



# 2019-2020 Annual Report



CITY OF BAYTOWN  
**PARKS and  
RECREATION**

# City of Baytown Parks and Recreation Department Annual Report 2019 – 2020

## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department is to foster lifetime involvement in and an appreciation of public space and recreational activities. Our Department is dedicated to Baytonians – continually striving to not only meet, but exceed community expectations – making Baytown a better place to live, work and play.*

The Baytown Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members and the Parks and Recreation Department staff are again pleased to present the Department's Annual Report to the Mayor, Council Members and City Management. This report is presented in its traditional format and continues to serve as:

1. The Department's collective view of the past year's activities
2. A progress/status report on most of our current programs and plans
3. A brief overview of our plans for the upcoming year

This report is made pursuant to Ordinance No. 885, adopted in September 1967, which states that, annually, the Board shall make a study of the parks and recreation facilities and policies of the City, and make recommendations concerning any changes, modifications or improvements.

The Parks and Recreation Department was enjoying another busy, productive year that featured several park projects and successful events such as the Grito Fest, Christmas Parade, Snow Day, and the annual Daddy and Me dance when everything completely stopped. The March Brown Bag Lunch series made two weeks before the entire state was shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As businesses, schools and restaurants shut down, the Parks and Recreation Department employees never blinked, keeping the parks clean, maintained and sanitized for hundreds of citizens looking for something to do.



The year was highlighted by the installation of the “Ninja Cross” at the Pirates Bay Waterpark, the completion of the Cary Bayou III trail project, and the Blue Heron/Crockett Park/Baybrook Place connector trail. The Department was recognized with several regional awards for projects and programs.



The Department began work on the 2030 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan will also include a Trails Master Plan and the Baytown Nature Center Master Plan. Halff and Associates, the same firm that completed the 2020 Parks and Recreation Playbook, was again selected to perform the 2030 plan.

The Department was challenged with transition with several employees moving on including Superintendent of Parks, Kyle Kelley, taking the newly created City of Red Oak, Texas Parks and Recreation Director position. The Aquatics Division welcomed two new coordinators Jessica Burch, Aquatic Operations and Jill Greer, Guest Services. Recreation Superintendent, Clifford Hatch, was promoted to Assistant Director and is charged with overseeing the Parks Division as part of his new responsibilities. Kyle Frye was hired away from the City of Missouri City to become the Recreation Superintendent. Tara Barton, the Marketing and Special Events Coordinator moved on to the Town of Northlake, Texas to head their City’s marketing efforts. Lauren Siple took over as the Athletics Coordinator in October. The Parks Division was also impacted by the retirement of a long serving employee, Michael Mueller.



The Department was saddened with the loss of Merle Hunt, a long-tenured volunteer. Mrs. Hunt was an ardent supporter of the Baytown Nature Center and a founding member of the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center. She passed away in February.

The Aquatics Division attendance dipped this past year mainly due to local school district starting the 2019-2020 school year two weeks earlier than in years past, and to numerous “rain days”. Despite the rain days, both Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove continued to be

at, or near, capacity especially on weekends. Pirates Bay Water Park and Calypso Cove entertained 173,161 guests during the 2019 season.

In its tenth season, Pirates Bay Water Park remained a popular destination. During the 2019 season, 156,306 guests passed through the gates at Pirates Bay. 1,466,892 guests have visited the park since its opening in 2010.

Calypso Cove, located at N.C. Foote Park, saw a slight decrease in the total number of visitors, mainly caused by 25 rain days and school starting two weeks earlier in 2019. Calypso Cove welcomed 16,855 guests in 2019. Calypso Cove has welcomed 164,663 guests during its first nine seasons.

The Parks and Recreation Department planted 89 trees in various parks and medians. The annual Arbor Day Celebration was postponed until October due to the COVID-19 shutdown.



The Recreation Division oversees special events, youth and adult programs, and adult athletic leagues, and manages over 200,000 square feet of indoor rental facilities. Some of our larger events include Grito Fest, the Christmas Parade, and our biggest event, the Baytown 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, which normally brings around 20,000 people to Baytown to enjoy two nights of free entertainment at Bicentennial Park. Our Programs Team plans classes and activities such as summer camps, self-defense classes, and fitness classes that are offered for free or little cost on a weekly basis, while the Athletics Team facilitates sports leagues at multiple facilities, partners with community groups such as Special Olympics, and manages a variety of tournaments at the Wayne Gray Sports Complex.

The 2019 – 2020 fiscal year was extremely challenging for the Recreation Division. Instead of planning various events and activities for groups to come together and enjoy a night of fun, we found ourselves working to promote public safety and wellbeing. The Recreation staff sanitized all playground equipment daily, planned virtual events to control the size of crowds in public spaces, and even spent time drawing inspirational chalk messages on the heavily used walking trails throughout Baytown. We believe that the only difference between a stumbling block and a stepping stone is the way one approaches it. The Recreation Division was able to successfully navigate these challenges, using them as a stepping stone to come together and continue to offer quality programs and events in these uncertain times.

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Grito Fest was held at Bicentennial Park. The event



featured Grupo Solido, along with Tropical Panamá and Mariachis Los Gallitos. Between acts the Mejikinzie Ballet Folklorico of Houston entertained the crowd with traditional costumes and dance. A local dance group, Los Huapangueros de Baytown, also performed before Grupo Solido took the stage. Festival goers enjoyed a Grito Competition, Salsa Competition, Jalapeno Eating Contest and an Accordion Competition. An estimated 6,000 guest attended the festival, making it the largest Grito Fest to date.

With the possibility of the state allowing for the Annual 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, staff was able to secure the New Orleans-based band Bag of Donuts to perform on June 19<sup>th</sup> at the Baytown Nature Center. The Party at the Peninsula provided an opportunity to test new safety measures ahead of the larger 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration. Staff worked to “social distance” concert attendees by painting circles large enough for six people scattered in front of the stage. The Department used this event not only to test social distancing, but also used new software to sell advance tickets and new alcoholic beverage rules during the event. The crowd was small, but the weather, entertainment and test plans went flawlessly.



With lessons learned from the Party at the Peninsula, staff turned their eyes to the Annual 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration at Bicentennial Park. All contracts were intact for entertainment with the exception of Dennis De Young, who cancelled in mid-June. Staff consolidated the two day celebration into a one day event planned for July 4<sup>th</sup>. However, City Council voted to cancel the 2020 Celebration due to the rapid escalation of the COVID-19 virus.

The Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center and Baytown Nature Center continue to offer outstanding programs to

**BAYTOWN'S JULY 4<sup>th</sup> CELEBRATION**

**CANCELLED**

AT BAYTOWN, TEXAS JULY 4

5:00 - 5:00 PM  
THE ROOTS YACHT ROCK BAND

5:30 - 6:30 PM  
ECLIPSE A TRIBUTE TO JOURNEY

6:30 - 7:45 PM  
THE PETERSON BROTHERS BAND

8:00 - 9:30 PM  
ROOTS AND BOOTS TOUR  
SAMMY KERSHAW, AARON TIPPIN,  
& COLLIN RAYE

9:30 - 10:00 PM  
FIREWORKS EXTRAVAGANZA

BICENTENNIAL PARK  
1001 Market Street  
Baytown, TX 77520  
6813 430-65947  
www.baytown.org

CITY OF BAYTOWN  
PARKS and RECREATION

Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District (GCCISD) and Baytown area students with the Back to the Bay, Wetlands Ecology and Liquid Science Programs. Following GCCISD's closure due to COVID concerns, Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center staff videoed these programs and made them available to help teachers with online instruction. Lee College instructors have asked us to do the same for them. The Wetlands Center's partnership with Lee College remains strong, as we participate in their Texas A&M Soltis Center experience in Costa Rica and utilize Lee College students as education interns.

The award-winning Nurture Nature Series draws visitors from across the state to the Baytown Nature Center on a monthly basis, and Gator Tales and Tyke Hike programs target our preschool citizens. The *Wade Into Wetlands* Summer Science Camp continues to fill to capacity, and Winter Holiday and *Spring Into Nature* camps remain popular as well. This year the Baytown Nature Center offered six half-day summer science camps to complement the ten hosted at the Wetlands Center. The Wetlands Center continued its tradition of hosting an overnight camping experience during summer camp. However, because of COVID concerns with long-distance communal transportation, campers stayed close to home and spent the night at Evergreen Park in Baytown.



The Baytown Nature Center educational programs continue to provide opportunities for outdoor activities and scout workshops. The Back to the Bay Program allows area high school students to practice their water testing and analysis skills, as well as their ability to catch and identify marine life in cast and seine nets. Nature Center attendance prior to the COVID crisis remained steady as visitors discovered it is not only a prime location for fishing and birding, but also for kayaking, biking and hiking. Post-COVID attendance has skyrocketed, with record numbers of visitors enjoying the outdoor amenities during their time away from work. Staff offers a guided Full Moon Night Hike each month on the Saturday closest to full moon. Participants walk the trails and look for the Nature Center's nocturnal residents such as owls and coyotes. Scout workshops and overnight campouts have become regular weekend activities. The annual Nurture Nature Festival was a success, with 3,000 visitors learning about nature and the environment.

The Wetlands Wagon Outreach Program often takes Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center staff on the road throughout Texas, promoting both facilities and the City of Baytown as an environmentally friendly destination. Unfortunately, many of the programs and events in which we normally participate were cancelled due to COVID concerns.

Prior to COVID closures and shutdowns in March, the Wetlands Center and the Baytown Nature Center were going strong with programs, outreach activities, and partnerships. Along with everyone else, we are unsure of what next year will bring, but will continue to find ways to promote our message of environmental awareness and responsible stewardship of our resources. Utilizing virtual formats, such as Facebook Live and YouTube, we hope to reach an even larger audience than we were before. However, we are all looking forward to returning to a more normal year!



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Response

In February 2020, TV news reported that thousands of people were sick and dying across Europe and China from something called COVID-19. The World Health Organization officially called the virus a pandemic even as staff wondered what the big deal was. A few cases were reported across Texas the first week of March, but we weren't overly concerned until March 12<sup>th</sup>, when the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo abruptly shut down the rodeo, quickly followed by the NBA cancelling their season, our Houston Astros closing training camps and the NCAA cancelling March Madness. We realized then that this COVID-19 thing was real.

The City of Baytown responded to fears of spreading the virus by shutting down all spray parks and cancelling all programs, rentals, and events until May 11<sup>th</sup>. The rentals included several weddings that were scheduled at the Betty Hazelwood Clubhouse at Evergreen Park. Staff worked to return deposit and rental fees as quickly as possible so brides could make other plans.

The Department also cancelled several popular and well attended events, including the two remaining Brown Bag Lunch Concert series in March, \$1 Taco Day and the Special Olympics Track Meet. All programs, including exercise classes such as Zumba and even chair yoga, were cancelled. The Senior Center and Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center were closed.

Starting on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, playgrounds, benches, and picnic tables were closed. Office staff started working from home. Office phones and e-mail were forwarded directly to staff at home and were answered at all times. Admin staff came in once a week to make sure that all invoices and other needed paperwork were processed. On Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, staff removed all basketball goals and volleyball nets in the interest of safety and to minimize congregating as large groups were using those park amenities.



Staff put the finishing touches on the budget that was due on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, while trying to work out the details of the major operations changes that were suddenly forced on the department.

The Parks Division has over 50 employees with four field supervisors housed in one location. To reduce the size of the group gathering in one location, one-half of the employees were relocated to the Evergreen Park Maintenance building. Park crews continued with routine park maintenance as if nothing had changed other than the COVID-19 protocol of maintaining social distancing, frequent hand washing and wearing of required safety equipment especially during park litter removal.

Since all events and programs were cancelled, the Recreation Division was available to assist with park maintenance. The Rec staff was split into two groups, sanitizing playgrounds, picnic tables, benches and other park amenities that people frequently touch. The team secured playgrounds with caution tape and made sure the closed signs were in place. The Rec team also provided chalk art and inspirational quotes at strategic locations on the park system's concrete trails.

Aquatics Division installed the NinjaCross™ and nervously planned the 2020 swim season. Staff was challenged to figure out how to train lifeguards while dealing with social distancing and the inability to complete deep water certification with Lee College and Ross Sterling High School natatoriums shut down. Several life guards that were on board took advantage of the opportunity to work with the Parks Division and were assigned weed-pulling duties on medians and the Baytown Nature Center's Jean Sheppard Butterfly Garden. The medians never looked so good.



MAKING BAYTOWN BETTER



Meanwhile, all of the City's parks were being heavily used. People took advantage of the beautiful weather as they explored trails, played disc golf and foot golf, and hit balls at the driving range as they enjoyed their parks. The Baytown Nature Center broke attendance records for March, April and May.



Park construction crews took advantage of the lack of event and program setups to catch up on several park maintenance repairs and construction projects. Crews installed several new playground units and completed the Cary Bayou III trail.



As the COVID-19 numbers improved, all city staff returned to work on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Out of an abundance of caution, staff immediately cancelled rentals, programs and events until May 31<sup>st</sup>. June rentals would be allowed at the governor's prescribed 50% of normal capacity protocols. Staff was allowed to accept rentals beginning in July at the governor's capacity protocols. The Senior Center also remained closed until at least August.

Rec staff continued to sanitize equipment, but it was becoming more difficult to keep people off of the playgrounds.

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Wetlands Center reopened, utilizing the museum reopening guidelines as reference. The staff also created Summer Camp 2020 Guidelines in anticipation of the upcoming *Wade Into Wetlands* Summer Science Camps. New guidelines included proper social distancing, daily health screening for staff and campers, a decreased number of campers, no field trips, and no shared equipment or supplies. Campers enrolled prior to COVID-19 were allowed to cancel with full refunds. Still, camps were full at the maximum allowed capacity (50%).

The Baytown Nature Center remained open throughout the entire spring, with gate attendants exercising extra caution in receiving money and interacting with guests. Attendance records were broken in March, April and May. Summer time, Fun Day Sundays, were implemented, with free admission during a four hour period each Sunday in June and July.

Recreation Division, under the new Recreation Superintendent Kyle Frye, began planning to restart some of the programs that could be easily held outside (such as Zumba) or inside with social distancing (such as Chair Yoga). Staff also began planning the restart of the monthly Farmers Market.

