

# Future Community Facilities

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## SECTION 21 – FUTURE COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Introduction

The Community Facilities section relies on factors such as the projected population growth and the future land use plan to draw conclusions about Navasota's future needs. Planning for community facilities must be coordinated with the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly with the Future Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Plan reflects the desired growth pattern within the City and influences the allocation and placement of community facilities.

### Goals & Objectives

#### **Goal #1: Consolidate and centrally locate appropriate City municipal offices in one location.**

- Objective 1: Navasota should raise funds within the next five years to install an elevator in City Hall to allow the third floor to be utilized for office space.
- Objective 2: The City should facilitate a redesign of the City Hall floor plan to provide office space for appropriate municipal departments.
- Objective 3: The City administrative offices should be relocated that do not reside in City Hall (including the Public Works offices).

#### **Goal #2: Renovate existing Public Works Building.**

- Objective 1: Upon completion of the redesign of City Hall, the Public Works Offices should be moved to it.
- Objective 2: Navasota should investigate and acquire funding for the redevelopment of the Public Works Building site.
- Objective 3: The Public Works Building site should be redeveloped for potential uses named in the Navasota Economic Development Plan.

**Goal #3: Maintain the duties of the Police Department with appropriate provisions of personnel, police services, and facilities.**

- Objective 1: The City should ensure that the Navasota Police Department has adequate personnel, equipment, and facilities to meet the current and future needs of the community.
- Objective 2: Navasota should provide a periodical review of the staffing needs of the Police Department and hire additional staff to accommodate growth and increased demands for service.
- Objective 3: The City should maintain an inventory of equipment and identify replacement and acquisition needs in advance to ensure appropriate budgeting.
- Objective 4: Regular software and equipment upgrades should be supported ensuring the department has state-of-the-art technology.
- Objective 5: Continuous training and education programs should be provided for department personnel.
- Objective 6: Navasota should encourage and utilize management and personnel training available through the National Emergency Training Center and FEMA.
- Objective 7: The City should consider the initiation of programs such as a ride along program, a community-policing program, and/or a Neighborhood Watch program.

**Goal #4: Continue to maintain high quality fire services and facilities.**

- Objective 1: The City should ensure the Fire Department has adequate resources and facilities to meet the needs of the growing population and expanding service area by reviewing staffing needs periodically and hire additional employees as needed.
- Objective 2: Service areas and response time should be regularly reviewed with regard to the location of future fire stations.
- Objective 3: Regular technology and equipment upgrades should be supported.

- Objective 4: Navasota should promote fire prevention and expand public outreach and education programs.
- Objective 5: Community programs should be continued and expanded such as CPR training, fire prevention week activities, school programs, and fire extinguisher classes.

**Goal #5: Continue to maintain, expand, and upgrade existing parks under the care of the City of Navasota and promote the development of new parks and greenways.**

- Objective 1: The City should improve the maintenance of all parks, recreation areas, and facilities.
- Objective 2: Navasota should prioritize improvements for current and future city parks through a parks and recreation improvement program.
- Objective 3: The City should identify methods of financing park facilities and other improvements, including grants, user fees, loans, bequests, parkland dedications, and local funding.

**Goal #6: Conserve natural resources and open spaces for recreational use.**

- Objective 1: Navasota should design and implement a parkland acquisition/dedication policy for new developments.
- Objective 2: Existing natural resources that warrant protection, conservation, and enhancement of the City should be identified and acquired.
- Objective 3: The City should encourage the preservation of open space by entities other than the City (e.g. private corporations, non-profits, individuals, and other public agencies).
- Objective 4: Tourism activities should be promoted through the use of natural amenities.
- Objective 5: Floodways and flood plain areas should be preserved for linear greenways and connections between parks.

- Objective 6: Navasota should encourage park development along Cedar Creek.
- Objective 7: The City should determine new park locations and amenities within the established park zones in order to spread amenities equitably throughout the City. New park locations should be based on the population growth and desire for recreational opportunities.

**Goal #7: Improve and develop a pedestrian and bicycle network which connect parks, neighborhoods, schools, open spaces, and other destinations.**

- Objective 1: Navasota should identify potential corridors and locations for trails that are safe and feasible.
- Objective 2: Easements, right of ways, and drainage areas should be identified that could potentially be utilized as a linkage between parks.
- Objective 3: The City should develop and implement policies to acquire or utilize easements during the early stages of corridor development.
- Objective 4: Navasota should improve and develop a trail system that connects the parks along Cedar Creek from the northeast side of the City to Downtown.

