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A proposal for a SPARK Park site selection process in East Baton Rouge Parish

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**A PROPOSAL FOR A
SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PROCESS
IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture

In

The School of Landscape Architecture

by
James M. McCord
B. S., Mississippi State University, 1993
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ABSTRACT

A Proposal for a SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish is the topic of this study to assist Parish schools and local governmental agencies in creating community parks. The SPARK Park program uses underutilized municipal properties to create community-use parks in lower-income urban areas. SPARK Parks originated in Houston, Texas. The Houston SPARK Park process was adapted for developing a site selection process for East Baton Rouge Parish.

East Baton Rouge Parish dedicated their first SPARK Park in 2000. The park was built in an attempt to reduce the Parish's open space deficit. Many more parks are needed for any significant reduction of the deficit. A prioritization process of park development need is required since most Parish communities qualify as potential SPARK Park candidates.

The proposed site selection process will expedite the park acquisition process and objectively locate those sites of greatest need for park development in the Parish. An easy-to-use checklist and a site selection prioritization map are the two Tools created for the proposed site selection process. They were designed to involve a school and the surrounding community early in the park development process, save vital resources of local agencies so several parks can be built simultaneously, be a model for similar park initiatives and other agencies, and assist school grant writing.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In days past, schools were a vital part of a community. This significance was diluted in the 1970s due to displacing students from their community schools caused by federally mandated busing. Today, neighborhood schools do not have their previous standing in the community. This lesser community presence is a consequence of the displacement.

Community support is needed for schools to flourish, and vice versa. A common ground is essential for school and community unity. One solution is to create a unifying element, a SPARK Park. This program originated in Houston, Texas and utilizes municipal properties in low to moderate-income areas to create community-use green spaces.

East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) acquired its first SPARK Park at Banks Elementary. Baton Rouge Green (BRG), a non-profit organization that assists schools, parks, neighborhoods, and roadways in the installation and conservation of trees in EBRP, followed Houston's SPARK Park process. This process demonstrated how to acquire park funding, but did not address issues of site selection prioritization. Many EBRP sites may be eligible based on Houston's criteria. Therefore, a regional site selection process specific to the Parish is needed to equitably prioritize sites.

Currently, Brownsfield Elementary Magnet School (hereafter known as Brownsfield Elementary) and McKinley Middle School are being considered as future SPARK Park candidates. Can these proposed sites be deemed worthier than other sites without a prioritization process? A site selection process will be prepared by adapting the Houston process and applying it to fulfill EBRP's needs. Useful Tools will be developed for local schools and governmental agencies to expedite the SPARK Park movement and create responsible urban park development in EBRP.

Several questions will provide a framework for the study. Would a site selection process for EBRP assist or impede local schools in the acquisition of more SPARK Parks? Would demographic mapping of areas assist BRG in saving vital resources while equitably choosing sites or would mapping hinder the site selection process? Can a site selection process for EBRP be a model for other park development initiatives? The answers to these questions will need to be studied for outcomes.

A uniform site selection and evaluation process will answer these questions and provide outcomes which could be valuable to EBRP schools and BRG. Banks Elementary was a study model for introducing SPARK Parks to EBRP. Having a uniform regional site selection process will facilitate the acquisition of the next park site. The process will entail four steps to achieve uniformity.

The first step is to study literature on the relationships of cities, parks, communities, and schools. A city's image as perceived by its residents will be reviewed. A community's relationship with its parks will be studied in depth. Schools as community centers also will be researched. It is hypothesized that these three relationships will justify the need for such a program as SPARK Parks in EBRP.

The second step is an analysis of the Houston SPARK Park acquisition process. Leading authorities will be interviewed, and SPARK Park movement information will be researched. The findings will be organized and reviewed for success and/or failure. With this information, an adaptation of the Houston process will show areas of improvement, which would benefit the EBRP process.

The third step creates a regional site selection process for EBRP to prioritize communities by need of park development. A site selection prioritization map will help reduce resource

expenditures on those sites less likely to qualify for federal funding. Maps will graphically represent potential areas in the Parish that meet the park eligibility requirements. A uniform petition process using a checklist format also will be developed to promote school and community participation early in the acquisition park process. BRG's resource demands will be reduced with the creation of the site selection prioritization map and the school petition process created for EBRP.

The fourth step is to apply the proposed site selection process and demonstrate its use by a petitioning school and BRG. Brownsfield Elementary will be used to explain a school's role in the process of acquiring a SPARK Park. The site selection prioritization map will be used to determine the three highest need sites in EBRP and also to validate Banks Elementary's eligibility. These findings will demonstrate how BRG will save labor costs and equitably choose park sites.

1.1 What is a SPARK Park?

The SPARK Park movement must be defined to better understand the need for a SPARK Park site selection process in EBRP. In 1983, Houston's mayor appointed a Green Ribbon Committee to assess its city parks. The intent of the committee was to evaluate Houston's parks compared to similar cities. Their findings showed Houston was deficient in green space acreage by at least 5,000 acres. In order to make Houston comparable to other world-class cities, this deficit would have to be reduced. Acquiring land to create the needed park space would be an exorbitant expense. Houston City Council Member Eleanor Tinsley had a vision to create parks on existing municipal lands, bypassing costly land acquisition. The vision was entitled SPARK Parks (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

SPARK Parks utilize existing public school land in lower-income areas to create community parks, making the sites eligible for funding via federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Hence, reducing the cost to remedy Houston's green space deficit. Equality of resource allocation to neglected neighborhoods is another advantage. The program also empowers residents to initiate further improvements to their community (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

SPARK, Inc., the agency leading the SPARK Park movement in Houston, was formed by an agreement between the Houston Parks Board and the Houston School District. In 1991, the SPARK Park program was granted its non-profit status. The program then became a self-sufficient entity. In 1996, SPARK Parks became an official program under the Mayor's Office and a Board of Directors, an Advisory Board, and a staff were appointed. This new designation allowed SPARK, Inc. to accelerate the promotion of more SPARK Parks (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

According to SPARK, Inc., there are currently 158 SPARK Parks in the Houston area, with ten additional parks being constructed this year. Prior land ownership is essential to achieve this number of parks per year. Since land is not acquired to create a SPARK Park, the process of developing these urban green spaces is expedited and control is absolute. SPARK, Inc. also attempts to update four existing SPARK Parks annually. This process is called "re-SPARKing them" (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

SPARK, Inc. successfully demonstrates how both public and private sectors can partner to enhance a community's environment and fulfill open space shortages at a low cost to Houston's taxpayers. Figure 1.1.1 demonstrates how this partnership works. The Houston program has shown success with 158 parks as of 2002. Another way of gauging the program's.

