



New Orleans City Park Master Plan
Vision for the 21st Century - City Park 2018

Adopted by:
The Board of Commissioners of the City Park Improvement Association
March 29, 2005
Amended November 27, 2007



Why is a Plan for City Park Important?

City Park is the heart of the region with an astonishing array of facilities and open space. The park is incredibly important to the **quality of life** of everyone in the region and its health and vitality is important to every citizen and employer.

The Park has a significant economic impact on the region which will be dramatically threatened if the Park is not put on a sound financial plan and if the facilities in the Park are not modernized and improved. According to the University of New Orleans (pre-Katrina):

- The Park accounted for a total spending impact of over \$100 million dollars.
- The Park supports directly or indirectly over 1,350 jobs
- The Park creates a "halo" effect on surrounding property values. The Park increased the value of surrounding property by a total of nearly \$400 million dollars.
- The Parks operation creates approximately \$11 Million in State and local government annual tax revenue

Hurricane Katrina Reaffirms Importance of Plan

The massive destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005 reaffirmed the importance of the Plan. While the recovery of other institutions and facilities were significantly delayed because of the lack of a master plan, City Park 2018 immediately provided a blueprint for re-building and revisions to the Park. The Park has used the Plan to guide restoration efforts, raise funds, marshal public and private support and to coordinate the efforts of numerous public and private supporters.

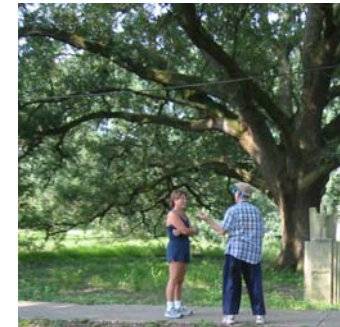


Mission of the Park - "Preserve and improve park spaces for recreational, educational, cultural and beautification purposes."

Mission of the City Park Improvement Association

Goal of the Plan - Make City Park the premiere urban park in the nation!

Over the next 10 years, existing Park facilities and infrastructure will be repaired and renovated with new facilities and uses introduced. The Park will be financially self sufficient, properly maintained and will offer an extensive array of programs and cultural educational experiences to the public to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the founding of the City of New Orleans.



Introduction - New Orleans' City Park is one of the country's oldest and largest urban parks. With the first parcels acquired in 1854, its 1,300+ acres dramatically illustrate the challenges and successes of the city's remarkable history.

The vision and plan for City Park was adopted in 2005, intended to guide development of the Park over the next decade and a half. The vision and plan were developed with extensive input from the public through a process which included a regional telephone survey and an online survey through a redeveloped master plan web site, as well as two well attended public meetings. In addition, other great public parks such as Central Park, Balboa Park, etc were examined to learn about trends in park planning and current thinking regarding programs and facilities appropriate to great regional park asset.

Many ideas and suggestions were developed during the community needs and assessment process. The following represents highlights of that input.

- Additional museums/cultural facilities
- More concerts/festival areas in the Park
- Increase the amount of undeveloped open space available to the public
- Programs for all age groups
- Children's water play area and skate park
- Dog park/animal agility center
- Improve lagoons/fishing/water quality
- Create a comprehensive forestry program
- Walking/jogging/bicycle paths
- Renovate the golf complex
- Renovate infrastructure/better maintain the park's buildings and grounds



In 2007, the Park undertook a review of the Plan, particularly designed to determine if modifications to the plan were necessary as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The Park undertook a new Regional Telephone Survey, conducted a public hearing and reviewed proposals submitted by interested groups. This research confirmed that the initiatives contained in the adopted plan were still correct and that only minor adjustments in the plan were necessary.



City Park Vision The vision statement describes the community's aspirations for the park. It is written from the perspective of ten years into the future.

City Park is a vital urban park, recognized for its beauty, diversity, and stewardship of its resources. Its 1,300 acres of lush parkland and waterways, crossed by a network of trails, contain a rich array of recreational, educational, cultural, and environmental resources well-used by the neighborhood, city, region, and State. City Park is a regional attraction, an important part of the region's economic development infrastructure and contributes to the economic vitality of the neighborhoods. The park's historic landscape has completely recovered from Hurricane Katrina and is the setting for contemporary programs and events that appeal to all ages. Through partnerships, public support, and creative fund-raising, the park maintains attractive facilities, grounds and programs that add to the enjoyment, health, and enrichment of the community.

The vision is structured around five themes. These themes are separated for clarity and emphasis, but are, in fact, closely related. Together, they describe the community's vision for the park in its land uses, design and programs. These are the basis for the Initiatives as introduced on page 5.
"In 2018, we envision..."

Expanded recreational opportunities where...

- Healthy living is encouraged for all ages and abilities with places to play, compete, enjoy fresh air and nature.
- New facilities and activities meet the needs of the community.
- Public transit links the park's resources with neighborhoods throughout New Orleans.

Strong sense of community where...

