



2006



Annual Report



**Marian Park**

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# This

was an event-filled year for the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. Every one of our employees worked diligently to fulfill the Department's mission of enhancing the quality of urban life for all Houstonians by

*"... providing safe well-maintained parks and offering affordable programs for the community."*

While we've had many successes, there remains much more to do. Under the leadership of Mayor Bill White, we are working to develop a park system which preserves our parkland and provides for the recreational needs of all our citizens.

To accomplish this we have identified core values to help guide us into the future including: recreation and wellness, accessibility, environmental stewardship, green-space management, private and corporate partnerships and responsiveness.

Recreation and Wellness are two of the major and most visible aspects of our departments programs. Our parks provide a variety of activities for Houstonians to choose from to "Get Moving!" and "Get Fit!" For 2007, we are committed to provide more programs and opportunities for citizens of all ages and abilities to lead active and healthy lives.



Accessibility for ALL is of critical importance to the department. We are committed to providing access to parkland and greenspace and to programming for ALL Houstonians regardless of abilities.

In the upcoming year, the parks department will continue to focus on environmental stewardship and greenspace management. With more than 24,493 acres of parkland in our system, it is imperative that we work to preserve and protect this greenspace for today and for tomorrow.

It would be impossible for us to meet these goals without individuals, organizations and businesses who share our vision and commitment to Houston and its parks. We thank each and every one of them for their contributions and hope to receive their continued support in the future.

We are excited about the coming year and the work before us. We know that by concentrating on the goals we've identified, we can create a park system that is inclusive, that helps keep our city fit and active and preserves greenspace for the future.

Sincerely,

Joe Turner, Director  
Houston Parks and Recreation Department

# OUR MISSION

*“ To enhance the quality of urban life by providing safe, well-maintained parks and offering affordable programs for the community.”*



**Buffalo Bayou Park  
The Henry Moore Sculpture**

active

inclusive

green

partner

responsive



Marian Park



- Opened 4 new beach entry pools for the summer.
- Created an Adaptive Recreation Program for people with disabilities.
- Won Challenge Day 2006 with 503,015 Houstonians participating in the exercise competition.

## Active

Whether it's skateboarding, jogging, swimming, biking, golfing or playing tennis, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing opportunities for all Houstonians to "Get Moving!" and "Get Fit!"

For two years running, Houston wore the title of the most unfit city in the nation. Following the Mayor's lead, the city and the Parks Department reacted with a number of initiatives designed to combat inactivity and obesity for all age groups. The results were evident when Mayor White and the city were honored for the changes made to "Get Houston Moving."

In 2007, the department will continue to encourage Houstonians to lead healthy lives. Programs like Project KidFit!, Walk in the Park, the First Tee Junior Golf Program, Group Wellness Classes, Aquatics, Youth and Adult Sports, Adaptive Recreation Programming and many more will provide citizens of all ages an affordable way to get active.

Beginning this fall, community centers will provide group wellness classes and monthly health-related seminars. We will increase the number of youth and adult sports leagues offered to provide more opportunities for participation. During the summer months, our aquatics program will increase the number of water exercise, fitness swimming and swim lesson opportunities offered.

The recently developed Adaptive Recreation initiative will provide programming for people with physical disabilities. Through our affiliation with the statewide Texercise initiative, we will work to engage a significant number of older adults in wellness classes and programs. This is just an example of our commitment to providing all Houstonians with affordable access to programs and facilities that will keep them active and healthy.

In the years to come, we look forward to the day when our city and community will lead the nation in health and wellness.



**Hermann Park Water Sprayground**

Hermann and Memorial Parks are often referred to as the crown  
Together the two parks enjoy



jewels of the Houston Parks and Recreation Department.  
over 9 million visits each year.



- Created an Adaptive Recreation Initiative to provide programming for People with Disabilities.
- Hosted the 24th Annual National Junior Wheelchair Basketball Tournament.
- Committed to building 3 Inclusive “Playgrounds Without Limits.”

## Inclusive

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing people of all abilities access and inclusion in programming and events within our park system.