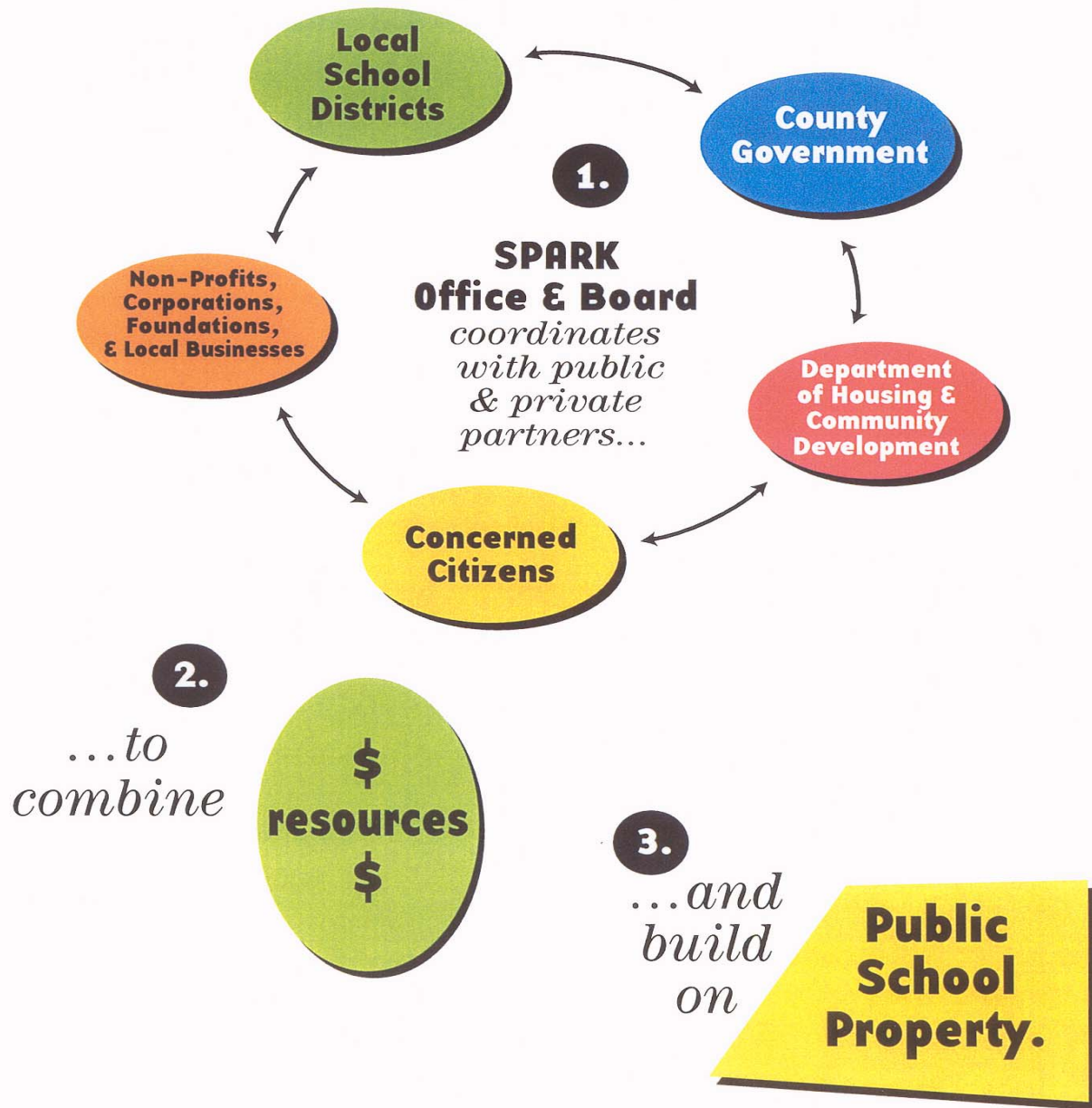


Figure 1.1.1--SPARK Park how it works from SPARK, Inc.

success is by visiting a SPARK Park. Families are seen spending time together, children are playing, cultural art is displayed, and neighbors are socializing. Greater school pride also is evident with numerous pictures of the parks available on school websites

With a SPARK Park, the school becomes the center of the community again. Moreover, the school's significance in the community is restored and the community acquires a sense of

ownership in their school. Participating in the SPARK process accomplishes the following: a self-reliant community is created, community leaders are born, and a realization that working together accomplishes great things (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

1.2 Benefits of a SPARK Park

Why would a school want to allow a SPARK Park on its grounds? According to SPARK, Inc., schools benefit from qualifying for a SPARK Park in three ways: renovated school facilities, increased community involvement, and outside funding sources to pay for the improvements. Examples of these funding sources will be discussed in Section 1.3.

SPARK, Inc. suggests that the most noticeable benefit to a school is its renovated playground facilities. New, modernized playground equipment replaces existing. All new equipment is Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliant, and in some instances also meets Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requirements. Conformity with recent legislation is crucial for safety and accessibility. SPARK Parks allow schools to update facilities while funding sources other than a school's operating budget bear a majority of the expense.

According to SPARK, Inc., other site improvements are implemented. These can include art walls, arches, and other structures exposing students to culturally significant art. Examples of such built structures are shown in Figures 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. Elements such as outdoor classrooms expose students to environmental issues including plant eco-systems, wildlife observations, and natural processes. Fences and gates, which must be opened during off-hours to allow for community use, secure the park site during the school day and regulate pedestrian traffic on the school grounds.



Figure 1.2.1--Cunningham Elementary park project in Houston from SPARK, Inc.