- Life long learning opportunities encourage curiosity, creativity, team work, and career development.
- Families enjoy the park's variety of activities at every stage.
- Neighbors meet through park programs and build long-term relationships.
- Public health is encouraged and celebrated for park employees and visitors.
- Employment opportunities in park related fields such as environmental sciences, business, and recreational management are explored and developed.
- Local businesses are complemented by the improvements to the park.
- Citizens are actively engaged in their community.

Integrated natural and functional systems where...

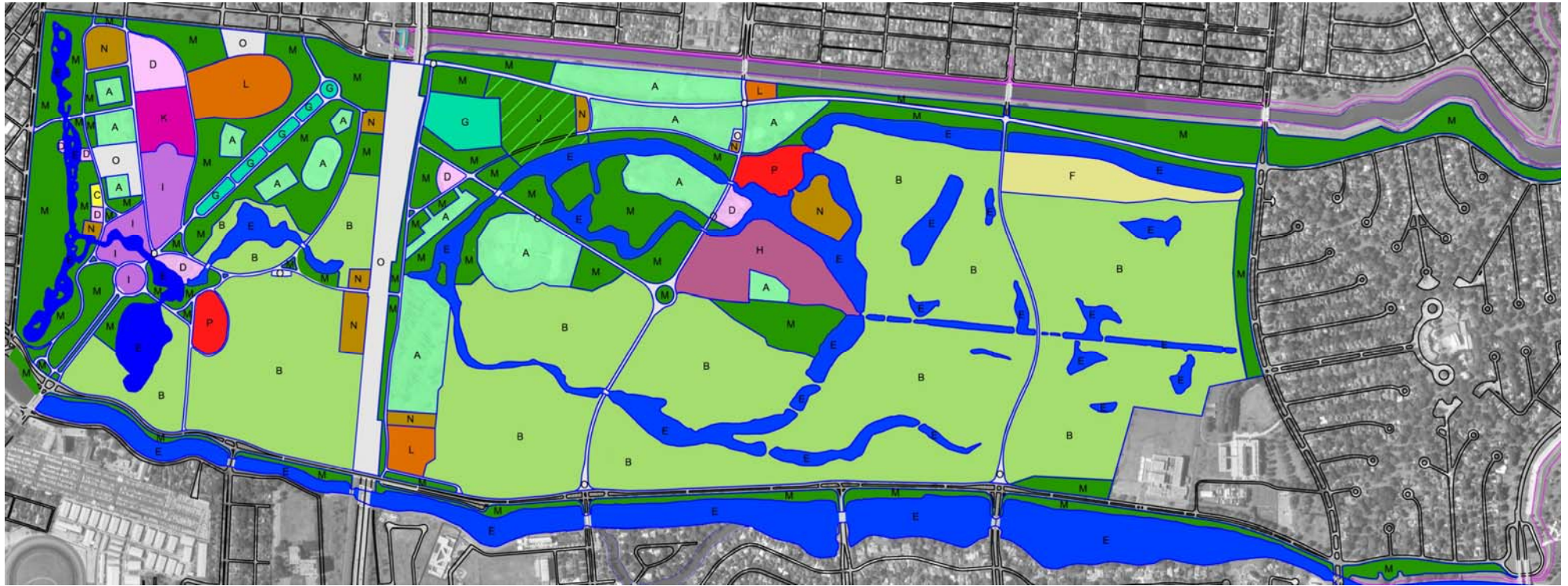
- Native Louisiana habitat of plants and animals thrive.
- Stewardship is a popular and rewarding recreational activity.
- Water quality throughout the park is high and routinely maintained.
- Trails and roads are safe and enjoyable routes to destinations throughout the park.
- The urban forest contributes to the park's character and environmental quality of the region.

Distinctive identity where...

- City Park's distinct heritage preserved and celebrated.
- A vibrant horticultural palette displays seasonal color of plant communities and traditions from New Orleans, the American South and exotic locations around the world.
- The surrounding neighborhoods enjoy and benefit from the park's year-round activities.
- City Park's recovery serves as an inspiration for citizens from throughout the region
- City Park is nationally recognized as a premiere public resource.
- Tourists find the park fun, safe, and well maintained.

Financial self-sufficiency where...

