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Recreational Facilities

7.7

Recreational Facilities Development

Outgrowing from the 2006 Parks and Recreation Attitude Survey’s identified needs for very specific recreation facilities, other relevant data was included to provide the most accurate, inclusive and holistic assessment of overall parks and recreation needs. Data from sports leagues, incomplete facilities from previous master plans, trails master plans, citizen input at public meetings and recreation trends were included in this assessment. Table 7.1 prioritizes the overall parks and recreation facility needs for the City of Keller, based on facility standards combined with citizen, staff and consultant input.

Table 7.1 <u>Prioritized, Overall Parks and Recreation Facility Needs</u>
<p>Overall Recreation Facility Needs in Order of Priority</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hike and bike trails2. Natural habitat/ Open Space /Parks3. Senior Citizen’s Center4. Playgrounds5. Tennis courts6. Basketball courts7. Lighted soccer fields8. Rental picnic/ Reunion pavilions9. Amphitheater10. Environmental Learning Center

i)

Hike and bike trails

Hike and Bike Trails were the highest desired elements in the citizen Attitude Survey. The value of trails is demonstrated by the high level of usage of the City’s existing trails, particularly at Big Bear Creek and The Parks at Town Center.

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The City of Keller has developed an important comprehensive document regarding both hike and bike trails and equestrian trails in the Citywide Hike and Bike Trail Master Plan. It is important that the vision of the Trails Master Plan be recognized and adhered to in future development with regard to locations of connections and standards. Further, the City’s Unified Development Code (UDC) provides specific requirements for land dedication, trail development and standards.

Reasons for updating and extending Keller’s Citywide Trails Master Plan:

- Provides alternate travel arteries from one location to another during much of the year when the weather is favorable.
- Creates a very visible recreational element that contributes to the perceived quality of life in the City.
- Trails are heavily used by all age groups.
- Trails are relatively easy to maintain, as opposed to many other types of recreation facilities.
- More trails are needed in Area 4, since existing trails are limited there; more north to south trails are needed in Areas 1, 2 and 3, where trails provide east to west connectivity. In each City Area, there is limited connectivity either to park destinations or other City Areas, so that there are disconnected trail segments that will be enhanced by their strategic and scenic extension.

The target goal for the length of hike and bike trails in Keller as per Chapter 6 of this Parks Master Plan is established at 1 mile per 1,000 residents. This may appear to be a very high goal to achieve. However with trails consistently being the number one need for residents in most cities in the country, it is well in line with many cities in the DFW metroplex that have adopted the same standard in the last few years.

The existing trail network’s momentum of success is ideal for the extension of the existing trails network to become a cohesive, City-wide web that serves all citizens. Now is the time for City of Keller to extend the cross-city trail network that further links parks, schools, historic sites and other facilities.

“There is nothing like walking to get the feel of a country. A fine landscape is like a piece of music; it must be taken at the right tempo.”

- Paul Scott Mowrer

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It is telling of a City that takes good care of its citizens when children are safe to go about their ways in a city by using trails.

“Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very fast.”

- Thomas Jefferson

Proposed Trail Features and Amenities

In order for the City of Keller trails system to be a successful community amenity, the trails should appeal to a wide variety of users. To achieve this, the trails should be designed to provide a high level of user conveniences. Recommended trail amenities include:

- Trailheads / Gateways with parking: A trailhead fulfils the role of a gateway whereby the experience of entering the trail is celebrated. A successful gateway design leaves the visitor with an impression and memory that makes him/her want to come back and enjoy the trail many times. As a design concept a trail head should establish a sense of branding that repeats the use of material and design details consistently at all the City’s trailheads.

