

**TAKE NOTICE THAT A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
WILL BE HELD AT CITY HALL, COMMISSIONERS' ROOM,
118 S. CAGE BLVD., 2ND FLOOR, PHARR, TEXAS
COMMENCING AT 12:00 NOON ON
MONDAY, JULY 3, 2017**

"The City of Pharr has called this meeting as allowed pursuant to Texas law, city charter, and Ordinance O-2015-28. The governing body may recess from day to day when it does not complete consideration of a particularly long subject as authorized by law. All persons desiring to address the governing body must register with the presiding clerk prior to the scheduled meeting"

1. REGULAR SESSION:

A. Call Meeting to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Consideration and Action, if Any on Approving the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

D. Adjournment

I, the undersigned authority, do hereby certify that the above notice of said Special Called Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board of the City of Pharr was posted on the bulletin board at City Hall and on the City's web page at www.pharr-tx.gov. This Notice was posted on the 29th day of June, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. and; will remain posted continuously for at least 72 hours preceding the scheduled time of said meeting, in compliance with Chapter 551 of the Government Code, Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated (Open Meetings Act).

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL, this 29th DAY OF JUNE 2017.




CITY CLERK
for

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 3, 2017 AT 6:00 P.M.
118 S. CAGE BLVD., 2ND FLOOR, PHARR, TEXAS

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Pharr, Texas met on Monday, July 3, 2017, at 12:00 Noon and the following is the record of attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Johnny Ramos*
 Oralia Rodriguez
 Allen Williams
 Rebecca Lizcano

STAFF ABSENT: *Eduardo Mata*
 Mari Caballero
 Frank Nuñez

STAFF PRESENT: *Sergio Alanis*
 Elva G. Edmundson
 Isaac Escobedo

ITEM A: CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Johnny Ramos called the meeting to order.

ITEM B: ROLL CALL

Johnny Ramos introduced the item.

ITEM C. CONSIDERATION AND ACTION, IF ANY ON APPROVING THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Johnny Ramos introduced the item. He then opened the floor for any board discussion. Board members had no discussion Board member Allen Williams made a motion to approve the item. Rebecca Lizcano seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

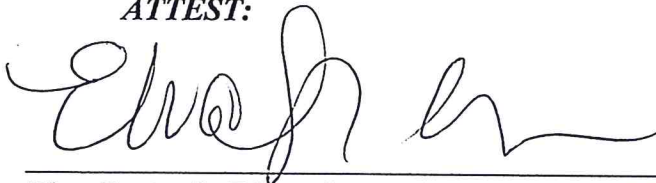
ITEM D: ADJOURNMENT

Johnny Ramos introduced the item. There being no further business, Allen Williams moved to adjourn. It was seconded by Rebecca Lizcano and the motion carried.

**STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HIDALGO
CITY OF PHARR**

ON THE 3rd DAY OF JULY 2017, the Parks and Recreation Committee of the City of Pharr, Texas, convened in a Special Called Meeting at City Hall, 118 S. Cage Blvd. The meeting being open to the public notice of the said meeting, giving the date, place and subject hereof, having been posted in accordance with chapter 551, Texas Government code (Open Meeting Act) and there being a present quorum, I Elva Guajardo Edmundson, Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant, of the City of Pharr, Texas, certify that this is true and correct copy of the minutes.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Elva Guajardo Edmundson', written over a horizontal line.

Elva Guajardo Edmundson, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED DATE: 10-5-17

MEMO

TO: Parks and Recreation Committee
VIA: Sergio Alanis, Assistant Director, Pharr Parks and Recreation Department
From: Ann Bagley, *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan* Consultant
Date: June 27, 2017
Subject: Changes to the Committee Review Document.

Here are the pages that are changed.

1-3 to 1-5: Changes to Census statistics provided by Robert Garcia

3-1: added Regional Park in Goal 1

5.1, 12, 16, 18, 22: corrected Jose "Pepe" Salinas Civic Center name, added Aquatic Center and PAL participation rates

6-6: added Regional Park Needs Assessment

7-2: added Regional Park to Priorities

Also, on the Future Parks Map, we will add a symbol * to show potential locations in the southern part of the City for a regional park and note that the symbols are not for specific properties.