The second benefit to a school from a SPARK Park is increased community involvement. A community assists with the fundraising, design, construction, maintenance, and policing of the park. This vested interest creates a partnership that is maintained for years, just like the park itself. The park becomes the hub of the neighborhood and reinforces the impact that a school can make on a community. A SPARK Park creates a venue for social interaction among community residents. Residents see the school as a vital part of their community (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.). Having a positive image in the community, a school's educational role can have a greater impact. Parental and community involvement increases the focus on education for the students. Hence,



Figure 1.2.2--MacGregor Elementary park project in Houston from SPARK, Inc.

the students should benefit from their parents' value for education (Department of Education, 2000).

Increased public presence on the grounds also provides low cost security for the school during off-hours. If a community feels that they have ownership in the park site, a watchful eye is provided and the facilities are protected. The community also is required to assist the school

with maintaining the park site. Many Houston communities show their pride by keeping the parks clean and safe (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

The last major benefit that a school receives with a SPARK Park is outside funding sources. With state and local governments in current financial impasses, many non-critical projects such as park renovation go un-funded. It is difficult for a school to solve all of its site issues with such limited resources. A SPARK Park opens up potential funding opportunities that otherwise would not exist (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

According to SPARK, Inc., funding is usually in the form of grants from government agencies, mainly from The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Other organizations, such as the National Endowment for the Arts, provide funding for park elements (SPARK Art as shown in Figures 1.2.1 and 1.2.2). Other funding sources include fundraising efforts and corporate sponsorships. Fundraising efforts that strengthen the bond between the community and school bring about culturally creative means for acquiring funds. With SPARK Parks increasing civic pride, local businesses are more apt to partner with schools and communities on such projects.

1.3 Funding Sources

Funding is the most crucial element for a SPARK Park to become reality. No matter how beneficial the park would be to a school and community, without adequate funding a SPARK Park would remain an idea. HUD considers SPARK Park projects as enhancements to the environment and living conditions of lower income areas. Due to this, funding is readily available by means of CDBG.

Since SPARK Park's inception in 1983, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has funded over 75% of the parks developed in the Houston area.

Houston's DHCD deems "SPARK Park as an outstanding program which embodies the best use of the CDBG to address the needs of low to moderate-income citizens" (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

CDBGs totaling \$7,525,000 have been used to fund SPARK Parks since 1985. How can these grants apply to a SPARK Park? One reason for HUD's support is the improvements these parks provide low-income areas. HUD funds only are available for the construction and improvements to facilities, affordable housing, public services, and economic development activities. A second reason is the use of existing public land, which reduces cost and expedites the impact on the community (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.).

According to SPARK, Inc., SPARK Parks qualify for these grants since they improve the lives of the residents and provide them accessible green space. In Houston, these grants averaged \$60,000 for each park. United States Census data is used to confirm the demographic criteria of a potential site. Fifty-one percent of selected households in a qualifying community must be located within a half-mile to mile radius of the park site. Those selected households must have at least four members whose combined income is \$43,500 or less annually. A community that meets the demographic criteria is eligible for a CDBG.

One limitation of HUD grants is that they will not pay for specific elements related to the park construction. Examples of these are the SPARK Art, design fees, administration fees, and maintenance fees to name a few. Other funding sources are needed to subsidize any costs not covered by HUD. Figure 1.3.1 shows a diagram of the funding sources used in Houston and how they rely on one another to construct the parks (Guinsler, Department of Housing and Community Development).

SPARK, Inc. called on the Houston schools, communities, and school districts to be responsible for providing additional funds for construction. According to SPARK, Inc., the

school and community are required to contribute a combined minimum total of \$5000 toward the park project. Several different approaches that schools and communities have used to raise