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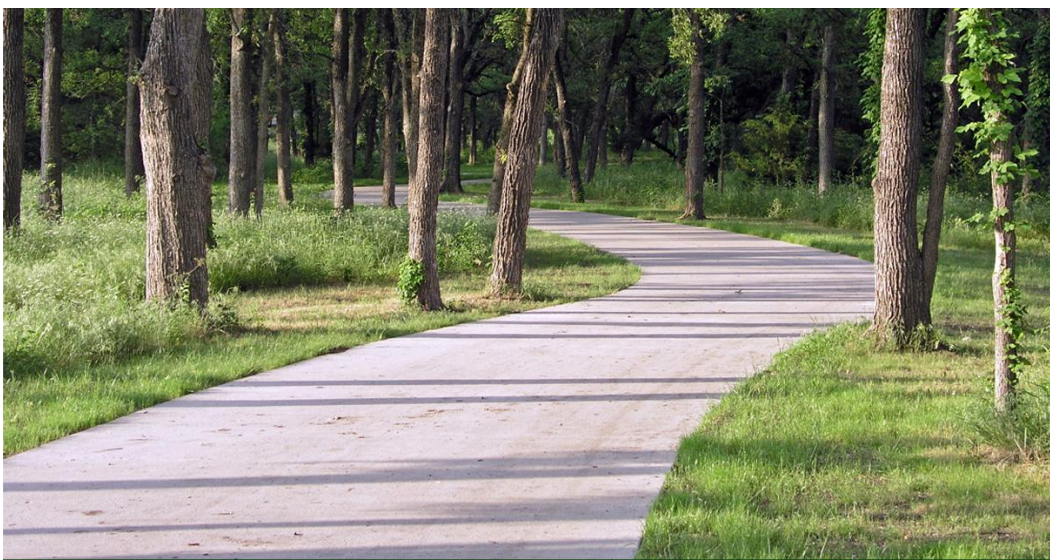
- Playgrounds at Trailheads: Playgrounds are not a necessity at trailheads but do provide additional play opportunities for children, especially when they are able to access the trail by bicycle.
- Benches: Utilize perforated metal benches.
- Bike racks: Staple racks are inexpensive and most effective.
- Picnic Areas: The experience of a trail is enhanced by the opportunity to have informal picnic opportunities with strategically placed benches and shade trees.
- Designated Open Space/ Nature Areas: Trails through natural open space provide the visitor with an experience that is unique within a city setting and should be encouraged.
- Milepost markers: Mileposts greatly increase use of the trail by walkers, joggers and cyclists looking for set work out distances. It is recommended to incorporate milepost markers onto fixed concrete or stone bollards. Signage should be consistent with other trail signage.
- Trash receptacles: The trail should establish the National Park Service ethic of “pack it in, pack it out.”
- Dog waste pickup stations: Dog waste pickup bag dispensers should be placed at trailheads and key neighborhood access points along the route. Signs should be placed along the trail notifying dog owners to pick up after their dogs.
- Information kiosks: Trailhead stations should provide trail users with information and the rules and regulations of the trail. Involving school children and civic organizations in the research, design, and construction of these kiosks is an ideal community activity.
- Directional signage: The directional signing should impart a unique theme so trail users know which trail they are following and where it goes. The theme can be conveyed in a variety of ways: engraved stone, medallions, bollards, and mile markers. A central information installation at trailheads and major crossroads also helps users find their way and acknowledge the rules of the trail. They are also useful for interpretive education about plant and animal life, ecosystems, and local history.
- Restrooms: Where appropriate at major trailheads.

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The following images are examples of trail features and amenities designed by Halff Associates.



The Trail at the Woods in Allen, Texas



West Rowlett Creek in Frisco, Texas

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ii)

Natural Habitat/ Open Space/ Parks

There is a huge shortfall of park land and relatively little available natural habitat and open space to acquire in the City of Keller. This, combined with public support for parks and open space consistent from 1998 to today makes a **concerted effort urgent for the acquisition of park land.** Through objective public participation efforts, many cities learn about the strong need that most citizens have to experience natural habitat and natural areas within the City. However, most cities/towns have never considered acquiring land for conservation purposes, partly because it is not “programmed” space. However, land with no particular program may fulfill the function of wildlife habitat and flood control. If managed correctly, such land typically requires the least amount of maintenance.

