



City of Copperas Cove

T E X A S

City Built for Family Living

CHAPTER 5: PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Chapter 5 – Parks, Recreation and Open Space

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INTRODUCTION TO PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Vibrant state-of-the-art recreational facilities and programs serve as a vital component of growing communities. The quantity and quality of parks, recreation, and open space for family activities is reflective of the quality of life for the City. Copperas Cove has long recognized the importance of accessibility to park facilities, which is a key component to increase housing values along with having a direct correlation to its quality of life values. The following chapter examines the existing parks and recreation facilities, along with the recently approved capital improvement projects being completed. This assessment will help to identify any further needs in relation to parks and recreation activities.

The City of Copperas Cove maintains eight parks for the public’s enjoyment and 1 golf course:

1. Highland Park, 1203 Craig St. (W)
2. Heritage Park, 1929 Pleasant Lane (SW)
3. Kate St. Park, 603 Kate St. (SE)
4. High Chaparral Park, 1310 High Chaparral (W)
5. Edgar H. Rhode Park, 3514 Rhode Way

6. South Park, 2602 Dennis Street (CR 30 46) (SW). South Park has a paved hike/bike trail that runs along a local creek. The trail measures 0.7 miles one way and is used for many exercise and fitness activities. One of two swimming pools is located at this park and features a Splash Pad for our younger patrons. It also has a children’s playground and two youth multi-purpose fields.

7. Ogletree Gap Preserve, 1878 Post Office Rd. (Hwy 190 West). Ogletree Gap has the original stage stop at this historical town site. This is a beautiful area for exploring and walking in a natural setting. Ogletree Gap features a pavilion that can be reserved and rented for special events. This park also has established a new three-mile single track hike and bike trail.

8. City Park Complex, 1206 W. Ave. B. (NW). This is an 88-acre park with picnic areas, grills, playgrounds, soccer fields, baseball and softball fields, outdoor basketball and volleyball courts. City Park features the main public swimming pool in Copperas Cove which features a circular slide and a zero entry in the children’s play area with a mushroom fountain. And don’t forget your fishing pole and try your luck at the “duck pond”.

9. The Hills of Cove Golf Course, 1408 Golf Course Road.



Highland Park



Heritage Park



Kate Street Park



High Chaparral Park



South Park

Ogletree Gap Park

City Park



Edgar H. Rhode Park

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

The following is a summary outline for creating and developing a new Parks Master Plan. In April, 2011, the City of Copperas Cove created a Parks Needs Assessment which included the following elements:

- An executive summary.
- What did the design team learn from residents?
- City leadership, key stakeholders' input, youth engagement through meetings and surveys.
- Goals of the Needs Assessment were established.
- Development of preliminary master plans in five parks.
- Proposed sequence/cost of implementation.

To initiate the Parks Master Plan, current staff utilized this Needs Assessment to establish and prioritize the current five year Parks Improvement Plan to include the "project types" within this improvement plan. Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation Department hired BSP Engineers to initiate and produce the Master Plan, which started in October, 2018 with an anticipated completion of May, 2020.

THE FUTURE PARKS MASTER PLAN

- Update inventory on parks (park facilities and amenities).
- Update existing parks Needs Assessment / conduct one.
(What does the City have and what is the condition life cycle).
- Public involvement i.e. surveys, Town Hall Meetings (Being developed).
- Meet with City Council to hear their vision for City parks, include City Manager.
- Identify opportunities and deficiencies within the park(s).
-Inject current five-year plan (2017-2021) into inventory.
- Create schematic layout of each park / combine into the entire park system.
- Cost estimate to create "proposed" layout / Identify different funding opportunities.
- Take before City Council to receive input through workshop(s).
- Final report to City Council requesting adoption of this plan / update every five years.

WHY CREATE A PARKS MASTER PLAN?