In late May, the governor announced that youth and adult sports league could begin practice on May 29<sup>th</sup>, with league games starting June 15<sup>th</sup>. Staff gathered the Little League, Girls Fastpitch and Teenage Baseball league presidents together prior to the 29<sup>th</sup> and charged each to come up with their individual league and the city's league plans to re-open. All leagues resumed play on the 15<sup>th</sup>. However, the Little League and Girls Fastpitch Softball cancelled the remainder of the season due to the virus. Teenage and the City's league play continues.

A virtual Memorial Day Service took the place of the annual gathering and was beautifully produced by the city's Channel 16 staff. Lloyd Lively arranged the presentation that featured VFW president Jerry Johnson and Assistant City Manager, Kevin Troller which read the names of our local heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice from our Baytown Community.

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, hope of normalcy continued as the governor announced that playgrounds and spray pads could re-open and that water parks could open at 50% capacity. Park crews quickly restarted the spray parks much to the delight of our citizens. Signs were removed along with the caution tape around playgrounds before the weekend.

Aquatics staff worked out new plans to open Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove. Calypso Cove opened on June 10<sup>th</sup> and Pirates Bay on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Basketball goals were put back up the week of June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Staff was presented a unique opportunity to book the very popular band, Bag of Donuts for



June 19<sup>th</sup>. With concerns about large crowds, stage crowding and social distancing typically experienced during concerts and anticipating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, staff devised a plan to effectively social distance everyone and limited ticket sales for the first Party at the Peninsula at the Baytown Nature Center. For the first time since the first week of March, live music was heard in Baytown.



The Parks and Recreation Department staff was not immune to the virus. Several Parks division employees tested positive which in turn sent 12 employees home to quarantine or get tested. Aquatics was hit hard, causing the management, staff, and several others to be quarantined. This effectively closed Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove. The Recreation staff was also affected.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, City Council cancelled the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities along with the July Pop-Up-Park at Roseland Park as the state's Covid-19 numbers escalated.

Parks and Recreation Department employees never blinked as they provided clean, well-maintained parks and facilities. Not only did the department revamp recreation, but it helped our park service team reorganize and reprioritize responsibilities, completing all back-logged projects, innovatively recycling materials for new playground elements, reusing old turf for exercise areas, and building and installing new park elements.



## Awards

### **Texas Recreation and Park Society - East Region Lone Star Programming Award**

\$1.00 Taco Day

The Parks and Recreation Department received the 2019 TRAPS East Region Lone Star Programming Award at the Annual TRAPS East Region Holiday Awards Dinner at the Republic Country Club in Stafford on December 5, 2019.

The Baytown Parks and Recreation Department hosted the first-ever \$1 Taco Day on May 5, 2019. After the success of the award-winning Arts and Eats Fest, several citizens expressed a desire for more events that celebrate Latino culture and include local food vendors rather than vendors from outside of the community. With these suggestions



in mind, the recreation team created \$1.00 Taco Day, an event designed to celebrate Cinco de Mayo and its importance to the local Latino population.

Out of respect for traditional celebrations and in an effort to maintain cultural relevance, the Recreation team sought the guidance of several staff members who live in Baytown and whose families celebrate Cinco de Mayo each year. With their guidance, the recreation team selected USA Tropical Band, an upbeat group that performs in both Spanish and English, to perform live at the event. These staff members also assisted in finding a local vendor to create piñatas in the shape of dollar signs and tacos.

In addition to satisfying citizen requests, the recreation team also sought to highlight several local taco trucks. In order to allow attendees to sample tacos from a several vendors (as opposed to only ordering food from one or two), the Department required each truck to offer at least one taco for \$1.00. This also allowed large families to enjoy dinner at a relatively low cost at the event.

Over 5,000 residents and visitors could be seen enjoying tacos with their families at large, family style tables, dancing to the music, and smashing piñatas every half hour.

## **Texas Recreation and Park Society - East Region Promotional Award**

### **Baytown Parks and Recreation Activity Guide**

The Parks and Recreation Department received the 2019 TRAPS East Region Promotional Award at the Annual TRAPS East Region Holiday Awards Dinner at the Republic Country Club in Stafford on December 5, 2019.

The Baytown Parks and Recreation Activity Guide provides residents with a comprehensive overview of all Department activities, events, leagues, and facilities. Residents can easily access the guide, which is published quarterly, via [issuu.com](http://issuu.com), an online publication platform. The guide can also be downloaded as a .pdf on the Baytown Parks and Recreation website.



The first edition of the guide was published in Summer 2019. The 33-page publication featured individual, color-coded sections for parks and trails, facility rentals, aquatics, programs, athletics, special events, and the environmental education division. In addition to individual sections for each of the Department’s divisions, the guide also featured special interest sections such as a director’s message, the Baytown Summer Bucket List, “Did you know?” blurbs, social media features, a recap of Spring 2019, and instructor features throughout the guide.

Baytown Parks and Recreation offers a plethora of recreational opportunities; with over 50 parks, 17 miles of trails, dozens of programs and leagues, Pirates Bay Water Park, Calypso Cove, the Baytown Nature Center, and the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center, the Department is proud to offer services to residents and visitors of all ages, walks of life, and interests.

The Baytown Parks and Recreation Activity Guide was designed with Baytown residents in mind. By consolidating all Department offerings in one publication, residents are more likely to be exposed to each of the Department’s four divisions. For example, readers who are looking for information on Pirates Bay will be exposed to information on summer camps, athletic leagues, educational sessions at the Nature Center, and more information that they might not otherwise encounter.

The Activity Guide also serves as a hub for information that Parks and Recreation staff can direct customers to.

**Association of Aquatic Professionals**  
***September 2019 Aquatic Professional of the Month***  
**Jenna Stevenson**

The Competitor Aquatics Professional of the Month award from the Association of Aquatic Professionals in September 2019 was awarded to Jenna Stevenson. This is a recurring award that sheds light on an Aquatics Professional who has risen above the competition. This award is peer nominated and highlights one director a month whose work holds noteworthy achievement.

Jenna was nominated by Operations Supervisor, Emma Swonke, for her work as the Aquatics Superintendent for the City of Baytown. Emma notes that “Since Jenna arrived at the park in December of 2018 she has made many changes to the organization. She implemented shallow water guards at Pirates Bay in order to combat the lifeguard shortage, grew the swim lesson program by 60% by certifying all instructors, ran all blended learning lifeguard classes to allow her staff more time to offer more guard classes, and increased revenue in the Pirate’s Bay gift shop by selling unique souvenir cups and snack items.”



## **In Memorial**

### **Merle Moody Hunt**

February 8, 1932 – February 12, 2020

The Parks and Recreation Department lost a long-time volunteer and friend who was dedicated to making Baytown a better place to live, work and play. Merle Moody Hunt passed away on February 12, 2020, at the age of 88, from complications of a stroke.

Merle began her career with the YMCA as an exercise instructor. When she retired in 1994, she was the Executive Director of the Baytown YMCA. After retirement, she continued her community involvement by volunteering for the Baytown YMCA, the Baytown Nature Center, the Nurture Nature Festival and the Long Neck Wildlife Festival. Merle was also active in coordinating many United Way “Day of Caring” events at the Baytown Nature Center,



leading other volunteers in their efforts to improve and beautify the center. Merle and her husband Howard were finalists for the Baytown Sun's Citizen of the Year Award in 2001. Merle also served on the Civil Service Commission in Baytown and was a founding member of the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center. Being avid birders, she and her husband enjoyed traveling the globe, visiting six continents in their quests for birds.

Merle was a member of the initial Planning and Design Committee for the proposed nature education facility back when it was still the abandoned Brownwood Subdivision. Her calm demeanor and level head helped create the facility that would eventually become the Baytown Nature Center. She was especially proud of the wooden truss footbridge designed by her son, Michael. She used that location for her backdrop when she became one of the "Nature Mamas" and posed at the age of 72 for the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center Calendar Girls calendar in 2004. That spunk is what endeared Merle to all of us.

## Retirements

The Department said good bye to two long-time Parks Division employees this past year.

Michael Mueller, better known as "Mikey", began his career with the City of Baytown as a part-time ball field worker preparing the city's softball fields for league play. Mikey was hired full-time in February 1989 as a park caretaker, was quickly promoted to equipment operator in 1990, then to heavy equipment operator in 1994. He served briefly as a construction crew leader before being promoted to Foreman in 1997. Mikey spent over almost 23 years taking care of the northside parks along with a number of construction projects. Mikey never backed down from any project. This report is not long enough to list all of Mikey's accomplishments.

Fred Mixon began working with the city in 2000 as a park caretaker. Fred was a member of one of the Department's park maintenance crews and has kept the city's parks clean and trimmed for 20 years. Fred finished his career with the city assisting with the maintenance of the very popular Evergreen Park. Fred never met a stranger and was always eager to visit and assist park visitors whenever possible.

Both Mikey's and Fred's personalities and "institutional knowledge" of the park system are greatly missed.



## Special Recognition

The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the Mayor, City Council Members and City Management for their support of the Department, as well as to allied groups including Friends of the Baytown Nature Center, Friends of the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center, The Bay Area Heritage Society, The Baytown Historical Preservation Association, Lee College, Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District, the Baytown YMCA, The Rotary Club of Baytown, The Kiwanis Club of Baytown, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Baytown Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County, Baytown Optimist Club, Evening Pilot Club and the Pilot Club of Baytown. Collectively these groups, organizations and others contribute a great deal to the success of many of the Department's programs and events. The Board would also like to acknowledge the numerous contributions of volunteers, businesses and industries. While it is not possible to recognize them all individually, we recognize that we could not be successful without them.

We would like to thank Sherman Eagleton and all of Harris County Constables from Precinct 3 for their help with the Christmas Parade, the Party at the Peninsula and Grito Fest. A special thanks to Major David Jones and Sergeant Richard Miranda for their assistance in assigning and coordinating the deputies.

We owe Harris County Transit Authority a big thank you for providing buses for Nurture Nature Festival and summer camp.

The Parks and Recreation Department would like to express their gratitude for the staff at the Sterling Municipal Library for their assistance proofreading this Annual Report.

The Parks and Recreation Department would like to thank several local industries for their contributions of money and labor during the past year. Most notable are ExxonMobil, Covestro, Chevron Phillips LP, Awards and Engraving, Beacon Federal Credit Union and Randy Casey State Farm. Without their support of the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center, the Baytown Nature Center and several special events, many of the activities that are provided to the public would not be possible.

The Department would also like to thank the Texas Avenue merchants that have embraced the Town Square and have participated or sponsored several events including Sabor of Mexico, Wazabi Sushi Bar, Rooster's Steak House and the Arts, Cultural, and Entertainment (ACE) District.



We would also like to take this opportunity to express our utmost appreciation to several City Departments including the Legal, Information Technology Services and Public Works and Engineering Departments whose employees have provided noteworthy assistance to the Department this year. The Traffic Control staff has helped with many events during the year, most notably the Town Square Events, Grito Fest and the Christmas Parade. A huge thank you is due to the Police, Fire, Communications and Health Departments for their support and assistance with numerous events including this year's Grito Fest and Christmas Parade.



We also thank the Public Works and Engineering Department (PWE) for stepping up and taking over the planning, design and construction management of the new Parks Service Center and new Roseland Park Pavilion.

A special thank you to the PWE's Street Lifting Crew. Crew members John Kitchens, Victor Pegeuro, Marcus Humphrey and Marvin Watts took on the challenge of eliminating several large bird baths on the Jenkins Park Basketball Court slab which limited the use of the court for several days after any rain event. The crew set up laser levels and specialized equipment, and spent a day drilling and pumping material under the slab to raise the slab's low spots. The court is now game ready to play on daily.

The Department would like to recognize and thank the Faith Family Church for continuing to volunteer services when needed. This year, despite the complications surrounding COVID-19, they were able to host their annual Service Day on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>. Two groups totaling around 60 volunteers cleaned medians along Bayway Drive and repainted heavily used park pavilions at Roseland Park. Their representative, pastor Tony Rinley, hopes to continue the efforts by offering monthly volunteer opportunities in the following months.

The Parks and Recreation Department sends out a special thank you to the Baytown Police Department for providing weekend security at the Pirates Bay Water Park.

We also would like to thank all the volunteers who helped make this past year a success, especially the annual Daddy and Me Dance. We would like to recognize the volunteers that worked in preparation for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Grito Fest. A special thank you as well goes to Whataburger, Ron Craft Chevrolet- Cadillac, Golden Corral, Chick-fil-A, LD Signs by Design Ventures, BDI Resources, Chicken Express, The Party House, Bonito Michoacán Meat Market, Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, Evening Pilot Club of Baytown, Baytown GMC Buick, Starbucks Baytown, HEB, Joey's Glass, Fuller's Tire,

Highlands Knights of Columbus, 1<sup>st</sup> Photo, Showbiz, Texas Roadhouse, Papa John's and the Great 8 Human Grade Dog Treats. Thanks also go to the numerous volunteers that help staff during the various programs at the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center and at the Baytown Nature Center.

We would also like to recognize the Human Resources Department for going over and beyond the call of duty to assist in the recruitment, staffing and training of over 350 lifeguards, cashiers, concessions and maintenance employees in the Aquatics Division. We would also like to recognize the Finance Department for their assistance with money handling and for making sure our seasonal part-timers are paid every payday.



A special thank you goes to the Parks and Recreation Department staff for providing innovative and cost-effective quality activities and for putting in many hours beyond normal weekday work schedules. Staff's determination and can-do attitude continue to show through, making Baytown a better place to live and play despite the pandemic challenges we face.

The remainder of this report describes in more detail the status of our projects and programs. It also notes a number of completed improvements and concludes with a review of a few specific goals for the upcoming year.

## Park Land Acquisition

The City's parkland inventory grew by 8.98 acres this past year.

- A. Ginger Creek Park (0.38 Acres)** – The Parks and Recreation acquired two lots (.38 acres) in the northwest corner of the Ginger Creek Estates Subdivision that will be developed into a neighborhood pocket park. The sub-division is located off of Cedar Bayou Lynchburg and has no access to the City's trail system or any nearby parks.

The park will be designed and developed by the Parks and Recreation Department during the fall of 2020. The project is funded by the Municipal Development District.

- B. Dittman Family Park (8.6 acres)** – The Fred Dittman family donated 8.6 acres of land located on Kilgore Road with Cedar Bayou waterfront. The property is adjacent to the 10.95 acres of land donated by David Rogers in 2014. Both parcels (19.55 acres) will provide future citizens easy access to Cedar Bayou. Both parcels (19.55 acres) are located about 1,500 feet north of Roseland Park.