Natural habitat/Open space is a facility in its own right that underlies all others in importance: regular contact with nature is fundamental to our health, from early

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childhood development learning experiences on through adult years for relaxation and revitalization. Parks are greatly enhanced by this facility that provides a multitude of unprogrammed recreational opportunities, ranging from imaginative free play to informal nature study and observation.

Nature areas and natural habitat also provides a sense of visual, emotional and psychological relief to citizens. The provision of such land does not include the acquisition of undeveloped land only, but may include areas within existing parks where the establishment of native trees, wildflowers and native grasses is encouraged. This, in turn, allows for activities including bird watching and wildflower enjoyment.

The conservation of open space and natural areas also makes economical sense. It has been proven that the value of property adjacent or close to open space often has a substantial premium over the value of property in the same vicinity but not identified with the open space. This is additional motivation for the acquisition of park land and park dedication as a matter of principle and policy. Previous pages emphatically described the tremendous lack of parks and open space when compared with local and national standards.

“Many community leaders feel they must choose between economic growth and open space protection. But no such choice is necessary. Open space protection is good for a community’s health, stability, beauty, and quality of life. It is also good for the bottom line.”

- Will Rogers,
President: Trust for Public Land; 1999.

Every effort should be made to acquire park land and secure the protection of existing natural areas and to restore disturbed sites. It is recommended that the City adopts policies to ensure developers to work “with” rather than “against” the land.

Big Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek and their tributaries provide unique natural beauty and memorable recreation for the citizens of Keller. The value of natural water features available to the public is immeasurable. The protection of both riparian vegetation and habitat is essential to water quality and wildlife diversity and ultimately, to all citizens of Keller.

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iii)

Senior Citizens’ Center

The seniors in our communities are an extremely important component of the fabric of our society. Not only do they deserve the respect for their societal contribution, but seniors often have unparalleled wisdom and experience to impart to all of us, particularly the young. By developing senior citizen centers in close proximity to places frequented by children and young adults, the opportunity exists to form a relationship for exchange and interaction. Examples include recreation centers, schools, and parks. Another very important requirement is that the Senior Center be connected to the City’s trail network, to facilitate and encourage trail use and enjoyment.

Senior Citizens’ Center is the overarching indoor facility priority for the City of Keller. This was identified in the Keller Senior Citizens Council as a critical need, both for today and more so for the future. The current center may be suited to another use, or with improvements serve along with a new facility located elsewhere. The best location for a single, large facility is in a central location that is easily accessible, or in two semi-central locations, also with good access.

iv)

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are important gathering sites for families and parents to stimulate and promote social interaction in the community. It is recommended to plan and design for the development of playgrounds in all existing and future parks. Develop the playgrounds in such manner as to benefit from shade provided by existing trees. If that is not possible, instead plant a dense stand of shade trees adjacent to the playground and consider steel supported canopy shade structures.

v)

Outdoor Tennis Courts

In Keller, the tennis courts that are available to residents are all school owned and subject to school schedules. With no City owned facilities, even practicing tennis is problematic, and the need for courts was expressed in the Attitude Survey as well as in the public meeting. Some of this need could be met by developing the two courts shown in the Keller Sports Park Master Plan.

A study to ascertain the demand of a multi-court facility will determine its size. Should it be shown that there is benefit more by the construction of a tennis center which has capacity for league play, typically 6 – 8 courts is a minimum size. For longer term consideration, as an outdoor practice facility with tournament capability, it is recommended to plan for a 6 – 8 court facility with ability to expand to 16 – 20 courts. Outdoor tennis courts are often most successful in a multiple court tennis center, which may feature restrooms, a concession area and pro shop.

