

***“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”***

## 7. Recommendations for “Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”

***“Enriching our Community through People, Parks and Programs.”***

- City of Keller P.A.R.D. Mission Statement

### 7.1 ***A Vision for Keller***

The mission statement of the City of Keller Parks and Recreation Department meshes well with the vision, **“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”**. Cultural landscapes are places imbued with a sense of culture, natural and human history, people and events. Cultural landscapes brim over with a special sense of place, including historic sites, protected natural areas, vernacular and ethnographic landscapes. In addition to the park land encompassed in the park system today, examples of cultural landscapes range from the early structures, such as in the Old Town Keller District, Bourland and Mount Gilead Cemeteries, to agrarian and rural, open space landscapes, to the dramatic topography of the future Northeast Park, as well as to creeks, greenwalks, trails and treelined streets. Indeed, a well designed streetscape has every bit as much richness and ability to relax as the calm of a meadow or woods.

In our busy society, the quiet strength and refreshing energy of cultural landscapes are too easily overlooked. Undeveloped or historic settings are valued not on their own merit, but rather for their economic development potential, commonly taught as the “highest and best use”. Such an approach typically excludes passive uses that afford their own, inherently unique value that complements and enriches adjacent developments. With such an attitude, rare opportunities for **“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”** are undervalued and lost, forgotten or simply regarded as so common as to have little value – until all the land is developed for other uses. By creating a network of protected cultural landscapes, both future developments and the city as a whole are enhanced by incorporating important historic features that contrast with contemporary ones. Indeed, the context sets up a dialogue that infuses new energy into both contemporary and historic elements of the built and natural environments.

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Further resources concerning new thinking regarding context sensitive development are discussed in **Appendix F: Context Sensitive Design**, regarding The Cultural Landscape Foundation, Conservation Development and New Urbanism.

### **7.2**

#### ***Achieving Uniqueness***

Ideas fundamental to achieving uniqueness in terms of the vision of ***“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”*** for the City of Keller include:

- Protection of natural areas and the rural character of the City;
- Extension of the citywide trail system connecting parks, creeks, historic sites and schools;
- Preserve *as a destination of quality* the historic, pedestrian-oriented character of the Keller’s original Main Street in the Old Town Keller District;
- Protection of the entire Big Bear Creek, its tributaries, all other creeks and the 100 year flood plain at build-out conditions;
- Protection of view sheds, and horizon lines.

The implementation of such ideas requires visionary leadership, whereby tools are used to identify, define, preserve and respect important natural and cultural features within a community and find ways to incorporate those creatively in the City. The direct results are higher property values, a more beautiful City, and a greater quality of life for citizens.

### **7.3**

#### ***Park System Recommendations***

This Chapter 7 summarizes the findings of the Needs Assessment and recommends a series of actions to improve and expand City of Keller’s park system. These recommendations address matters of City Policy, acquisition of park land, the development of land already acquired and dedicated for parks, general improvements to existing parks, the development and provision of recreation facilities, and parks operation and maintenance.

The recommendations should be implemented or initiated over the general life of this master plan, which covers the next five to ten years. However, this section also includes other longer range recommendations, such as the renovation of existing parks.

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Recommended items in this chapter are prioritized in Chapter 8, The Implementation Plan.

*The recommendations fall into six general categories:*

- City Policy  
Adopt City policies that will ensure the implementation of the vision for the City of City of Keller based on priorities established by citizen input and recommendations in this Parks Master Plan.
- Land Acquisition  
Acquire land for future parks, park expansion, new recreation facilities, and open space including habitat protection where possible.
- Park Development  
Develop parks according to the specific need and in order of priority.
- Recreation Facilities  
Provide needed recreational facilities.
- Park Improvements  
Implement key improvements to existing parks as described per individual park in Chapter 3.
- Operations and Maintenance  
Establish procedures and funding for effective operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.

***“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”***

- Eleanor Roosevelt,  
U.S. Diplomat and Politician, (1884-1962)

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**City Policy and Vision**

**7.4  
Exemplary Choices for the City of Keller**

**“The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision.”**  
- Theodore Hesburgh

Through comprehensive public participation, a vision has been established for the City of Keller’s physical image, parks, open space, and recreation. This Vision, expressed as **“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”**, comprises acquiring and protecting natural habitats, cultural landscapes and open space landscapes, the acquisition of adequate park land, development of additional trail connections, and the provision of recreation facilities which relate well to their context. The following describes essential policies that the City of Keller requires to make this City Vision, **“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”**, a reality.