## **Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

In 2000 the Parks and Recreation Department completed its first 10-year master plan. In 2010, with the assistance of Halff Associates, Inc, the City of Baytown 2020 Parks Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Master Plan was completed. Staff has used this master plan as a beneficial guide since. It was an essential requirement for the successful Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Jenkins Park grant. The plan has also been used as background information for numerous other grant applications.

It is now time to start working on the 2030 Master Plan. This new plan will include a trails master plan and a new master plan for the Baytown Nature Center (BNC) whose last plan was completed in the mid-1990's. The new plan will focus on the significant growth in the north and east side of the city with possible trail links across the city.

The consultant started meeting with stakeholders including Council, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center and Friends of the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center Education and Recreation Center among others in January. Halff Associates plans to use surveys and any other means needed to gain valuable information from our citizens. The 2030 Master Plan will include information from other plans including the Russell Park Master Plan, the Recreation Center Feasibility Study and the Aquatics Facilities Master Plans.

A joint City Council, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Planning and Zoning Commission was held in February which provided a wealth of knowledge to the consultants. Halff continues to work on the plan though the pandemic and throughout the shutdown has significantly slowed progress on the project.



# Parks

## Completed Projects

- A. **Holloway Park Parking Lot** – The asphalt parking lot at Holloway Park was replaced with a new concrete lot and connecting drive to Raccoon Drive. The new parking lot allows for 28 regular spaces and 3 handicap parking spaces. The Engineering Department designed the parking lot. Contractors began work in early August, and was completed by mid-September. Additional lighting was also added to the new parking facility.



- B. **Sports Complex Tennis Court Renovation** - The Wayne Gray Sports Complex Tennis Courts are heavily used and were last renovated almost 20 years ago. They needed a facelift. The courts were cleaned, leveled, repainted and are now in perfect playing condition. A second set of Pickleball lines were added to provide multiple game options for the Department. The renovated tennis and Pickleball courts were completed in March, and opened in May as the state of Texas slowly reopened from the pandemic.



C. **Goose Creek Trailheads and Signage** – The Goose Creek Trail runs from Bayland Park to Baker Road with the majority of the trail located along side of Goose Creek. Additional trail is planned to extend to the San Jacinto Mall and eventually north of I-10. Several parks are linked to the existing trail. Finding the trails has always been a challenge for citizens as the maps and signage have been inadequate.

The Department installed six trailhead signs at locations near parking areas and other strategic locations. Directional signage has also been installed along the trail.



D. **Blue Heron Connecting Trail – Crockett Park and Baybrook Place** – A Ground Breaking Ceremony was held on January 9, 2019, to officially start construction on the trail that connects the two neighborhoods to the Blue Heron Trail.

The 1,585 foot-long, 8 foot-wide concrete trail connected both the Crockett Park subdivision and the Baybrook Place subdivision to the City’s existing Blue Heron Trail. The new trail provides safe access for both neighborhoods to nearby Crockett Elementary School and Ross S. Sterling High School and the City’s trail system.

Staff worked to obtain five easements with the two subdivisions and the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD). The easements with the two subdivisions were quickly secured. The HCFCD easement agreement took much longer and also required HCFCD approved engineered plans which delayed the project several months.

The contractor completed the ADA trail by the end of March providing the neighborhoods access to the Blue Heron Trail system just as the COVID-19 pandemic shut down began.



**E. Town Square Fountain Renovation** – The Department contracted with the original manufacturer of the fountain, Robinson Iron Works, Inc. to repaint and repair the Town Square center piece. The project was planned to begin soon after the Christmas Tree was removed from around the fountain in January. However, weather challenges, followed by the pandemic shut down, delayed the project until late May. Robinson Iron Works sent a two-man crew to clean and repaint the fountain leaving it like new. The company also removed several decorative attachments at the base of the fountain and took them back to their home shop to repair, sandblast and paint. Park crews will reassemble them on the fountain once they are returned. The fountain basin was painted by park crews prior to filling the pool and the fountain was back in service by the end of June.

**F. Walker Park Picnic Shelter** – Park crews constructed a new two table picnic shelter in July 2020. The 16 x 20 foot shelter was funded by ExxonMobil, and will also be equipped with a family size grill.



**G. GIS Park Mapping** – The Department hired an intern during the summer to map every city park and median. Each picnic table, bench, trash can, playground and even the disc golf goals were mapped into the City’s GIS mapping system and into the Cityworks GIS software. The Intern also mapped mowing right of ways to get a better handle of the amount mowed each year. The Intern created a park inventory map of items that needed maintenance and/ or replacement. The SEP Phase 1 tree planting was mapped with GIS coordinates within the parks.

**H. Wayne Gray Sports Complex Girls Fastpitch Scoreboards** – All four of the scoreboards located on the Girls Fastpitch fields were replaced. The new boards are operated by a phone app instead of a wired controller.



I. **Playground Improvements** – The department completed several playground renovation projects this past year. Most renovations occurred during the COVID-19 shut down as park crews were able to focus on park renovation projects when events and programs were cancelled. The following parks received new playgrounds:

- a. Barkaloo Park
- b. Wayne Gray Sports Complex (Pirates Bay)
- c. Newcastle Park
- d. Goose Creek Park
- e. Carver Park
- f. Jenkins Park



## **Projects in Process**

### **A. New Park Service Center –**

The Park Service Center located at 1210 Park Street, was originally constructed in 1973, and designed for 20 employees, has served the department very well. However, the division has grown over the years to over 50 employees.

A new 11,600 square foot metal building will be constructed on the adjacent property to accommodate current and future levels of personnel and equipment. The building will include four offices, a conference room and a large assembly/break room. The back of the building will be open work space. The existing parking area will be enlarged and a covered bridge will connect the two properties. The existing property will be used for covered storage, allowing all tractor equipment to be covered. Additional metal shelters will be added in the future to add even more room to park large equipment.

After several delays and issues with the existing soil conditions, the project was handed over to the Public Works and Engineering Department. The unforeseen existing conditions required a change order and additional contract amendments further delaying the project. The proposed new park service center finally started construction in July 2020.

### **B. New Roseland Park Pavilion –** Staff contracted with Quorum Architects, for Professional Services for the design of the new Roseland Park Pavilion.

The heavily used Roseland Park Pavilion has been flooded several times over the years including during Hurricanes Alicia and Ike. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey caused the building to be underwater for five days. The Parks and Recreation Department rebuilt the pavilion following Alicia and Ike. Due to the extended flooding after Hurricane Harvey, the age of the building and the continued issues with the low elevation, the facility was demolished. Staff requested funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to rebuild the structure,

which was denied. As a result, staff requested and received funding in the City's FY 2019 - 2020 budget to rebuild this popular facility. The building site will be moved to higher ground on the opposite side of Roseland Park. The building will be raised at least five additional feet because of the new elevation requirement.

Staff has met with the consultant several times and are excited about the layout and location of the proposed new facility. The floor plan and exterior elevations are attached at the end of this report on page 71.

- C. Bayland Marina Basin and Channels Dredging Project** - The flood that was caused by Hurricane Harvey added several feet of silt and sand to the Bayland Marina basin and connecting channels leading to the boat ramps and to the Houston Ship Channel. Our consultant, which also handled the dredging project following Hurricane Ike, has obtained all the needed permits for the project from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Port of Houston. The consultants also added repairing and replacement of the Bayland Aids to Navigation (ATON) or channel markers to the bid documents. The project will be awarded in July and construction will actually begin in October following the current Army Corps of Engineer's ship channel dredging project.

Staff applied to the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) for partial funding of the project. FEMA will only pay for the damaged caused by Hurricane Harvey. The City is responsible for the balance of the cost.

As boats with deep draught are already getting stuck in the sand and plans to build a hotel and convention center at Bayland Park underway, the need to dredge Bayland Marina is an urgent priority. Maintenance dredging usually takes place every 10 years, but Hurricane Harvey created the need sooner.

A site map is attached at the end of this report on page 72.

### **Beautification Projects**

- A. Arbor Day** – The celebration of tree giveaway was scheduled for Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at Town Square. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic shut down, the celebration has been rescheduled for Friday October 16<sup>th</sup>. Over 2,000 one to five-gallon size trees will be available to be given away in October. The trees are donated seedlings from the Apache Corporation. Restoration of natural trees is a key component of efforts to enhance and beautify the appearance of a community.

The Annual Arbor Day Tree Giveaway is scheduled to return to its April 2021 date and location.

**B. Park Trees** - The Department planted 89 trees, some of which were grown at the Department's tree nursery. The majority of the trees were planted at the Baytown Nature Center, Blue Heron Park, Roseland Park, Jenkins Park, Evergreen Park and the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center.

**C. Median Improvement** – Park crews continued to improve and beautify the city's medians. The focus of the median improvements shifted to changing the appearance of the landscaped beds and developing a new prototype landscape method to both improve the appearance and reduce the maintenance of the beds. Staff selected several locations to demonstrate the new concepts. Blue Heron Parkway near Crockett Elementary, Alexander Drive medians at Ward Road and Rollingbrook at Garth Road. Staff will use lessons learned to determine if the new concepts will be expanded or not. Staff is also exploring the use of "art" instead of a landscaped bed in the medians.

Staff also had several median nose pavers leveled, pressure washed and sealed to provide a fresh and clean look to the area.



**D. TxDOT Right of Way Maintenance** – The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Right of Way Mowing Program was developed to alleviate the number of complaints caused by the lack of TxDOT contractors’ mowing major highways. Started in January 2009, the program continues to be a success and staff has added broadleaf weed control to continue to improve the appearance of Spur 330, Business 146 and Highway 146.

A two-person TxDOT Right of Way maintenance crew takes care of litter removal ahead of the median mowing and also weed-eats, trims and cleans along guard rails and sign poles. The crew also maintains areas that the tractor batwing mower cannot mow. TxDOT reimburses the City for three of the mowing cycles and for the monthly litter removal.

**E. Faith Family Church Serve Day** – On Saturday, July 11, almost 200 members of the Faith Family Church worked on two projects for the Parks and Recreation Department. The first project, held at Roseland Park, had over 150 church members who painted picnic tables, shelters and trash cans in an effort to start a color coordinating system that the department can then spread to other parks around town. In addition to the Roseland Project another 20 church members helped to “spruce up” medians at Bayway and Market Street and Market at Main Street. The Parks Division had representatives with each group to ensure the projects were carried out safely. The group made a tremendous impact on the appearance of the City.

## **Grants and Special Projects**

**A. Baytown Nature Center - Day of Caring Projects** - The Friends of the Baytown Nature Center, ExxonMobil staff and Parks crews worked on several projects at the Baytown Nature Center for the United Way Day of Caring.

This hardworking group:

- Repaired the suspension bridge
- Painted the concrete pond at the Children’s Nature Discovery Area.
- Painted the restroom at the former Westwood Park
- Removed graffiti
- Cleaned up the shore line
- Weeded the butterfly garden



**B. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – Recreational Trails Grant – Cary Bayou Trail Phase III** - Staff received a \$44,044 grant to construct 3,940 feet of new trail at Jenkins Park.

Jenkins Park was expanded in 2007 with the purchase of an additional 56 acres of land. With the additional parkland, the City of Baytown has constructed a five acre dog park and a disc golf course. The Cary Bayou Trail Phase III project was planned to add an additional 3,940 feet of trail made from decomposed granite, providing a natural surface walking/jogging trail loop around the newly acquired 56 acres.

The project including a section of trail along Cedar Bayou Lynchburg Road that will eventually connect to the Blue Heron trail was not completed. The short 300-foot section has major challenges including a railroad crossing, ditches and a lack of Right of Way and will be part of a future city sidewalk/trail improvement project.

The actual project added an additional 4,892 feet of decomposed granite trail, 952 feet longer than was requested in the original grant application. The new trail connects to the existing 11,513 feet of decomposed granite Cary Bayou Phase I and II trail.

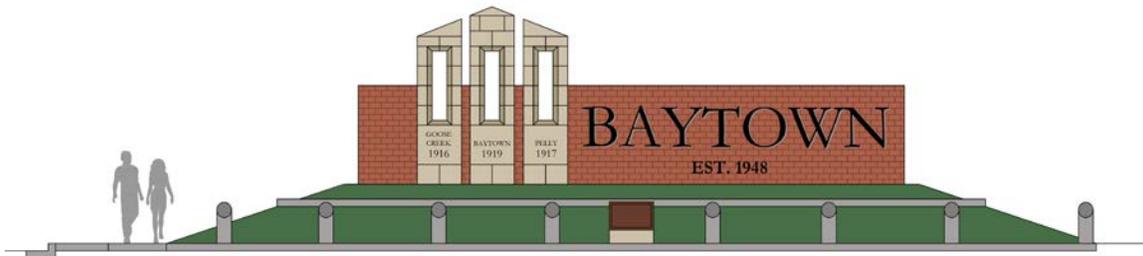
To complete the project, the Parks and Recreation Department requested and was granted permission from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to build a small “Hike/Bike Plaza” near the intersection of the trail system. It includes a Bike Repair Rack and an outdoor Handicapped Accessible drinking fountain complete with bottle filler and dog water bowl. An Omniflow Solar Light with USB charging station and two benches were also added to the plaza.

This project was designed by the Parks and Recreation Department utilizing in-house labor as the City’s match for the project.

The new trail section has been heavily used since the completion and has been especially busy since the “Stay at Home” orders in March.



- C. **Gateway 3 – I-10 and SH 146** – Keep Baytown Beautiful and the City of Baytown won the prestigious Keep Texas Beautiful – 2018 Governor's Community Achievement Award. The award provides \$270,000 for a community project. The third gateway has been selected as the City's project. Funding and construction of the project goes through the Texas Department of Transportation, Beaumont District (TxDOT). Knudson LP was selected to design and coordinate the project for the City. Knudson designed the other two gateways. The project kicked off design in 2018. In late fall of 2019 30% design plans were submitted to TxDOT which officially started the review phase of the project. Shortly after submitting the 30% plans, our consultant Bryan Janhsen of Knudson LP took a similar position with Freese and Nichols. The City negotiated a contract with Knudson in order to keep Bryan Janhsen working on the project. TxDOT approved the 30% plans in May and requested the consultant to skip the 60% submittal and go straight to 90% which will be submitted to TxDOT in late July. The project is planned to be bid in early 2021.