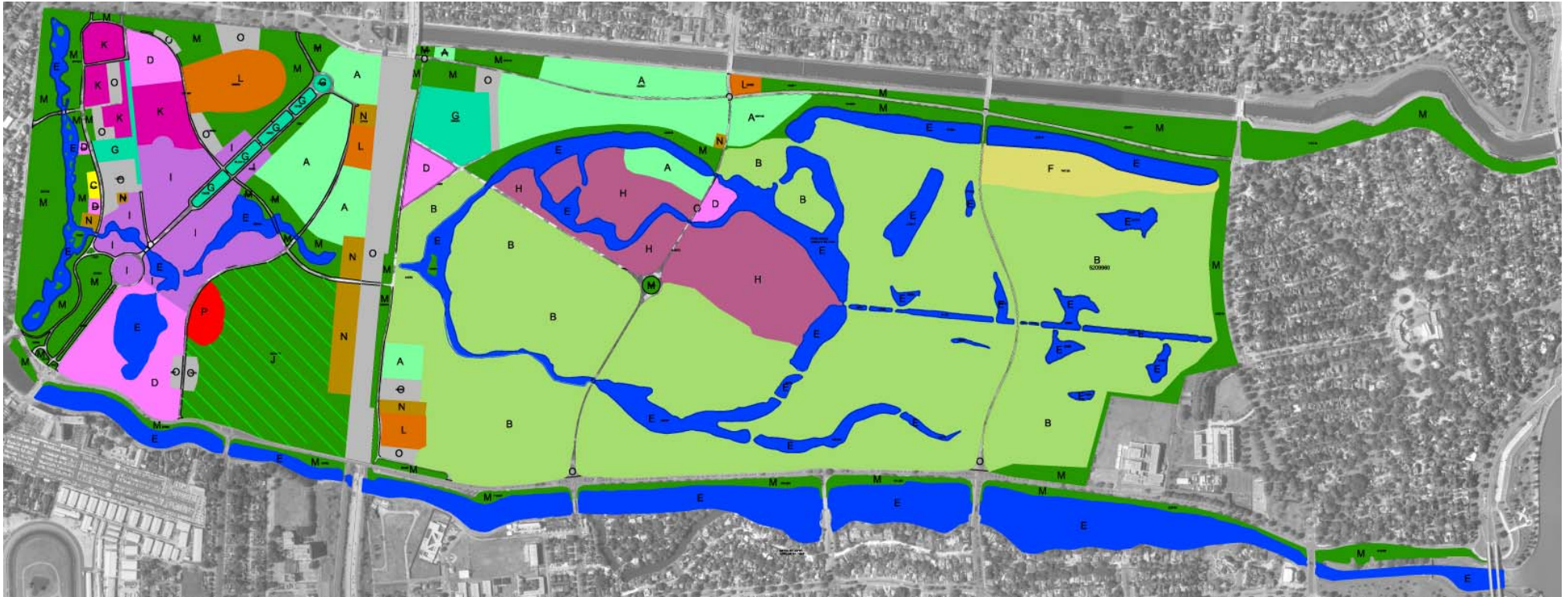
- Park management and governance are responsive to ever changing conditions.
- Funding of park improvements and operation is abundant and widely supported.
- A variety of public/private partnerships are mutually beneficial and grow with the park.
- Ongoing evaluation directs improvements at all levels.



Land Use Legend:

 'A' ACTIVE RECREATION / SPORTS	 'F' EQUESTRIAN CENTER	 'K' FAMILY / AMUSEMENT AREAS
 'B' ACTIVE RECREATION / GOLF	 'G' FORMAL GARDENS AND MALLS	 'L' STADIUMS / RECREATION CENTERS
 'C' ACTIVE RECREATION / PLAY	 'H' NATURAL RESOURCE AREA	 'M' UNDEVELOPED OPEN AREAS
 'D' PASSIVE RECREATION	 'I' CULTURAL AREA	 'N' PARK SUPPORT
 'E' LAGOON / BAYOU / WATER RELATED RECREATION	 'J' UNDEVELOPED OPEN AREAS / PERIODICALLY USED AS FESTIVAL GROUNDS	 'O' VEHICULAR CIRCULATION / PARKING
		 'P' NON-PARK RELATED AREAS