- Policy Issues include:**
- Protection of unique cultural and natural landscapes
  - Parkland dedication
  - Creek Protection
  - Making Old Town Keller District a destination of quality through unique and creative park and trail development within the District.
  - Coordinating development with the Keller Unified Development Code (UDC) and the Citywide Hike and Bike Trail Master Plan.

**7.4.1  
Cultural and Natural Landscape Protection**

The purpose of the protection of open space is to create a community-wide network of open space and natural preserves to allow for an interconnected network of community green spaces.

It is recommended that the City commits to the following:

- Preserve the community-wide network of protected open space as "linked landscapes";
- Create the city’s resource inventory of cultural and natural landscapes (Resource Map).

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- Update the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to make provision for the implementation of the protection of the updated network of protected open space.

***“One measure of a development project’s success should be the increase in the number of songbird species inhabiting a site after it has been developed.”***

- William McDonough  
Dean, School of Architecture, University of Virginia

**7.4.2  
Park Land Dedication**

The extent of existing development combined with the pace of current and proposed development in the City of Keller will lead to inadequate park land acreage if a concerted, targeted and expedited effort is not made to acquire additional park land. With land continually being slated for residential and other development, **time is critical now to acquire adequate acreage that will meet the requirements for parks in the next 10 to 20 years** even if those parks are left undeveloped for a number of years.

It is recommended that the Park Land Dedication Ordinance be revised to include the following considerations:

Basic principles

- Encourage all land and site features as identified in the recommended Resource Map to be set aside and ensure their protection and maintenance by the Home Owners Associations or through the involvement of a variety of Conservation Trusts in Texas that have as their aim the conservation of open space (see [www.texaslandtrusts.org](http://www.texaslandtrusts.org)).
- Provide unimpeded public access to these identified and protected site features through a combination of trails, single loaded roads, and dedicated easements.
- Open space, parks and recreational areas required by the park dedication ordinance should NOT be restricted to the private use and enjoyment of the citizens of the particular development or subdivision.
- Drainage areas and easements should NOT be accepted as land dedicated for parks but should be made available for park and trail use where needed.
- Utility easements should NOT be accepted as land dedicated for parks but should be made available for park and trail use where needed.
- In addition to the requirement that each park must have ready access to a public street, it is required that single loaded roads be established between a

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subdivision or part thereof and land set aside for park land and/or open space protected areas.

- Review and update Park Dedication and Park Improvement Fee in terms of Dwelling Units and Non-Residential Development to be in line with the standard used in the industry. A few examples follow:

Dwelling Unit Park Improvement Fee Comparison:

- City of Colleyville: \$1,802 / DU
- Flower Mound: \$789 / DU
- Grapevine: \$1,135 average per lot, 300 s.f.
- Southlake: \$1,200 fee per gross acre

Non-residential Park Improvement Fee Comparison:

- Southlake: N/A
- Flower Mound: \$1,000 / acre
- Grapevine: N/A
- City of North Richland Hills: \$1,000 / acre
- City of Colleyville: \$800 / acre

Park Dedication Comparison:

- Southlake: 1 acre / 40 DU;
- Flower Mound: 1 acre / 25 DU
- City of Lancaster: 1 acre / 50 DU
- Grapevine: 1 acre / 50 DU;
- City of Colleyville: 1 acre / 25 DU

**7.4.3  
Creek Protection**

Creek buffer recommendation

Creek corridors provide a tremendous opportunity for recreation in conjunction with flood control. Other than the 100-year floodplain area plus a creek and drainage maintenance easement, the creek corridor also includes a buffer area along and above the containing the habitat and wildlife associated with the creek environment. In addition to flood control which has in itself an economical and huge public safety benefit, creek corridors have tremendous value from an ecological and recreational point of view. The plant life associated with creeks provide habitat for birds and animals and the linear nature of creeks provides ecological linkages to different parts of the City. The recreational value of creek corridors lies in the creek itself, views up and down the corridor, shade and the linearity that provides for excellent trail connections with the minimum disturbance of the land. Plants, especially native grass above and below the 100-year floodplain limits, act as an important bio-filter removing sediments and pollutants from the surface runoff

As a first step and as a matter of priority it is recommended that the City initiates a **Creek Corridor Study** to establish an integrated riparian corridor system for

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the City of Keller. Among other aspects, the study needs to take the following into account:

- Flood management in terms of 1% and 0.2% probabilities;
- Delineation of the 1% floodplain at build-out conditions;
- Stream bank stability;
- Flow velocities, valley storage and water quality; and
- Environmental inventory including riparian vegetation, wildlife, cultural and scenic value.