**Goal #8: Provide quality indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.**

- Objective 1: Potential programs and activities should be identified that will take place in the new recreation center.
- Objective 2: Navasota should establish and facilitate recreational programs for all ages of community members.
- Objective 3: The City should adopt and implement an agreement with other entities such as the Navasota I.S.D. to share parks and other facilities.

**Goal #10: Improve the quality of life for current and future Navasota residents through quality educational opportunities.**

- Objective 1: Navasota should partner the high school cooperative program toward local businesses and industry.
- Objective 2: The City should inform the public of educational resources, new educational programs, and classes through City publications, brochures, and a web site.
- Objective 3: Night courses should be provided at the high school for programs including computer literacy, art, job skills, and English as a Second Language.
- Objective 4: Navasota should invite healthcare professionals to educate the public about and describe programs which are available as well as career opportunities.

**Goal #11: Provide quality health services for Navasota residents, by providing for the specific health needs in the community.**

- Objective 1: Navasota should educate residents about health programs and services available.
- Objective 2: The City should encourage Grimes St. Joseph Health Center to provide a location for geriatric care.
- Objective 3: As part of public outreach, the City should encourage health service staff to visit Navasota High School as mentioned above to educate students about health needs.
- Objective 4: The City should annually review population growth and determine health care programs/facilities needed in order to adequately serve Navasota residents.
- Objective 5: A community initiative program should be implemented to encourage a healthy diet, exercise, and lifestyle.

## **Municipal Government**

The City of Navasota needs to consolidate as many municipal functions as is appropriate and feasible. City Hall has the potential to house all or many of Navasota's administrative offices, although some structural changes are needed to add the necessary office space. The upper space in City Hall is not fully utilized, and has the potential to provide room for growth within its excellent Downtown location. In order to fully use the top story of City Hall, an elevator and shaft must be installed to provide access for disabled employees and citizens. The top priority should be to identify funds for the project with construction on the elevator shaft. Elevator installation and floor plan redesign are the next steps to properly retrofit the building. Upon the completion of the elevator shaft and floor plan renovations, city administrative offices not already in City Hall can be relocated.

Upon consolidation of Navasota's municipal departments, the land where the existing Public Works Building stands would potentially be available for public/private redevelopment. This land as well as other city-owned property in Downtown could be leveraged as an incentive to carry out some of the revitalization and economic development projects outlined in the Navasota Economic Development Plan.

Administrative office consolidation may provide additional benefits to both employees and the public. Consolidation may also aid in a stronger community presence and infuse land capital for needed revitalization projects.

## **Police Services**

As the City of Navasota grows, so should the services that protect the City. Over the next ten years, the Navasota Police Department must actively seek to serve citizens in an effective and efficient manner while maintaining the courteous, ethical, honest, progressive, and professional services currently offered by the Department.

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports, an average of 2.3 sworn officers should be available for every 1,000 residents. With a population of approximately 7,000 and 18 sworn officers, the current ratio for the City of Navasota is 2.57 officers per 1,000 residents. To continue to meet the required ratio, an additional officer should be hired when an increase of 435 residents occurs. For a higher standard, the average of 3.2 sworn officers per 1,000 residents should be followed for cities with a population less than 10,000. To meet this higher standard, 4 more sworn officers would need to be employed as soon as possible. After the addition of 4 officers, an additional officer should be hired when an increase of 313 residents occurs.

Currently, office space needs for the Navasota Police Department are being satisfied in the existing facility. Similarly, the equipment and number of patrol vehicles meet the needs of the community, but should continually be monitored to ensure that appropriate protection is maintained. Technological upgrades, such as implementation of camcorders or computers in patrol vehicles, should be made whenever financially feasible to increase the effectiveness of the Department.

To ensure adequate protection and cooperation of the residents of Navasota, the police department should increase community involvement. A number of programs are available and a comprehensive web link can be found at the end of this section.