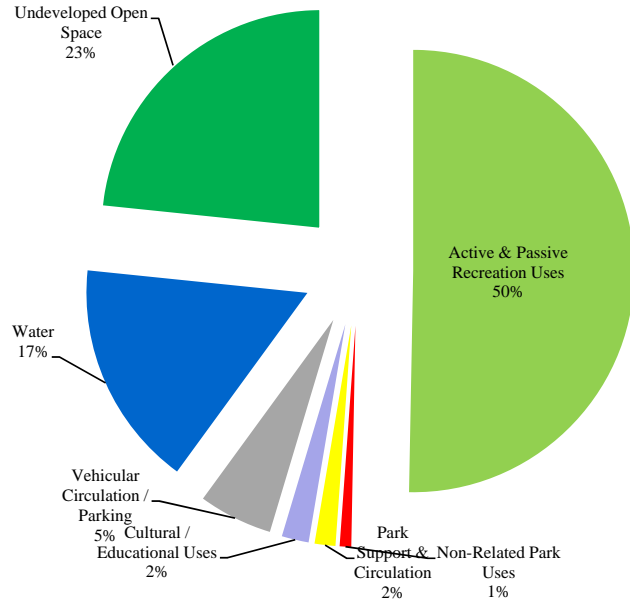


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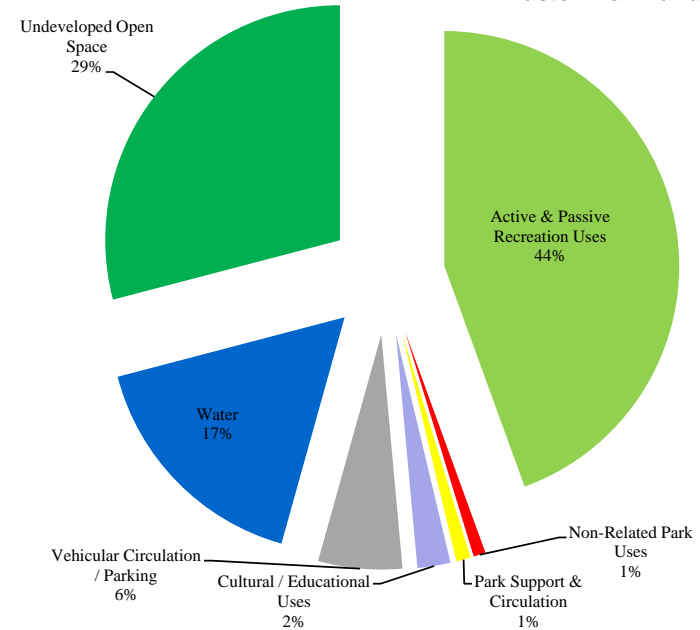
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Existing Land Use Allocations - 2005



Master Plan Land Use Allocations



Land Uses	Existing Acres	Existing Acres
Active & Passive Recreation Uses	50%	661.00
Non-Related Park Uses	1%	11.00
Park Support & Circulation	2%	20.00
Cultural / Educational Uses	2%	26.00
Vehicular Circulation / Parking	5%	71.00
Water	17%	218.00
Undeveloped Open Space	23%	307.00
		1,314.00

Proposed Acres	Proposed Acres	Change
44%	584.00	-6%
1%	11.00	0%
1%	13.00	-1%
2%	30.00	0%
6%	76.00	0%
17%	218.00	0%
29%	382.00	6%
	1,314.00	

Plan Initiatives

The proposed land uses are formed by the following initiatives. They are based on the City Park Vision's themes to meet the community's goal of making City Park the premiere urban park in America.

Central Place - Create a more vibrant focus for the historic core of the park by creating a more diverse family recreation and leisure activity area- Tri-Centennial Place

Open Space - Increase the acreage devoted to open and undeveloped park space by closing the south golf course and utilizing the space for open space and festival grounds.

Culture - Expand the area available for cultural and educational facilities including NOMA, Botanical Garden expansion and new museum sites.

Recreation - Improve the park's recreation facilities by building a new tennis center, dramatically upgrade the entire golf complex and upgrading the park's sports fields.

Education - Expand education, youth and senior programming, and outreach activities through increased budget allocations and with a new multi-purpose building.

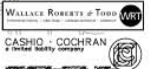
Healthy Living - Build a network of bike and walking/jogging trails to provide expanded exercise opportunities.

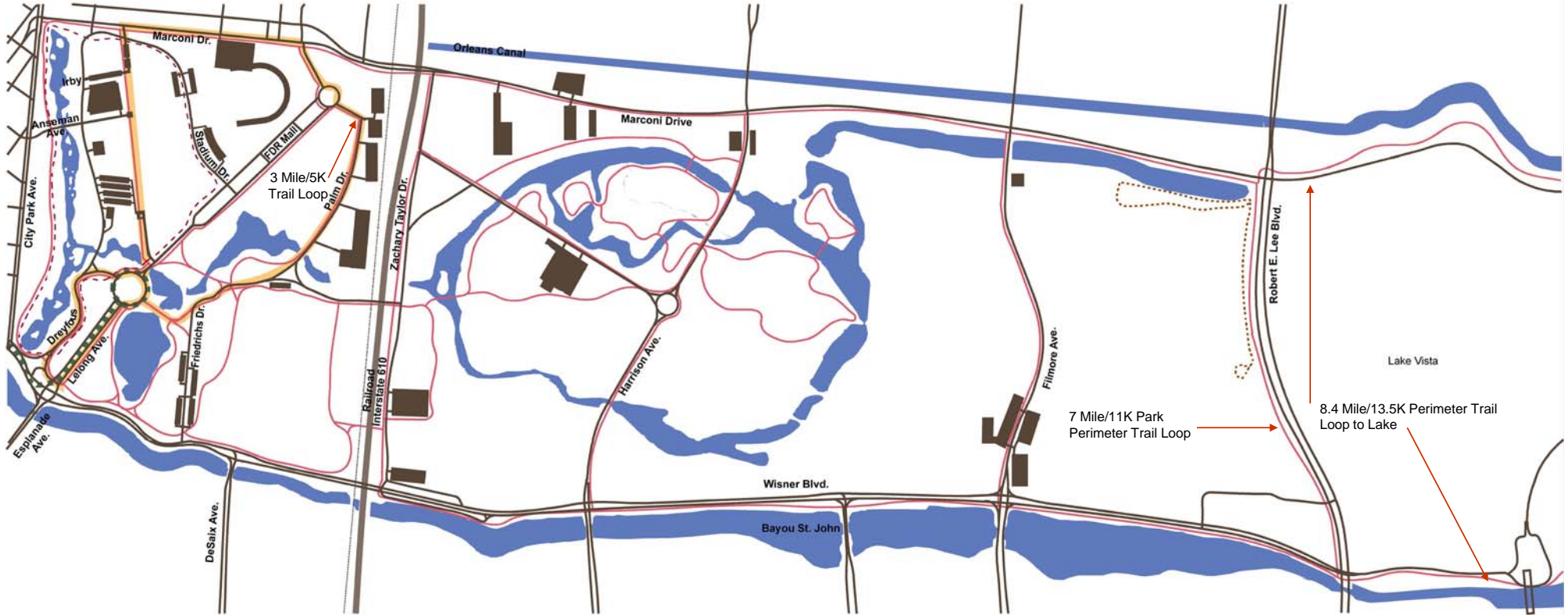
Natural Resources - Develop an extensive tree stewardship program, shoreline restoration and water quality improvement program.