- Master plans are tangible and often visible statements of where the park is now, what it should be in the future and what is required to get there.
- Good master plans are flexible, and have involved the community and other stakeholders from the outset, giving the plan a legitimate base, and a better chance to come to fruition.
- Master plans can build visibility and credibility for a nonprofit group, and can help them target projects and raise money.
- Master plans can/will assist the City in not only applying for but in being granted recreational grants (TPWD, one of the funding sources, requires an update to a Master Plan every five years in order for the entity to submit applications for funding).
- Include this active document into the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The current Capital Improvement Program will greatly improve the quality of parks in Copperas Cove. With the update to park infrastructure and much needed facility improvements, residents will have an improved quality of life. Landscaping improvements and installing monument signs will greatly beautify not only the park, but the surrounding neighborhoods as well. These improvements also reflect upon many of the identified outdoor recreational needs mentioned in the previous need’s assessment.

It is important to take these priorities into account to examine what has been funded and/or built since the previous Comprehensive Plan. It will also help formulate what priorities are still important, and if there are any new priorities for the current population.

An October 2016 update to the 2017 – 2021 Capital Improvement Plan involves many improvements to parks and recreational facilities throughout Copperas Cove. Over the next five years, approximately 3.7 million dollars of park improvements have been approved. These include projects that involve improvements and creation of parking lots/sidewalks, walking trails, restrooms, pavilions, playgrounds, monument signs, fitness stations, security lights, multi-purpose fields, and a splash pad.

Table 5-1 shows the park improvements to be implemented.¹

PARK IMPROVEMENTS BY YEARS

ITEM/PROJECT TYPE	FY	FUNDING	YEARS	PHASE
PARKING LOTS/SIDEWALKS	2017-2018	\$1,556,367	2017	1
**WALKING TRAILS	2017-2018 (On-going)	378,029	2018	2
RESTROOMS/CONCESSION	2018-19	834,425	2019	3
PAVILIONS	2020	431,250	2020	4
PLAYGROUNDS	2021	500,000	2021	5
MONUMENT SIGNS	2017			
FITNESS STATIONS	2021			
SECURITY LIGHTS	2021			
MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS	2021			
TRAILS AND PARKING	2022-23			
		\$3,700,071	TOTAL	

¹ 2017 – 2021 Capital Improvement Plan, City of Copperas Cove, 2016
http://www.copperascovetx.gov/files/parks/town_hall/town_hall.pdf

ITEM/PROJECT TYPE	
PARKING LOTS/SIDEWALKS	<p><u>Identified the 1st phase:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parking lots in 7 out 8 parks 2. Sidewalks/Walking trails 3. Monument Signs in all 8 parks 4. Developing construction signs at each park outlining phases
WALKING TRAILS	
RESTROOMS	
PAVILIONS	
PLAYGROUNDS	<p><u>Phase 2:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuing Phase 1 focus (Trails and Parking Lots) 2. Move into restroom renovation at City Park, South Park, and High Chaparral
MONUMENT SIGNS	
FITNESS STATIONS	
SECURITY LIGHTS	
MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS	<p><u>Phase 3:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Renovation to restroom, concession and storage areas at the following parks: CP, SP, and High Chaparral
SPLASH PAD	

Phase 4:

1. Continue renovation to restroom, concession and storage areas at the following parks:
 - City Park
 - South Park
 - High Chaparral
2. Begin construction of park pavilions

Phase 5:

1. Continue pavilion construction
2. New play structures
3. Play structure canopies
4. Fitness stations along identified walking trails
5. Security lights
6. Multi-purpose fields