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The location should be well considered, both in terms of size and accessibility as well as for acoustic buffering from traffic, which otherwise could be a nuisance and a detriment to the facility. The ideal location is central, with good access from thoroughfares. It may also be beneficial to consider a location that has a similar facility, e.g. recreation center, aquatic facility, etc. that could offer shared support facilities, such as restrooms and concessions. A study should be conducted to determine the best location and facility size that the local and neighboring cities’ demand will bear.

vii)

Outdoor Basketball Courts

Outdoor basketball courts are favored generally in neighborhood parks, either as half or full courts. Where appropriate consider one half basketball court (one goal) at existing and new neighborhood parks. The value of basketball courts allows for neighborhood kids to practice their skills at their own time. Where desired at community parks, provide a number of full basketball courts in close proximity to enable tournament and league playing.

vii)

Lighted Soccer Fields

Develop competitive level league fields grouped together as planned in the Keller Sports Park and/or future Community Park.

viii)

Rental Picnic/Reunion Pavilions

Pavilions and other shade shelters with picnic tables are frequently used and requested by the citizens.

- Reasons for additional rental picnic/ reunion pavilions:
 - Serve many diverse age groups.
 - Are key to recreational use during the warm seasons of the year.
 - Larger facilities may generate rentals revenue for the City.
- Distribution should remain balanced throughout the City so that all City areas have a good supply of park pavilions and tables.
- Design and construction of pavilions should allow for airflow through the roof by means of a multi-tiered roof structure.

ix)

Amphitheater

There is one amphitheater next to the Senior Center in Johnson Road Park, set into a hill, with a seating capacity of 50 to 100 people.

The City of Keller may consider investing in a larger performance facility that offers:

- An elevated performance stage at least 20’ x 25’ or larger in size;

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- Adequate electrical service of a minimum of 200 amps, or larger service;
- Shaded spectator seating;
- Close proximity to adequate restrooms and parking;
- Water and electrical service for temporary utilities for entertainers vehicle connection;
- Provision for stage lighting and sound;
- Concession vendor accommodations;
- Locate centrally: The Keller Town Center Master Plan includes an amphitheater within The Parks at Town Center.

x)
Environmental Learning Center

Keller residents show in their responses in the Attitude survey and in questionnaires an unwavering, overwhelming support for parks, preserving nature areas and open space and maintaining a rural character in Keller. Moreover, there is a strong affinity between the purpose of an environmental learning center and the strong support for parks and nature areas/ open space. With the natural resources of Keller as its focus, this facility could highlight vegetation, topography, the uses of water as a drinking source and the value and importance of conserving it and other natural resources.

Although in the Attitude Survey, the question related to support for potential projects for an upcoming bond election showed that there is a higher majority support for “Performance Art And Cultural Center”, it is recommended that the Environmental Learning Center be given priority due to its purpose of understanding natural resources as a way of valuing parks and nature areas in order to successfully conserve these elements in the City: the potential to convey a unique and enduring message has immeasurable value to future generations.

Location of this support facility is especially important. With the natural resources in Keller, especially in Big Bear Creek and Little Bear Creek, it would be opportune to locate an environmental learning center nearby to learn about the importance of water as a resource, in terms of its origins, cycle, flow pattern, quality and quantity, plus the value of natural habitat for wildlife and recreation.

Other (Unranked) Priority Facilities

Expansion of the Keller Sports Park

Citizens of Keller strongly support the development and renovation of parks. Continuing with the implementation of the additional fields and amenities as set out in the Keller Sports Park Master Plan is important to meeting the needs of soccer, baseball and softball, in-line hockey, to name a few facilities. Also included in the KSP expansion according to the Master Plan is the Arena Master Plan, which includes an enclosed arena, which was developed and approved in 1998. The existing outdoor arena was constructed in 1999.

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Expansion of The Keller Pointe

The Keller Pointe is a facility that respondents in the Attitude Survey gave very strong support to in terms of its quality overall. It is a unique recreational facility that is quite successful in Keller and is not yet complete in terms of its overall vision. The Keller Pointe Master Plan includes an outdoor aquatic facility in a children’s water spray park and other amenities which will help meet the needs of citizens once developed and in use by the community.