Access - Improve and clarify access by minimizing redundant roads and realigning Stadium Drive: extend streetcar into park.

Infrastructure - Repair and modernize the park's buildings and utilities including drainage, water, electrical, sewer and roadways.

Implementation - Continue the development of a partnership between the Park, the City and the State to support the Plan with adequate operating and capital funding. Plan includes permanent funding commitments from all three parties.





Specific roads are realigned for safety and clarity including:

- Stadium Dr. from Storyland to FDR Mall

Proposed Circulation

Legend:

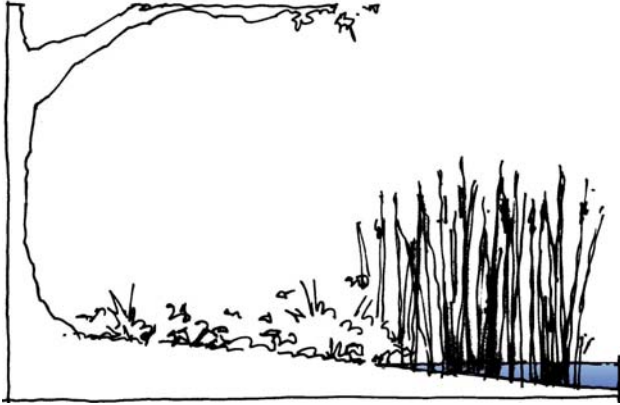
-  Automobile
-  Bicycle, Pedestrian Trails
-  Equestrian Trails
-  Parking
-  Waterways
-  Miniature Train
-  Park Shuttle Route