Table 5-1: 2017 – 2021 Capital Improvement Plan Inventory

CITY PARK AREAS AND FACILITIES

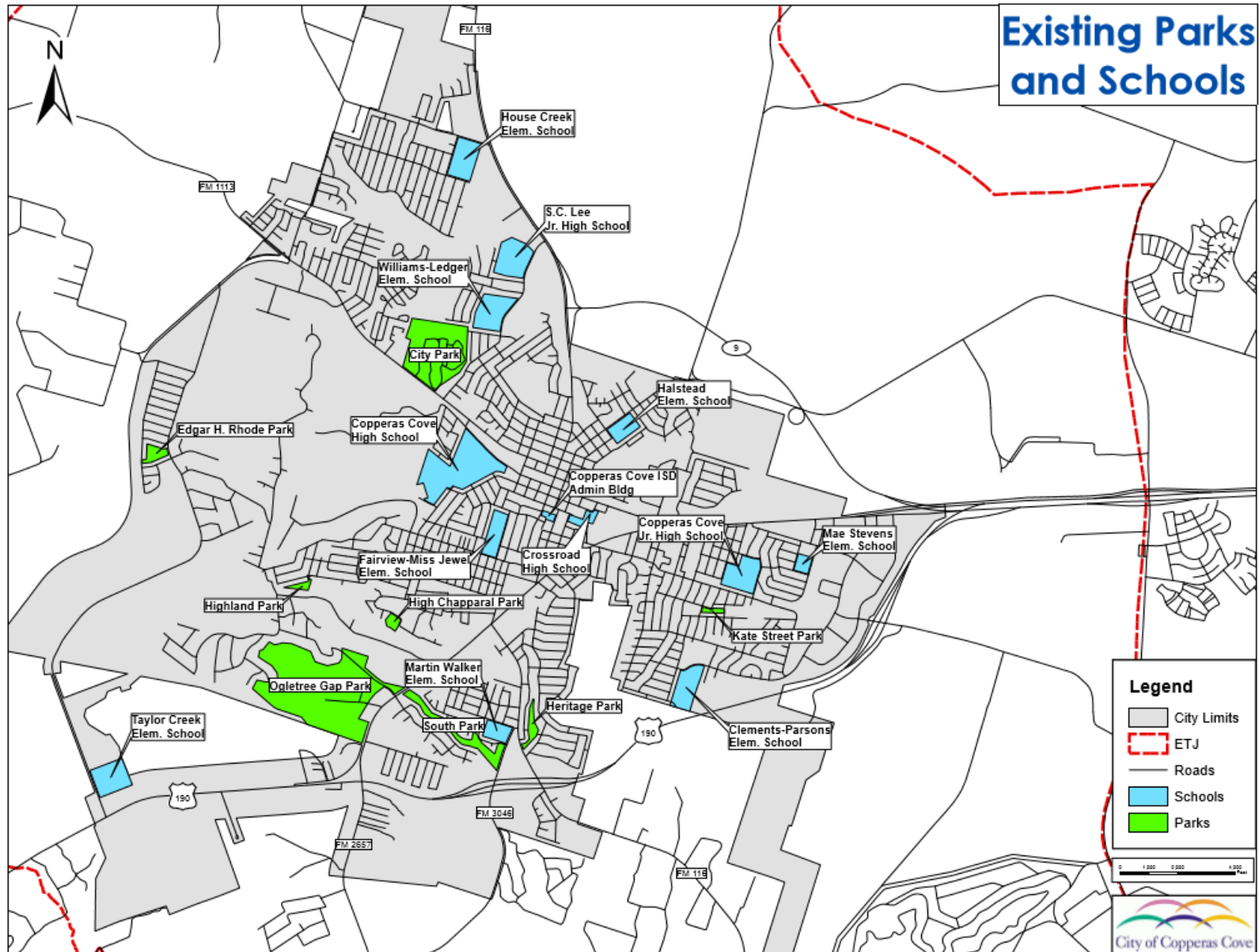


	Acres	Restrooms	Pavilions	Picnic Units	Play Units	Pool	Open Play Area	Pond	Grills	Walking	Basketball	Soccer	Baseball
City Park 1206 W. Avenue B.	88												
South Park 2602 Dennis Dr.	22												
Ogletree Gap Preserve 1808 Post Office Rd.	218												
Highland Park 1203 Graig St.	4												
Heritage Park 1929 Pleasant Lane	7												
Kate Street Park 603 Kate St.	23												
High Chaparral Park 1310 High Chaparral	5												
Edgar H. Rhode Park 3514 Rhode Way	4												

Table 5-2: Inventory of City Parks in Copperas Cove
Source: Copperas Cove Tourism Guide

Recreational parks and open spaces are provided through the City’s Public Park Areas and Facilities. The City currently operates and maintains eight City parks and facilities that can be seen on **Table 5-2**. Copperas Cove has approximately 371 acres of park land and 100 acres of golf course currently maintained and operated by the City. Ogletree Gap Park is the largest park and Highland and Rhode are the smallest parks.