I am working with my editor on the final proofing and formatting of the document.





POPULATION

Important to developing the current and future parks and recreation needs, is an understanding of the population. The City's recently adopted *Comprehensive Plan Update* provides recent data that reveals the makeup of the population. It should be noted that the U.S. Census considers Hispanics an ethnic, cultural, and language group, not a race. The population is further described in the following tables.

TABLE 1.1 – RACE AND ETHNICITY 2015		
Race	Pharr	Texas
White	85.1	70.4
Black	0.6	11.9
Asian	0.5	3.8
Native American	0.5	0.7
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0	0.1
Two or More Races	1.7	2.7
Other Race	11.7	10.5

Source: *Pharr Comprehensive Plan Update 2016-2025 from Sites on Texas Report, Detailed Demographics for Texas and Pharr, 2015*

TABLE 1.2 – HISPANIC DEMOGRAPHICS		
Hispanic/Not Hispanic	Pharr	Texas
Hispanic	93.0	70.4
Not Hispanic	7.0	11.9

Source: *United States Census, Demographic and Housing Estimates 2011-2015, American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates*

On the following page, Table 1.3 – Age Distribution displays the different age categories in the City. It shows that over one-third (37.8%) of the population is under the age of 20. A further breakdown of the 20 to 64 category will most likely show that a large portion (35.5%) is under 40 years of age—further indication that there are active users of the parks and recreation facilities. At 11 percent, the older population must also be considered in the needs for walking trails and senior programming. The chart below may not fully reflect the use of the parks by Winter Texas.



TABLE 1.3 – AGE DISTRIBUTION	
Age Range	Pharr %
Under 5 years	10.4
5-9	9.9
10-14	9.7
15-19	7.8
20-24	8.0
25-34	14.1
35-44	13.4
45-54	8.8
55-59	4.1
60-64	3.2
65-74	5.4
75-84	4.0
85 and older	1.2

Source: *United States Census, Demographic and Housing Estimates 2011-2015, American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates*

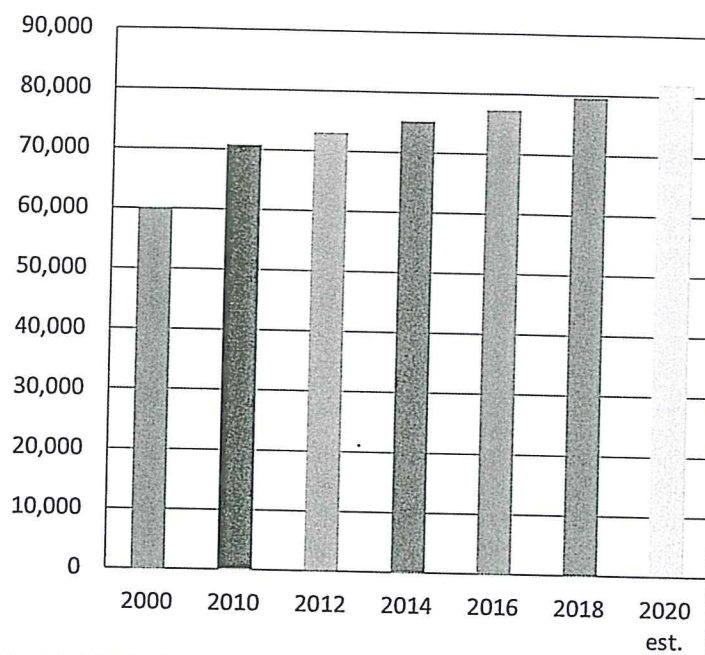
Pharr, the Rio Grande Valley, and the State of Texas have seen phenomenal growth over the past 17 years, and this growth is expected to continue. Since 1999/2000, the population has increased by 17,402—29.04 percent. This increase is attributed to the more accurate censuses following the annexations of south Pharr, new residential and commercial development, and general in-migration from inside and outside the Valley. It is estimated that growth will continue and another 6,000+ residents could live in Pharr by 2020. The numbers below are from the *United States Census, Population Division, Annual Estimates of Resident Population: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2016*