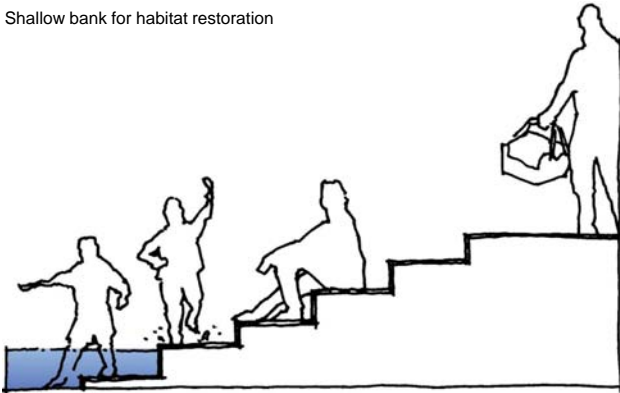


View down Tri-Centennial Place

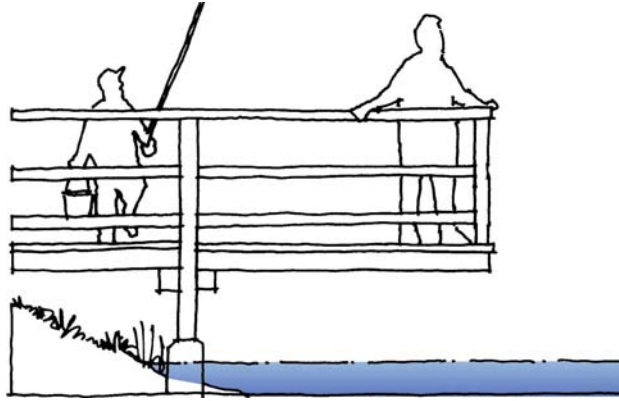




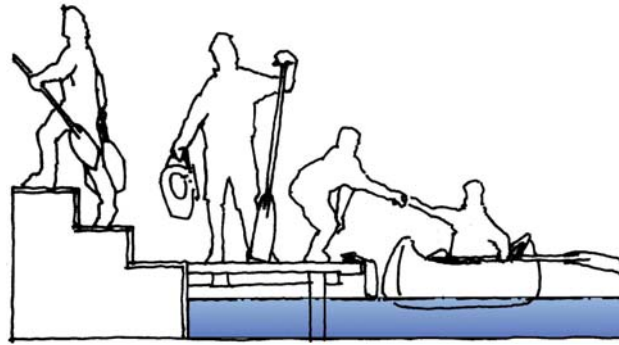
Shallow bank for habitat restoration



Steps located in areas of active pedestrian



Fishing pier



Boat dock invites access to small boat enthusiasts

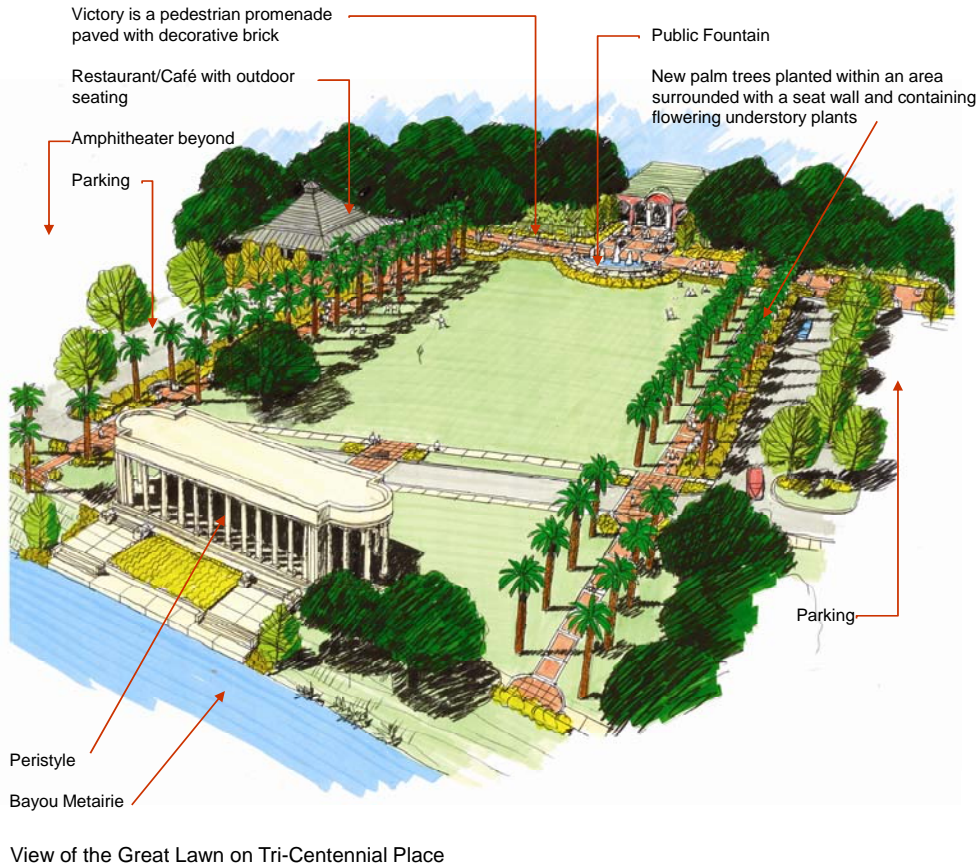


Bayou St. John, a designated Scenic Stream and Historic waterway located in the heart of New Orleans is in dire need of attention. Years ago, its natural connection to Lake Pontchartrain was altered by the construction of two water control structures.

Bayou St. John currently is utilized by New Orleans City Park (NOCP) to manage the water and salinity in the ponds and lagoons within the park. The water quality and habitat of Bayou St. John is currently not a consideration. Water circulation in Bayou St. John is low and the bayou currently functions as a linear pond with low habitat value or productivity. The historic estuarine ecology of the bayou has been severely reduced by urbanization of the surrounding area, channelization, dredging and the placement of water control structures near Lake Pontchartrain.

The following are examples of project concepts for Bayou St. John that should be pursued. Many may be eligible for possible Funding through USCOE Section 1135 or Section 206 authorization, NOAA, LDNR and other sources.

- Re-build the west "marshy" banks of bayou St. John where appropriate for vegetative planting of emergent vegetation (*Spartina patens* and *S. alterniflora*) and SAV. Re-establish small marsh islands in the bayou.
- Removal of non-native plants and trees. Replant native trees identified by Bienville in 1699 (Oak, Persimmon, Lirodendron, Pecan, Wild Cherry, Acacia and Sweet Gum, Cypress). Plant native species conducive to birds and butterflies along some shoreline.
- The Old Control Structure at Robert E. Lee needs to be repaired or removed to allow free water and fisheries access.
- A sluice gate which regulates flow between Bayou St. John and the northern NOCP lagoons should be replaced with a larger motorized gate to facilitate ease of water management. Increase size of present 16 inch pipe to allow increased flow into northern system of lagoons.
- A management plan should be developed detailing goals of water resources and implementation strategy with emphasis on salinity. Very important to include Orleans Levee Board and the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board in development of management strategies
- Water outlets from New Orleans City Park may need to be enlarged or augmented by small pumping stations.
- Sand resources at the mouth of Bayou St. John may be reworked and planted with emergent and submergent vegetation.
- Fisheries monitoring and stocking fish program. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries have aggressively stocked both Bayou St. John and City Park with Florida-strain Largemouth Bass, Blue Gill Sunfish, Channel Catfish and Blue Catfish.
- Shoreline clearing of park lagoons of non-native species and replanting with native species friendly to fisherman access and bird/butterfly habitat needs.
- Fresh water wells are needed on north and south lagoons as a means to control excess salinity during extreme droughts.



