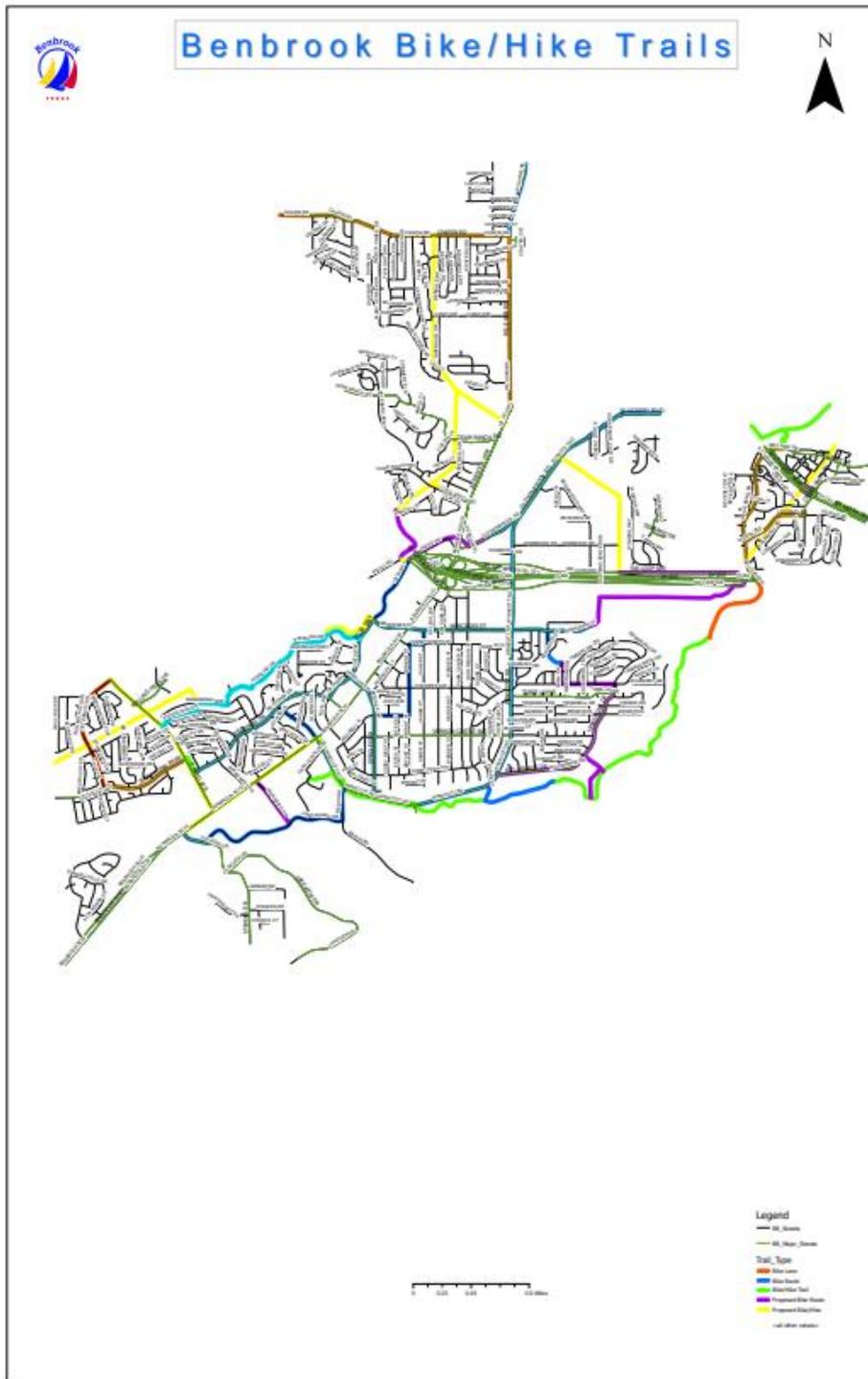
This is a Federal Grant Program offered to cities to assist funding public improvements. The grant assists public facility improvements, including parks. CDBG monies are funded in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, and areas of people with special needs.

# Appendix A - Parks Map (City Limits)





# Appendix B - Benbrook Trails Map



## Appendix C - Survey Tables 1.1 and 1.2

<b>Table 1.1 – Most Visited Parks</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Park Name</b>
72	369	Dutch Branch Park
10	52	Rolling Hills Park
8	41	Timber Creek Park
4	22	I/we do not visit Benbrook parks
3	17	Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park
2	11	Twilight Park
1	4	Mont Del Park

<b>Table 1.2 – Which Park Facilities Do You Use Most?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Facility</b>
63	327	Playgrounds
54	279	Walking Paths
25	129	YMCA
23	117	Lake Benbrook
22	115	Nature Area
16	82	Bike Paths
11	55	Ball Fields
8	41	Pavilions
7	36	Fishing
5	26	Soccer Fields
5	26	Tennis Courts
4	22	Other
3	16	Pickleball Courts
2	11	I/we do not use park facilities