The precedent for a Creek Corridor Study is found in the Linear Greenbelt Park Study conducted by the City of Allen, Texas in 1986. Based on this study, Allen has ordinances and regulations in place that ensure the optimal protection and use of creek corridors for the benefit of the community as a whole. The end result 21 years later is a noticeable quality of life experience that is exemplary in the region.

The proposed **City of Keller Creek Corridor Study** will form the basis for decisions to be made about floodplain reclamation and the establishment of a creek buffer in terms of quality and dimension.

Ideally, no floodplain reclamation should be allowed and the utmost attempt should be made to discourage reclamation. However, practical considerations including bridges may necessitate reclamation. Reclamation considerations should be guided by the **Creek Corridor Study** with trade-offs established to offset the affect of reclamation, even if it is only for the loss of open space and natural areas.

The purpose of a creek corridor buffer is to ensure the protection of unique features including tree cover, topography, prairie land etc. and to provide an adequate bio-filter of pollutants. However, the occurrence of unique features is not constant along the length of the corridor due to, among others, the impact of agricultural activity including overgrazing and cultivation. Where feasible an attempt should be made to restore such disturbed environments with prairie grass and trees associated with a creek corridor.

Considering the need for creek and drainage way maintenance as well as accommodating a single loaded road along the length of the creek corridor, the creek protection corridor may vary in width to accommodate and ensure the protection of unique natural features along the corridor as well as practical considerations for the alignment of the single loaded road beyond the buffer.

#### Creek Buffer Implementation

Implementation of a creek protection buffer beyond the 100 year floodplain requires creative solutions and the willingness of developers to brainstorm with City officials, Planning and Zoning (P & Z) and Parks and Recreation Board to

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achieve the goal of protecting the very essence of what makes City of Keller special and unique. Prescriptive regulations could lead to legal actions, whereas collaboration will lead to mutually beneficial results.

Guided by the proposed **City of Keller Creek Corridor Study** that will identify sensitive areas along the creek which necessitate protection, the options to achieve adequate protection include:

- Clustered or Conservation Development whereby the quality places on the property are left untouched as accessible communal open space with clustered development – the obvious benefit to the developer is cost savings including less infrastructure.
- A land gift from the developer who understands the value of the open space and how its protection in fact increases the value of individual units and thus leads to an increase in his bottom line.
- Purchase agreement between the City and the developer.
- Involvement of a Land Trust to assist with acquisition.
- Acquisition of Development Rights.

Protecting quality areas along the creek will prove beneficial not only in terms of the land itself and the view and vistas that it afford, but will lead to better quality development that seek integration rather than separation from the natural environment with the many benefits that contact with nature afford people. The end result will be a community that is attractive for many reasons and that will ensure better than normal return for the developers and investors.

#### **7.4.4**

### ***Citywide Hike and Bike Trail Master Plan and Unified Development Code (UDC)***

The City of Keller uses two existing policy documents that all future development should coordinate and comply with. Both of these documents provide additional information regarding hike and bike trail and equestrian trail standards. In addition, the Keller Unified Development Code (UDC) stipulates land dedication and donation and cash requirements for developers in lieu of donations, etc.

#### **7.4.5**

### ***Old Town Keller District***

The very essence of an overlay district is to look at the particular area in a comprehensive manner in which the recommended implementation measures are applied consistently according to the shared goals and objectives. The Old Town Keller District which has been established for Keller is recommended to be studied in terms of:

- Maximizing pedestrian and multi-modal potential.
- Unique and creative park development to provide additional draw to the area.