Plan Implementation

The Master Plan for City Park presents an ambitious but achievable schedule of physical and programmatic improvements designed to make City Park the premiere urban park in the country. It sets an achievable time frame of completing the physical improvements over the next 10 years and provides for continuing improvements to the care and stewardship of the Park during that time. The Plan calls for spending \$115 million dollars in infrastructure repairs and improvements while raising an additional \$5 million dollars in operating revenue to care for the Park's man made and natural assets and to provide programming comparable to the nation's other great public parks.

Plan Implementation *cont.*

These improvements are over and above the extensive repair of Hurricane Damage currently underway. The Park suffered over 40 million dollars in damage and it is expected that basic repairs will occur over the next two to five years. The Park is using the funds allocated for repair to advance the improvements called for in the plan by combining repair and enhancement funds.

The individual capital projects which make up the \$115 million dollar investment strategy and listed in an accompanying chart and are broken down over three phases. Clearly changes in the scope and phasing of these improvements will be made over the next 10 years depending on the timing of fund raising, project phasing, and detailing the scope of work on particular projects. The cost figures however clearly indicate the magnitude of expected work on these plan components.

The operation of City Park has been chronically under funded because of its extreme over dependence on self-generated revenue. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, City Park generated over 98% of its own operating revenue and received little to no public support. Extensive analysis of other great urban parks confirms that this operating platform would not allow for the maintenance and operation of the Park to achieve the goal of having a world class asset. Simply put, it is not possible to raise sufficient revenue for entrepreneurial activities in the Park to achieve the goal of making City Park the premiere park in the country.

After studying the Park's operating budget needs, it was determined that an additional \$5 million in operating revenue needed to be raised (from \$10.6 million to approximately 16 million).

Hurricane Katrina obviously dramatically affected the Park's operations and operating budget. All of the Park's operations were severely damaged, our self-generated revenue was dramatically decreased, and the Park's overall operating budget remains at only about 60% of pre-Katrina levels. Fortunately, through the efforts of the Park's legislative delegation, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the State has begun to provide a base level of public support. This was an important goal of the 2005 plan. The operating strategy is now to have public support to provide 30-40% of the Park's operating needs with 60-70% of the operating needs being generated by self-generated revenue. As the Park recovers from the Hurricane, consistent monitoring will occur to determine if this model provides sufficient operating revenue to achieve the Park's goal.

Financing Plan

The financing plan adopted in 2005 has been revisited in light of the damage sustained by Hurricane Katrina. The plan will continue to build on the partnership which has been developed between the State, City and the Park. Perhaps the most important development over the last two years since the storm is the Park's portion of its ongoing operating expenses from the State through the budget of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Currently the Park is receiving a little over \$2,400,000 annually toward our operating expenses. This is slightly over the amount identified in our 2005 financing plan as coming from the State and its receipt has been absolutely crucial to the Park's recovery. The current financing strategy calls for public tax dollar support providing a platform of between 30 and 40% of the Park's total operating budget with between 60 and 70% of the revenue to be generated through Park operations.

The 2005 plan called for a City property tax to support the Park as part of the City's responsibility to support the Park. The devastation wrought by the Hurricane has placed this proposal temporarily on hold while the City stabilizes its recovery. The City has suggested and the Park is pursuing the implementation of a Tax Increment Finance District as an interim effort to secure some City support. The TIF District, while not supplying a tremendous amount of funds, will generate additional financial support which the Park expects to dedicate toward its capital program.

The Capital Budget strategy has also been revisited. As previously discussed the impact of the Hurricane has not allowed the Park or the City to pursue the dedicated property tax which would have supported both the operating and capital budget of the Park. Therefore the strategy in the near term has been revised to indicate more funds coming from the Park (primarily by dedicating revenues received from the tax on slot machines at the Fair Grounds) and a substantially greater reliance on private donations and State Capital Outlay dollars. Raising these funds will be challenging but eminently accomplishable. The State has already increased its approval of capital dollars with nearly \$21 million approved in the 2007 legislative session and private giving to the Park is up substantially. All told it is the Park's goal to raise approximately \$11.5 million a year over the next ten years to implement the plan.

City Park Master Plan

Phasing of Capital Projects



The cafe is seen across the Great Lawn from the Peristyle. The lawn provides another set venue for events including a bandstand, picnic shelters, and fountain.



Photos from other great parks illustrate concepts recommended by the Master Plan



Under Interstate 610 the sidewalks are widened for pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers etc. Overgrown vegetation is removed for safety. Palm trees and lighting are added to mark the crossing of the park and the interstate.