Map 5-1 displays both City parks and schools.

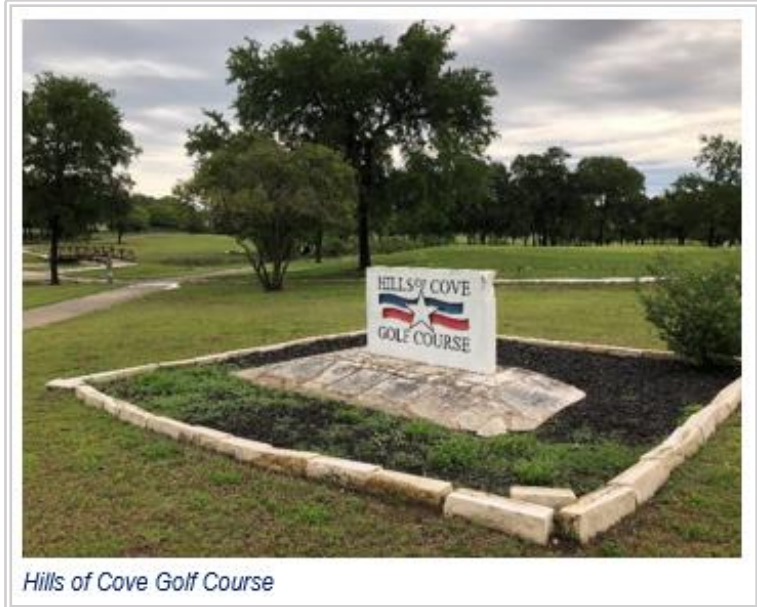


Map 5-1: Existing Parks and Schools

The Hills of Cove Golf Course

Hills of Cove Golf Course is an 18-hole facility owned and operated by the City of Copperas Cove. The original nine holes golf course was built in 1972, but was expanded to 18 holes in 1999. The course, a par 71, winds its way through the rolling terrain of Northeast Copperas Cove and is made up of five challenging par 3's, nine magnificent Par 4's, and four exuberant Par 5's. The Hills of Cove offers a golf professional, golf lessons, a full-service pro-shop, beer sales, driving range, grill, and a fleet of 40 Yamaha golf carts.

The City has taken some aggressive steps towards creating and developing this course to serve as one of the top municipal courses in our region. The City is currently navigating a 3 Phase, Cart Path Renovation project that will see nearly 4 miles of new concrete cart path. Phase 1 started in December of 2018 and will look to wrap up Phase 3 in 2020.



Hills of Cove Golf Course

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STANDARDS-BASED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) releases an annual Research Report that analyzes the standards for parks across the United States.² The NRPA recognizes that every city varies in population and individual needs. The 2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review shows that typically there are 10.1 acres of park land per 1,000 residents in the United States. Copperas Cove's current park acreage is 471 acres, which includes 100 acres for the Hills of Cove Golf Course. At a population of 34,787, Copperas Cove is currently exceeding the NRPA recommended acreage which is 351.3 acres for the current population. At its projected 2040 population of 51,950, Copperas Cove would need 524.7 acres of park land. This means Copperas Cove would need to add 53.7 acres to accommodate the projected population.



The City also needs to focus on the facilities and recreational features available at each park.