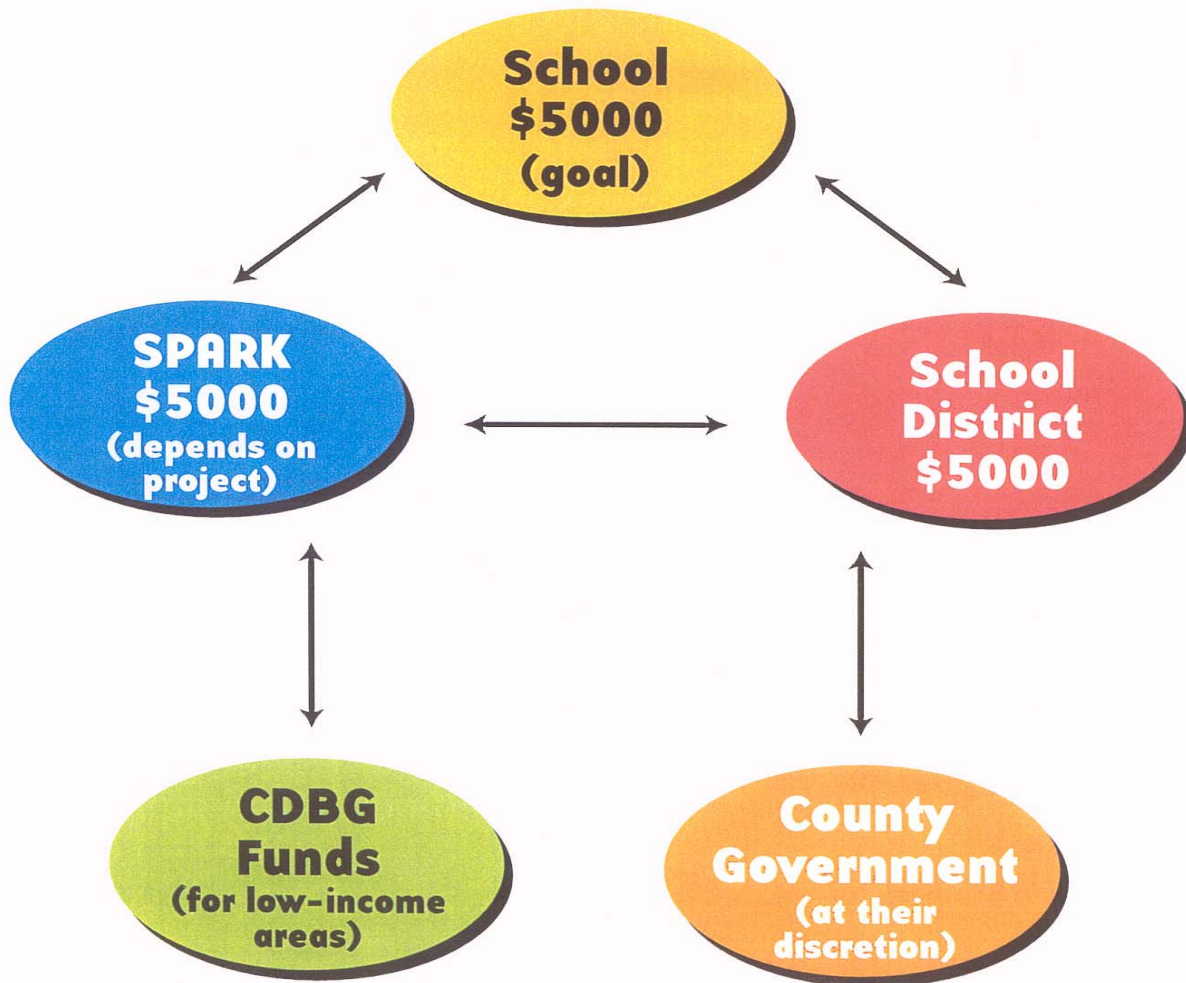


Figure 1.3.1--Funding sources form SPARK, Inc.

money have included: penny drives, bake sales, carnivals, candy sales, spaghetti dinners, inscribed brick paver sales, and rummage sales (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.). SPARK, Inc. also requires the Houston school districts to pledge a matching \$5000. These financial gestures result in \$10,000 for park construction and validate commitment to the SPARK Park acquisition process.

According to SPARK, Inc., many Houston schools have partnered with local businesses to supplement economic shortfalls. Corporate sponsorships have risen accordingly with the increasing numbers of SPARK Parks in Houston. The private sector has contributed over \$3,000,000 for the creation of SPARK Parks. This market has the greatest potential funding opportunities for areas that may not qualify for governmental assistance. Corporate sponsorships help provide needed community parks and the corporations receive public recognition. Corporations build valuable consumer relationships and create sustainable market-share less affected by market trends. Concentrating on selling the benefit that the sponsor receives does not imply selfishness, but realistic return on their investment.

1.4 Other Cities Success in Similar Urban Area Development

Several cities throughout the United States have invested in revitalizing inner city communities. Most of these revitalization efforts have included the incorporation of community open space. These urban spaces are a critical for the development of relationships among the residents. These relationships encourage efforts to further improve the community.

As examples, three cities that have attempted revitalization to low-income urban areas and green space improvements will be used to reiterate the positive impact that such an investment can make in these communities. These cities are: 1) Minneapolis, MN, 2) Austin, TX, and 3) Portland, OR. All of them used CDBGs to improve these low-income communities. However, none of these cities have had a greater impact than Houston's SPARK Park movement, since their efforts are not as well organized and they do not have a twenty-year history.

Minneapolis, with its Hope Community project is the most similar out of the three cities to Houston's movement. Hope Community started over fifteen years ago in a low-income area that was devastated by urban flight and drug wars. Crime was high, five crack houses were

present, and property values had plummeted. However, to look at the community today, one may not believe its past.

This community's revitalization began with the re-purchasing of declining homes to renovate them and create affordable rental units. Gradually community green space was incorporated into this neighborhood. Fences that enclosed small spaces were removed to create a large open space for all of the residents to utilize. Prior to this sharing of space, the cultural diversity of the neighborhood had caused tension among the residents. Now, these spaces act as a common ground where understanding and relationships are being built (www.communitygreens.org).

The second example city is a low-income neighborhood, Guadalupe, in East Austin. The community was awarded \$600,000 in CDBG funds. It was proposed that a large park be built with these funds. However, the intent of the park was to charge admission, which would hinder the residents' use. The neighborhood residents, along with a community church, organized and fought the park development. Their effort was successful and money was only used for projects that would directly benefit the residents of the community.

A community development corporation was created to distribute the funds in a way to maximize the impact to the neighborhood. The corporation bought homes and sold them to residents with special financing programs. Money went to the renovation of these homes and beautification efforts to the neighborhood. Open space was revitalized on a smaller scale. The community has thrived since they were allowed show to how the redevelopment of their community would proceed (www.clicd.org).

Finally Portland has started an urban open space revitalization program, but it is still too early to judge its success. This program has consisted of street and park improvements in low-

income areas. The city had originally used CDBGs to pay for these projects. Since the parks have become popular with the constituents, they have authorized city bond financing for more parks to be constructed.

The city is currently trying to fully assess the success of its original revitalization initiatives in the Harney Park and Brentwood Darlington neighborhoods. So far, the visual quality has improved and the residents have a more positive image of their community. The initiatives seem to be a success, but time is needed to judge sustainability of these projects (www.ciportland.or.us).

1.5 East Baton Rouge Parish's Need for Open Space

In 1990, the EBRP Metropolitan Council adopted Wilbur Smith Associates' (WSA) Horizon Plan--A Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plan (hereafter referred to as the Horizon Plan). This plan sets goals, objectives, and policies for future growth and land use in the Parish. The Horizon Plan was implemented to create a special sense of place that Baton Rouge could derive from its natural beauty, the integrity of its neighborhoods, the amenities of its parks, and economic strength based on education.

The Horizon Plan has several goals and objectives for responsible growth in EBRP. There are thirteen major elements or divisions in the Horizon Plan but only two elements pertinent to open space will be studied. These two elements of the Horizon Plan apply directly to a SPARK Park. These are the Recreation and Open Space and Urban Development elements.

The Recreation and Open Space Element has three goals and eight objectives. One of these goals parallels SPARK, Inc. of Houston, "to coordinate acquisition and use of public open space with the Baton Rouge Recreation and Park Commission (BREC) and the EBRP School Board" (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990). The objective is to "improve the overall Parish-wide

image” and to “provide for special recreational needs and desires of the community” (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990).

WSA also suggested that EBRP government needed to improve the unique identities of existing neighborhoods and create similar identities in the deteriorating sections of the Parish and in the new developing areas. They also claimed that a neighborhood unit is the primary building block of a community, and its promotion and preservation are crucial. In the Horizon Plan, the Metropolitan Council of EBRP was asked to “promote neighborhood participation in making decisions which affect the quality of life....and to provide a living environment that offers clean air and water and a sufficient amount of green space” (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990).