## **Fire Services**

Using projected growth for the City of Navasota, the City will remain in the population range of 5,000 to 9,999 for the foreseeable future. With this population, the standard of 2.4 full-time firefighters is required. Currently the City has 3 full-time firefighters and should maintain this level. As for equipment, an additional pumper truck will be needed once the population increases to 7,600. This is predicted to occur sometime after 2015. According to Municipal Benchmarks, one fire station will continue to meet the needs of Navasota, based on population projections through 2015, but the distance to outlying residences should be monitored to ensure that appropriate response times continue. When locating



future fire stations, consideration should also be given to travel impediments such as the railroad.

In addition, the Navasota Fire Department should seek to increase awareness of fire safety and protection throughout the City. This can be done by providing information to citizens on wildfires, planning fire escapes, and cooking safety. More information for the public can be found at the end of this section.

## **Park & Open Space Plan**

As growth occurs, the City of Navasota will be challenged to provide superior parks and recreational opportunities. These parks must be readily available to the public, equitably located, and provide high quality. The recreational opportunities must serve the entire population and offer a diverse group of programs. Parks and recreational opportunities directly impact the future aesthetic values as well as quality of life within the City. This Park and Open Space Plan will identify the local park needs and provide recommendations for actions to be taken by the City to further develop a parks system, which will adequately serve future citizens.



Hillside Park & Cedar Creek

### ***Proposed Parkland***

According to the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) standards the City of Navasota needs to develop more parkland. The process of projecting future park and open space needs is driven by two key factors: city population and park location. The changes in population determine the appropriate size and number of future parks needed. The locations of the parks are based on security and accessibility. These locations should be identified prior to development and flexible enough to permit parkland acquisition as proposed later in this section. Sites along

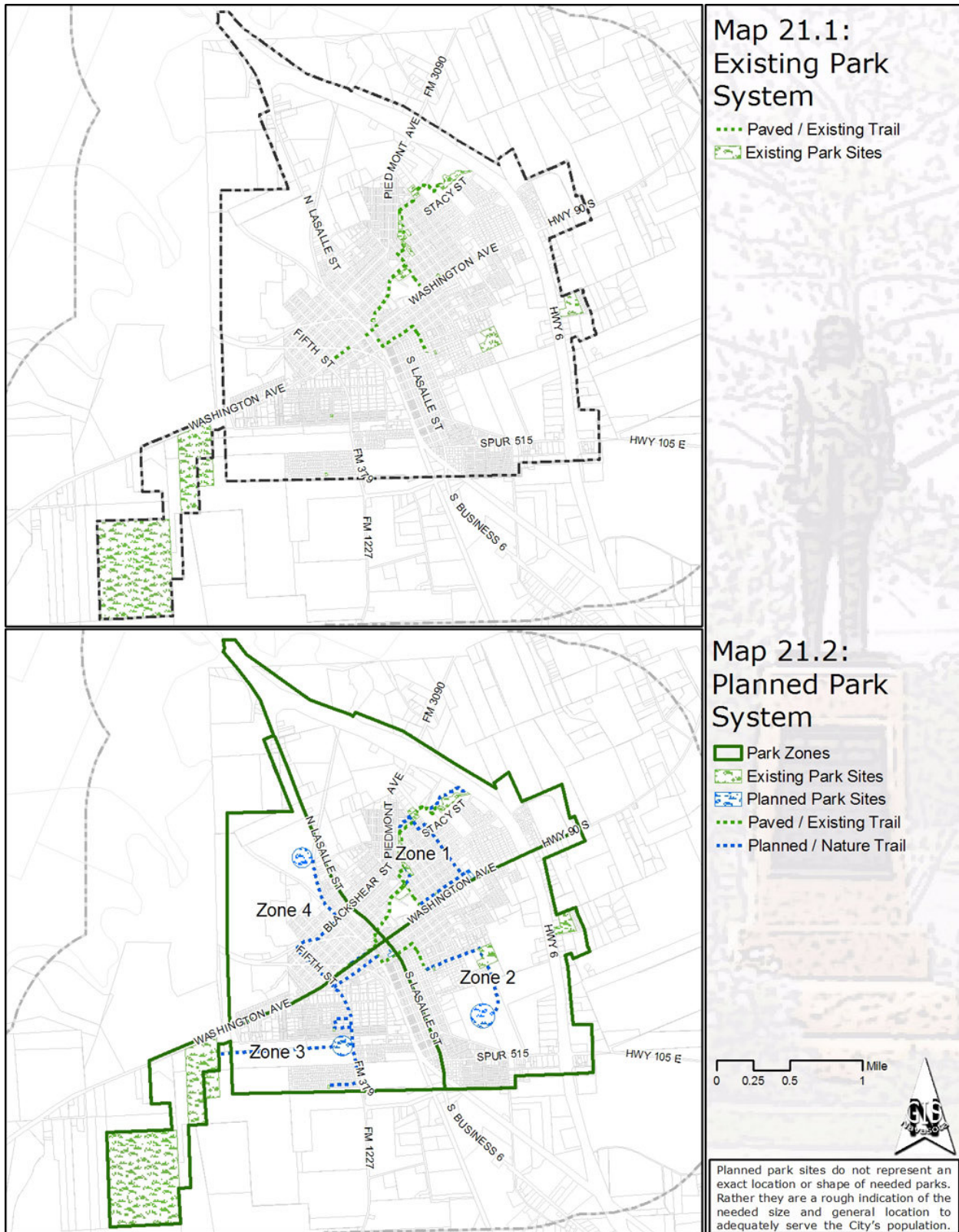
creeks, such as Cedar Creek, are desirable for park locations. Furthermore, park sites must be located in a way that will not require pedestrians to cross major thoroughfares. Intersections with major thoroughfares will discourage bicycle and pedestrian use. In the event that major street crossings are necessary, some form of traffic calming should be employed to promote usage. For example, a median could be utilized in the center of a major road as a point for the pedestrian to pause during traffic.