## Appendix C - Survey Table 1.3

<b>Table 1.3 – Which Existing Facilities Do You Think Benbrook Needs More Of?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Needs</b>
50	256	Shade structures for playground and picnic areas
48	247	Access points to the lake
26	136	Playgrounds
22	115	Areas for open play
22	112	Bird watching/wildlife observation areas
18	95	Fishing areas
12	61	Passive open space
11	55	Signage to direct people to the parks
9	44	Signage to help people find their way around the parks
7	38	Basketball courts
4	20	Tennis courts
3	18	Volleyball courts
3	16	Sand volleyball courts
3	15	Soccer fields
3	17	No new facilities are needed
2	12	Football fields
2	9	Baseball and/or softball fields
0	2	Lacrosse fields

## Appendix C - Survey Table 1.4

<b>Table 1.4 – Which New Facilities Do You Think Benbrook Needs More Of?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Facility</b>
27	141	Dog park
27	139	Nature areas
25	131	Paved hike and bike trails
24	123	Additional restrooms
22	115	Replace equipment at Robot Park
21	106	Lighting for existing trails
18	94	More water fountains
17	89	Picnic areas
16	84	Replace equipment at Castle Park
16	84	Gravel hike and bike trails
12	63	Outdoor exercise equipment
10	53	Additional pavilions at parks
9	47	Climbing wall
6	29	Disc golf course
4	22	Additional bleachers at Dutch Branch Park
4	20	Pickleball courts
2	12	No new facilities are needed

## Appendix C - Survey Tables 1.5 and 1.6

<b>Table 1.5 – What Are the Reasons Your Household Seldom or Never Use Benbrook Park Facilities?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Reason</b>
77	346	Not applicable, I/we use park facilities
13	56	Parks do not have the features I am interested in
6	29	Limited by age or disability
6	25	Other
4	17	Don't feel safe at the parks
0	2	Don't have transportation to get to the parks
0	1	I/we belong to a private club

<b>Table 1.6 – If You Are Disabled, What Type of Accommodation Is/Are Needed for You to Use the Park System?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Disability</b>
90	428	Not applicable
7	34	Adaptive equipment
3	13	Other
1	4	Personal attendant or care provider
0	2	Sign language, interpretation
0	1	Non-verbal assistance, Braille

## Appendix C - Survey Tables 1.7 and 1.8

<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Reason</b>
43	220	More restrooms, drinking fountains
40	201	More lighting on trails
32	163	Provide seating and viewing areas
30	151	Provide more security on trails
25	127	Wayfinding signage
24	119	More paved surfaces
11	57	Improve maintenance
11	57	I am happy with the trails
10	49	More gravel surfaces
9	46	Other
4	19	I am not interested in using the trails

<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Factor</b>
24	160	I/we participate in programs at the YMCA
22	149	Programs are too expensive
12	82	Don't know what programs are offered
11	77	Safety and security concerns
10	70	Classes offered at inconvenient times
7	46	It does not offer activities I am interested in
6	42	Need childcare
4	26	Poor equipment or facilities
4	25	Housekeeping improvements
0	1	Need transportation assistance

## Appendix C - Survey Tables 1.9 and 1.10

<b>Table 1.9 – Which Special Events Do You Attend?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Special Event</b>
56	290	Christmas Tree Lighting and Fireworks Show
38	197	Heritage Fest
30	152	Household Hazardous Waste collection
29	151	E-Waste collection and document shredding
27	137	Farmers Market
19	96	We did not attend any special event
17	86	Touch-a-Truck
10	49	Trash Bash
4	18	Other

<b>Table 1.10 – Indicate the Number of People in Your Household for Each Age Category?</b>		
<b>% of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Surveys</b>	<b>Age Category</b>
52	267	1-9
32	163	10-19
18	93	20-29
47	241	30-39
35	177	40-49
25	126	50-59
18	93	60 +

## Appendix D - Tables 1.1 and 1.2

<b>Condition</b>	<b>General Description</b>
Good	Amenity is in good condition with few or no maintenance issues.
Fair	Amenity is in fair condition indicating the start of ongoing maintenance problems. Amenity is overall in adequate condition but may be in need of updating.
Poor	Amenity is worn but functional and should be given increased attention. Amenity may need to be updated or replaced to meet current regulations.