At the core of this commitment is our annual Townhall Meeting for People with Disabilities, held in conjunction with the Mayors Office for People with Disabilities. These meetings provide a forum for the community to express their needs and views on the departments progress towards inclusion. With this input, the department is able to make the necessary changes needed to eliminate barriers and create programming for people with disabilities.

In January, as a result of our first Townhall meeting, an Adaptive Recreation Manager was hired to create programming opportunities for people with disabilities. The first two projects initiated under this title were the hosting of the 24th Annual National Junior Wheelchair Basketball Tournament and the NBA All Star Wheelchair Basketball Clinic. Both events received accolades from national and local organizations alike.

This past year we initiated a project to identify and improve access to our parks for people with disabilities. With the assistance of the Mayor’s Office on Disabilities access to trails, parking and restroom facilities has been improved at a number of parks. This project will continue in the coming year.

In March, the “Playgrounds Without Limits” campaign kicked off. The goal is to build three Inclusive Playgrounds in City parks. The playground components are designed to provide opportunities for children of all abilities to play together.

As a result of the requests generated by the first Townhall Meeting, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department began negotiations with the City of Houston Health Department to transfer the West Gray Multi-Service Center to the Parks Department. When completed this transfer will provide a venue for increased programming for people with disabilities.

We are pleased with our progress but realize this is only a beginning. We are committed to creating a fully accessible and inclusive park system to keep ALL Houstonians active.



Fonde Community Center  
NBA All Star Wheelchair Basketball Clinic



- Utilized GPS Technology and College Internship programs to update Houston's Tree Inventory count.
- Completed Phase I and Phase II of Gragg Naturalization Project.
- Houston designated Tree City, U.S.A. for the 21st year in a row by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- Renamed the Grounds Maintenance Division to Greenspace Management to more clearly define the duties and goals of the division.

**Green** Environmental stewardship and greenspace management are at the heart of who we are as a department.

With over 24,493 acres of parkland and greenspace, Houston can truly be called an "Emerald City." As stewards of this resource the Parks Department is committed to preserving, protecting and increasing our green canopy and parkland.

We are reaching past our landscaping and maintenance efforts to ensure that our parks make a positive impact on the ecological health of our city.

For over 20 years, Houston has been designated Tree City U.S.A. by the National Arbor Day Foundation because of its commitment to the preservation of our tree canopy. Our Urban Foresters lead the way by planting trees through programs like Neighborwoods and the one-percent set aside program. The Neighborwoods program provides free trees to citizens and organizations to be planted on right-of-ways. The program requires a commitment from the citizen to care for the new tree for two years. The one-percent set aside program provides for the replacement of trees that must be removed as a result of major thoroughfare development projects.

To promote native planting and water conservation the department began the Gragg Park Naturalization Project. Phase I involved the main office courtyard which was planted with native plantings, a water feature, and bird feeders to support wildlife. The courtyard was certified as a Texas Wildscape Schoolyard Habitat Demonstration Site by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. Phase II of the project created native planting and low water usage demonstration gardens on the esplanades surrounding the main office.

The department has partnered with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Cooperative Extension Agency to host an ongoing Texas Master Naturalist certification programs. As a class project, students are restoring prairie habitat in Hermann Park.

For the upcoming year, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department remains committed to implementing and promoting environmental stewardship and greenspace management. Programs like volunteer tree plantings, nature trips for youth, esplanade adoptions and more; we will work to engage the community in preserving and protecting our greenspace.



Diez Park  
Arbor Day Tree Planting



“Twenty years from now this area will be surrounded by residential development



**Lake Houston Park  
Peach Creek Trail and Forest Trail Intersection**



and right in the middle will be almost 5,000 acres of parkland for all to enjoy.”

- Joe Turner, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department



Sylvester Turner Park



- Began the official negotiations for the transfer of Lake Houston State Park to the City of Houston.
- Closed \$3,105,000 in outstanding Texas Parks and Wildlife grants.
- Increased funding requests by 484% to \$17 million.
- Increased revenue received from funding requests by 368% to \$1.9 million.

## Partners

It would be impossible for us to complete these goals without the individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations who share our vision and commitment to Houston and its parks.