In order to determine sites for future parks, the City was divided into four park zones. These zones followed the major crossroads of the City. The park zones are indicated on Map 21.3 and are numbered one through four. Their boundaries are LaSalle Street, Washington Avenue, and the city limits. Once the zones were identified, the amount of parkland within each zone was calculated. The NRPA standards were then applied to the City. These standards were applied based on the population that is served by each park. The service areas are displayed on Map 21.3. Once the service areas were determined, the parkland proposals were made based on the population that was not being served by a park (Map 21.2).

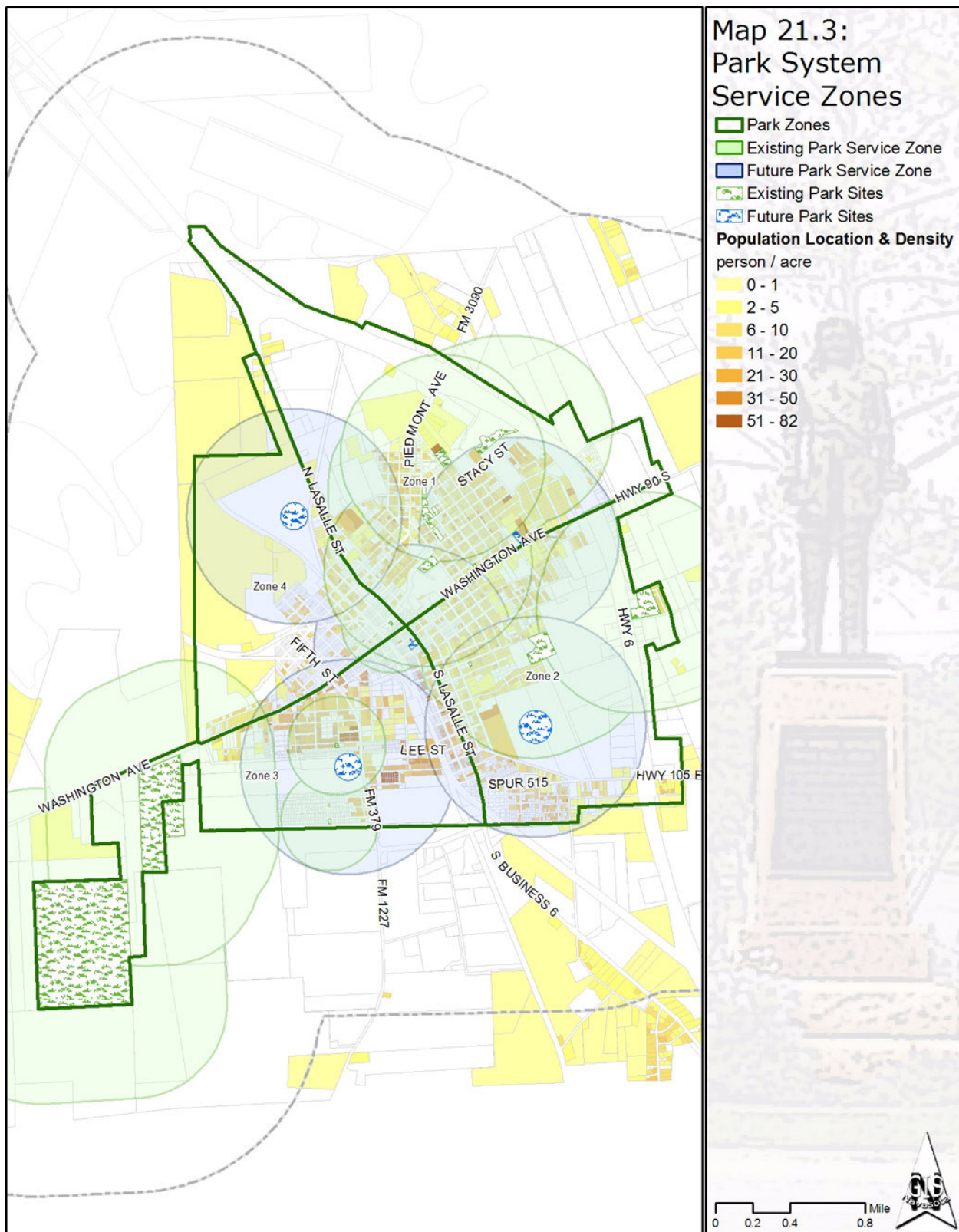
Overall, proposals were made based on the total amount of parkland, current park locations, and needed park types. Three larger neighborhood parks are recommended within park zone 2, 3, and 4. These parks should be roughly 10 to 15 acres in size and will support the use by the surrounding population. The neighborhood park locations were arbitrarily chosen based on the population needs. The shape of the site is strictly for the purpose of demonstrating general location needs. Miniparks were proposed in zone 1 and 4. The mini parks were determined based on assumed availability of property or potential partnership opportunities.