Performance Art and Cultural Center

The Attitude Survey asks for responses to the level of support for potential projects in an upcoming bond election. This included a performance art and cultural center, and the response supported this facility with 63% support, which was almost as high as the support for the expansion of the Keller Senior Center (64%). The reason that this facility, despite its strong support is not included on the ranked priority list is partly due to the nature of such a facility, and also due to the amphitheater need which is already part of The Parks at Town Center Master Plan.

Often, performance art and cultural centers become the pre-eminent icon for a city. Showcasing more than the talent they feature, they also often serve to project a city’s image. Such an endeavor usually requires years in the making. Also, it is not uncommon for more than one city to collaborate, pool resources and share a facility to answer the needs of the larger, regional needs. It is recommended that this facility need be addressed as a longer term goal.

Dog Park

The purpose of dog parks is mainly twofold: running opportunities and dog socializing (even owner socializing). Depending on what is allowed or not, dog parks need to be of a certain size to allow the turf to recover from wear and tear, as well as to absorb animal droppings not picked up by owners. Water stations and waste dispenser/ disposal stations, plus shade for dogs and their owners are features that are important to the overall success of the park. Dog parks also usually contain double entry/exit gates, separated an intervening “vestibule”, to prevent the accidental, occasional wayward pet. Fenced areas are commonly zoned for big dogs and small dogs. Location must be well considered, as one of the typical issues about dog parks includes the “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) factor, as a result of potential noise, odor and traffic, including the need for parking.

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Dogs on trails can be dangerous when their leashes get in the way of other roller skaters and/ or cyclists. Rules are typically posted to address the issue.

Skateboard Park

Skate Parks have gained popularity with many communities in recent years, providing recreational opportunities to skateboarders and in-line skaters. Some of these skate parks are successful especially when located in a high use, pedestrian area where public surveillance is part of the safety, as well as of the enjoyment. However, the requirement for it to be successful is a location that is well visited. Locating in the center of the city is great for accessibility for everyone. Other successful locations include sites with adjacency to a public transportation node, hike and bike trail with good visibility or next to a middle school or high school. Spectating is as much a part of this park function as the skating itself, so provision should be made to accommodate viewers. Skaters generally prefer parks that are beautified and softened with trees, which also enhances the park for spectators. Another consideration is parking, which should be convenient to the skate park itself. A benefit of providing a skate park is the potential to reduce the unsafe use of streets and their associated risk of injury due to vehicular traffic.

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Park Improvement

**7.8
High Priority Existing Park Improvement**

**7.8.1
Individual Parks**

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

**7.8.2
City wide**

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

Renovation of existing parks

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

Park Signage

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

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Park Maintenance

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

Wi-Fi Access

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

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

Art in Public Places including Parks

It is quite remarkable that the City of Keller has a Public Arts Policy, as many cities have no such instrument in place with which to present art that is public and free on a citywide basis to their residents. Aside from parks and recreation facilities provision, the public spaces of a city speak volumes about the quality of life in a city and its values and aspirations. Keller’s Public Arts Policy recognizes the value of public art to the residents and visitors in its stated purpose and goals. Close collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department will serve to advance the stated goals of this program.

Develop an “Art in the Parks” Master Plan for the entire City and in each park. Involve both the Public Arts Board and Parks and Recreation Board as well as the Parks and Recreation Department in the master plan process.

Reasons for public art: Art has a tremendous potential to add additional layers of meaning to the landscape and to encourage contemplation as a manner of passive recreation. It also will set City of Keller apart as a City that appreciates quality of life.

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Keller’s commitment to installation of public art is commendable.



The sculpture of an egret in the foyer of the Town Hall, overlooking the park is particularly impressive.

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.”