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**Land Acquisition**

**7.5  
Acquisition of Park Land**

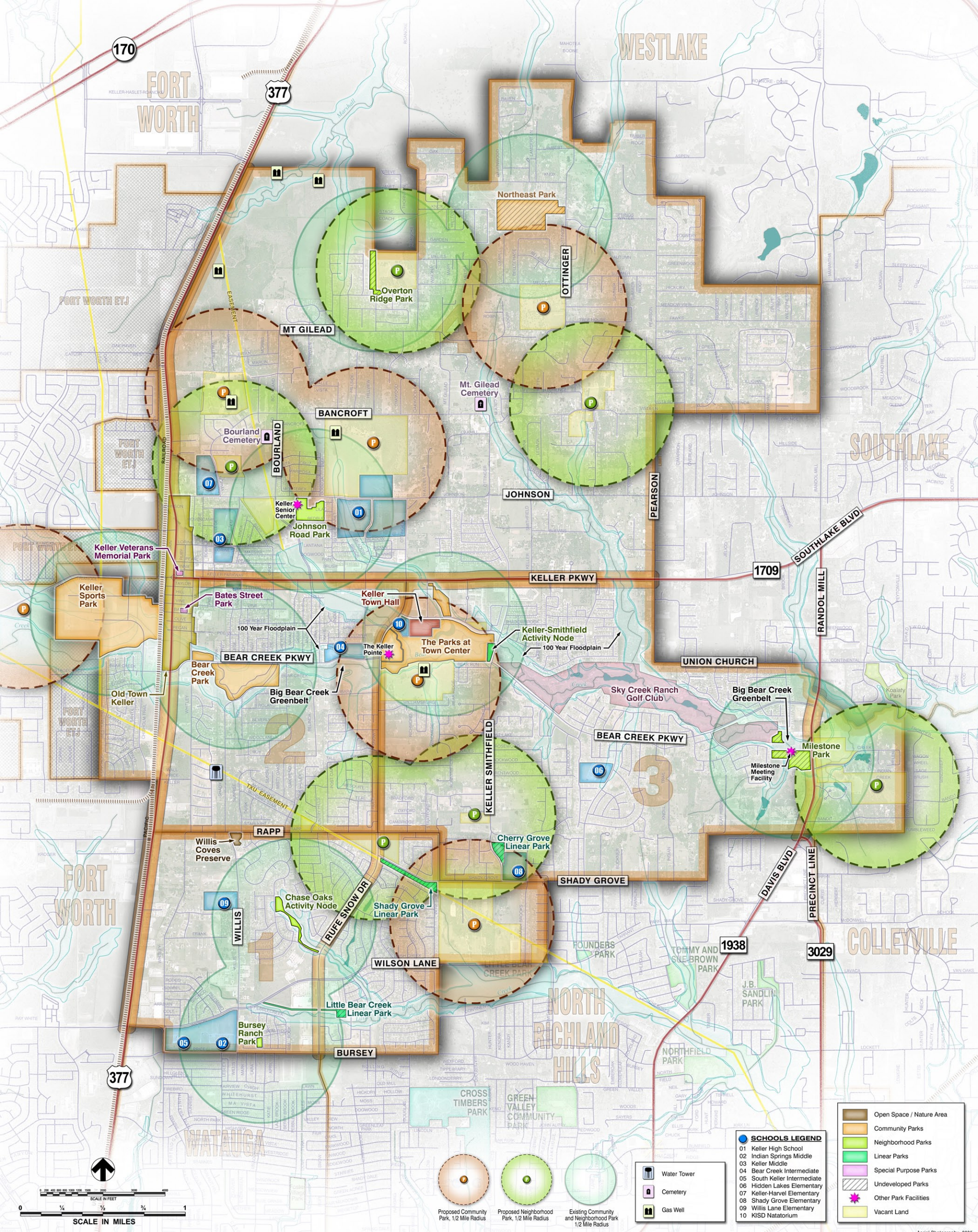
With opportunities decreasing and costs increasing, **there is a finite time to acquire adequate acreage that will meet the requirements for parks in the next 10 to 20 years and at build-out conditions.** The City of Keller is 91% developed and only 9% of land is currently vacant. The 1998 Parks Master Plan for the City of Keller stated a need to acquire additional park land, and cited their public survey which showed that 79% of citizens in support of a bond election to acquire additional park land. **The need to acquire park land as shown in this Parks Master Plan recognizes and strongly recommends that a concerted, targeted and expedited effort be made toward this end.**

Even if the newly acquired park lands are left undeveloped for a number of years, there is opportunity to make the interim a positive one. For instance, it may be well to install a soft surface trail through the site to familiarize the public with the park site. With this trail use and observation of the site, the City of Keller has the opportunity to heighten public awareness and pique imagination for the purpose of soliciting public input for the intent of the future park use.