- D. **ExxonMobil – EPA Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Tree Planting Project** - The City of Baytown agreed to be part of ExxonMobil's EPA Supplemental Environmental Project "Baytown Area Phyto-Pollution Reduction SEP". The project is designed to improve air quality and achieve other environmental benefits through the planting of trees in the City of Baytown. The City will plant 1,458 trees in various locations across Baytown. Approximately 50% of the total number of trees will be planted within a 1-mile radius of the ExxonMobil Baytown Facilities. The remaining trees will be planted within a 4-mile radius of ExxonMobil. The environmental benefits include the reduction of ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulates. The project will result in improved air quality through the generation of oxygen and the reduction of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. Trees that will be planted near high-traffic roadways also act as vegetative buffers which reduce the transport of particulate emissions from roadway traffic. Roadside vegetation has been shown to reduce a population's exposure to air pollution through the interception of airborne particles and through the uptake of gaseous air pollution via leaf stomata, in addition to affecting pollutant transport and dispersion.

Because of weather issues, the project's first two planting cycles were missed. Staff along with ExxonMobil decided to complete the project in two phases. The first phase was bid in August 2019. The installation of 592 trees began in

November. The sites included Unidad Park, Britton Park, along the Goose Creek Trail corridor (near Market St. bridge) and Evergreen Park. The project including irrigation was completed in February 2020. The large number of trees that were planted made a major impact to the appearance of Evergreen Park and the Goose Creek Trail.

The second phase to plant 857 trees was bid in May 2020. The project is expected to begin in July. The tree planting project locations are Bayland Park, Missouri Street along Highway 146 medians, Bicentennial Park, the RTC property, Goose Creek Park Nature area, Duke Hill Park and McElroy Park. The project is expected to be completed in November.



**Before**



**After**

- E. Baytown Nature Center Oyster Reef Restoration and Shoreline Protection Project** – The Parks and Recreation Department worked with the Natural Resource Trustee Program and the Galveston Bay Foundation on an \$80,000 grant for the construction of an educational oyster reef that will be located at Wooster Point in the Baytown Nature Center. The Department plans to partner with the Galveston Bay Foundation to complete the Oyster Reef Restoration and Shoreline Protection Project.

The Galveston Bay Foundation and the City of Baytown have been planning this project with the Natural Resource Trustees for many years. The Trustees include representatives from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), General Land Office (GLO) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

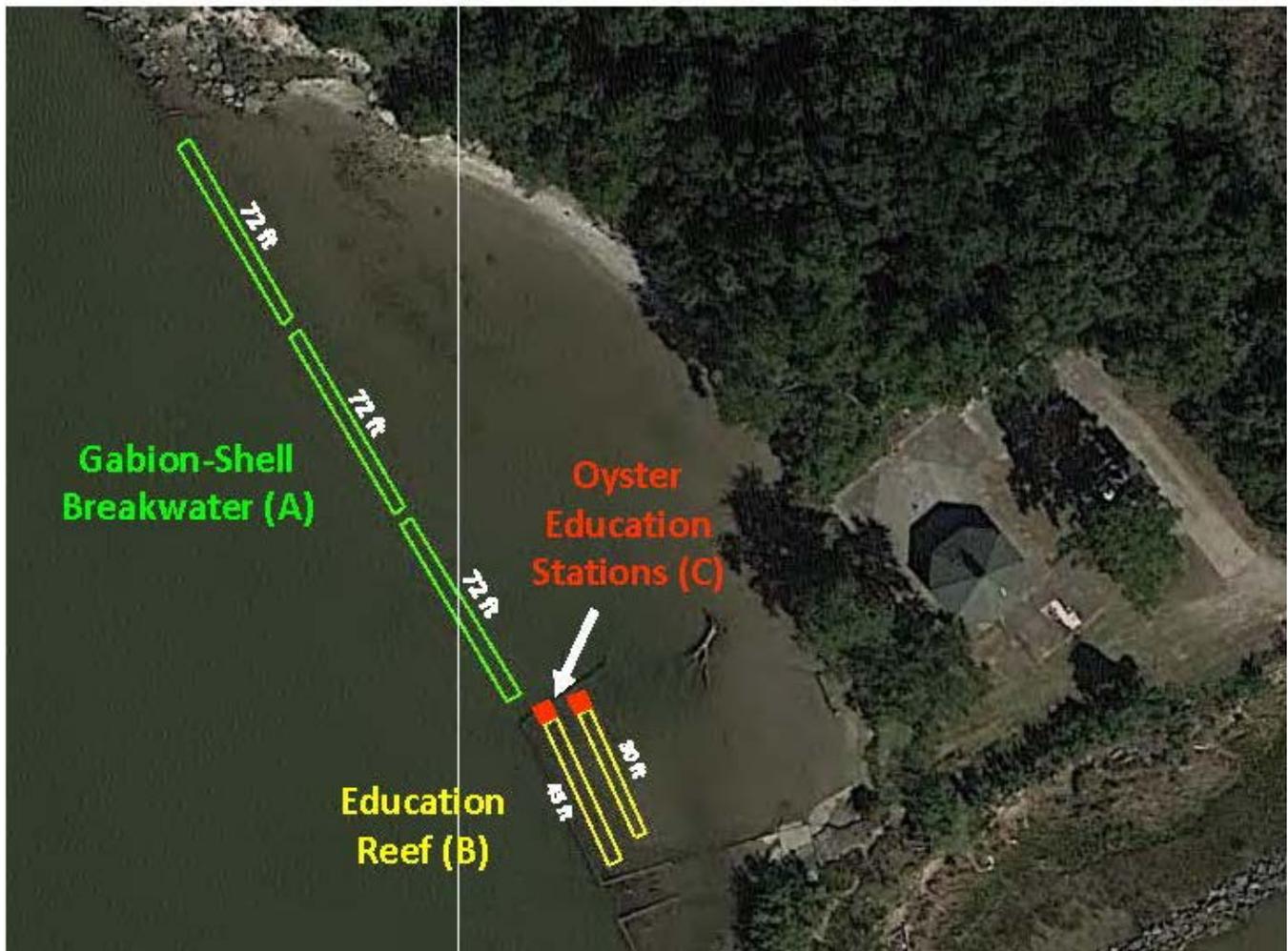
Due to the Baytown Nature Center’s close proximity to the Houston Ship Channel, the Crystal Bay shoreline receives erosive energy from ship wakes. In order to protect the shoreline from further erosion and to enhance natural oyster populations within the bay system, the Foundation and the Baytown Nature Center plans to construct up to 300 linear feet of oyster reef. The proposed oyster reef will be constructed in two sections: (i) Gabion-Shell Breakwater and (ii)

Education Reef with an additional component that will involve hands-on oyster education via the construction of removable oyster cages.

The Parks and Recreation Department has contracted with the Foundation to restore and improve the existing oyster reef at Wooster Point located in the Baytown Nature Center. This will provide much needed shoreline protection and serve as an educational oyster reef that will be included in the Baytown Nature Center's programming. The City will be responsible for the management and oversight of the project, purchase of needed supplies and materials and grant reimbursement. The project is expected to be completed in 2021.

**BAYTOWN NATURE CENTER**  
**Oyster Reef Restoration & Shoreline Protection**  
Crystal Bay, Harris County, TX

Proposed Layout



**F. MD Anderson Cancer Center and ExxonMobil - “Be Well Baytown”** - The Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a grant to help reduce skin cancer by limiting sun exposure for employees and park visitors. The \$259,850 grant provided sunscreen dispensers, hats for Parks Crews, shade structures at Roseland, Unidad and McElroy Parks and shade trees.



- Sunscreen Dispensers – Dispensers were installed at Pelly Park, Roseland Park, McElroy Park and Bergeron Park. SPF 30 sun screen is provided to park users free of charge at these locations.
- Parks Crews Long Sleeve Shirts – two long sleeved SPF 30 rated shirts were provided to all Park Division employees to use while working in the sun.
- Parks Crews Hats – large brimmed, UV protected, insect resistant hats were provided for all Parks Division employees while working outdoors. The “Be Well Baytown” logo and City of Baytown logo were embroidered on each hat.
- Shade Structures – five large shade structures were installed in three parks to provide sun protection for heavily used park facilities. The structures cover three playgrounds and two splash pads and have made a tremendous impact on the appearance and usage of the parks. The shade structures are located at the following parks:
  - Roseland Park Playground
  - Roseland Park Spray Pad
  - Unidad Park Playground
  - Unidad Park Playground
  - McElroy Park Spray Pad
- The “Be Well Baytown” initiative focus for 2020 is on physical activity and diet. The Parks and Recreation Department has been awarded a \$187,856.89 grant for 2020 including carry over from 2019. The project includes:
  - Citywide Sun Safety Training (postponed until 2021)
  - 100 – 30-gallon size trees to be planted in parks
  - Additional park crew UV large brimmed UV protected hats
  - Park Crew long sleeve shirts (2 each SPF 30 rated shirts)
  - Three event tents
  - Sunscreen and new sunscreen dispensers
  - A large sun shade structure at the entrance to Pirates Bay
  - A mobile stage
  - Be Well Baytown wrap for the pop up trailer

- Exercise instructors for the Pop-up-park (PUP) events
- Yoga mats
- PUP play equipment
- Wayfinding banners
- Stage banners
- PUP - Promotional supplies

The new Shade Structure was installed just prior to the season opening day at Pirates Bay in April. The area will provide guest the opportunity to wait to enter the park in the shade. Staff is also very excited about the future use of the mobile stage. The new stage has been used only twice since arriving in December, but will be a focal point for future PUP and other events such as the Party at the Peninsula. Staff plans to ask for an extension for the unused PUP funds that were cut short by the pandemic.



## **Proposed 2021 Projects**

Several major park improvement projects are proposed for the upcoming year:

### **A. Municipal Development District (MDD) Funded Projects**

- a. Citywide Landscaping
- b. Baytown Sports League Improvements
- c. Ginger Creek Park Development
- d. Jenkins Park “Perfect Trail” Project
- e. Park Security
- f. Basketball Court Roofs at Lincoln Cedars and Unidad Parks
- g. Jenkins/Holloway Park Wooded Trail Lighting

### **B. City of Baytown Budget Capital Projects**

- a. Design/Engineering for a new concession/restroom building at National Little League Park
- b. Goose Creek Trail, Phase VII

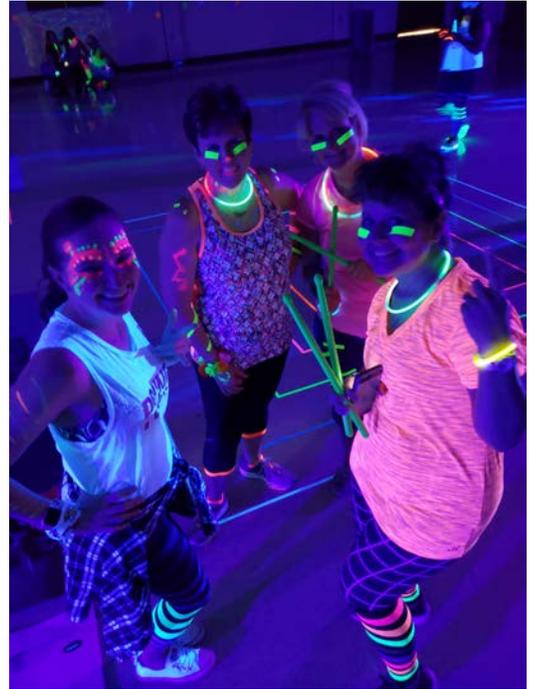
### **C. Ongoing Projects**

- a. Bayland Marina and Channels Dredging
- b. New Roseland Pavilion
- c. Jenkins Park Drainage and Water Line Improvements
- d. New Park Service Center
- e. 2030 Parks and Recreation, Trails and Baytown Nature Center Master Plans

# Recreation

## 2019 – 2020 Program Summaries

**POUND Lights Out** – The Baytown Parks and Recreation hosted the first ever POUND Lights out in the Auditorium on Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 8pm. Instructor Momo Foster worked closely with recreation staff to transform the Baytown Community Center into an exciting POUND workout space by adding black lights, sound systems, and tons of free glow in the dark accessories to help make the night memorable. Attendance surpassed expectations with 67 registered fitness enthusiasts attending the first time event.



**Bike to the Market** - To help promote over 17 miles of Trail Systems throughout the City of Baytown, the Parks and Recreation Department created an exciting way to attend the Baytown Farmers Market each month. Event participants start at Town Square, then travel down Texas Ave to the Goose Creek Trail, located behind the Sterling Library. From there, they exclusively use the trail system to travel past Britton Park to the Bayland Park Marina. Some participants choose to take a break and enjoy the serenity, visit O’Neal’s restaurant, or simply turn around and head back to the Baytown Farmers Market. As part of a healthy initiative, the Parks and Recreation Department reached out to the Baytown Human Resources Department to join forces and also reward City of Baytown Employees, who join in rides by awarding them Virgin Pulse Points that can be used to help lower insurance costs. The program continues to be adjusted by Recreation Technician, David Cornell, who is constantly looking for alternate routes to provide a better experience



**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Guns vs. Hoses Softball Tournament hosted by H-E-B** - On September 14<sup>th</sup>, Parks and Recreation Staff worked with the Baytown HEB, Field of Dreams Inc., and Baytown’s first responders to bring back the Second Annual Field of Dreams Event. Field of Dreams is a non-profit organization that works to give individuals with special needs an opportunity to participate in athletic events. This event featured a softball game where participants with special needs got to run and play alongside first responders from Baytown Fire and Baytown Police Departments. The event also featured a competitive tournament between the Baytown Fire and Police Departments, with the police taking first place.

**Special Olympics 1<sup>st</sup> Bocce Ball and Softball Tournament** - Unfortunately, due to Tropical Storm Imelda, Special Olympics had to cancel both the Bocce Ball and Softball Tournaments scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup> at the Wayne Gray Sports Complex.

**Disc Golf Open Tournament -**

The disc golf tournament on September 28<sup>th</sup> had a turnout of 75 players and an estimated 100 spectators. The social media reviews of Evergreen Disc Golf Course and the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department are all upbeat and positive. Event organizer, Chris Vandergriff, said the lighter than anticipated attendance was due to an A-tier event in Tyler TC that drew many of the upper players that normally play in Evergreen to other areas around Houston. He is a big Baytown fan, and has already requested the possibility of adding a 9-hole course at Duke Hill Park in the near future.