Their dedication to the city and to its citizens has allowed us to stretch our dollars further and accomplish more. This past year, their support has resulted in more than \$1.9 million in grants and over \$64,000 in in-kind donations. Partnerships, grants and volunteer events have allowed us to send children on fishing trips, provide equipment for youth sports programs, participate in Senior Olympics, clean parkland, plant trees, renovate sports fields, build observation platforms, provide meals for seniors at select sites, teach children about art and so much more.

In the coming year, we will look forward to providing partnership, volunteer and grant opportunities for civic-minded businesses, individuals, elected officials and foundations, who understand the importance of parks to the overall health of a community. We thank every one of our partners for their support. We hope that when they visit our parks or community centers that they will be proud to see how their contributions have made a difference.



Toys for Katrina Kids

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# Responsive

Hurricane Katrina showed the nation the worst that nature can deliver when she slammed into Louisiana and Mississippi on August 29, 2005. The City of Houston showed the best that individuals can do for each other in her immediate aftermath.

As a quarter of a million evacuees from the disaster zone began arriving in Houston, many bus loads showed up at the George R. Brown Convention Center. They were exhausted, scared, and far from everything that felt like home. Houstonians pitched in to make a large, empty building welcoming and comfortable for thousands who had been displaced by the storm.

Together with other city departments, the Parks Department was ready to respond to the city emergency. When called to action, the department used its expertise in working with youth to help the youngest victims find



shelter from the storm. The department, working with Little Tykes, built a playground so children could run off their excess energy in a constructive way. Parks Department personnel pitched in to provide supervision and recreational opportunities as well, giving harried parents a break. To provide stress release for residents, Department personnel created a theatre inside the George R. Brown which featured free nightly movies. On Sundays, to address the residents spiritual needs, Department staff scheduled, with the assistance of local religious groups, services for people of many faiths. Daily, Parks staff could throughout the day be seen responding to assigned duties and pitching in wherever they were needed.

Parks Director Joe Turner ably oversaw this massive undertaking as manager of the floor space in the George R. Brown Evacuee Center, but it was the ingenuity and adaptability of the volunteers that made all the difference in a time of need.

Houston Parks and Recreation Department  
General & Special Revenue Funds

# Financial Summary 2005/2006

	2005 BUDGET	2006 APPROVED BUDGET
Golf course fees	5,002,200	4,819,700
Recreational activities	336,900	347,000
Permits	100,000	96,000
Term Concession Agreements	246,000	252,000
Building/Park Rental Use Fees	349,800	240,000
Donations and Grant Income	5,812,077	6,420,866
General Fund Revenue	632,500	632,700
Miscellaneous	400,900	409,700
<b>Total Budgeted Revenues</b>	<b>\$12,880,377</b>	<b>\$13,217,966</b>

	2005 BUDGET	2006 APPROVED BUDGET
Personnel	31,478,237	31,445,335
Materials and Supplies	2,613,100	2,734,300
Contractual Services	2,287,167	1,953,100
Rent and Utilities	4,762,600	4,784,700
Communications Expenses	254,500	130,200
General Contractual Services	1,064,700	955,200
Expenditures of Grants	8,919,999	9,854,330
Expenditures of Special Revenue	7,057,507	6,768,825
Landscape Services	411,300	320,900
Workers Comp & Unemployment	1,610,600	1,420,662
Pension	3,681,264	3,812,428
Other Expenses	49,500	56,000
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditures</b>	<b>\$64,190,474</b>	<b>\$64,235,980</b>

# Houston Parks Community Centers *South west Region*

1. Alief Community Center  
11903 Bellaire 77072
2. Almeda Community Center  
14201 Almeda School Rd. 77047
3. Burnett Bayland Community Center  
6200 Chimney Rock 77081
4. Cherryhurst Community Center  
1700 Missouri 77006
5. Emancipation Community Center  
3018 Dowling 77004
6. Godwin Community Center  
5101 Rutherglen 77096
7. Lansdale Community Center  
8201 Roos 77036
8. Linkwood Community Center  
3699 Norris 77025
9. Marian Community Center  
11101 South Gessner 77071
10. Platou Community Center  
11655 Chimney Rock 77053
11. River Oaks Community Center  
3600 Locke Lane 77027
12. Sharpstown Community Center  
6600 Harbor Town 77036
13. Sunnyside Community Center  
3502 Bellfort 77051
14. Windsor Village Community Center  
14441 Croquet 77085