- Anatole France
Nobel Prize winner for Literature in 1921

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



Bellevue Downtown Park - Seattle, WA



City of The Colony, Texas

Keller Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
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Transit Station – Seattle, WA



Transit Station – Seattle, WA



Port promenade - San Diego, CA



Children’s Museum of Art - San Diego, CA



Seattle, WA



Olympic Sculpture Garden – Seattle, WA

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Operations and Maintenance

7.9

Operation and Maintenance Assessment

With the recommendations for additional parks, open space, and trails, additional manpower would be needed for the required maintenance of these various projects. The number of additional staff needed to maintain these proposed facilities will vary depending on the use of these facilities. However, positive support and the provision of adequate staffing must be included as each facility is developed, or the facility should not be built. The current City of Keller Parks and Recreation Operation and Maintenance budget and needs are discussed below.

7.9.1

Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

Table 7.2 City of Keller Parks and Recreation Budget *			
	Fiscal Year 2005	Fiscal Year 2006	Fiscal Year 2007
Total General Fund Budget	\$18,563,403	\$21,733,430	\$25,043,100
Parks and Rec. Admin.	\$312,635 1.7%	\$324,075 1.4%	\$357,470 1.4%
Parks Main'ce.	\$1,302,449 7%	\$1,636,825 7.5%	\$1,731,750 6.9%
Recreation Budget	\$285,706	\$346,310	\$395,995
Recreation / General Fund	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%
Total Parks & Recreation Budget	\$1,900,790	\$2,307,210	\$2,485,215
Overall Parks & Recreation Percentage of General Fund	10.2%	10.6%	9.9%

* City of Keller Parks and Recreation Department.

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For the 2007 fiscal year, City of Keller’s Parks and Recreation Budget is 9.9% of the City’s General Fund. This represents a 0.7% decrease when compared to 2006.

The City of Keller uses the term budget as an all-inclusive term. It includes the General Fund budget as well as the Keller Development Corporation (KDC) and The Keller Pointe Enterprise Fund.

The total funds for the Parks and Recreation budget as shown in Table 7.2 on the previous page originate from several sources. The primary source is Keller’s half cent/ 4B sales tax, which generates approximately \$2,100,000 dedicated to Parks and Recreation capital improvements. A Special Revenue Fund totaling \$125,000 is dedicated to Special Events. A Recreation and Aquatic Center Enterprise Fund, The Keller Pointe, has a \$3, 500,000 budget supported by user fees. Two additional funds support park improvements including Oil and Gas Mining Revenues from parks developed with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Grants and the Tree Restoration Fund collected from developer fines. The additional funds fluctuate year to year and are supplementary by nature. Most cities have general fund dollars to support their recreation and aquatic facilities.

As a percentage of the overall General Fund, City of Keller’s expenditures were compared with other cities in the area. All of the cities support their recreation and aquatic facilities through the General Fund which could account for larger available funds. See Table 7.3 below.



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Table 7.3 Comparison of Overall Park Expenditures Relative to General Fund					
City	Overall General Fund (Expenditures)	General Fund per Capita	Park Expenditures including recreation	Percent of General Fund	City size in Acres
City of Keller (2007) 37,700 population*	\$25,043,100	\$664	\$2,485,215	9.9%	11,772
Allen (2006) 70,750 population	\$45,983,458	\$ 650	\$4,642,000	10%	16,640
Bedford (2006) 48,600 population	\$25,669,046	\$443	\$976,000	3.8%	6,400
Burleson (2006) 28,350 population	\$21, 262,023	\$ 763	\$1,094,300	5.1%	12,544
Colleyville (2006) 21,700 population	\$16,277,722	\$1,093	\$1,300,000	8%	8,320
Coppell (2006) 39,200 population	\$38,512,083	\$982	\$4,542,000	11.8%	9,536
Flower Mound (2006) 61,550 population	\$35,466,415	\$576	\$2,808,600	7.9%	20,000
Grapevine (2006) 44,850 population	\$45,692,744	\$ 1,019	\$4,700,800	10.3%	22,912.
Hurst (2006) 36,273 population	\$29,240,000	\$763	2,976,000	10.2%	6,336
North Richland Hills (2006) 63,500 population	\$35,737,346	\$563	\$2,422,300	6.8%	11,648
Southlake (2006) 24,900 population	\$27,129,497	\$1,089	\$2,663,700	9.8%	14,336

* Keller population per City of Keller Planning Department

It is noticeable that City of Keller’s Parks and Recreation Budget as a percentage of the overall General Fund, is above the average of 8.5% as compared to the Cities above.