**Brown Bag Recap** - The second and final Brown Bag Lunch Concert Series of 2019 concluded on September 27, 2019. Each Friday, bands performed a different genre of music from 12:00 to 1:00 pm at Town Square. This series included a mix of new performers and familiar faces, including:

- September 6: Raa Raa De Zydeco All-Starz (Zydeco)
- September 13: Gary Michael Dahl (Caribbean)
- September 20: Jennifer B & the Groove (Blues/Rock) CANCELLED due to Tropical Storm Imelda
- September 27: Mariachi Calmecac (Mariachi)

**ExxonMobil 100 Year Anniversary Party at Town Square** - On Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Parks and Recreation team assisted ExxonMobil with their “Here for Good” 100 Year Celebration in Town Square. The event featured live performances by Joseph Mitchell, Kaitlyn Alyse, Don Vickers, and headliner, Cory Morrow. Guests enjoyed free snow cones, food trucks, lawn games, giveaways, and more. The Parks and Recreation Department assisted ExxonMobil by providing tents, lawn games, and staff. The Department also assisted in the coordination of light, sound, and stage equipment through Events Productions of Texas and bounce houses through Martibirds. The event was attended by approximately 1,000 people.

**1<sup>st</sup> Annual Caribbean Festival-** The first-annual Caribbean Vibes on the Avenue event was held at Town Square on Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. The event was hosted in partnership with the ACE District of Baytown, a local group of business owners and other stakeholders on Texas Avenue. Approximately 2,000 guests enjoyed live performances from the Tropical Steelpan Orchestra, Indiginis, the J Unit Band, and DJ Allan, in addition to dancing and crowd interaction from Moko Jumbies on stilts. Food trucks were serving a variety of Caribbean food and other items on site. Several arts and crafts vendors were present for guests to shop for an array of unique items. Younger guests enjoyed four bounce houses from All In One Events and Tents. While this year's event did not feature alcohol, the ACE District has expressed a desire to obtain an alcohol permit for future events.



**Grito Fest** – A larger than anticipated crowd of over 6,000 spectators packed Bicentennial Park for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Grito Fest, held on Saturday, October 5, 2019. The event was headlined by Grammy Award winning Tejano music group, Grupo Solido, a band widely-known for their romantic take on the norteno style. In addition to the music, the Grito Committee and the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department teamed up to host various competitions that included a jalapeno contest; won by Diego Loreda, accordion contest; won by Brandon Ybarra, grito contest; won by Jonathan Esparza, and both the red and green salsa competition; won by Iguana Joe's and La Original Taqueria respectively.



**Treats on the Trail** - The Baytown Parks and Recreation Department hosted the first Treats on the Trail event held at Jenkins Park on Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>, from 5:30 to 10 pm. As the event approached, heavy rains moved into the area that altered the original plan to include the Jenkins to Hollaway Park Trail system. However, Parks and Recreation staff adjusted to the set back and still hosted thirteen local businesses and organizations that lined the trails within Jenkins Park to distribute candy to hundreds of Baytown's trick or treaters. Treats on the Trail was designed to be a family-friendly event for all members of the community to come out and trick or treat in a safe environment. In addition to trick or treating, event attendees also enjoyed taking photos in a pumpkin patch provided in part by H-E-B of Baytown, as well as a free showing of Disney's *Coco* on a giant 8'x16' LED Screen! Free parking for the event was available at Stephen F. Austin Elementary, located at 3022 Massey-Tompkins Road. From there, guests could enjoy a free shuttle to and from the event site.

**Baytown Veteran's Day Ceremony** - The City of Baytown partnered with VFW Post 912 to host a crowd of over 100 guests at its annual Veteran's Day ceremony, held on the eleventh day of the eleventh month at the eleventh hour. This year, due to inclement weather, the program had to change venues. It was instead held at the Baytown Community Center. Despite heavy rains, guests showed up and enjoyed a moving speech from guest speaker, MSgt. Joe Ramirez, Sr., U.S. Army Retired who shared his personal stories about being a POW while serving in the Korean War.

**Tennis Lessons** - Another new program, introduced in 2019, were our tennis lessons at the Wayne Gray Sports Complex and Lee College. For this program, the City of Baytown partnered with Tennis Instructor, Elana Engleman, who is a member and instructor for the United



States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA). Lessons are available for all ages and skill levels, from age 4 through adulthood. In its inaugural session, the program had 18 participants across all age groups. Going forward into the fall session, all lessons will take place at the newly resurfaced tennis courts at JC Hollaway Park. The Fall session kicked off with an Intro to Tennis Jamboree at Hollaway Park on Saturday, August 31<sup>st</sup>. This was a free event, designed to give potential participants a chance to meet the instructor and learn the basics.

**Pickleball** - Along with tennis, another group eagerly awaiting the court resurfacing at Hollaway Park are our local Pickleball enthusiasts. Since the Parks and Recreation developed social media accounts, we have been inundated with a small, but passionate

group of pickleball athletes. Due to the request, the new tennis courts will be striped, with not only traditional tennis lines, but also have Pickleball lines in an alternate color. This will allow the general public to play either tennis or pickleball from sun up to 10pm at night.

**Be Well Baytown Ribbon Cutting at Roseland Park** - On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department hosted a ribbon cutting at Roseland Park in celebration of the Department's successful involvement with Be Well Baytown. Mike Ashton (ExxonMobil), Dr. Ruth Rechis (MD Anderson), Mayor Brandon Capetillo, District 6 Council member David Himsel, and Scott Johnson each made remarks as part of the ceremony. Representatives from Goose Creek CISD, ExxonMobil, MD Anderson, Baytown Family YMCA, Baytown News Now, and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members were in attendance.



**Salute to Service-** The Baytown Parks and Recreation Department hosted the first-annual Salute to Service on Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, at Town Square. This one-of-a-kind event, designed to celebrate past and present service members, featured free hot dogs and popcorn, lawn games such as corn hole and washers, and a free live performance by the Space City Big Band.

The band played a variety of swing-style music, and included an impressive arrangement of more than ten brass instruments including trumpets, saxophones, trombones, and more. The event was offered completely free of charge, and guests were encouraged to bring the whole family to Town Square to celebrate.

**Baytown Community Yard Sale, November 2<sup>nd</sup>** -The Community Yard Sale was held at Town Square again on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The highly successful event was completely sold out of over 64 vendor spaces, and hundreds of people came to the park to shop and mingle with other members of the community.

**Christmas Parade** – One of the year’s most anticipated and largest events, the Baytown Christmas Parade, took place on Thursday December 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. However, preparations for the event started months in advance as Parks and Recreation staff began to divide entries into respective groups. Once the groups are formed, each of the over 100 entries receive a personal phone call from a parks and recreation employee to develop a specialized game plan including entry times, staging locations, and drop off points to help eliminate any parade night confusion.

On the night of the parade, while office staff were busy lining up participants, other Park and Recreation Employees, along with Buyers Barricades, began to line the recently revamped parade route with steel pedestrian barricades to ensure the safety of the spectators. As the crowd gathered at Town Square, the 40-foot Christmas Tree was lit to kick off the parade and the holiday season. Each entry was judged by a group of volunteers as they passed Town Square and the winners were contacted the following week. Such efforts contributed to another extremely successful 2019 “Christmas Movie Memories” themed parade for the City of Baytown.



**Art Show & Exhibition** - On December 6<sup>th</sup>, the City of Baytown held its 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Show Exhibition at the Baytown Community Center. The exhibition was open to the public and roughly 400 people were in attendance. The program began at 6:00 P.M., with

an opportunity to enjoy the artwork. Local artists were present at the art show to sell their art work. Children were invited to take pictures with Santa Claus, and enjoy refreshments in the lobby. Parks Board Chairman, Carmen Torres and the Director of Parks and Recreation, Scott Johnson were on hand to begin the reception and the awards ceremony. Mrs. Carmen Torres announced the professional and the student winners, as Scott Johnson awarded them with their medals before taking photos with each winner.

**Christmas Movie Night** - On December 6, 2019, the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Christmas Movie Night at Town Square. Starting at 6:30 pm, the Department showed *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer* on a large screen on the stage, followed by *A Christmas Story*. Free popcorn and hot chocolate were available to guests, who brought lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy the show.

**Youth Sports Expo** - The Baytown Youth Sports Expo was held on January 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center. There was a great turnout with over 15 sports teams and organizations from around Baytown present at the event. Academy was even in attendance and set up a booth raffling items off and familiarizing themselves with all of the sports teams and organizations in Baytown. Academy Sports + Outdoors looks forward to sponsoring our leagues and being present at their opening day events in the near future.



**Snow Day** - On January 11<sup>th</sup>, Baytown Parks and Recreation brought over 75 tons of snow to Town Square for Snow Day 2020. The event featured two large slides, one medium slide, a four-lane bunny hill for smaller children, and two play areas filled with snow. Two food trucks, Nom Mi Street and Spar-Tacos, were in attendance, and penguin and polar bear mascots mingled and took photos with guests throughout the event. Reverend Butter, an ice sculptor from Houston, carved a fun photo prop live, using his chainsaw early in the morning then returned to conclude the event with an exciting ice battle between Reverend Butter and Billy the “Viking.” A special thanks to the Pirates Bay lifeguard staff for “guarding” the snow slides to ensure everyone could play safely.



**Daddy and Me Dance** – The Baytown Community Center was transformed into a groovy disco themed hangout for the latest Daddy and Me Dance on Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff went all out with preparations that included a glow in the dark dance floor, golden disco lounge, custom made vinyl records photo ops and the annual balloon drop. The DJ from Taylored Entertainment kept the dance floor full of dads and daughters with fun disco era music as well as popular music from today. To take a break, dads were able to visit the gold and black HEB and Chick- fil-A lounge for free snacks and refreshments. A complete list of sponsors are as follows:

- HEB Baytown/ Chick-fil-A Baytown Disco Lounge
- The Party House- Balloon Master pieces
- LD Signs by Design Ventures- Banners
- Whataburger
- Chicken Express
- Showbiz
- Texas Roadhouse
- Papa John's
- 1st Photo
- The Great 8
- Pirates Bay Water Park
- Baytown Nature Center
- Eddie V. Gray Wetland Center



**Pop -Up-Parks** - The Parks and Recreation Department took its show on the road and planned to bring the all new “Pop-Up-Park” program to parks across Baytown. The Pop-Up-Park program was sponsored by “Be Well Baytown”, an initiative of the MD Anderson Cancer Center sponsored by ExxonMobil. The monthly events are designed to bring neighbors together and to highlight the city’s smaller neighborhood parks.

The monthly event is planned on the first Sunday of each month from March through October from 2pm – 5pm. This event brings Town Square activities to neighborhood parks across the city, while tailoring each park around a certain theme. The complete schedule includes:

- March 1 – Carver Park
- April 5 – Britton Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- May 3 – Baytown Soccer Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- June 7 – Central Heights Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- July 5 – Roseland Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- August 2 – Bergeron Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- September 13 – League of Women Voters Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19
- October 4 – Tejas Park – Cancelled due to COVID-19

The first event was held at Carver Park, 802 Carver Street and featured a concert from Raa-Raa and Da Zydeco Allstarz. There were bounce houses for youth and adults, basketball activities with prizes, hula hoops, sidewalk chalk and free hot dogs. The Department’s new mobile stage that was funded by Be Well Baytown was unveiled and used for the first time at the Carver Park event. The event was a success, however, it was the only Pop Up Park that was held in 2020 due to COVID-19, as all remaining Pop Up Park scheduled events were cancelled. The new program is planned to continue in 2021.



**Brown Bag Lunch Concert March Series** - The Brown Bag Lunch Series planned for four bands of different genres to play at Town Square on each Friday from 12 – 1:00 pm in the month of March. However, the final two weeks were cancelled due to COVID-19.

**Memorial Day Service** - On Monday May 25<sup>th</sup>, The Parks and Recreation Department partnered with VFW Post 912, and Baytown’s Channel 16 to host the City’s first ever virtual Memorial Day Ceremony. Due to rising safety concerns surrounding COVID-19, Parks and Recreation staff thought outside the box to still facilitate another impactful event. This year, rather than coming to the park and congregating in a large crowd, event goers were able to view welcoming remarks by Jerry Johnson from the VFW, and follow along as Assistant City Manager, Kevin Troller, read the names from the Bicentennial Park monument of those local heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice from our Baytown Community.

**Party on the Peninsula** - On June 19<sup>th</sup>, all four divisions of the Parks and Recreation Department partnered together for the first time on an exciting new event. Party on the Peninsula was held at the Baytown Nature Center, with the most perfect weather possible, featuring the band Bag of Donuts. With COVID-19 at the forefront, staff developed a plan that consisted of social distancing circles, free face masks, limited capacity and scheduled sanitizing. This event allowed staff to not only utilize the new recreation software for ticket sales, but also helped to implement the new alcohol policy for parks. About 150 people came out and enjoyed food, drinks and great music. Hopefully, we can continue to put on similar events at this location moving forward.



**Farmers Market** - The 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Baytown’s Parks and Recreation Department’s Farmers Market at Town Square saw a few notable changes. First, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the farmers markets were cancelled March, April and May. The monthly event started back up in June with social distancing, hand wash stations and masks to be worn by vendors and attendees. There were on average about 20 vendors that came out to Town Square to participate.

**Senior Recreation Center** - The seniors continue to enjoy the weekly programs each month including Bridge, Quilting, Bingo, Dominoes and Cards. The monthly dances with live bands are always popular. Each quarter, the seniors host a luncheon where they plan new and exciting activities for the months ahead. President David Weber continues to offer monthly casino trips that are always well attended. Like so many other events and activities, the senior programs were placed on hold in early March 2020. However, Seniors of Baytown president, Dave Weber and his wife Sandy, started delivering meals door to door throughout the pandemic.

## **Leisure Programs**

Baytown Parks and Recreation leisure programs utilize rooms at the Community Center as well as park facilities throughout the City of Baytown. Recreational staff work to offer many new and exciting programs around the Community Center's full rental schedule. Currently, we offer Cooking Classes, Fitness Classes, Youth and Adult Karate, Chair Yoga, Pound, and much more.

Staff is continuously growing, expanding and adding programs and activities throughout the year by listening to the needs and interests of the public. We are very fortunate to work with qualified instructors in our community who share the same values and goals as our department and who are willing to offer their time and effort. Programs offered or expanded this year were as follows:

- **Karate** – The youth and adult karate classes taught by David Lange at the Community Center continued to be one of the best attended and most requested classes offered. Mr. Lange has brought a professional attitude that shows in his full classes each session.
  - April Session-Canceled due to COVID-19
  - June Session- 1/4 Attendance due to COVID-19 Social Distancing
- **Farmers Market/ Entertainment**
  - **June-** Reduced number of vendors due to COVID-19 Social Distancing and no entertainment scheduled.
  - **July-** Reduced number of vendors due COVID-19 Social Distancing
- **Cody Kouba Band** - Canceled due to COVID-19
- **Summer Programs at the Community Center** - Summer Camp was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. We expected a 400+ youth sign up to participate in various summer camps at the Baytown Community Center. Each camp targeted students age 4 -17 and promoted fun through STEM education.