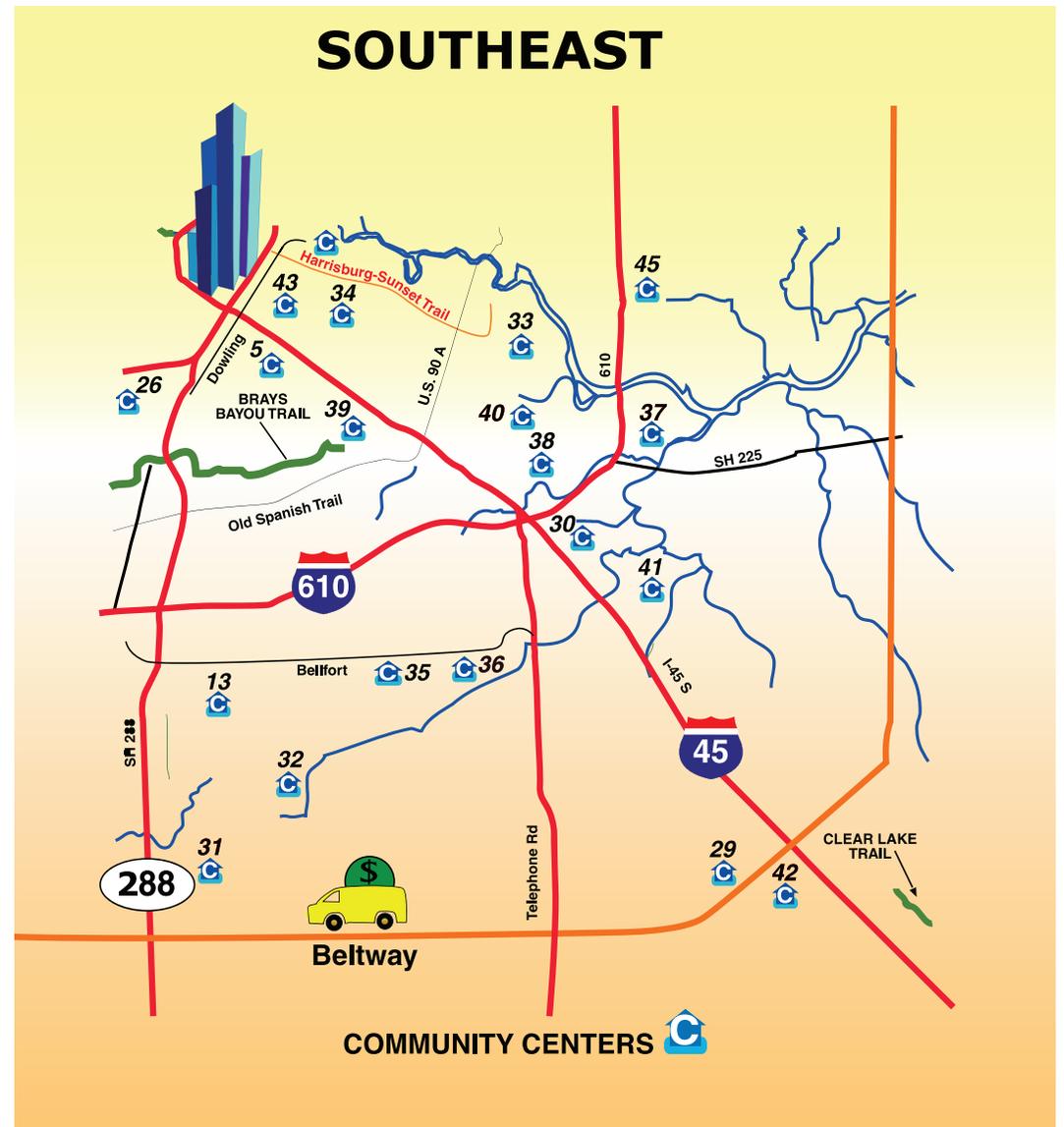


## Houston Parks Community Centers *Northwest Region*

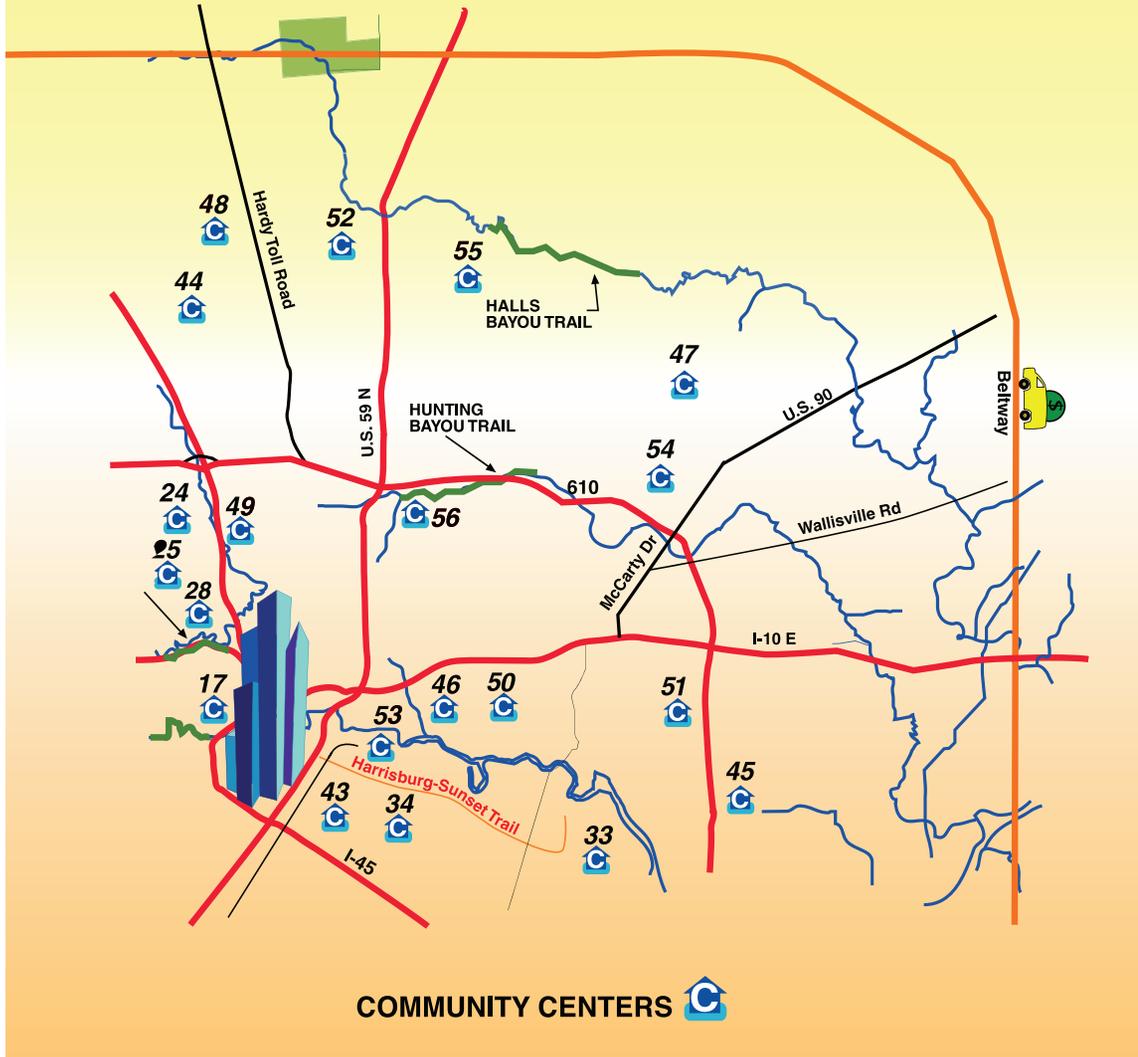
- 15. Carverdale Community Center  
9801 Tanner 77041
- 16. Candlelight Community Center  
1520 Candlelight 77018
- 17. Fonde Community Center  
110 Sabine 77002
- 18. Freed Community Center  
6818 Shady Villa 77055
- 19. Highland Community Center  
3316 DeSoto 77091
- 20. Ind. Heights Community Center  
603 East 35th 77022
- 21. Lincoln Community Center  
979 Greshaw 77007
- 22. Love Community Center  
1000 West 12th 77008
- 23. Milroy Community Center  
1205 Yale 77008
- 24. Montie Beach Community Center  
915 Northwood 77009
- 25. Proctor Plaza Community Center  
803 West Temple 77009
- 26. Robinson Jr. Community Center  
2020 Hermann Drive 77004
- 27. Stude Community Center  
1031 Stude 77009
- 28. Woodland Community Center  
212 Parkview 77009