Acquisition of land should be focused on the provision of neighborhood parks, community parks, linear parks, and the protection of habitat and open space. Land acquisition may include direct purchasing, park land dedication, the establishment of recreation and/or park land easements, purchasing of development rights (which means the purchasing of the right to develop from a property owner, with the sole intent of never developing the land but to place it in a conservation easement for ever), and the involvement of Conservation Trusts ([www.texaslandtrusts.org](http://www.texaslandtrusts.org)).

Desirable locations for park land area to be acquired are shown on the Proposed Parks Maps, as described below:

*The **Proposed Parks Map** on the next page illustrates the distribution of existing and proposed Neighborhood and Community Parks.*



August 30, 2007

# PROPOSED PARKS

CITY OF KELLER, TEXAS

**Half Associates**  
ENGINEERS - ARCHITECTS - SCIENTISTS - PLANNERS - SURVEYORS



Concept plan only. Subject to change. Land use locations and configurations are approximate and may be altered to respond to changing development conditions and requirements. Plan subject to governmental approval.

Aerial Photography 2005



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The following describes the recommended acquisition of park land per City Area:

Proposed parks situated in Area I include two Neighborhood Parks, one Community Park, one Special Purpose Park, and an undetermined number of Linear Parks, and Nature Areas/ Open Space.

***Area I***

Proposed parks situated in Area II include one Community Park, two Special Purpose Parks, and an undetermined number of Linear Parks, and Nature Areas/ Open Space.

***Area II***

Proposed parks situated in Area III include three Neighborhood Parks, two Special Purpose Parks, and an undetermined number of Linear Parks, and Nature Areas/ Open Space.

***Area III***

Proposed parks situated in Area IV include six Neighborhood Parks, one Community Park, two Special Purpose Parks, and an undetermined number of Linear Parks, and Nature Areas/ Open Space.

***Area IV***

***Citywide Land Acquisition***

A summary of park land to be acquired, by City Area, is shown below:

**Park Land Acquisition, 1 – 5 Years:**

**Neighborhood Parks – 11 Citywide:**

1. Area I: two park sites;
2. Area III: three park sites;
3. Area IV: six park sites;

**Community Parks – 3 Citywide:**

4. Area I: one park site;
5. Area II: one park site;
6. Area IV: one park site;

**Special Purpose Parks – 4+ Citywide:**

7. Area I: one park site;
8. Area II/ III: two park sites;
9. Area IV: two park sites;
10. Area I -IV: various park sites;

**Linear Parks – undetermined Citywide:**

11. Area II, IV: one park site;
12. in Area II: one park site;
13. Areas I – IV: various park sites;

**Nature Areas/ Open Space – undetermined Citywide:**

14. Areas I – IV; various park sites.

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***Park Development***

**7.6  
Park Development**

The following section describes general, as well as specific, recommendations for park development in the City of Keller.

***General Recommendations for Park Development***

Key design points that should guide the design of every existing or new park in the City are recommended as follows:

- Each park should truly celebrate the history and culture of City of Keller by incorporating historical plaques and features that allude to the neighborhoods around the park or the circumstances that caused the park to be created.
- Every park should include features for a wide variety of park users and levels of activity. Parks should be multi-faceted, without being over-programmed and over-filled with elements. Natural and unprogrammed areas play a huge role in providing “breathing space” in a park and should be encouraged.
- Parks should incorporate art and should be an example of the sophistication of the City of Keller of today and tomorrow.
- A design concept for each neighborhood park, incorporating children’s play areas, offering solar refuge with shade trees/ structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for open play, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Include all the basic facilities that make up a Community Park with specific reference to the programmed recreation facilities as identified in the needs assessment.
- The size of one individual Special Purpose Park may vary depending on the specific need and function.
- Linear Parks are ideal for hike and bike trails, as these parks may be associated with creeks, rail or utility corridors, they provide connectivity to many destination points.
- Within nature areas and open spaces, provide low key facilities with generally passive uses.
- At non-City owned Cemeteries, work with owners to provide park facilities such as trails to connect with these valuable cultural resources.
- Encourage the golf course owner to enroll in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP), which aims to establish environmental stewardship at golf courses.
- A single loaded road adjacent to all parks is advised in order to protect open space for purposes of informal surveillance and prevent crime in areas that may pose danger for park and open space users.