## COVID-19 Innovations

- **Side Walk Chalk Art:** A program was put together in April 2020 to replace normal activities with quarantine activities, inspiring the citizens to explore different parks and trails in Baytown. Supportive quotes were written and drawn by the recreation staff to encourage the citizens during hard times and utilize the time they spend on the trails with their kids. Drawing on the trails and sidewalks is an activity for moments of boredom, but beneath that boredom lies a more visceral need to comfort and connect. And, paths such as “the main public places of the city” and “its most vital organ,” have emerged as the perfect canvas for boosting neighborhood morale, one chalk drawing at a time.



- **Virtual Fitness Classes**
- **Dance Fitness Virtual- Facebook Live** - No excuses! Be ready to get your cardio fitness workout virtually! You don't even have to brush your hair! Be sure and "Like" Dance Fitness with Reanna on Facebook. She can add you to a group for today's class at 11:00 am. You can join her live, one-hour fitness class by clicking the groups tab and requesting.
- **POUND Zoom Class-** Channel your inner rock star with this full-body cardio jam session, inspired by drumming. Using lightly weighted exercise drumsticks, torch calories and tone while rocking out to your favorite music with Momo.
- **GENERATION POUND® Zoom Class-** youth-oriented program that fuses movement and music to improve focus, coordination, physical fitness and teamwork skills. By combining exercise and interactive Activities, kids will learn new ways to explore movement, embrace their creativity and ROCK OUT—ultimately building strength, confidence and self-awareness. Ages 6-12
- **Tisma Bradford- Faithful Fitness Facebook Live**
  - Floor
  - Yoga
  - Strength
  - Senior Cardio/Strength

## Athletic Programs

The City of Baytown strives to provide its citizens with a number of options for both recreational and competitive athletics. In the past year, the City of Baytown has built on the leagues and activities that were previously in place and brought multiple new ideas and leagues to facilities around Baytown. Currently, Baytown offers multiple leagues on a weekly basis with a current enrollment and participation level of 34 teams, per season, that visit our different facilities around town. Our Adult programs consist of Men's 7v7 soccer, Adult Men's/Coed Slow-pitch Softball, 6v6 Arena Soccer Leagues at Jenkins Park, and Sand Volleyball at Roseland Park. All leagues are sanctioned by the United States Specialty Sports Association. (USSSA) and the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF). Each league operates on an 8-10 game schedule, followed by a single elimination tournament at the end of each season to decide overall league champions.



The City of Baytown also offers tennis lessons. All classes are taught and directed by tennis instructor Elana Engleman who is a long time member and instructor with the United States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA).

- **Youth Promotion in Athletics** -In addition to all the current leagues that the city offers, we continuously strive to promote youth athletic sports programs throughout the year. Annually, the City of Baytown hosts the Youth Sports Expo at the Community Center inviting all of the program presidents to come and promote and advocate on behalf of their programs. In January of 2020, the following youth programs attended and promoted their activities: Baytown Little League, Baytown Teenage Baseball, Baytown Girls Fastpitch Softball Association, Baytown Stingrays Lacrosse, Bay Area Chargers football, Elana Engleman- former professional tennis player, Baytown Broncos TIFI football, X-Racers cycling, Karate, Baytown Bay Area Basketball, and more.
- **Baytown Summer Track Program** - Unfortunately, the 2020 summer track season was cancelled due to COVID-19. Our summer track program works with nearly 100 athletes ready to compete by participating in the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF) Summer Games. This year we had six phenomenal coaches strategically selected to guide our young athletes to the next level. We look forward to the next track season and seeing our athletes compete with surrounding communities such as: Galena Park, La Porte, Deer Park, Texas City, Beaumont, and Pasadena.

- **Tournaments Hosted -**

In addition to running leagues, our staff works extensively with outside organizations to accommodate and bring softball tournaments to the Wayne Gray Sports Complex nearly every weekend throughout the year. The organizations include:

The Baytown Senior Softball Association, 24/7 Softball, Amateur Softball Association (ASA), Global Sports Authority (GSA), National Softball Association (NSA), Circuit Tournament Softball, United State Specialty Sports Association (USSSA). Throughout 2019-2020, the Wayne Gray Sports complex has hosted over 20 tournaments with the exception of the pandemic. Our staff is continuously working to enforce social distancing practices and procedures to assure our



programs can successfully continue to run smoothly. Our staff has adopted friendly procedures such as social distancing reminders, enforcement of mask wearing, as well as maintaining clean facilities by utilizing sanitizing procedures after games to keep facilities as clean and safe as possible.



Throughout 2019-2020, Baytown has received an extensive growth in Disc Golf and Foot Golf as our courses have held tournaments such as The Greater Houston Area Disc Golf Championship bringing over 200 people from professional playing levels to beginner levels. We are proud to continuously provide our Disc Golf community with two beautiful 18-hole disc golf courses to assure social distancing at both Evergreen Park and Jenkins Park.

- **Innovation 2019 - 2020 -** Throughout 2019-2020, our athletic programs have taken a creative approach by taking and minimizing sports and programs that tend to draw big crowds and maximizing our promotion of activities that can be played in safe and socially distant atmosphere. We have adopted and continuously promoted sports such as: sand volleyball, pickleball, tennis, disc golf, foot golf, home run derby's, and online sports videogaming. We will continue to work within these difficult times to be innovative and create the best active lifestyle for our community members.

- Wayne Gray Sports Complex has also had several cosmetic projects take place throughout the 2019-2020 seasons. Staff re-painted all of the foul poles on fields 5-8, completely power washed the entire facility, replaced all of the bleacher boards assuring community safety, remodeled the concession stand while replacing sheetrock and the fields have been completely fertilized and grounds have been meticulously maintained.
- All bleachers have been replaced at Baytown Soccer Park, and grounds are also being worked on to assure a safe environment for all soccer players and fans attending games.
- **Toy Drive- Duck Soup** - In December 2019, the City of Baytown hosted a fun 3-week toy drive league called “Duck Soup”. Duck Soup is simply the game of slow pitch softball with a few quirky twists included to give everyone a laugh. This league is open to absolutely anyone, but each individual must donate a toy in order to participate in the fun and quirky league. All toys collected from this league are then given to the Baytown Blue Santa team and then distributed to kids for Christmas.

Due to COVID-19, Golden Groove Dances, Brown Bag Lunch Concert Series, Arts and Eats Fest, Self Defense Class, Special Olympics Track Meet, \$1.00 TACO Day, Community Yard Sales, Star Studded Squad, Pop-up-Park events as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations were all cancelled.

### **Remaining Programs for 2020**

- Grito Fest – Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>
- Veterans Day Ceremony – Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Parade – Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Baytown Art Exhibition & Reception – Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>



## Aquatics

The Aquatics Division enjoyed another great year as Pirates Bay Water Park and Calypso Cove welcomed 173,161 guests during the 2019 season. Due to COVID-19, the start of the 2020 season was delayed until June 10<sup>th</sup> at Calypso Cove and June 13<sup>th</sup> at Pirates Bay. Unfortunately, COVID necessitated the abrupt closing of both parks on June 25<sup>th</sup>. While Pirates Bay remains closed, Calypso Cove reopened on July 14<sup>th</sup> for the public to enjoy.



The Aquatics Division welcomed two new full time managers. Jill Greer; Guest Service Coordinator, and Jessica Burch; Operations Coordinator, joined the division in January 2020.

Staff worked on several off-season projects to keep the park looking new. Both play structures at Pirates Bay were refurbished and now look much like they did when they were installed in 2010. Some other projects including refinishing the mat racer and tube slides, repainting all airbrushed themed items, repainting of the Cool Deck, and remodeling of the interior of the Crow's Nest. All slides were also waxed prior to the 2020 season.



A new attraction, a NINJACROSS™ System, was installed at Pirates Bay as the first NINJACROSS™ System in North America. The addition of the NINJACROSS™ System has already become one of the parks most used attractions. The Aquatics team used the system during the 2020 season to implement elevated lifeguard conditioning and are in the process of creating and implementing a NINJACROSS™ fitness program for the 2021 season.

The Aquatics Division is set up as a self-supporting enterprise fund with revenue paying for all operational expenses including personnel, utilities, and routine maintenance for both Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove. The operating costs for the two facilities had no impact on the City's operations budget until 2019. Due to the GCCISD decision to start school two weeks earlier and a greater than normal number of rain days, Aquatics had to dip into the City's general fund for the first time. With the continuing pandemic, 2020 will be especially difficult for Aquatics. Normally, funds remaining after all expenses are set aside for future capital maintenance costs. The maintenance account has been very helpful over the years as the park has needed additional care between seasons to continue to have a fresh look. The maintenance account has also been used to replace expensive pumps and equipment as needed.

The Aquatics Division includes five full time employees and 318 seasonal employees that staff the two waterparks. Beginning in January, the aquatics staff hired and trained over 318 local employees in various positions from lifeguards and concession operators, to ticket takers and custodial workers. The lifeguards are all certified through the American Red Cross in Waterpark Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR, Emergency Oxygen Administration and AED usage. Staff is trained on all slides and rides including the FlowRider and NINJACROSS™. The aquatics staff is cross-trained to work at both Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove.

During the 2019 summer season, the Aquatics Division expended \$1,375,629.62 in personnel costs to 382 high school and college students that worked at Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove. The City's aquatics facilities continue to be an excellent opportunity for summer employment for our youth.

The Parks and Recreation Department assessed current and previous advertising for Pirates Bay, and made changes in an effort to maximize impact and reach. The Department worked with the Houston



Chronicle Media Group to create and promote sponsored Facebook posts, banner ads, and connected television commercials. The Department continued its longstanding partnership with Cox Media Group for radio ads. Print advertising was placed in national publications such as USA Today's Go Escape: Summer Travel Edition. With Pirates Bay's ten-year anniversary in 2020, the Aquatics team felt it was time to refresh the park's identity. The team engaged Arsenal Advertising, an Austin-based advertising and design firm, to breathe new life into the Pirates Bay brand. Jonathan Smith, Partner at Arsenal Advertising, worked to create a brand that recognizes where the park has been, yet prepares it for a bright future. Arsenal designed multiple new logos for Pirates Bay that were debuted with the park's opening on June 13, 2020.



**Pirates Bay Water Park** - The Pirates Bay Water Park continued its popularity from the first ten seasons drawing visitors from all over southeast Texas and beyond. The expansion completed in 2014 added much needed capacity that reduced the long entrance lines; however, the popular waterpark is at or near capacity from Thursdays through the weekend.

During the close of the 2019 season staff continued several successful programs including morning swim lessons, FlowRider private lessons, Dive-in Movies with the addition of Friday night movies, Special Pirate Celebration, and Itty Bitty Beach Party. During the 2019 season 450+ children attended swim lessons at Pirates Bay/Calypso Cove. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the staff was unable to hold any of these events/programs during the 2020 season.

In January 2020 Pirates Bay was awarded the Association of Aquatic Professionals Life Jacket and Swim Lesson Grant. With this grant 50 new life jackets were purchased for the waterpark for the community to use. Three different sizes of life jackets were purchased so that all guests can have properly fitted jackets to be safe in the water.

**Calypso Cove** – Calypso Cove is a smaller, Caribbean-themed water park located at N.C. Foote Park on West Main. Attendance for the 2019 summer season was 16,855 guests,

averaging 208 guests a day. Staff continued another successful summer of morning and evening swimming lessons at Calypso Cove along with many private rentals.

**COVID-19** - When news broke that both facilities would be opening under the Open Texas guidelines set out by Governor Abbott, the aquatics team knew they had a challenge on their hands. Tasked with making sure that full time staff, part time staff, and the guests were socially distanced to ensure safety was no small feat. For the 2020 season, guests were required to pre-purchase their tickets online to limit the transfer of cash between guests and staff. The entrance of the park was also redone to ensure that the line was properly social distanced. Social distancing dots were placed 8 feet apart from one another, and barricades were put up to help control the flow of traffic. For the slides, there was a staggered start approach to ensure that people were not in catch pools at the same time. Additionally, social distancing dots were placed on the slide towers to help guide the guests on where to stand. Throughout the park there were messages from the CDC played on the sound system that reminded people to social distance.

**Town Square Ice Rink** – The rink is made of ice that the Aquatics team spends over a week in freezing layer upon layer until there are approximately 8-10 inches of ice covering the glycol filled pipes. This rink surrounds the city’s large festive Christmas tree that is placed over the fountain at Town Square. Each year the Aquatics management team hires approximately 40 team members to run the daily skate times, private rentals, and special events. The rink opened on Friday, November 29, 2019 and closed on Snow Day, January 11, 2020. The 2019 - 2020 season set a record for attendance with 4,386 skaters which was a daily increase of 32% from 2018 - 2019 season.



**Spray Parks and Splash Decks** - The popular facilities are open daily from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM. All six spray parks opened for the 2020 season on Saturday, March 7, 2020. The spray parks were only open five days before they were all closed on March 12<sup>th</sup> due to COVID-19 virus. They remained closed until the Governor reopened the facilities back up on June 4<sup>th</sup>. The facilities are scheduled to remain open daily until November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**McElroy Park Spray Park** – The McElroy Park Spray Park opened for its ninth season on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The large 4,511 square foot partially shaded spray park features three large picnic shelters, sixteen picnic tables, large family size grills, connecting trails, and parking lot.

**Pelly Park Splash Deck** – The Pelly Park Splash Deck opened for its ninth season on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The very popular splash deck served the Pelly area neighborhoods during the long hot summer.

**Bergeron Park Splash Deck** – The Bergeron Park Splash Deck opened for its tenth season on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The very popular splash deck served the West Baytown neighborhood during last summer’s extremely hot weather, cooling off kids of all ages.

**Roseland Spray Park** – The city’s first spray park opened for its 18<sup>th</sup> season this spring. A shade structure to partially shade the spray area was added in May 2019 thanks to a MD Anderson Cancer Center and ExxonMobil, “Be Well Baytown” grant.

**Central Heights Park Splash Deck** – The Central Heights Park Splash Deck opened for its seventh full season on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The project was funded by the Community Development Block Grant. The project funding was secured thanks to the hard work of the neighborhood and this splash deck has been a nice addition to the popular neighborhood park.