TABLE 1.4 – POPULATION BY YEAR	
YEAR	POPULATION
2000	59,918
2010	70,752
2012	73,094
2014	75,188
2016	77,320
2020 est.	82,065

SOURCE: *U.S. Census, Population Division, Annual Estimates of Resident Population :April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016*



TABLE 1.5 – POPULATION GROWTH



SOURCE: U.S. Census, Population Division, Annual Estimates of Resident Population:
April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016



GOALS AND ACTIONS

The goals of the *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan* provide the underlying framework for decision making for the City of Pharr's parks and recreation system. They should reflect the purpose, needs, and desires expressed by the citizens, with implementation possible within the next 10 to 15 years. Each goal has detailed actions necessary to move forward in improving and expanding the existing and future park system. Based on the survey and discussions within the Parks and Recreation Committee, the following goals and actions are to guide the future of Pharr's park system.

Goal 1: Provide a balanced, well-maintained, attractive parks system for the citizens of all ages.

- 1.1: Continue to work to develop neighborhood and community parks to serve all six park zone areas, particularly in underserved areas.
- 1.2: Revisit park dedication requirements to ensure that there are adequate park spaces in new residential areas.
- 1.3: Consider providing regional or citywide parks in currently undeveloped areas.

Goal 2: Assure that the current projects that are underway are completed.

- 2.1: Complete the City Hall Plaza Park.
- 2.2: Move forward with the construction of the Nature Park and Amphitheater in accordance with the recently awarded grant.
- 2.3: Move forward with the expansion of Dr. Long Park, Phase Two.
- 2.4: Move forward with the development of Arnold and Chavez City/School Parks in partnership with PSJA ISD.
- 2.5: Move forward with the redevelopment and future expansion of Jones Box Park.

Goal 3: Considering the climate in Pharr, expand the use of native trees, water-wise plants, and environmentally friendly building materials and techniques.

- 3.1: Plant native or adapted trees to provide shade at parks and recreation facilities. Assure that the necessary irrigation is provided.
- 3.2: Assure that landscaping is in accordance with CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) guidelines to provide safe, visible areas.
- 3.3: If trees are not feasible, design and install creative shade structures.
- 3.4: Use environmentally sustainable designs and construction in parks to minimize negative environmental impacts and create better public spaces.

Goal 4: Continue to work with Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District and other governmental entities on joint projects to serve mutual interests for the citizens and youth.

- 4.1: Look for new opportunities to develop new school parks.
- 4.2: Partner with Hidalgo County for support and development of parks and trails.

Goal 5: Maintain and expand recreation and sports programs to meet needs for population growth.

- 5.1: Create new classes and recreation programs identified in the park survey responses.
- 5.2: Continue working with the Police Athletic League (PAL) in providing sports programs.

Goal 6: Develop new and creative types of parks and open spaces that encourage healthy activities.

- 6.1: Develop a skate park at Victor Garcia Park to provide a new and in demand facility.
- 6.2: Install exercise stations on walking trails in parks.
- 6.3: Develop a dog park in an appropriate location. Provide rules for use.
- 6.4: Develop indoor facilities for sports exercise for individuals and groups.



INVENTORY OF PARKS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS

The Parks and Recreation Department has come a long way since it was created in 1972. Currently, there are 79 acres of park land across 11 parks and facilities, with expansion plans that will increase the park land to 120 acres. With an improving border economy, the City has invested time and money in developing and improving the number of parks and recreational programs it provides. More than 10,000 residents, from very small children to senior citizens, participate annually in programs provided by the Parks and Recreation Department. Even more residents and visitors take advantage of the playgrounds at the parks, swim and play at the Aquatic Center, walk on the paths and trails at the parks, play on the sports fields and tennis courts, and generally enjoy the park and recreation environment.

In previous plans, the City was divided into three park zones: 1, 2, and 3. For this new plan, and to better identify where parks are currently serving neighbors and where parks are missing, each larger zone was divided into two smaller zones, labeled A and B. Cage Boulevard/US 281 was the logical north/south dividing line for the new zones. The smaller zones provide a clearer picture of the park system.