²<https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/park-facilities/>

Golf Course Cart Path Restoration

Cold Hard Facts:



Phase 1 will accomplish the base bid and additive alternates 2-6

- 4k square yard of cart path
- 3,200 square yard of sod
- 6 culvert crossings
- 12 bridge approaches amended
- 8k linear feet of post and cable established

Phase 2 will accomplish additive alternates 7-10

- 2k square yard of cart path
- 1,600 square yard of sod
- 6 bridge approaches
- 4k linear feet of post and cable established

Phase 3 will accomplish additive alternate 11, 12 and 1 (Maintenance road)

- 1k square yard of cart path
- 800 square yard of sod
- 2k linear feet of post and cable established



Facility-Activity Standards

Table 5-3 shows the Outdoor Park and Recreation Facilities medians for the United States for populations of 20,000 to 49,999. These facilities do not include school facilities due to the ISD being responsible for the school facilities, and not the Parks and Recreation Department.

	NRPA Median for Population of 20,000 to 49,999	Current	Needed to meet current population (34,787)
Basketball Courts	1 per 7,056	2	5
Community Gardens	1 per 24,775	0	1
Baseball Fields (Youth)	1 per 5,000	3	7
Dog Park	1 per 27,552	0	1
Playgrounds	1 per 3,019	6	12
Football Field	1 per 17,173	0	2
Soccer Field (Youth)	1 per 4,839	6	7
Swimming Pools	1 per 26,474	2	1

*Table 5-3: Comparative Development Standards
Source: National Recreation and Parks Association Annual Research Report*

As the table shows, Copperas Cove does have a variety of outdoor recreational facilities. However, Copperas Cove is lacking in community gardens and dog parks; but these are facilities/activities that the City is looking to plausibly identify through the on-going development of the Parks Master Plan. Copperas

Cove and Copperas Cove Independent School District (CCISD) currently share facilities through a long-standing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU allows City use of various athletic facilities, while also allowing CCISD access to various City facilities. These types of agreements bolstered with long range planning will solely assist the City in creating and developing a strong quality of life while looking at a projected growth of approximately 17,000 people by 2040.



Dog Friendly Purser Family Park, Harker Heights. Source: <https://www.bringfido.com/attraction/11799>.

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 5-1: Provide a high-quality park and recreation system, meeting the needs of the citizens of Copperas Cove.

Objectives:

- Add parks as necessary in newly annexed residential areas.
- Develop and establish more youth activities and facilities.

Policies:

- Expand park facilities as Copperas Cove continues to grow.
- Coordinate with CCISD school groups, local churches, and other youth engagement groups to provide regularly scheduled activities for the entirety of the City's youth.

Implementation Measures:

- Copperas Cove will continue to grow and annex. It is important to add parks to these new areas, regardless of exceeding the median acreage for parks by the NRPA. The City must also be careful here as it relates to the types of park classifications. The City should ensure that it maintains a balanced allotment of park classifications.
- Park Classifications:
 - Mini-Park
 - Neighborhood Parks
 - Community Park
 - Regional Park
 - Special Use Areas
 - Greenways/ Linear Park
 - Natural Resource Areas
- Something lacking in the current park system within Copperas Cove are dog park(s) and community garden(s). These provide important recreational facilities for citizens of Copperas Cove. It allows people to meet their neighbors and interact with a diverse group of people. Community gardens also provide great opportunities for families to grow and share their own food.
- Develop a parkland dedication ordinance. A parkland dedication ordinance would allow the City to acquire future sites for parks and open space. As the City continues to annex and expand within its ETJ, it will be important to set aside and identify land specifically for use of parks and recreation.
- Enhance green space by encouraging the establishment of landscaped areas.
- Commit to the upkeep of existing parks and recreation spaces.
- Implementation of the Parks Master Plan. Initiating the Parks Master Plan began when the Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation Department hired BSP Engineers to initiate and produce the Parks Master Plan, which started in October, 2018. The 2020 Parks Master Plan has been incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Encourage the Parks and Recreation Department to create year-round activities, lessons, and events that appeal to all age groups.