**Jenkins Park Spray Park** – The Jenkins Park Spray Park opened for its fourth season on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The very popular wetlands-themed spray park has several fun spray features including an alligator slide, cattail-shaped spray features, a dumping bucket, water wickets, and a slithering snake. The area also features five shade canopies, picnic tables and nearby playground and restrooms.



# Environmental Programs

## Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center

- A. The Wetlands Center conducted the “ExxonMobil Wetlands Ecology Program” (21<sup>st</sup> year) and “Covestro *i*<sup>3</sup> Program (20<sup>th</sup> year) for 1,700 Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District (GCCISD) 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students participated in educational activities at both the Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-aligned activities center around wetland ecosystem awareness, marine debris and biodegradation timelines, estuary modeling, animal adaptations, scientific methods, and use of microscopes, life cycles, metamorphosis, and live animal biology. Barbers Hill sends their 5<sup>th</sup> graders to the Wetlands Center for the Wetlands Ecology Program as well.

Once GCCISD cancelled classes due to COVID, Wetlands Center staff videoed components of this program for GCCISD science teachers use with their online classes. Videos were given to the GCCISD Science Coordinator for distribution to teachers.



- B. The “The Rotary Club of Baytown Liquid Science Program” for GCCISD 7<sup>th</sup> graders was conducted for the 12<sup>th</sup> year. Approximately 1,780 GCCISD 7<sup>th</sup> graders participated in the program, which focuses on water sampling and analysis, watersheds and pollutant awareness, abiotic and biotic parameters affecting an ecosystem, and the aquatic ecosystem requirements and biology of blue crabs. The Rotary Club of Baytown continues to sponsor the program.

Once GCCISD cancelled classes due to COVID, Wetlands Center staff videoed components of this program for GCCISD science teachers use with their online classes.

C. Chevron Phillips again sponsored the *Wade Into Wetlands* Summer Science Camp for the 20<sup>th</sup> year. Because of COVID concerns, camps were operated under brand new protocols, including social distancing for campers, smaller camp sizes, and daily health checks for staff and campers. No equipment was shared and there were no field trips taken under these new guidelines. The Wetlands Center offered ten camps and the Baytown Nature Center offered six camps. This year the Wetlands Center's camp offerings included "Sensational", "Things with Wings" and "Crafty Critters" for 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. For 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> graders "Hook, Line and Sinker", "Blast From the Past", "Animal Super Powers" and "Water Works" were offered. The 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> graders were able to participate in "Under the Lens", "Outsiders", and "Animal Encounters." We continued our tradition of overnight camping with the older kids at Evergreen Park in Baytown. The Baytown Nature Center increased its offerings with "Camp Egret", "Camp Roly Poly" and "Young Naturalists" for 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> graders, "The Night Shift" and "Wilderness Survival" for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders, and "What's That?" for 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders. The Friends of the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center awarded \$4,000 in low income and academic scholarships, and the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center awarded academic scholarships to campers attending the BNC camps. Private donors sponsored eight campers from La Porte's Boys and Girls Harbor to attend Wetlands Center camps.



D. The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Break Camp for 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade students was cancelled due to COVID concerns. We hope to bring it back in 2021.

E. Wetlands Center staff conducted the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual "Winter Holiday Camp". The three-day camp hosted 6 campers who learned about "The Science of Cooking", taking advantage of the Wetlands Center's kitchen improvements which include an oven, range top and icemaker.



- F. Wetlands Center staff hosted educational field trips for pre-schools, churches, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, home-schoolers, public and private schools within and outside of GCCISD (elementary through high school), Lee College and other area colleges, daycares and senior citizen groups. School districts attending Wetlands Center programs include Barbers Hill ISD, Crosby ISD, Liberty ISD, and Houston ISD.
- G. Wetlands Education and Recreation Center (WERC) staff spoke to Lion’s Club, Rotary and other community service groups about WERC and Baytown Nature Center programs.
- H. The Wetlands Center’s teen environmental club, EPIC (Environmental Protectors Initiating Change) continued to grow as high school students from each of Baytown’s high schools met weekly to discuss contemporary environmental issues and ways to be involved in the community. Each month the club participates in a local event (i.e. shoreline cleanup, trash pickup, volunteering at Nurture Nature Festival, participating in Adopt-A-Beach Program at Morgan’s Beach) as they strive to make a difference in their environment. They also designed and built a “Recycling in Whoville” float for Baytown’s “Christmas Movie Memories” Christmas Parade to promote recycling awareness in Baytown. The float was awarded the “Best Overall Club/Organization” Award for their efforts. EPIC kids began fundraising for the 2021 return trip to the Texas A&M Soltis Research Center in Costa Rica.
- I. 2018-2019 EPIC International Conservation Experience at the Soltis Center in Costa Rica was a huge success for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time. 6 students, 4 staff, and a returning student had a great trip learning about Costa Rica’s progressive measures toward conservation and ecotourism. A Caribbean Sea experience was added to the itinerary to learn about sea turtle conservation at Tortuguero National Park. All funds for this trip were raised by the students over the past two years.



- J. EPIC kids hosted their 4<sup>th</sup> annual Spooktacular evening, which continues to grow. Over 440 attendees enjoyed the kid-friendly event in the Wetlands Center Exhibit Hall. Proceeds will be applied to 2021 Soltis Center experience.



- K. The Wetlands Center continues to host monthly meetings for community groups. Hill of Rest Cemetery Board, Baytown Area Citizens Advisory Panel, and Beta Sigma Phi have all gathered at the Wetlands Center.
- L. The Wetlands Center continues to host Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Hunter Education workshops. Jose Flores, with TPWD, teaches the workshops in both English and Spanish.
- M. The 3rd Annual Butterfly Bonanza in partnership with Gulf Coast Monarch Project (GCMP) was planned for April 2020, but was cancelled due to COVID.
- N. Tracey Prothro, Superintendent of Natural Resource Programs, partnered with Lee College and the University of Houston Clear Lake for a 5th year, travelling to the Texas A&M University Soltis Research Center in Costa Rica. This year no students attended but teaching staff still worked with the local elementary school to teach about forest conservation using the Dr. Seuss book, The Lorax.
- O. Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center staff and volunteers represented Baytown at many outreach events across the state, including:
- NatureFest at Jesse Jones Park (Humble)
  - State Fair of Texas with the TPWD (Dallas)
  - Lee College Career Madness Day, 'A Purposeful Place' class, and STEM Day (Baytown)
  - Baytown Special Rodeo (Baytown)
  - Area 5 Mini-CAST Educator's Conference (Orange)
  - Venom Experience Herp Show (Conroe)
  - Harris County Precinct 2 Boo Bash (Crosby)
  - Covestro Energy Trailer at Houston Astros Street Festival (Houston)
  - Safari Club International Youth Wildlife Conservation Experience (Houston)
  - Harris County Public Health Family Day (Baytown)
  - Covestro Health and Safety Fair (Baytown)
  - Take Me Outdoors Houston Festival with the TPWD (Houston)
  - University of Scouting (Houston)
  - Seaborne Nature Fest (Rosenberg)
  - Southwestern University Texas Ecoregions Class (Georgetown)
  - Space Family Education Inc. at NASA (Clear Lake)

Outreach activities also included onsite student classes at local libraries, churches, and many visits to GCCISD schools, and preschools in Baytown. GCCISD and other local schools also hosted the Wetlands Wagon exhibits at numerous fall and spring festivals, career days, and family science nights.

All spring and summer outreach activities were cancelled due to COVID.

- P. Gator Tales, the preschool program at the Wetlands Center, completed its winter session. Kids enjoyed story time, then met live animals and participated in an activity or made a craft. Weekly sessions included hands-on nature activities to introduce the science of water, using tools to explore nature, winter activities, our five senses, liquids and solids, and many other nature-based topics. Parents/grandparents attend with their children. Gator Tales serves as a complementary program to Tyke Hike, which is held at the Baytown Nature Center during the spring and fall.



The summer session of Gator Tales was presented through Facebook Live due to COVID concerns. Free kits with supplies to complete crafts were made available for pickup for interested parents.

- Q. Birthday parties continue to be a popular Saturday event at the Wetlands Center. Promotional flyers advertise “Wildest Birthday Party in Town,” which includes two hours of room use, tours of the Wetlands Center exhibits, an activity based on the party theme, and a chance to touch and handle the Wetlands Center’s live animals.

As of March 2020, birthday parties have been suspended due to COVID concerns.

- R. The Friends of the Wetlands Center hosted their annual fund-raising gala, “Evening at Evergreen Park”. Approximately 170 people attended and the event raised close to \$20,000. These proceeds help fund extra staff hours and summer science camp scholarships at the Wetlands Center.
- S. The “Land of Milk and Honey” beehive continues to thrive, with volunteer Clarence Shepherd, a local beekeeper, helping to maintain the hive’s health.

- T. The Friends of the Wetlands Center and Lee College continued their partnership to provide educational interns for the Liquid Science Program. Selected students teach and assist with education stations during the Liquid Science Program and receive a \$500 scholarship funded by the ExxonMobil Lee College fund for their next semester.
- U. Three issues of the Wetlands Center/Baytown Nature Center’s newsletter, “Marsh Matters,” were written and published. Most subscribers are now receiving the newsletter by email. Current issues are also linked to the [www.baytown.org](http://www.baytown.org) website for public enjoyment. Both the Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center are on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.
- V. Tracey Prothro taught “Nature’s Art” and “Water, Water, Everywhere” at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s “Becoming an Outdoor Woman” Conference at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center in Palestine, Texas. These workshops are a great outreach opportunity for the Wetlands Center and Baytown Nature Center.
- W. The Baytown Nature Center (BNC) Naturalist and Wetlands staff hosted scout workshops for Webelos, Brownies, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Cadets and Girl Scouts at the Wetlands Center.
- X. Kyle Laird designed, dug, and landscaped a wetlands pond in front of the Wetlands Center to complete his Eagle Scout badge requirements. Parks Field Supervisor Chuck Jennings assisted Kyle with his design and installation. This is a great addition to the Wetlands Center and will be used as an education site for future classes and camps.
- Y. Jingle the Elf returned to the Wetlands Center in December. Each day a new adventure with Jingle and/or Sprinkles the Reindeer was posted on the Wetlands Center and BNC Facebook page as a way to promote the facilities.
- Z. Tracey Prothro was interviewed by Tumbleweed Smith for “The Sound of Texas” radio broadcast. The session focused on the environmental and nature programs offered in Baytown. The session aired on June 9, 2020.



## Baytown Nature Center

- A. The Friends of the Baytown Nature Center were hit with another major loss with the sudden death of founding member, Merle Hunt. Merle was a major inspiration behind the “Friends” mission of supporting and improving BNC from its early beginnings through today. She served on the board since its beginning, acting as its first President. The Baytown Nature Center would not be the success that it is today without Merle’s dedication and calm attention. She will be greatly missed.



- B. The Children’s Nature Discovery Center was renamed “The Billy Barnett Children’s Nature Discovery Center” to honor Billy’s memory and his contributions to the center. Friends of the Baytown Nature Center used donations to buy a concrete log sign which was attached to the existing sign. A ribbon cutting ceremony was planned for 2020 but has been postponed due to COVID concerns.

- C. The BNC hosted its 1<sup>st</sup> Annual XRacers 3K Family Bike Ride and Bike Rodeo in partnership with XRacers and Armand Toledo. Approximately 100 kids participated in the ride from Tracey’s Theatre to the Brownwood Pavilion and back (3K). The Bike Rodeo portion offered riders a chance to learn safety skills, get safety checks on their bikes, and practice their skills on a fun obstacle course.



- D. The BNC presented the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the “Back to the Bay” high school biology program. This program complements the Wetlands Ecology Program and the Liquid Science Program from the Wetlands Center. Select 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade biology students from GCCISD traveled to the BNC to participate in water analysis, seining and cast netting for species identification, introduction to invasive and exotic species, and a historical perspective on human impact on the local environment. Several other area schools have also participated with the “Back to the Bay” Program.

The spring session of Back to the Bay was cancelled due to GCCISD cancellation of in-person classes due to COVID concerns.



- E. The Naturalist and BNC staff continue to host educational field trips for scout groups, bird watching clubs, senior groups, church groups, universities (College of the Mainland, Lee College, Lamar University, and Texas A&M University at Galveston, public and private schools (both Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District (GCCISD) and other districts, area summer camps and tourists to promote the natural resources and cultural history of the center. BNC staff also spoke in the community, with talks at ExxonMobil, Lee College, and other local groups.
- F. “Tyke Hike,” the Baytown Nature Center’s (BNC) preschool program, continued during the fall. Weekly sessions included hands-on nature activities and topics including Things that Live in Shells, Insects and Worms, Halloween Fun, Squirrels, Owls, and a Thanksgiving Feast for Wildlife. Parents/grandparents attended with their children.

The spring session of Gator Tales was presented through Facebook Live due to COVID concerns.

G. The “Nurture Nature Series” continued at BNC on the first Saturday of each month. Topics this year included a Guided Hike, Nature Photography, Kayaking, Nature Scavenger Hunt, Reptiles, Wilderness Survival, iNaturalist Bioblitz, Birding, Geocaching, and Angler Education. Guest speakers and Baytown Nature Center/Wetlands Center staff present the topics.

H. The Full Moon Hike program continued as a successful monthly event. An average of 20 people attended monthly and walked the trails to see what BNC has to offer after dark. So far, coyotes, raccoons, bats, snakes, fireflies, and opossums are the most common nocturnal creatures spotted. Screech owls trilling in the night are also crowd favorites!

I. The BNC hosted the annual North American Butterfly Association Butterfly Count, with results posted on their national website. In addition, BNC hosted the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The national exposure on these events promotes BNC as an ecotourism site.

J. Scout interest in workshops and camping at BNC remains strong. The BNC Naturalist hosts workshops for Webelos, Brownies, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Royal Rangers, and Daisy Groups. Several troops have also camped overnight at BNC.

K. The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Nurture Nature Festival attracted 3,000 visitors on a windy, chilly day. To help with parking shortages, this year we charged for onsite parking and offered free parking at West Town Shopping Center, with shuttles provided by Harris County Transit Authority. This worked out well and we will continue to utilize these options in the future. The festival hosted 42 vendors and exhibitors, as well as Texas Snakes and More, Crocodile Encounter, and Wildlife Revealed Birds of Prey as stage presenters.