The inventory of parks is found on the following pages. Information for each existing park is provided, including location/address, type of park, size, park zone, and for whom the park is named. The golf course is identified but not included in the acreage count above.

Also included are proposed parks and facilities with conceptual illustrations.

There are two maps, Existing Parks and Future Parks. The Existing Parks Map shows the locations of the parks and the recreation facilities with a quarter mile service area around each one. The Future Parks Map shows the locations of proposed parks that are in development and consideration stages. Park Zones 1A, 1B, 3A, and 3B have additional opportunities for future parks, even the potential for a larger regional park in Zone 3B.

In addition to the existing and future parks, an interest has recently been expressed in developing a larger community or regional park of over 100 acres. This type of park would include a wider range and number of facilities than the more local neighborhood oriented and city parks. As there are undeveloped tracts, as well as the need, there is potentially the opportunity to locate such a park in Park Zones 3A and/or 3B. Unstructured open space would be a major feature of this type of park. This type of park is shown on the Future Parks Map by a symbol for illustration purposes as it is not intended to designate a particular tract of land.



INVENTORY OF PARKS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS

JOSE "PEPE" SALINAS CIVIC CENTER/TENNIS/SKATE COMPLEX

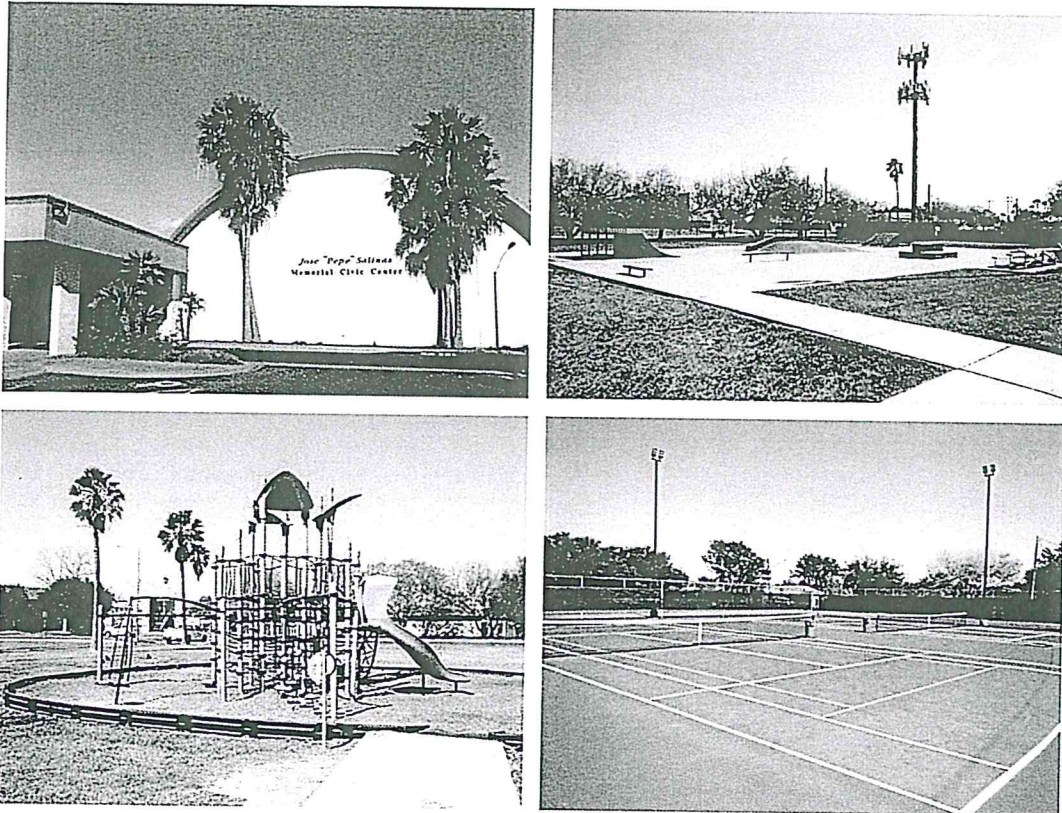
Address/Location: 1011 West Kelly Street

Type: Sports/Neighborhood

Size: 3 acres

Park Zone: 2A

Named for Jose "Pepe" Salinas, a former City Commissioner who also worked for the Parks and Recreation Department



The civic center was originally built in 1971. There have been additions throughout the years, including the LED-lighted tennis courts and a skate park plaza to the east of the facility. The park plaza sits on three (3) acres that also includes a play structure, water fountain, and benches for the adjacent neighborhoods.