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- A transparent, wrought iron metal fence between all residential lots and parks and/or open space should be demanded where a single loaded road is not possible.
- Shade should be incorporated into many features of every park. Playgrounds should be covered where feasible, and several covered picnic tables should be included in every park, no matter how small the park.
- All pavilion structures should consist of a multi-tiered roof system to prevent heated air from being trapped under the roof.
- Implement storm water bio-swales to allow for temporary retention of storm water in order to allow for infiltration and bio-filtration of run-off water before the excess water leaves the site.
- Community input should be welcomed and included in the design of every park in the City.
- Where required, provide park lights on photocells as an energy saving measure.

Parks are about green open spaces and trees. It is suggested that the City consider the following in terms of a planting strategy:

- Place preference on the application of drought tolerant landscaping and native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.
- Parks should continue to be developed and upgraded in order to reduce maintenance. Automatic irrigation systems attuned to plants with low water requirements should continue to be a key component of Keller Sport Park competition fields and The Parks at Town Center, as should simple features that make these parks easy to maintain. As a water saving tool, the ideal is that no irrigation be provided at all; however, even native plants require temporary irrigation for a period of at least two years to ensure effective establishment. When opted for, hand watering with gator bags should be done consistently and in ample quantities.

#### ***Use of Native Plants***

One of the best ways for any community to express its regional uniqueness, is to use plants native to the area. It is, after all, the natural surroundings, including native plants that determine the unique and special quality of a place. Recognized by many this has led to the increased use of shade trees that are native to a specific area.

***In response to a question about beautification in Keller, respondents agreed in a ration of 48:1 (or 96%) that they would support the use of plants native to Texas; such as Red Oak, Pecan, Red Bud trees, and Texas Sage in city projects.***

Curiously, few know and apply the use of small native trees – often because of a lack of knowledge and often because it is not readily available in the commercial nurseries.

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It is recommended that the City of Keller makes a commitment to encourage the use of Texas small trees, including - but not limited to - Eve’s necklace (*Sophora affinis*), Indigobush (*Amorpha fruticosa*), Mexian Buck Eye (*Ungnadia speciosa*), Mexican Plum trees (*Prunus mexicana*), Possumhaw trees (*Ilex decidua*), Texas Red Bud (*Cercis Canadensis var. Texensis*), and Rusty Black Haw Viburnum trees (*Viburnum rufidulum*).

For the same reason it is recommended that Keller not overuse Crape Myrtles in its public spaces. Many communities plant the Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) for the very fact that it is drought tolerant. However, it is necessary to recognize that the crape myrtle ornamental tree is an exotic plant that is native to the Southeast Asia.

The very fact of this being a practical, drought tolerant small tree with many blossoms and colorful bark, has caused this tree to be overused extensively as the ornamental tree of choice from the western states of Florida and the Carolinas, across the country to California, making the planted landscapes of this immense area uniform and somewhat boring. In fact, it may be argued that this is one of many contributing factors that have affected the uniqueness of communities including our native wildlife that will less likely nest and find food in a Crape Myrtle.

For purposes of retaining and maintaining its unique North Central Texas character, it is recommended that the City continues to make a concerted effort to promote the use of native plants including trees, shrubs and grasses for both public and private use.

***LEED for Park Facility Development***

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, LEED, is a national rating system for the design, construction and operation of buildings and sites. The system evaluates performance in five areas: sustainable site development, water conservation, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

Aspects that lend positive, measurable results include: on-site storm water management and permeable paving to prevent increased run-off; native plantings to reduce erosion, water consumption and irrigation dependency; organic maintenance programs to reduce chemicals and pesticides that infiltrate ground water and city utility and treatment systems; photocell systems for lighting to reduce energy costs; selection of sustainable materials (recycled and rapidly renewable resources) to use resources to maximum effect. Such results not only produce benefits for the environment, but for the owner and users as well. It is recommended that the City consider the achievement of LEED certification for all future park facilities.