L. The BNC hosted several community service groups, including ExxonMobil college co-op interns and the Lee College Puente Program, who cleaned the shoreline, cleared brush and trees from trails, spread granite on trails, weeded the butterfly garden and other beds, and completed minor construction and repair projects.



M. Monthly bird counts continue on the third Thursday of every month at BNC. These are led by volunteers David Hanson and Chuck Davis. Results from the bird counts are published on the TexBirds and Houston Audubon’s websites, with pictures taken by David Hanson. This is great exposure for BNC in the local birding community. Sightings of rare birds (i.e. a family a brown boobies) guarantee an increase in attendance at the Baytown Nature Center.



N. Staff from ExxonMobil’s Baytown Technology & Engineering Complex (BTEC) facility chose the Baytown Nature Center as their project site during United Way’s Day of Caring. With the help of Parks crews, volunteers repaired the suspension bridge and painted the concrete pond at the Billy Barnett Children’s Nature Discovery Area, painted the restroom and removed graffiti at the former Westwood Park, cleaned the shoreline of trash and debris, and weeded the butterfly gardens. BNC is grateful for United Way’s continued support. Several of the Friends of BNC also helped out.

O. The annual Rivers, Lakes, Bays and Bayous Trash Bash event was cancelled due to COVID concerns.

P. The BNC Naturalist attended the Association for Nature Center Administrators annual conference in Cincinnati.

**Baytown Nature Center  
Five Year Comparison of Annual Attendance and Revenue  
April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2020**

	April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016	April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017	April 1, 2017- March 31,2018	April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019	April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020
Day Permits Sold	43,219	27,636	33,124	35,660	33,138
Revenue	\$100,969	\$94,752	\$107,131	\$114,542	\$107,292
Annual Individual Passes Sold	355	142	109	140	120
Revenue	\$6,010	\$4,260	\$3,270	\$4,200	\$3,600
Annual Family Passes Sold	223	167	168	205	209
Revenue	\$9,615	\$10,855	\$10,920	\$13,325	\$13,585
<b>Total Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$116,594</b>	<b>\$109,867</b>	<b>\$121,321</b>	<b>\$132,067</b>	<b>\$124,477</b>

## Recommendations

1. Continue to incorporate the recommendations of the *Playbook 2020, The Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Baytown, Texas*.
2. Complete the 2030 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan that will include a comprehensive Citywide Trails Master Plan and Baytown Nature Center Master Plan.
3. Continue to demonstrate sensitivity to the community's needs through the involvement of citizens in the planning and development of facilities, programs and policies.
4. Work to incorporate the recommendations of the *Imagine Baytown – Community Based Strategic Plan*.
5. Begin implementation of the *Gene and Loretta Russell Park Master Plan*.
6. Begin implementation of the *Recreation Center Feasibility Study*.
7. Continue support for “Quality of Life” initiatives, community appearance and economic development projects.
8. Continue to acquire CDBG funds for the development/renovation of target area parks.
9. Continue to provide adequate annual funding for quality maintenance and operation of the Department.
10. Enhance the promotional and marketing efforts for all special events and programs, as well as Town Square, Pirates Bay, Calypso Cove and the Baytown Nature Center.
11. Expand athletic program offerings and partner with area facilities to broaden our participation base.
12. Continue to submit tournament bids for future, TAAF and USSSA softball and flag football tournaments on the regional, state and national level.
13. Continue to implement the recommendations of the *Aquatic Facilities Master Plan*, as well as the *Pirates Bay Expansion Master Plan*.
14. Work to secure future parkland that will correspond to the future growth of the City, especially east of Cedar Bayou.
15. Expand the recreation and educational programs offered to attract all age groups.
16. Continue to improve and expand the environmental, recreational and educational programs of the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center, the Baytown Nature Center and the future George and Freda Chandler Arboretum.

17. Work to complete the goal of the Goose Creek Trail to connect Bayland Park to I-10 and the San Jacinto Mall.
18. Continue to improve the City's image and tourism through the City's environmental and recreational opportunities, by hosting and promoting special events that increase the exposure of our facilities in an effort to attract visitors to Baytown.
19. Enhance the Parks and Recreation Department's section of the City's website, as well as improve the appearance and the interactive usability of the Pirates Bay, Calypso Cove and Baytown Nature Center sites.
20. Continue to expand the City's *Sidewalk Master Plan* to make Baytown a walkable community.
21. Continue progressive park planning and recreational programming by offering the newest activities and amenities throughout the City's parks.
22. Continue to work with the "Be Well Baytown" initiative to further improve community health awareness.
23. Work with volunteers to plan and implement Baytown's first MLK Day and/or Juneteenth Celebrations.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Johnson, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department



Carmen Torres, Chair  
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Appendix: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members  
Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Staff  
Parks Staff  
Aquatics Staff  
Environmental Programs Staff  
Recreation Staff  
2010 – 2019 Pirates Bay Water Park Attendance Summary  
2011 – 2019 Calypso Cove Attendance Summary  
Bayland Marina Dredging and Connecting Channels Map  
Proposed Roseland Park Pavilion Layout



**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members**  
(Left to Right) Vice Chair Kevin Jones, Michelle Bitterly, Chair Carmen Torres,  
Thomas Capetillo, Agustin Loredo, Dr. Yvonne Thomas, Terry Sain



**Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Staff**



**Parks Division Staff**



**Aquatics Staff**



**Environmental Programs Staff**



**Recreation Division Staff**

## Pirates Bay Water Park Attendance Summary 2010 - 2019 Seasons

Pirates Bay Water Park



Daily Attendance Summary	Daily Attendance									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Number of Days Open</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>
Monday	6,930	15,926	13,301	14,321	20,681	22,519	19,969	16,292	18,552	14,867
Tuesday	6,220	13,232	10,037	11,147	14,800	15,792	14,202	15,400	13,872	9,883
Wednesday	5,561	12,283	11,626	12,355	17,040	16,891	17,284	17,500	16,508	12,889
Thursday	7,154	13,046	12,489	15,267	17,657	23,202	22,298	16,438	17,841	16,218
Friday	10,171	16,236	16,098	19,072	19,503	23,794	24,244	26,015	26,517	25,208
Saturday	19,518	32,418	31,965	34,604	40,648	39,513	39,240	44,486	46,511	44,116
Sunday	15,022	27,556	23,010	26,542	35,702	31,814	31,075	37,303	36,376	33,125
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,576</b>	<b>130,697</b>	<b>118,526</b>	<b>133,308</b>	<b>166,031</b>	<b>173,525</b>	<b>168,312</b>	<b>173,434</b>	<b>176,177</b>	<b>156,306</b>
Average Per Day	954	1,281	1,031	1,212	1,566	1,827	1,753	1,684	1,798	1,645
Attendance Goal Per Day	480	600	794	887	1,701	1,684	1,771	1,844	1,912	1,912
<b>Above/Below Goal</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>(135)</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>(160)</b>	<b>(114)</b>	<b>(267)</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,048,030</b>	<b>\$ 1,652,730</b>	<b>\$ 1,819,113</b>	<b>\$ 2,041,054</b>	<b>\$ 2,977,577</b>	<b>\$ 3,376,927</b>	<b>\$ 3,224,920</b>	<b>\$ 3,289,873</b>	<b>\$ 3,715,372</b>	<b>\$ 2,900,989</b>
Average Revenue per Day	\$ 14,163	\$ 16,203	\$ 15,818	\$ 18,555	\$ 28,090	\$ 35,547	\$ 33,593	\$ 31,941	\$ 37,912	\$ 30,537
Average Dollars Spent per Guest	\$ 14.85	\$ 12.65	\$ 15.35	\$ 15.31	\$ 17.93	\$ 19.46	\$ 19.16	\$ 18.97	\$ 21.09	\$ 18.56
Days Closed Due to Bad Weather	2	0	3	0	0	4	1	3	4	4
Rainy Stormy Days	3	14	19	19	34	30	32	40	20	25

## Calypso Cove Attendance Summary 2010 - 2019 Seasons

Calypso Cove

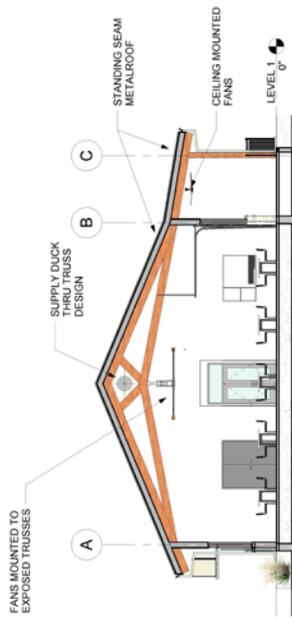


Daily Attendance Summary		Daily Attendance								
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
<b>Number of Days Open</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>81</b>	
Monday	2,452	2,051	2,256	2,083	2,195	2,345	1,884	2,080	2,037	
Tuesday	Closed	1,635	1,994	1,873	1,786	1,802	2,133	1,909	1,413	
Wednesday	2,350	1,954	1,971	2,038	1,753	2,409	2,320	1,921	1,361	
Thursday	2,138	2,082	2,165	2,102	2,389	2,441	2,273	2,180	1,642	
Friday	2,212	2,313	2,409	2,243	3,458	3,384	3,721	3,633	2,947	
Saturday	3,334	3,048	4,121	5,101	4,857	4,028	4,358	4,871	4,409	
Sunday	3,331	2,529	3,143	3,363	4,012	3,025	2,889	3,461	3,046	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,817</b>	<b>15,612</b>	<b>18,059</b>	<b>18,803</b>	<b>20,450</b>	<b>19,434</b>	<b>19,578</b>	<b>20,055</b>	<b>16,855</b>	
Average Per Day	214	175	212	216	232	223	204	218	208	
Attendance Goal Per Day	200	200	200	194	191	207	183	183	183	
<b>Above/Below Goal</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	

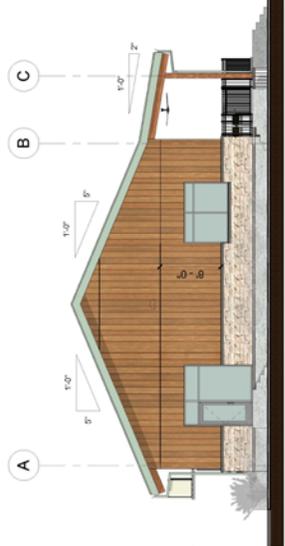
Total Revenue	\$ 84,638	\$ 78,215	\$ 89,927	\$ 87,761	\$ 93,318	\$ 90,690	\$ 86,111	\$ 92,278	\$ 76,787
Average Revenue per Day	\$ 1,144	\$ 879	\$ 1,058	\$ 1,009	\$ 1,060	\$ 1,042	\$ 897	\$ 1,003	\$ 948
Average Dollars Spent per Guest	\$ 5.35	\$ 5.01	\$ 4.98	\$ 4.67	\$ 4.56	\$ 4.67	\$ 4.40	\$ 4.60	\$ 4.56
Days Closed Due to Bad Weather	1	2	2	2	6	4	6	4	4
Rainy Stormy Days	8	16	15	32	22	21	42	20	25



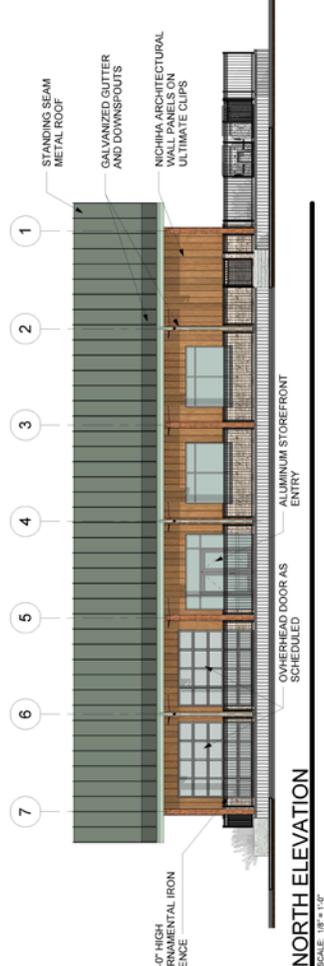


5 BLDG SECTION 1  
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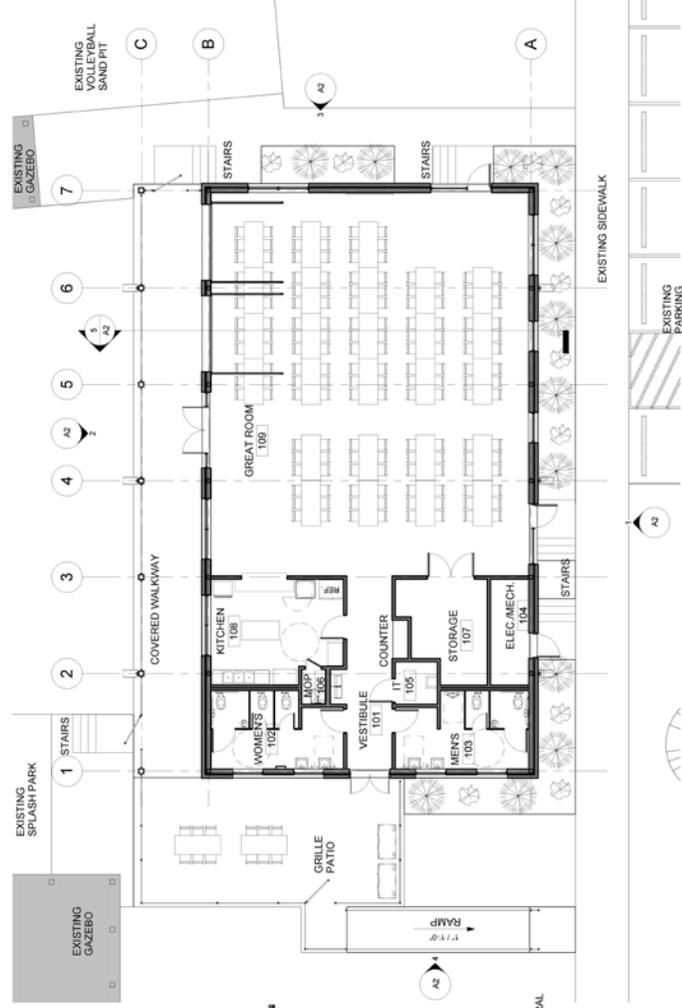
4 WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



3 EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



A1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 SOUTH ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

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12/28/19

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City of  
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*“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”* — Joshua J. Marine