Currently, several recreation programs are conducted at the indoor facility, including different dance and exercise classes, karate, tumbling, cheerleading, and guitar.



CESAR CHAVEZ ELEMENTARY CITY/SCHOOL PARK

Address/Location: 401 East Thomas Drive

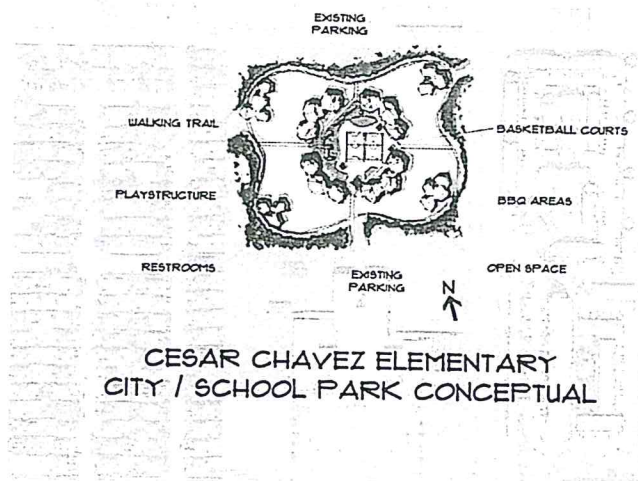
Park Zone: 3B

Type: City /School

Size: 25 acres

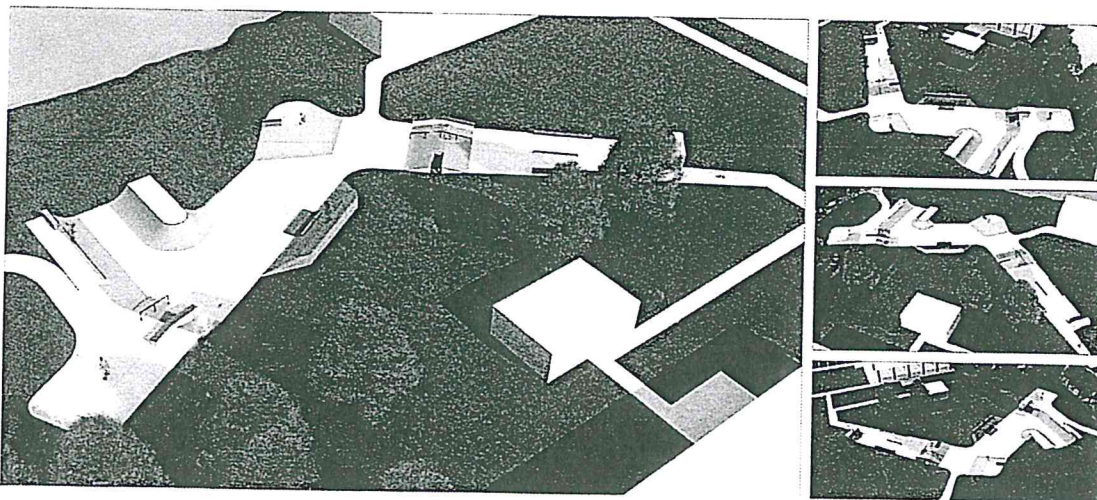
Named for Cesar Chavez, labor and civil rights activist

Located at the southeast quadrant of Pharr, this park will have standard amenities to include basketball courts, restrooms, covered picnic areas, a play structure, multi-use open space, and a walking trail that will be approximately a quarter (1/4) of a mile. Construction plans are already under way.