In the second element titled Urban Development, the Horizon Plan emphasized the need for community parks in EBRP. According to WSA, all urban development, including parks, should preserve and enhance the character of the site and its surroundings. Urban development also should be a mix of residential, open space, and commercial. WSA proposed that open space development of under-utilized land within urbanized areas should occur, and these deteriorating areas should be revitalized by both public and private efforts.

Another issue that WSA addressed in the Urban Development element is the creation and maintenance of accessible public open spaces to increase the quality of life in impoverished areas. Accessibility to these public open spaces will be enhanced by increased numbers of SPARK Parks.

WSA suggests that giving residents a sense of place creates sustainable neighborhoods. Critical aspects of any new development or revitalization project are historical, cultural, and natural resource preservation. Preserving these elements is critical to create the sense of place as suggested in the Horizon Plan. The community’s history and culture is displayed and depicted

throughout the site in SPARK Art. Residents and students work with local artists to personalize the space (Leodler, SPARK, Inc.). Outdoor classrooms are used to promote natural resource preservation. A local landscape architect is retained to create a master plan using school and community input. According to the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), it is a landscape architect's ethical duty to preserve the environment while enhancing the space (www.asla.org).

In the Urban Development section of the Horizon Plan, all development should recognize and strengthen the sense of place, enhance the district, improve visual quality, and create activity centers (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990). A SPARK Park accomplishes all of the above suggestions. With the development of urban open space as suggested in the Horizon Plan, benefits similar to Houston would result.

1.6 SPARK Park Movement in Baton Rouge

Due to Houston's success, the SPARK Park movement has spread to other cities like Baton Rouge, Louisiana. SPARK Park, Inc. of Houston assists interested cities through guidance and support in imitating the SPARK Park program in their municipalities. BRG utilized this support to create its first SPARK Park.

The inaugural SPARK Park development was due to the efforts of Ms. Peggy Davis who is BRG's Education Director. BRG envisioned a similar program after numerous SPARK Parks were visited in Houston. The acquisition process of the Banks Elementary park site began as collaborative efforts of SPARK, Inc. and BRG. Houston's process for creating SPARK Parks and acquiring funding for construction was demonstrated for BRG. SPARK Park was ready to be introduced to the Parish after BRG received this vital information. Two issues had to be

addressed prior the construction of a SPARK Park in EBRP: the site had to be selected and partnerships had to be created with pertinent agencies.

Banks Elementary, located in the northwest section of the Parish, was the chosen site. The reason for this selection was attributed to BRG's relationships with Scotlandville community leaders from past community projects. These leaders had aspirations of improving the image of their community. The SPARK Park became the long-awaited catalyst for neighborhood improvements. In addition to the community's enthusiastic pledge of support for the SPARK Park, the school also had to prove that it met the need requirements set forth by SPARK, Inc. Banks Elementary met all of Houston's required criteria. First, its playground facilities inadequately satisfied neighborhood demand and safety requirements. Second, the school owned a three-acre parcel of land adjacent to the school site. Third, the park site was accessible by foot. With these criteria met, the site was deemed worthy as a SPARK candidate. (Davis, Baton Rouge Green)

According to BRG, three partnerships to be established prior to bringing a SPARK Park to EBRP: DHCD, EBRP school board, and Service Master. The purpose of the first partnership with the DHCD was to acquire project funding. The SPARK Park concept presented to the DHCD how Houston applied HUD block grants to fund the parks. The DHCD agreed to assist BRG with establishing a SPARK Park pilot program in EBRP. This partnership would be on a limited basis until the program was proven successful. HUD completed the demographic studies for Banks Elementary and the pilot program was ready to proceed.

BRG's second partnership was with the EBRP school board. The EBRP school board granted approval to proceed with the pilot program after BRG attended numerous school board committee meetings to present the SPARK Park concept. Similar to HUD's position, the school

board wanted see that the pilot program was proven successful before investing in additional SPARK Parks. (Davis, Baton Rouge Green)

The third partnership was with Service Master, the company that maintains the school grounds. According to BRG, the EBRP school board would have withdrawn their support without Service Master's approval of the SPARK Park program. Service Master's input was required for choosing the construction materials for durability and maintenance requirements. EBRP was able to continue with the pilot program after securing the coalition of necessary partners.

BRG worked with community leaders to hold community meetings and design charrettes to introduce this innovative park program to the community. Community history, perceived boundary lines, accessibility to green space, community's visions for the park, and other community issues were discussed at length in these meetings. Valuable input for the park design was gained by using these venues and utilizing existing community relationships. (Davis, Baton Rouge Green)

BRG stated that they also had to find creative ways to acquire additional funding for the park since HUD block grants were limited to park construction. A grant from the National Endowments for the Arts contributed financing for SPARK Art. BRG initiated and supervised the school's fundraising efforts for their contribution to the SPARK Park.

SPARK Park dedication ceremonies commenced nearly two years from initiating the pilot program. BRG directed the entire process. Their duties included coordinating the coalition of necessary partners, guiding school and community participation, assisting the design process, and managing the construction phase. BRG, the EBRP School Board, DHCD, community

leaders, and Banks Elementary deemed the pilot program successful. (Davis, Baton Rouge Green)

1.7 Need for a SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish

The Horizon Plan suggested the need to create a framework in EBRP to guide future growth in a responsible manner. The framework also should apply to park development. Responsible growth in park development can be obtained by implementing a uniform SPARK Park site selection process in EBRP. A site selection process would prioritize areas of greater need, increase community involvement and support early in the process, and reduce the resource demands on BRG. Addressing these framework issues would fulfill many of the Horizon Plans open space requirements for EBRP.

The Horizon Plan sets goals to improve urban environments for the residents so Baton Rouge can be a livable city for all residents. It suggested the need for improvements in low to moderate-income areas in EBRP. A prioritized SPARK Park site selection process would ensure that communities with the greatest need for open space will be considered first (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990.).

Second, the Horizon Plan addressed the importance of community input in the planning and development process. According to WSA, residents want a great city with livable neighborhoods, quality educational system, and one that is sensitive to its history and culture (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1990.) . Involving a school and community early in the process is vital to create a successful SPARK Park movement in EBRP. A site selection process would define the schools' and the communities' roles in the SPARK Park acquisition process. Their involvement would expedite this movement and create a greater local impact. According to BRG, early school and community involvement would facilitate acquiring more parks.