### **Neighborhood Parks:**

- Proposed Neighborhood Park in Zone 2: This park should be roughly 15 acres in size and can potentially serve 1700 people within a half-mile radius. The park can include amenities such as picnic tables, ball fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, swing sets, and a jogging loop with exercise







stations. The general location was established due to the vacant property close to the apartment complex. It also fits well with the planned residential development.

- Proposed Neighborhood Park in Zone 3: This park should be close to 10 acres in size and can serve an estimated 2800 people within a half mile radius. Due to the close proximity to higher density developments, this park should support more intense and family oriented outdoor recreational activities. Such amenities can include picnic tables, bar-b-que pits, basketball courts, playground equipment, tennis courts, volleyball courts, ball fields, swing sets, and a jogging loop with exercise stations.
- Proposed Neighborhood Park in Zone 4: This park should be an estimated 10 acres in size and can serve 900 people within a half-mile radius. During the early stages of the park it should include more passive uses such as picnic tables and ball fields. As the population grows and develops in this area, the park then should acquire more facilities to serve the public.

**Miniparks:**

- Proposed Minipark in Zone 1: The location of this minipark was chosen due to the position of the detention pond and the potential for a partnership with Harlan's Food Mart. The property is already utilized as a detention pond and adding park amenities will not affect the property's ability to retain water. The City could provide amenities to the site for lower intensity uses and Harlan's could allow the public to utilize the land. Furthermore, the location will potentially serve the neighboring retirement home as well as the neighborhood located behind Harlan's Food Mart. The park site would add aesthetic value to the store as well as the neighborhood.
- Proposed Minipark in Zone 4: The addition of a minipark in the Downtown area of the City would help enhance the connectivity between parks. A specific site has not been selected. The park should be roughly half an acre

to one acre in size with low intensity uses such as picnic tables. The current Downtown park serves as the end of the nature trail. Adding another minipark roughly a fourth to a half a mile away will promote connectivity. This site could help create a linkage between the north and south sides of the City while promoting the unique natural atmosphere in Downtown.

### ***Parkland Dedication Program***

A Parkland Dedication Program would be beneficial to the City of Navasota. The adoption of an ordinance implementing this program will require new residential developments to set aside property for a park or pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication. Fees collected would be placed in a city administered account and could only be used for park development and maintenance within the zone of the original dedication. The City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, or Parks Board should be responsible for establishing a per-unit standard of both land and fee dedication fund. Parks Board approval of dedicated land or fees should be a mandated part of the platting process for all new residential subdivision development. This program would help to guarantee the availability of parkland to the residents of the City. Furthermore, a separate program could be created to accept property donations from individuals. The opportunity to leave property to the City of Navasota would also provide potential parkland.