# Houston Parks Community Centers *Southeast Region*

- 29. Beverly Hills Community Center  
11000 Kingspoint 77075
- 30. Charlton Community Center  
8200 Park Place Blvd. 77017
- 31. Cloverland Community Center  
11800 Scott 77047
- 32. Crestmont Community Center  
5200 Selinsky 77048
- 33. DeZavala Community Center  
907 76th Street 77012
- 34. Eastwood Community Center  
5020 Harrisburg 77011
- 35. Edgewood Community Center  
5803 Bellfort 77033
- 36. Garden Villas Community Center  
6720 S. Haywood 77061
- 37. Hartman Community Center  
9311 E. Ave. P 77012
- 38. Ingrando Community Center  
7302 Keller 77012
- 39. MacGregor Community Center  
5225 Calhoun 77021
- 40. Mason Community Center  
541 South 75th 77023
- 41. Meadowcreek Community Center  
5333 Berry Creek 77017
- 42. Sagemont Community Center  
11507 Hughes 77089
- 43. Settegast Community Center  
3000 Garrow 77003



# NORTHEAST



## Houston Parks Community Centers *Northeast Region*

- 44. Clark Community Center  
9718 Clark 77076
- 45. Clinton Community Center  
200 Mississippi 77029
- 46. Finnigan Community Center  
4900 Providence 77020
- 47. Lakewood Community Center  
8811 Feland 77028
- 48. Melrose Community Center  
1001 Canino 77076
- 49. Moody Community Center  
3725 Fulton 77009
- 50. Perez Selena Community Center  
6402 Market 77020
- 51. Robinson Sr. Community Center  
1422 Ledwicke 77029
- 52. Shady Lane Community Center  
10220 Shady Lane 77093
- 53. Swiney Community Center  
2812 Cline 77020
- 54. Taylor, Hobart Community Center  
8100 Kenton 77028
- 55. Tidwell Community Center  
9720 Spaulding 77016
- 56. Tuffly Community Center  
3200 Russell 77026

24,493	acres of parkland	145	baseball softball fields
338	parks	1	beep baseball field
101	miles of trails/pathways	186	soccer/football/rugby fields
56	community centers	2	lacrosse fields
39	swimming pools	1	cricket field
13	water spraygrounds	1	croquet field
1	indoor adaptive recreation swimming pool	3	tennis centers
7	golf courses	156	neighborhood tennis courts
1	first tee golf course	156	basketball courts
2	dog parks	267	playgrounds
13	fitness centers	2	gardens
1	adaptive recreation fitness center	3	bird sanctuaries