Third, resource management is crucial for sustaining a SPARK Park movement in EBRP. By implementing a SPARK Park site selection prioritization process and initiating earlier community involvement, better resource management would result. Resources would concentrate on project management duties rather than the facilitation of new SPARK Park sites. BRG would be able to simultaneously manage the construction of several parks. Hence, benefiting more schools and communities.

The proposed SPARK Park site selection process for EBRP is a feasibility study consisting of two tools. These tools consists of a petition guide to assist EBRP schools in acquiring a SPARK Park, and a site selection prioritization map to assist BRG in responsible park development. This site selection process may also serve as a model for similar community park initiatives, either local or national. The overall intent of this proposed site selection process is to fuel a SPARK Park movement in EBRP, using the Banks Elementary pilot program as a point of departure.

A SPARK Park movement can help change the image of a city, preserve the culture, and unite a community. The Horizon Plan's goal for responsible growth is not likely achieved without a process to guide the movement. By promoting responsible development practices, these parks will revitalize declining areas and “spark” them for further community improvements. SPARK Parks cannot solve all of the woes of a community, but they can be a catalyst as shown in Houston. The benefits of this park program to EBRP (a Parish/city), Scotlandville (a community), and Banks Elementary (a school) will be presented in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perceptions of a City

According to Kevin Lynch, author of The Image of a City, the perception of a city's image is defined by its residents based on boundaries, landmarks, paths, nodes and the community in which they live. One's image of a place is attributed to a familiar environment. With enhanced local environments, the positive perception of a city's image is greatly increased and so is satisfaction with community life.

When one thinks of a world-class city, New York City, San Francisco, Paris, Rome, and other similar urban areas come to mind. Not only are these cities economic powers and cultural icons, they are recognized for their urban parks. As landmarks, urban parks are destination sites for travelers around the world. As nodes, they contribute to the community's living environment. As edges and districts, urban parks define cultural differences that make individual communities unique. Creating smaller spaces or monuments creates a positive identity for the community on a scale that is real to its residents (Lynch, 1960).

Parks have an implied importance in a city's image. Larry R. Ford, author of The Spaces Between Buildings, suggests that without adequate green space, residents perceive a city as unattractive. The manicured lawn has become the icon of community acceptance and an integral part of the urban scene. People view green space as a critical element adjacent to architecture. According to Ford, "green spaces have become as American as apple pie..." and are influential in perceptions of an urban setting (Ford, 2000).

For years, city leaders have been aware of the connection between a city's amenities and the fulfillment of life for the residents. With restoration efforts becoming prevalent in urban centers, well-used open spaces and urban parks have added perceived vitality for these cities.

August Heckscher, a past New York City commissioner of parks and administrator of recreation and cultural affairs, gives his opinion that not only does the city's population find pleasure in urban open spaces, but they also find a sense of unity. A mixture of age, class, race, and nationality in these spaces is what makes a city great.

He also states, "In today's cities efforts to deal with education, housing, jobs, and crime are always paralleled by attention to the city's open spaces." (Heckscher, 1977). Cities that have significantly developed their open spaces noticed improvements in economic growth and social issues. According to Heckscher, a city's fate is determined by any development that increases the residents desire to live in them.

Cities in the 1960's and 1970's made large strides in improving the urban environments for their residents. This was due to the increased amount of federal funding for open space development. With private development also on the rise, people started to re-evaluate the importance of their parks and open spaces. Preservation became an issue for urban development. With the protests of the Vietnam War prevalent, the parks became areas of true democracy as their originally intended by Frederick Law Olmstead, designer of New York City's Central Park (Heckscher, 1977).

Revitalization of urban spaces and the importance to their cities is shown in Kathleen Madden's book, How to Turn a Place Around—A Handbook for Creating Successful Public Spaces. It is her opinion that cities have thriving public spaces, their residents have a stronger sense of community and affinity for that city. The opposite also applies. According to Madden, a city cannot be great without great places. Great places benefit the city economically, culturally, and environmentally (Madden, 2000).

Randolph T. Hester, Jr., a renowned landscape architect, community designer, and the author of Community Design Primer, Neighborhood Space, and Planning Neighborhood Space with People shows how successful urban spaces can be created by involving communities in the design process. Neighborhoods define communities and cities. Diversity, conflicting interest, and different points of view make neighborhoods unique places. Community design empowers residents to revitalize their unique environments, which provides an improvement their perception of the city in where they live (Hester, 1984). A SPARK Park requires community involvement in the planning, implementation, and management of the site. This helps create a unique and sustainable space for the individual community.

According to Hester, community design is a scaled-back version of city planning. A community designer affects smaller urban spaces while impacting the whole city. Community design attempts to remedy the past injustice of resource allocations to inner city areas. A catalyst for further improvement to inner city areas is provided by community involvement in the renovation of strategic neighborhood locations. He also writes that preservation of these neighborhood spaces as community amenities creates a resident's sense of belonging to the city. Without community amenities, city life would be less bearable for its residents (Hester, 1975).

Since financial instability has decentralized the city's role, neighborhoods have been given more control. Active participation in the process leads to self-reliance. Community involvement promotes the creation of spaces, unites people, and nurtures the social sense of the neighborhood. Knowing they have played a part in creating their environment can bring a sense of joy to the community and increase one's appreciation for the city. People seek roots in their community by forming relationships with neighbors, becoming community leaders, and volunteering time and resources to reclaim neighborhood spaces. Neighborhoods enhance city

life. The corner store, neighborhood school, and community park are all places to congregate and interact. Such institutions are becoming extinct in cities, and are rarely seen in suburbs (Hester, 1990).

One common theme from the experts concerning a city's image is that the offered amenities dictate perception and satisfaction among residents. One of these amenities is an urban park. Communities tend to have a special relationship and affinity for their neighborhood parks, especially those in which they have a collaborative stake.

2.2 A Community's Park

The American people have chosen their best places for their parks because they have felt themselves to be at their best in them... The ancient phrase '*pursuit of happiness*' has always meant a search for a condition more truly human, more largely fulfilled and we have selected as parks, places where we do, indeed, pursue that kind of happiness—no undifferentiated glee, no frolicking foolishness—but happiness...Parks are landscapes and shrines in which we feel wonder and reverence, where we invite each other to consider what is about America in which we take the greatest pride and when we Americans are at our best. Pride in our better selves is a good thing, pride in our better places is good too—Rodger Kennedy (naspd.indstate.edu).