SKATEBOARD PARK AT VICTOR GARCIA PARK

Improvements in Victor Garcia Park include the development of a skateboard park where the swimming pool used to be. It will be the much needed second skateboard park in the City where the demand for such a facility is high. Skateboarding provides a high level of physical activity and skill development for younger residents of Pharr at a relatively low individual cost. Plans for the facility are already developed. Skateboard parks have been shown to be popular in recreation facilities all over the world.





INVENTORY OF PARKS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS

INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARK FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS																	INVENTORY OF PARKS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS	
Park Name	Size (Acres)	Benches	Water Fountains	Trash Cans	BBQ Pits	Canopies Shade Structures	Trees	Picnic Tables	Pavilions	Bleachers	Play Structures	Restrooms	Basketball Courts	Baseball/Softball Field	Open Space	✓ Sidewalks/Walking Paths/Trails	Other	
Victor Garcia Park	7	9	2	13	7	5	82	18	1		1	1						
Memorial Park	2					3		6	3		1							
Lorenzo "Lore" Garcia Park	7	10	1	10	7	5	37	7			1	1	2		✓	✓		
Pharr Aquatic Center	2	35	2	8		18	120	35										
Pharr Sports Complex	10		3	13	2	2	26	4		7				3				
Dr. William Long Park	5		2	6	3	3	42	3			1	1	2		✓			
Witten Park	0.5	2		3	2	3	9	3	2	2	1	1					Track and Field	
Dora Garza Park	1							1			1							
Jones Box Park	17	10	1	17	6	5	16	9	2	4	1	1				1		
Universal Estates	0.5							1					1					
Jose "Pepe" Salinas Civic Center/Tennis/Skate Complex	3																Tennis, Skateboard	



Aquatic Programs

The Aquatic Center provides a variety of programs for all ages. Participation rates increased steadily since the opening of the pool and associated facilities. Rates over the past three years have held steady at near capacity as follows:

PROGRAM	PARTICIPANTS
TAAF	100
Public Swim	5,000
Gus & Goldie	1,500
Lap Swim	6000
Aqua Aerobics	200

Source: Pharr Aquatic Center

Spots and Athletics Programs

Sports and athletics programs are provided by the Pharr Police Athletic League (PAL), a 501(c)(3) entity supported by donations and the City of Pharr. It is an affiliate of The National Police Athletics/Activities Leagues. PAL headquarters and facilities are located along with the offices of the Parks and Recreation Department at 413 East Clark adjacent to Lorenzo (Lore) Garcia Park

PAL's mission is as a "youth crime prevention program that provides civic, athletic, recreational, and educational opportunities and resources to create trust and understanding between police officers and youth. National PAL encourages youth to stay away from negative lifestyle choices such as gangs, drugs, and criminal activities by offering positive, healthy experiences with law enforcement." With its vision statement "To provide professional high-quality community services for the citizens of Pharr, by using fun athletic activities and educational programs that will improve their quality of life." To implement this vision PAL, offers the following sports and training:

PROGRAM	PARTICIPANTS	
	2015/2016	2016/06/27/17
Flag Football	190	180
Tackle Football	330	280
7 On 7 Flag Football	165	135
Girls Volleyball	340	323
Volleyball Camp	48	20
Boxing	360	360
Winter Baseball	272	250
Girls Basketball	355	256
Boys Basketball	337	46
Little Hotshots Basketball Camp	48	39
Girls Soccer	135	215
Boys Soccer	252	260
Soccer Camp	150	150
Lineman HS Challenge	170	141
Wrestling Camp	38	0
Pony Baseball/Softball	660	624
Football Camps	52	47



How does Pharr compare with other cities in the Valley? In the chart below, Pharr appears to provide less parkland per 1,000 residents than do the other nearby cities, although these cities are also below the national medians for their sizes.