### ***Community Athletic Complex***

The existing 9-hole golf course should be converted into a community athletic complex. The City of Navasota already has solicited plans for an athletic complex from an architect. Creating the complex would accommodate the growing little league population as well as the potential for Navasota to host athletic tournaments. The facility would be able to serve a large amount of the



Current Municipal Golf Course & Facilities

population, as it is a multi-use complex. Primarily, facilities for youth activities as well as fields for adult events could be provided. The addition of ball fields, playground equipment, and basketball courts could be beneficial outcomes for the citizens of the proposed athletic complex.

### ***Hike & Bike Trail***

The existing pedestrian and bicycle trail travels along Cedar Creek connecting several parks and potentially Downtown. It is recommended that the existing trail be renovated as well as expanded in order to promote connectivity between the different parks and pedestrian destinations. Map 18.1 in the Future Transportation section (section 18) demonstrates a hike and bike trail proposal. The proposed trail connects the Cedar Creek Corridor to the proposed parks within other sections of the City. Linkages between the downtown park and the Cedar Creek park system as well as to the proposed athletic complex are essential.

Adoption of a proposed trail system into the overall Thoroughfare Plan would aid in implementation by utilizing the same acquisition policies for trails that are currently used for streets. In order to promote usage, these valuable linkages should be made. One of the main issues with the trail connecting to Downtown is the intersection with LaSalle Street. This intersection is difficult for the pedestrians to cross due to the traffic and lack of traffic calming. The implementation of a median would offer the pedestrian/bicyclist the opportunity to pause in the middle of the street when crossing. Another method of safe passage could be rerouting the trail underneath LaSalle Street. Connecting the proposed athletic complex on the edge of the City with the rest of the community would promote usage as well as offer the children an alternative means of transportation to the park.

### ***Recreational Programs***

The City of Navasota could benefit from additional recreational programs. With the future completion of the recreation center, there would be space available for new programs. Proposed programs include:

- Boys & Girls Club
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters

- Girl Scouts & Boy Scouts
- Arts & Crafts Classes (knitting, crochet, needlework, wood working)
- Senior Citizen Programs (club, computer classes)
- After School Programs (Kids Klub, tutorials, latch key kids programs)
- Music Classes
- Dance Lessons
- Dog Obedience
- Aerobics
- Youth Programs

## Educational Facilities

The existing educational facilities of Navasota adequately provide for the population. Navasota's student teacher ratio is within the recommended standards and exceeds both the state and national averages. Thus meaning that the ratio between the number of students to teachers is ideal. Future population growth will determine the need for additional facilities and teachers. Based on maximum build-out calculations, the future population of students will increase and may require new facilities or expansions of current facilities. The increase in age ranges is shown in Table 21.1.



Swimming Pool, Stadium, & NISD Administration Building

**Table 21.1: Students by Age Groups**

Age Range	Current Number of Students	Current School Facilities	Projected Number of Students
Age 4-6	273	Navasota Primary	554
Age 7-8	291	John C. Webb Elementary	446
Age 9-10	347	Navasota Intermediate	465
Age 11-13	401	Navasota Junior High	668
Age 14-18	401	Navasota High school	837



The figures are based on the maximum build-out capacity for single-family residential, medium density residential, and agricultural/residential density residential neighborhoods. If these numbers are reached, additional facilities may be needed. The addition of educational facilities would reduce class sizes and could be very beneficial to students. Smaller schools could foster a close sense of community, promote healthier student teacher interactions, and provide a better learning environment for Navasota youth. As Navasota grows it is recommended that the high school cooperative program be partnered toward local businesses and industry. Navasota's community would benefit from programs such as night courses teaching computer literacy, art, job skill training, etc. Along with these programs, public outreach should be initiated to inform the public of educational resources and programs available in Navasota.

## Health Services

The existing Health services and facilities are adequate for the current population of Navasota and will be able to support Navasota residents based on the projected population. Future population growth may require additional health professionals and or facilities. Based on the 2000 census data for Navasota, the future population in 2020 will be 7687. Table 21.2 indicates the number of recommended health professionals per 1,000 people, the current population's comparison, and the projected population recommendations.