Why is a park of such importance to a community? This section will explain how parks provide areas for recreation, create a sense of place, promote physical and mental well-being, impact neighborhoods financially, and reduce crime. This is why parks are of such great importance to the community.

Many communities have limited access to recreation facilities due to proximity and income. According to the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) in The National Urban Recreation Study, over 70% of the United States population live in an urban environment. Even though demand for recreational facilities is on the rise in America, supply has dwindled due to aging facilities and budget constraints. During the 1970's, expenditures for recreation

insufficiently increased because of rising costs of land acquisition, construction, energy, and staffing (Department of the Interior, 1978). Why should this shortfall be an issue of concern?

The DOI defines recreation as activities of their own choosing that refresh people's minds and bodies in contrast to their daily lives. Individual recreation provides physical and mental fulfillment, stimulation, socializing, learning, and personal recognition. Community recreation is of great importance because it defines boundaries, land use, and social culture of the neighborhood.

The DOI has made several important conclusions concerning urban parks. Over 75% of community members are dissatisfied with the recreational opportunities in their neighborhoods. People want parks close to home. Urban areas have the poorest distribution of recreation opportunities, which is a disturbing trend. Density of an area is inversely related to the amount of recreational space available to residents. Those citizens who need recreational space the most have the least. Most of the land acquired for recreational space is on the edges of the city. These spaces do very little to solve the dilemma of urban recreational needs since they are less accessible to the masses (Department of the Interior, 1978).

Another finding of the DOI's report shows that a wide variety of open spaces in and around urban areas that possess aesthetic, cultural, environmental, agricultural, and recreational value are under-utilized. Thereafter, only a small portion of recreational needs will be met due to urban expansion pressures on such areas. Cities do not fully utilize the existing and potential recreational resources available. Economic issues take precedence over the recreational needs of our city residents. Resourcefulness can solve some of these woes. The streets, museums, churches, public lands, and schools make the city a recreational resource. All of these resources

have potential recreational value at a significantly lower cost than acquiring new lands (Department of the Interior, 1978.).

Communities have a unique relationship with their parks. John P. Kretzmann, Co-Director of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University places a unique significance on communities and their parks. He claims that parks have an unrealized role in redeveloping communities. The skills, resources, and gifts of the residents build communities. Parks are the common grounds for this collaborative sharing of views and talents. This collaborative sharing is how communities solve issues, and parks are where these issues are solved (Kretzmann, 1996).

Communities where people live define who they are. A sense of place is critical to one's existence. Thomas Barrie, Urban Planning instructor at Lawrence Technical University, reiterates this point in his publication The Orchard Lake Community Project—A Handbook for Community Input and Neighborhood Revitalization. He states that “Open space should define and connect adjacent communities....each neighborhood should have its own park within walking distance.” (Barrie, 1998). According to Barrie, beautiful places can make one's life easier and more satisfying. The physical environment has a great role in defining and affecting one's life, and its significance cannot be ignored.

According to The Trust for Public Land, 77% of the residents of the Los Angeles, CA neighborhoods that were most damaged in the 1993 riots said that revitalization of their park and recreation facilities was of greater importance than health care and economic issues. Texas A&M University and Pennsylvania State University performed a study of tax liability and recreational funding. Roughly 75% of constituents supported the rates of governmental spending

for recreation. Additionally, 65% said that they would voluntarily pay increased taxes for more and safer recreational space (www.tpl.org).

According to Anne Whiston Spirn, a renowned landscape architect and author of The Granite Garden—Urban Nature and Human Design, no matter how little attention to natural process has been given by urban residents in the past, they currently place great emphasis on small areas of natural environments in their communities. This view dates back to the seventh century B.C. and progressed throughout history until present day. Love for pockets of nature in an urban setting is evident by garden plots, parks, and utopian designed garden communities.

The need for urban green space increases according to the growth of the urban area. In the past when cities were smaller, people were closer to green space and the need for such areas diminished. According to Spirn, with the expansive growth of urban areas and the loss of accessibility to the country, urban open space is needed to create pockets of utopia in the cities (Spirn, 1984).

A connection to nature is more critical than just a romantic sense of nature. Cities have incurred increasing costs of health and welfare due to the degradation of the natural environment. Lives of the residents are affected negatively in a poor urban environment. Nature's power must be recognized and harnessed to improve the urban existence. (Spirn, 1984)

Community parks also address the social environment of the neighborhood. Parks are for people to interact with their neighbors, have family reunions, serve as a social arena, start a revolution, and serve other needs of the residents. According to David Gray and Donald A. Pelegrino, authors of Reflections on the Recreation and Park Movement, the use of urban parks has declined in the past. With a decline of residents using urban parks, safety became an issue. Crime increased and neighborhoods deteriorated. The decline is attributed to poor design without

input of the community. Past park projects emphasized the aesthetics of the place and neglected the function of the user.

Giving people in a community reason to re-establish an urban park is one solution to the problem of decline. This will happen only if people have a voice in the design of these revitalized urban spaces. These parks can be assets to the city if community interest and involvement are sustained. Cities must realize that “great cities have great parks and that their communities deserve the spoils of a great city” (Gray & Peligrino, 1973).

According to the Centers for Disease Control, United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Recreation and Park Association, community parks are not only aesthetically pleasing but centers for wellness (www.healthypeople.gov). Physical activity has a direct effect on physical well-being. Since over 300,000 people die annually due to conditions related to inactive lifestyles, parks can help save lives by providing a place to promote physical fitness. (www.cdc.gov) “In many religions there is a belief that people who wish to remain spiritually and psychologically healthy will, from time to time, go forth to a natural place to renew themselves. And then return, full of renewed consciousness of their concurrent, shared, historic unities among each other...”-Rodger Kennedy (naspd.indstate.edu)

Another urban park benefit is financial. According to John L. Crompton, author of Parks and Economic Development, parks have a direct economic impact on the community. A worker's health benefits from the use of urban parks leading to reduced absenteeism from work. Fewer days missed at work increase the productivity of local businesses and reduce the financial strain on governmental healthcare (Crompton, 2001). The Trust for Public Land agrees that parks directly impact communities economically. According to their studies, cities have shown economic growth following park development. Examples of these cities experiencing economic

growth are Baltimore, San Francisco, New Orleans, and San Antonio. Moreover, with economic development comes increased tax revenue for cities (www.tpl.org).