	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Dutch Branch Park	77	78	25
Rolling Hills Park	112	10	1
Timber Creek Park	57	36	14
South Benbrook Park	80	0	0
Twilight Park	49	9	1
Mont Del	22	2	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>

## Appendix D - Table 1.3 Dutch Branch Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition				Comments
	Quantity	Good	Fair	Poor	
Basketball Court	1		5	1	Needs a paint job, goals are bent, replace fence
Upper Tennis Courts	2	5			Need new netting attached to fence, couldn't locate
Lower Tennis Courts	2	2	3	1	Need to be refinished
Pickleball Courts	4	2	1	2	Needs signage on how to get to equipment, need to be painted, needs separate court, takes away from tennis
Ballfields	8	2	4	1	Drainage issues
Soccer Field	1	2	4		Bleachers need updating, plus 2 practice fields, heavy use, drainage issues
Concession Stand	1	4	2		Could be refreshed
Restroom	3	1	5		Floors need to be cleaned, needs painting
Castle Park	1	1	3	3	Great condition, needs updating, past its life
Robot Park	1	1	3	3	Great condition, dangerous to little kids, needs paint, slide too high off ground and kids fly off
Pavilion	4	2	3	1	Good condition, need more, grill rusted out at Pav #3
Picnic Tables		2	3	2	Good condition, need more, concrete ones broken by Pav #3, need new ones
Volleyball Court	2	3	2	1	Sand could be refreshed, drainage
Benches	7	2	3		
Walking Track	1	2	4		Track in bad shape
Parking Lot	3	3	3	1	Needs restriping, drainage issues
Roads within Park	2	2	2	2	
Sidewalks		3	3		Consider adding sidewalk to opposite side of Castle Park, need to be refreshed or replaced
Signage	1	3	3		Could use better lighting, some are faded
Trash Cans	66	7			
Bike Rack	1	3	1		Couldn't find
Bike Repair Station	1	5			Couldn't find
Duck Pond	1	5	1	1	Some erosion issues
Stables	1	1	6		
Driving Range	1	2	5		Needs new nets
Par 3	1	1	5	1	Needs upgrades
Marina	1		2	2	
YMCA	1	5	2		
Baja Beach	1	1		3	Needs makeover
Dog Station	1	5			

## Appendix D - Table 1.4 Rolling Hills Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition				Comments
	Quantity	Good	Fair	Poor	
Basketball Court	1	8			Standing water after a rain
Playground	2	8			Seesaw for the playground, floods after a rain
Restroom	1	7	1		Floors need to be cleaned and some writing on the walls
Pavilion	1	8			
Picnic Tables	9	7	1		Might be nice to have one on the lower trail area, weathered and need to be cleaned
Volleyball Court	1	6	1	1	Weeds, net in poor shape, how often is the sand maintained? Poor drainage
Benches	4	7	1		
Walking Track	1	8			
Parking Lot	3	8			
Signage		8			Would like to see more events posted in the case
Trash Cans		7	1		None of lower walking trail, weathered
Water Fountain	2	5	3		Low water pressure on both
Work Out Stations	4	7			
Dog Station	1	7			
Natural Area	1	7	1		Walking track is great park of the park, needs more grass too much mud, evasive briars encroaching on uphill side of path
Bike Rack	1	4	1		

## Appendix D - Table 1.5 Timber Creek Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition				Comments
	Quantity	Good	Fair	Poor	
Basketball Court	1		6	3	Court not painted, too much mud between courts and playground, timer switch plate loose
Tennis Courts	1	1	6	2	2 marked but one net
Playground	1	8	1		New colors and canopy look great
Pavilion	1	4	4	1	Needs repainting and could additional larger one
Picnic Tables	1	3	3	3	Needs to be replaced
Community Garden	1	5	2	1	Locked, more utilization of the area, not well maintained, would like electricity at pavilion, foundation for a flagpole
Benches	3	7	1	1	
Parking Lot	3	2	5	2	Parking spots need to be marked and expanded, no curbing, drainage
Sidewalks		7	2		Need one from playground to courts, someone's name was written in it, washout under sidewalk
Signage		6	3		Not visible until in the park, wayfinding signage is needed, update with something other than wood
Trash Cans	2	6	3		Need to replace them with red can like the one in the playground
Dog Station	2	7		1	
Swings	1	1			

## Appendix D - Table 1.6 Dr. Jerry Dittrich Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition			Comments	
	Quantity	Good	Fair		Poor
Playground	1	9			Drainage issue in NW corner
Picnic Tables	3	9			Need covers
Benches	4	9			
Walking Track	1	9			
Signage		9			Was not found on online maps
Trash Cans	1	6			Need two more
Bike Rack	2	9			
Sidewalk		9			
Dog Station	1	9			
Swings	1	2			

## Appendix D - Table 1.7 Twilight Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition				Comments
	Quantity	Good	Fair	Poor	
Playground Equipment	1	8	1		Could be cleaned and refreshed. Swings needs refinishing
Picnic Tables	2	8	1		Needs refreshing
Benches	3	8	1		Muddy around two of them
Sidewalks		8	1		Bridge is nice, bridge needs to be redone due to rust (it is designed to do this - Cor Ten steel)
Signage		7	2		Looks worn, could be bigger
Trash Cans		7	2		Tops need refinishing
Dog Station	1	3	1		
Bike Rack				1	

## Appendix D - Table 1.8 Mont Del Park Assessment Scores

Existing Amenities	Condition				Comments
	Quantity	Good	Fair	Poor	
Duck Pond	1	7	1		Litter along the pond
Benches	3	7	1		Pad cracked for concrete bench (north bench)
Fountain	1	8			