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**Specific Recommendations for Park Development**

**i)**

***Neighborhood Parks***

General planning and design approach for neighborhood parks:

- Prepare a design concept for each undeveloped neighborhood park that incorporates children’s play areas offering solar refuge with shade trees/structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for open play, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities, and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Include the participation of neighborhood citizens in the design process.
- Provide good pedestrian access to all parks including signage and a wide, welcoming gateway.
- Develop parks adjacent to existing and future schools with easy access from the school grounds. Not only will this add to the quality of life for the community, but also funding is more likely available through collaborative action.
- Place preference on the application of native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.

As parks are in short supply in Keller generally, and the foundation of a healthy parks system consisting primarily of neighborhood parks, the emphasis for the next five years, apart from land acquisition, is on the development of four new neighborhood parks, plus one undeveloped park at Overton Ridge for a total of five new neighborhood parks, or roughly one new neighborhood park per year. The needs assessment, together with an analysis of the existing parks system and public input, supports parks and neighborhood parks as priorities for development in the next five years.

**ii)**

***Community Parks***

General planning and design approach for community parks:

- Develop and implement a concept plan for each parcel of land acquired for the purpose of a Community Park.
- Include all the basic facilities that make up a Community Park with specific reference to the recreation facilities as identified in the needs assessment.
- In addition to the recreation facilities which are typical of a Community Park, incorporate children’s play areas covered with shade structures, walkways, hike and bike trails, areas for non-athletic, leisure “free play”, multi-use play areas, picnic facilities, and a park pavilion with a multi-tiered roof.
- Provide support facilities such as restrooms, parking, etc.
- Provide signage and a uniquely designed gateway.

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- Place preference on the application of native plantings including native trees, wildflowers and native grasses.

Community parks, as the name implies, support communities. They are important for providing all the features that one would expect to find in a neighborhood park, plus a number and variety of playing fields that support competition and league play. Due to their large size and the variety of activities they support, these are major investments in the parks and recreation system. In Keller, there is a shortage of community parks. Furthermore, there is work that is already “on the boards” which needs to be completed to meet existing needs. For example, there is need to continue with the planned expansion of the Keller Sports Park to meet the existing and growing need for sports and recreational activities. Also, the undeveloped park land at Northeast Park is needed to support sports and recreation activities in a new community park.

**iii)**

***Special Purpose Parks***

The size of one individual Special Purpose Park may vary depending on the specific need and function. Its establishment is based on as and when the need arises.

Special Purpose Parks facilities offer unique recreational opportunities. Their development is important in supporting significant interests, such as in a skate park, tennis facility or dog park.

Another potential future special purpose park may be contained within the evolving the Old Town Keller Historic District. Such a park may have a particular theme, suited to its historic context. As to the development of plans for the Old Town Keller Historic District, progress may indeed occur over the long term; however, the initial steps to acquire easements for trails or pedestrian walkways are necessary now to ensure the long term success of this unique, historic district.

**iv)**

***Recreation Facilities***

Recreation facilities in Keller consist of The Keller Pointe and the Keller Senior Center. The Keller Pointe is an example of a well conceived, high quality facility that is popular and enjoyed as a unique destination for the community. The facility combines recreational facilities in an engaging and dynamic manner, and offers activities for a variety of ages. The Keller Pointe is an innovative facility, which should serve as a model as other parks and recreation developments are planned, designed and funded.

The Keller Senior Center has a devoted following who would like to see it become a model facility. The Keller Senior Center was identified in the previous parks master plan as having outgrown its then current facility. Because of the importance of the Senior Center in serving a growing population and the variety



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of activities it provides, it is recommended to expand the existing facility and transform it into a state of the art facility that is the hallmark of Keller’s public domain.

**v)  
Linear Parks**

General planning and design approach for linear parks:

Linear parks are characterized by their linear nature that makes them ideal for the implementation of hike and bike trails, which in essence become the “spine” of each particular park. Linear parks may be associated with creeks, railway or utility corridors, and are ideal to create connections between different destination points. Whereas trail development typically includes amenities like trail heads, rest stops, overlooks, benches and light fixtures, linear parks may include additional amenities and facilities e.g. picnic pavilions, playgrounds, basketball, and volleyball courts.