Projects	Phase I 2005-2009	Phase II 2009-2013	Phase III 2013-2018
Relocate tennis courts	\$3,300,000		
New Catering Complex		\$2,500,000	
Botanical Garden improvements			
Infrastructure	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	
Conservatory (Plaza Phase)	\$400,000		
Conservatory Addition	\$2,500,000		
Renovations to sports fields	\$800,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Renovation of Amusement Park	\$1,900,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Golf Complex Improvements			
Renovation of East Golf Course	\$9,990,000		
Renovation of North Golf Course		\$3,000,000	
New Golf Club House complex		\$4,000,000	
Renovation of West Golf Course			\$3,000,000
Driving Range/Learning Center	\$1,000,000		
Replacement for Shelter #5	\$400,000		
New Shelter Construction	\$1,000,000	\$400,000	
Tricentennial Place			
Children's Spray Park	\$2,600,000		
Infrastructure Improvements	\$3,160,000	\$2,700,000	\$1,550,000
Amphitheatre	\$150,000		
Great lawn	\$400,000		
Miniature Golf	\$700,000		
Skate Park	\$1,840,000		
Fountain	\$400,000		
Festival Market Place	\$190,000		
New Playground Equipment		\$200,000	
Improve Stadium Drive		\$1,500,000	
Covered ring in horse stables	\$400,000		
Lagoon edge/water quality	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
Multi-Purpose Building	\$6,000,000		
Front Lake Beautification	\$500,000		
Sidewalk renovations	\$600,000	\$800,000	\$800,000
Storyland Refurbishment	\$350,000		
New Maintenance Facility	\$2,500,000		
Streetcar extension		\$7,500,000	
Renovations to Tad Gormley		\$4,000,000	
Pavilion Addition		\$1,000,000	
Parkwide bike system	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Environmental Ed. Center			\$4,000,000
Pan-American Stad. Renovations	\$1,500,000		
Festival Grounds-infrastructure	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000
Sound Wall Construction			\$4,200,000
General Infrastructure Imp. (drainage, electrical, sewer, etc)	\$3,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
Endowment	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000
Sub-total	\$52,580,000	\$41,300,000.00	\$25,750,000
Grand total	\$119,630,000.00		

Note

All Pre-Katrina cost estimates are subject to modification to incorporate the latest pricing information.

City Park Master Plan

Revenue and Budget Plan



The Busch Grove Splash pad, Buffalo Grove Park District, Illinois



Denver Skate park, Colorado



Louisville Extreme Park, Kentucky



The Green at Grant Park, Chicago



Concerts on the Great Lawn, Central Park, New York



Kettering Skate Park - Kettering, Ohio

Capital and Operating Budget Plan 2005 - 2018

Capital Strategy 2018

Source of Funds	2005 Master Plan	Amended Strategy 2007
City Park	\$17,500,000	\$25,000,000
City of New Orleans	\$13,000,000	\$15,000,000
State Capital Outlay	\$26,000,000	\$37,500,000
Dedicated Tax	\$45,500,000 (Property Tax)	\$18,500,000 (Slot Tax)
Federal	\$13,000,000	\$20,000,000
Total	\$115,000,000	\$115,000,000

Operating Strategy 7/2006-6/2010

Fiscal Year	State Funds	Self-Generated Funds	Total	Budgeted Positions
7/06-6/07	\$1,200,000 (28%)	\$3,050,000 (72%)	\$4,250,000	26
7/07-6/08	\$2,475,000 (35%)	\$4,552,000 (65%)	\$7,027,000	63
7/08-6/09	\$2,575,000 (33%)	\$5,200,000 (67%)	\$7,775,000	70
7/09-6/10	\$2,675,000 (30%)	\$6,200,000 (70%)	\$8,875,000	85



Outdoor Café, Bryant Park, New York

2005 New Orleans City Park Improvement Association

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Mr. Beau L. Bassich, Executive Director
Ms. Minette J. Bruce, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Robert DeViney, Chief Operating Officer
Mr. John Hopper, Director of Development
Mr. George Parker, Chief Administrative Officer

Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the New Orleans City Park Improvement Association

November 27, 2007

WHEREAS, the current Master Plan for City Park was adopted on March 29, 2005, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has a legal mandate to periodically review and amend if appropriate the Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina caused catastrophic damage to the Park and the Board and staff have used the adopted Master Plan as guidance for the recovery of the Park, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the Master Plan was held on September 25, 2007 at which time comments were received from the public on various components of the Plan including proposals for amendments to the Plan, and

WHEREAS, comments and proposals were received until October 23, 2007, and

WHEREAS, the Board has carefully reviewed all of the comments received as a result of the public hearing and has also reviewed the staff report and recommendations on modifications to the Master Plan dated November 18, 2007, and

WHEREAS, some of the proposals for the use of certain Park land and recreational facilities are not yet sufficiently developed and detailed for final Board approval and require additional guidance from the Board through its Chief Executive Officer and its Executive Committee in order to be fully considered by the Board.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the City Park Improvement Association hereby approves amendments to the Master Plan as set forth in the recommendations of the staff report, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Executive Office and the Executive Committee of the Board are authorized to engage in discussions and negotiations with the Louisiana Children's Museum towards the reservation of a cultural facilities site as per the parameters outlined in the staff report, and with the Bayou District Foundation for the improvement of the golf complex also as per the parameters outlined in the staff report, subject to further consideration and action by the Board, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board's President Paul J. Masinter and the Park's Chief Executive Officer, Robert W. Becker, are hereby authorized to modify the Master Plan to reflect the recommendations contained in the staff report on behalf of the Board and the Association, their execution thereof constituting conclusive evidence of the approved modification of the Master Plan.

Mr. Robert W. Becker, Chief Executive Officer
New Orleans City Park

June Rogers, Secretary of the Board of Commissioners
New Orleans City Park Improvement Association