***Table 21.2: Recommended Health Professionals per 1,000 People***

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	<b>Health Professionals per 1000 People</b>	<b>Current Number of Health Professionals</b>	<b>Projected Number of Health Professionals</b>
Physicians	1.50	7.00	10.00
Dentists	0.53	3.00	3.50
Hospital beds	4.00	25.00	27.00

Canter, L.W., Atkinson, S., & Leisritz, F., (1985). Impact of Growth. Chelsea, WI: Lewis Publishers.

Based on the projected needs and the proximity of College Station/Bryan, Navasota should have adequate healthcare well into the future. To further promote a healthy community, public outreach should be initiated. An outreach program that informs and educates residents of the health programs and services available in Navasota would be very beneficial. Another approach to foster a healthier community would be to initiate a Healthy Community initiative program similar to the Walk El Paso program. The primary objective of this program is to provide information, motivation, and opportunities for people to exercise.

### **Other Community Facilities**

In addition to the previously listed community facilities, the City of Navasota should establish other organizations and amenities to enhance the community's quality of life.

#### ***Skate Park***

A community skate park would offer the youth of Navasota a facility for skateboarding, inline skating, and biking. Providing a park for this use will prevent damage to other paved areas, which youth may currently be utilizing. More information can be found at the end of this section.

#### ***Convention & Visitor's Bureau***

The organization of a Convention & Visitor's Bureau (CVB) would help bring tourism to the City of Navasota. The City is encouraged to develop a CVB as soon as it can reasonable do so. Once the City as a whole becomes more of a heritage tourism destination, the need for this facility will increase. The creation of a convention center can follow the establishment of the CVB. A convention center can be utilized to draw visitors to the area.

The following 10 year action agenda is suggested for implementation of this section of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Action Agenda**

### **Year 1:**

- Estimate future costs of City Hall and Public Works building redevelopment.
- Allocate funding for the redevelopment gradually over a five year period.
- Adopt Parks Plan.
- Prioritize improvements of current and future parks.
- Develop parkland acquisition program (through parkland dedication ordinance or donation program).
- Repair and add signage along existing hike/bike trail.
- Secure funding to complete the interior of the Community Recreation Center.
- Determine uses/programs for Community Recreation Center facilities.
- Provide adequate personnel and equipment for police and fire services as specified in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Create a citizen task force to implement desired community policing programs as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Year 2:**

- Locate and apply for funding to support the community athletic complex.
- Investigate the addition of bike lanes and sidewalks to support connectivity between parks.
- Establish and facilitate recreational programs for community.

### **Year 3:**

- Investigate programs to promote public participation in maintenance of parks.

### **Year 4:**

- Begin construction of athletic complex.

### **Year 5:**

- Evaluate progress and effects of community policing programs on crime within Navasota.

### **Year 6:**

- After adequate funding for the renovations/redevelopment of City Hall have been acquired begin construction on the elevator.

- Once City Hall's elevator has been installed centralize targeted municipal departments in the building.
- Investigate the feasibility of a Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).
- Promote tourism activities through natural amenities and historic resources.
- Market Navasota resources (athletic complex, swimming pool) to other cities in the county for tournament use.
- Begin land acquisition in order to develop a trail system linking the park system.

### **Year 7-9:**

- Begin redevelopment of the existing Public Works building site.
- Redevelop Public Works building site.
- Collaborate with other entities such as Navasota ISD to share parks or facilities.
- Develop trail system to connect Cedar Creek to northeast side of the City.

### **Year 10:**

- Meet national standards concerning total acreage of parkland within the City.
- Evaluate progress and effects of community policing programs on crime within Navasota.

### **Ongoing Activities:**

- Annual evaluations of all municipal facilities should be completed in order to fully utilize facilities.
- Update parks plan.
- Search for funding through grants, users fees, and donations for parkland acquisition.
- Solicit public input concerning new park development.
- Select new park locations based on population density.
- Preserve floodways and floodplains for linear greenways.
- Identify easements and right-of-ways that could be used as park linkages.
- Continue to provide adequate personnel and equipment for police and fire services as specified in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Continue community policing programs as advised by the citizen task force formed in Year 1.

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<http://www.firesafety.gov/directory/public/>

<http://planner.eskal8.org/skateparkfaq.asp>