Three Linear Parks are recommended to be developed in the next five years for Keller. Such parks provide the opportunity for trail linkages and connections to other park and recreation facilities, schools, civic destinations and neighborhood to neighborhood alternative travel routes. Natural resources and open space/ natural habitat highlight the users’ experience of linear parks. Preserving open space such as Little Bear Creek and Big Bear Creek is enhanced by linear parks with trails that encourage observation and appreciation of these natural “gems”, and their unique character in Keller.

**vi)  
Natural Areas / Open Space Preserves**

Natural resources and open space/ natural habitat highlight the users’ experience of parks. Preserving open space such as Little Bear Creek and Big Bear Creek, is essential to maintaining a rural feel and unique character in the City of Keller.

General guidelines for the preserving natural areas/open space include providing low key development with generally passive uses within these earmarked areas. Develop educational signage pertaining to the value of native plants, cultural landscapes and the different benefits of manicured and natural parkland, creeks, and drainage ways.

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**vii)  
Cemeteries (Non City Owned)**

Cemeteries in any city have huge value in providing communities with a connection to past. Cemeteries are often beautiful tree covered open space areas that are unique destinations in themselves. Trail connections to the non City owned Bourland Cemetery and Mount Gilead Cemetery are recommended. Such connections may include informational signage and benches for quiet contemplation. Informational and education signage may refer to the history of the particular cemetery and its geographic context describing the surrounding cultural and historical qualities. To ensure success in providing access to the cemeteries, it is recommended that the City work closely with the relevant private entities and be sensitive to the historical graves especially those at Mount Gilead, some of which date to the Civil War.

**viii)  
Golf Course**

The Sky Creek Golf Course has trails on three sides, which encourages trail connectivity and adjacencies with the golf course and its neighbors.

Evaluate the feasibility of the city partnering with the owner to develop an organic program of maintenance at this golf course in response to similarly developed organic programs throughout the parks system in Keller.

It is recommended to encourage the golf course owner to establish and enroll the particular golf course as part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP). This program has the aim to establish environmental stewardship at golf courses.

By their very nature, golf courses provide significant open spaces and opportunities to provide needed wildlife habitat in increasingly urbanized communities across North America. At the same time, golf courses are called to address environmental concerns related to the potential and actual impacts of water consumption and chemical use on local water sources, wildlife species, and native habitats. The ACSP for Golf Courses seeks to address golf’s environmental concerns while maximizing golf course opportunities to provide open space benefits. This highly-regarded education and assistance program promotes participation in comprehensive environmental management, enhancement and protection of existing wildlife habitats, and recognition for those who are engaged in environmentally-responsible projects.

Source: <http://www.auduboninternational.org/programs/acss/golf.htm>

***“Inspiring Exemplary Cultural Landscapes”***

**Additional Considerations for Park Development:**

***Trails and Trail Gateways***

Trails are part of all parks and add connectivity to the parks system as a whole. Keller residents are overwhelmingly devotees of trail usage, and the current city trail system should be expanded. The Citywide Trails Master Plan identifies future trails and trail connections, and this Parks Master Plan includes additional proposed trails that will enhance connectivity to parks, schools, neighborhoods as well as cultural landscapes and natural resources within the city. Keller’s trail network should afford connections to surrounding cities’ trails as well.

Trail Gateways are features which not only provide identity, but also may serve as places for useful directional and informational signage, drinking fountains and waste receptacles, as well as restrooms at major trailheads, especially in high use community parks.

***Park Signage***

The City of Keller has already adopted a name branding system of park signs. Such identifiable features add to a sense of place that is unmistakably Keller. As new parks are developed and existing ones renovated, it is important to include park signage for each park.

***Tree Plantings***

Tree plantings should be done citywide on an annual basis to ensure the longevity of established, mature shade trees. This strategy goes beyond what is planned for the individual park development; rather, it is an adjunct program which is designed to invest in the value of the parks with young trees that balance the loss of mature trees to natural disaster, disease and age. By providing an annual tree planting program, the parks’ futures are ensured with what will in their own time become mature, shade trees for the enjoyment of future generations.

***Park Renovation***

Similar to an annual tree planting program, park renovation is an investment in the value of parks, and is important in providing amenities that are safe and reflect current interests and needs. It is recommended that one park per year be renovated, for the first five years.