The following table illustrates the per capita expenditure for parks compared with a number of cities.



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Table 7.4 Comparison of Park Operations and Maintenance Expenditures (excluding special or performance funds)			
City**	Population	Budgeted Park Expenditures	Per Capita Expenditure
City of Keller*	37,700	\$2,485,215	\$66
Allen	66,400	\$6,819,574	\$103
Bedford	48,600	\$1,051,527	\$22
Burleson	28,350	\$1,094,273	\$39
Colleyville	21,700	\$1,500,000	\$69
Coppell	39,200	\$4,542,226	\$116
Flower Mound	61,550	\$2,743,278	\$45
Grapevine	44,850	\$4,475,335	\$100
Hurst	36,273	\$3,316,395	\$91
N Richland Hills	63,500	\$2,476,307	\$39
Southlake	24,900	\$2,663,749	\$107

*2007 - City of Keller Planning Department

** 2006 Metro Area Survey: figures show 2006-07 budget numbers

Compared to other cities, City of Keller’s Park Operations and Maintenance per capita Expenditure appears to be slightly above the average of \$64 as compared with the above cities’ per capita expenditures, excluding special or performance funds.



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Expenditure calculations for cities with other operating funds (special or performance funds) are presented in Table 7.5 below.

Table 7.5			
Comparison of Overall Park and Recreation Expenditures including special or performance funds			
City	Population	Budgeted Park Expenditures in 2006/07**	Per Capita Expenditure
City of Keller*	37,700*	\$6,193,700	\$164
Allen	66,400	\$11,116,203	\$167
Bedford	48,600	No other funds	-
Burleson	28,350	\$1,164,273	\$41
Colleyville	21,000	No other funds	-
Coppell	39,200	\$4,784,132	\$122
Flower Mound	60,450	\$3,244,830	\$54
Grapevine	44,850	No other funds	-
Hurst	36,273	\$6,264,174	\$173
N. Richland Hills	63,500	\$9,154,996	\$144
Southlake	24,900	\$4,691,768	\$188

*2007 - City of Keller Planning Department

** 2006 Metro Area Survey: figures show 2006-07 budget numbers

With special funds included in the comparison, it appears that Keller is well above the average of \$96 as compared with the above cities in terms of the per capita expenditure including special or performance funds.

“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”

**7.9.2
Parks and Recreation Personnel**

City	Overall Budget (1)	Total Park Acres	Overall Budget/ Park Acre (closest 100)	Number of Personnel (2) ;(3)	Total Park Acres/ Staff Member
City of Keller	\$1,731,750	437	\$4,000	24	18
Allen	\$4,642,200	427	\$10,900	51	8
Bedford	\$1,245,171	150	\$8,300	15	10
Burleson	\$1,094,300	198	\$5,500	14	14
Colleyville	\$1,300,000	190	\$6,800	13	15
Coppell	\$4,983,501	560	\$8,900	67	8
Flower Mound	\$2,808,600	545	\$5,200	29	19
Grapevine	\$4,117,800	1,511	\$2,700	67	23
Hurst	\$2,175,007	287	\$7,600	25	11
N Richland Hills	\$2,422,300	835	\$3,400	33	22
Southlake	\$2,663,800	636	\$4,200	36	18

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

Staff Levels

City of Keller Parks and Recreation Department staff levels for the 2007 fiscal year are shown in Table 7.6 above. The staff number includes maintenance of park facilities only (recreational programming staff excluded)

City of Keller Parks Department Personnel for 2007 includes the following:

- Parks and Recreation Director (1)
- Park Planner (1)
- Parks Maintenance
 - Parks Superintendent (1)
 - Parks Foreman (1)
 - Parks Crew leader (3)
 - Parks Maintenance Worker (14)
 - Seasonal Parks Maintenance Worker (4)
 - Building Maintenance Worker (1)

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The total number of Parks Department personnel for 2007 is 24 people, excluding Administration.