**Houston Parks and Recreation Department Headquarters  
Gragg Building Atrium**

## **CITY OF HOUSTON**

Bill White, Mayor

## **HOUSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

Joe Turner, Director

### **EXECUTIVE STAFF**

Doug Earle, Deputy Director  
Recreation and Wellness

Abel Gonzales, Deputy Director  
Greenspace Management

Cheryl Johnson, Deputy Director  
Management and Finance

Mark Ross, Deputy Director  
Facilities Management and Development

Karen Cullar, Assistant Director  
Grants, Legislation and Development

Rick Dewees, Assistant Director  
Park Administration

Estella Espinosa, Division Manager  
Communications

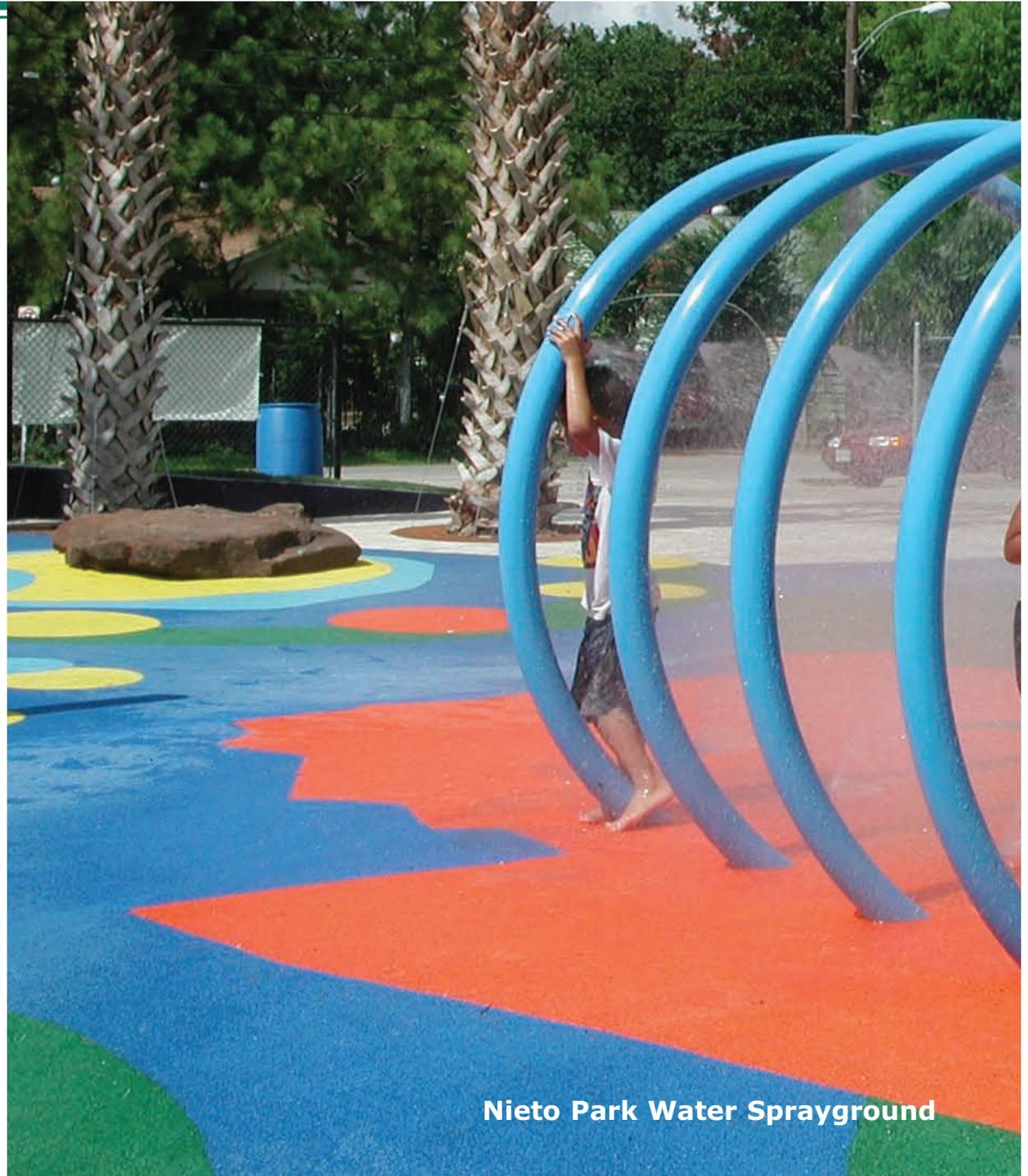
Joe Cochran, Division Manger  
Urban Park Rangers/Lake Houston Park

Maria Padilla  
Administration Manager

Dan Pederson  
Council Liaison



2999 S. Wayside Drive  
Houston Texas 77023  
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**Nieto Park Water Sprayground**