PARK LAND IN THE CITIES SURROUNDING PHARR

CITY	POPULATION ESTIMATES	NUMBER OF PARK FACILITIES	APPROXIMATE ACRES OF PARK LAND	ACRES PER 1,000 POPULATION	NATIONAL MEDIAN ACRES PER 1,000
Pharr	70,400*	12	59.00	0.83	4.53-9.19
McAllen	129,877	25	243.75	1.87	3.94-7.65
San Juan	35,000	16	106.00/72.35**	3.02/2.06	5.23-9.67
Hidalgo	11,198	4	N/A	N/A	4.50-10.59
Alamo	18,353	6	38.00	2.07	4.50-10.59
Edinburg	77,110	13	241.40	3.13	4.53-9.19

* This population for Pharr is 70,400 is from the same list as the other cities. The *Comprehensive Plan Update* uses the higher figure of 76,329

**San Juan 72.35 developed acres

RESOURCE-BASED APPROACH

Pharr has two vital resources that can provide a variety of new and expanded parks and recreation opportunities. Park Zones 1A, 1B, 3A, and 3B have vacant land with the potential to be developed into a park. Also, an interest has been expressed in developing a large citywide/regional park in Zones 2A (southern part), 3A and/or 3B in South Pharr where there may be available land. Areas along the irrigation canals may provide ways to link the parks to each other and to activity centers with trails and sidewalks.

Secondly, the partnership with the PSJA School district is a great asset in City/School parks in which the school district owns the land and the City develops and maintains the parks and facility. There are four current examples of additional partnership: Phase 2 of Dr. Long Park and the future Armstrong, Chavez, and Ford school sites.

SUMMARY

To continue the progress that has been made, the City will need to add park sites and acreage, facilities and open space as it is below the national standards. The Aquatic Center is reaching capacity, so a new facility should be considered in the long range planning efforts. As the population continues to grow, more recreation programs will be need as well as new and updated spaces in which to hold the programs.

While the City's financial picture is bright, continuing to seek additional funding and matching grants is another important resource in improving the quality of life and promoting healthy lifestyles for Pharr residents.



2018-2023

- ⊗ Develop the walking/exercise loop in South Pharr.
- ⊗ Develop a skate park at Victor Garcia to provide an additional in-demand facility.
- ⊗ Develop Henry Ford City/School Park.
- ⊗ Develop plans for regional park in the southern part of the City.
- ⊗ Develop a dog park in an appropriate location. Provide rules for use.
- ⊗ Develop another indoor/outdoor aquatic facility to provide more space and facilities to reduce crowding at current facility. Partner with other jurisdictions on a new Aquatic Center, possibly in the northern and/or southern park zones in the City.

2024-2027

- ⊗ Develop indoor facilities for sports exercise for individuals and groups.
- ⊗ Work with adjacent cities and Hidalgo County to expand connections to parks and public spaces regionally.

While not exactly priorities, the following activities or actions should be considered in conjunction with ongoing and new programs.

- ⊗ Plant native or adapted trees to provide shade at parks and recreation facilities. Assure that the necessary irrigation is provided.
- ⊗ Design creative shade structures to be located in conjunction with trees.
- ⊗ Create new classes and recreation programs identified in the park survey responses.
- ⊗ Continue to work with the Police Athletic League (PAL) for the provision of sports programs.
- ⊗ Assure that landscaping is in accordance with CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) guidelines to provide safe, visible areas.
- ⊗ Include open space for play and pick-up games in new parks.
- ⊗ Revitalize the “adopt a park” program for groups to assist in the overall appearance of parks.
- ⊗ Continue to work to develop neighborhood and community parks to serve all six park zone areas, particularly in underserved areas.
- ⊗ Revisit park dedication requirements to assure park spaces in new residential areas.
- ⊗ Consider providing parks (open space for ballfields) in industrial and agricultural areas.
- ⊗ Incorporate environmentally sensitive approaches to mowing, planting, chemical use, and other maintenance tasks.

With a long list of accomplishments in providing parks and recreation places, the City has a new “to do” list that will move the City forward in providing a healthy, happy place to live and play.



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Source: Pharr Aquatic Center

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Football Camps	52	47



INVENTORY OF PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Middle School Rugby	185	0
High School Rugby	40	40
Crossfit Adult and Kids	540	650

Source: PAL

From a good foundation, Pharr will continue to expand its parks, open space, recreation programs and facilities over the next twenty or more years. This plan is a "guidebook" that will ensure that Pharr continues to be a happy and healthy community.