It should be noted that all parks are maintained for mowing by City staff except Milestone and Johnson Road Parks which are mowed by contract mowers. Areas that require a trailer for the mowing equipment including Bursey Ranch Park and trail areas in the southern and northern end of the City are mowed by contract mowers.



By taking good care of parks we take good care of our children as well.

**7.9.3
Parks Department Staffing, Operations and Maintenance
Recommendations**

The City’s needs pertaining to parks and recreation facilities operations and maintenance are addressed in terms of:

- staffing;
- potential changes to operations and maintenance techniques, equipment or strategies; and
- establishment of a parks and operations maintenance facility.

Staffing Recommendations - based on the adoption of the recommendations of the Parks Master Plan, the following additional staffing needs are recommended:

1. **Special Projects Crew** (1 crewleader and 3 maintenance workers). This crew would handle landscape construction to include: Irrigation system maintenance and repair, playground inspection, maintenance, repair, and construction, installation of park signage, landscape plantings, repair and

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renovation of park facilities. The amount of \$40,000 is recommended as a budget for a foreman and \$30,000 per technician (including salary and indirect costs.) The total budget for a special projects crew is \$130,000.

2. **Additional General Labor:** Due to the increase in additional park acreage, hike and bike trails, right of way maintenance, additional athletic fields, and other duties assigned to the Department, additional grounds maintenance labor must be added. The amount of \$25,000 is recommended as a budget per laborer (including salary and indirect costs). The total budget for 5 additional general laborers is \$125,000.
3. **Grant Writer** is needed to identify and pursue grants for the entire City. This grant writer should be skilled in preparing grant applications. A total of \$60,000 is recommended as a budget for this position (including salary and indirect costs.) An alternative is to hire a consultant on an “as needed” basis.
4. City should invest additional funding for **staff development** in the areas of continuing education, licensing, and certifications. The amount of \$30,000 per year is recommended for staff development.

With acquisition of additional park land, the collective impact of the recommended staff, labor costs, and additional funding comes to \$405,000 annually for the above new positions, as funding allows.

Operations and Maintenance Techniques, Equipment or Strategies

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

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

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Parks Operations and Maintenance Facility

Keller Municipal Service Center is centrally located and includes Keller’s Parks Maintenance facility containing:

- EPA approved storage facilities for Chemicals and Pesticides
- Above ground fuel storage and fueling station
- Small engines service area and parts storage
- Irrigation parts storage
- Wash rack for cleaning mowing equipment
- Office space for supervisory staff
- Break room and restrooms for department staff
- Parking for staff vehicles and City vehicles
- Storage for seasonal items such as Christmas Decorations, Banners, etc.

Consideration should be given to add:

- Covered storage for all motorized equipment
- Storage bins for bulk storage of soil amendments
- Greenhouse for propagation and holding of bedding materials

Other parks operations and maintenance issues include:

1. The City should continue to develop a plan to implement native plant material with low water requirement in all landscape situations where possible.
2. The City should implement an annual tree planting program in all parks to provide for additional shade, to phase the cost for these trees, and to ensure healthy grouping of old and young trees together. Some funding is available through the Tree Restoration Funds.
3. The City should weigh the cost benefits of establish a tree farm versus purchasing trees for the propagation of trees native to North Central Texas. These trees are adapted to the local climate and soil conditions and will result in superior tree cover, shade, and drought tolerance.
4. The City should continue to implement and expand the practice of producing compost whereby tree and plant clippings are chipped and mulched for re-use as compost on all City property. The purpose is to implement an integrated and organic maintenance approach for the entire City that minimizes reliance on chemicals and pesticides.
5. Although the City already has an automated irrigation system, it should study the benefit of investing in a City wide irrigation system that is a computerized central control system radio linked for the efficient management of irrigation.