The Trust for Public Land shows that parks have direct positive impact on adjacent properties. In New York City, 57% of property values were higher for real estate that was located within two blocks of a park. In Salem, Oregon, residential properties within 1000 feet of a greenbelt sold for an average \$1200 higher than similar sized properties further away (www.tpl.org). Community Greens is an organization for the promotion of urban green space. According to their studies, parks increase adjacent property values (www.communitygreens.org).

Along with health and welfare, a park also adds safety to a community. The Trust for Public Land suggests there is no data to prove lack of open space directly relates to the amount of crime. However, evidence shows that when these spaces are improved and crime drops significantly. Urban recreation and sports have shown to be effective on crime reduction since numerous crimes are committed by youth. Mayor James Sharpe of Newark, New Jersey hypothesized that if three recreation leaders were added to his payroll, they would have greater impact on crime than anything else. Over 2.8 million people under the age of twenty-one are arrested for crimes in the United States annually. Recreation is a better way to fight crime, according to Congressman Bruce Vento of Minnesota (www.tpl.org).

2.3 A School as a Community Center

The community school had been a part of America's culture prior to the 1950's. The philosophy was to build school grounds in a community. In the 1960's, schools lost their significance in the community due to federally mandated busing. There is a need for this relationship to prevail once again. With modern school reform, the school-community relationship has become a major educational theme (Mertz & Furman, 1997). Howard G.

Danford, Ed.D, former Director of Recreation in Madison, Wisconsin, defines the community school in Recreation in The American Community, as a center of a community enriching the lives of the residents, which increases involvement in the school and gives the school cultural significance.

According to the United States Department of Education (DOE), if a school is the center of a community, then learning will be the center of the community. Good schools are important to residential growth patterns. Many people decide where they are going to live based on the quality of schools in the community. By creating better neighborhood schools, more livable communities are built. One approach to creating a better neighborhood school is by creating cultural and learning parks. These parks increase the importance of the school to the community and provide facilities the whole community can share and enjoy (Riley, 1999).

Schools as Centers of Community: A Citizens Guide for Planning and Designing by the DOE suggests that a school can enhance a community's identity, consistency, and harmony. Schools should be the old town square, around which the community revolves. It should serve as a learning hub for both the students and community members. School facilities should reinforce the integral relationship with the surrounding community.

Schools should provide for community activities and meetings as well as recreation and wellness needs. Involvement of the community and the parents in educational roles also is encouraged. A student's learning gains focus when parents and community are involved (Department of Education, 2000).

The DOE summarizes its vision of the community school. It should be an inclusive place rather than an exclusive one. They should be centrally located in the heart of the community and accessible to all of the residents. Public spaces should be available for use by the community

after-hours and year-round. Community schools should support learning for all ages and fit in the landscape of the community, reflecting its unique identity. Finally, the school should serve as an icon of pride for the community.

According to Project for Public Space, Inc., access is critical for the success of a park. The space must be visible, accessible by foot and provide easy circulation. This access must take into consideration all levels of human ability since a community is diverse in its make-up. (Madden, 2000.) The National Center on Accessibility agrees that accessibility is crucial for public spaces, stating that understanding promotes tolerance through social integration (www.ncaonline.org).

Perceptions of comfort and image of a space can determine its success. Safety, cleanliness, seating, and character can affect a community's image and desire to use the space. One of the most critical issues of creating a successful public space is its function. A space should accommodate the community's need for desired activities and social interaction. The community is the authority and gives the space identity. Too many urban spaces have failed in the past due to the lack of community input in the design process (Madden, 2000.).

On the facade, it seems that only the community benefits from a school being a community center. Not true, both entities benefit from the partnership. According to Peter D. Blauvelt, one of the better ways to combat vandalism on school property is through community policing (Blauvelt. 1981). According to Garret in her book Keeping American Schools Safe, it is the responsibility of the school, students, and community to make schools safe. Through a community-school partnership, safer schools are attainable (Garret, 2001.).

These experts have confirmed some of the many benefits of urban park development. Urban parks impact how residents feel about their city, how residents are attached to their

communities, and how a school and community find unity. A SPARK Park accomplishes all three if properly planned and implemented. Hence, the importance of a site selection process for EBRP.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

A five-step process to develop a SPARK Park site selection process will meet the needs of EBRP. The first step was completed in the Chapter Two, reviewing literature on the integral relationships of cities, communities, parks, and schools. Steps two through five are:

- To analyze and discuss the Houston process for merit and areas of improvement
- To adapt these findings to the EBRP SPARK Park movement
- To address regional issues and concerns of pertinent governmental agencies
- To establish the demographic criteria for SPARK Park site prioritization.
- To overlay the proposed SPARK Park criteria to create a site prioritization map.

The second, third, and fourth steps will be discussed in this Chapter; step five will be discussed in Chapter Five.

3.1 Houston's SPARK Park Process

The process of choosing potential SPARK Park sites in Houston has evolved during a twenty-year period into a simple and successful model for other cities to study or follow. Ms. Allison Leodler, Assistant Director of SPARK, Inc. has provided the following information for section 3.1 concerning the Houston park site qualification process.

To start the petition process, a letter of interest, as shown in Figure A.3 of Appendix A, must verify that the school understands its commitment to and support of the park acquisition process. From all submitted petitions, twenty potential sites are chosen for further review by SPARK Inc. This entails reviewing income data for the area to ensure the proposed site is in a low to moderate-income area. This designation allows the park sites to be eligible for HUD block grants. HUD has contributed nearly \$8,500,000 to Houston SPARK Parks since the program's inception.

Funding eligibility requires four criteria. These include majority of residents, income, household size, and qualifying area. HUD's definition of a majority is 51% of the residents for a given area. They define low to moderate-income level as \$43,500 or less per household. A qualifying household is defined as four or more people under the same roof. The qualifying area applies to those households that are located within a half-mile to mile radius of the proposed park site.

In addition to funding eligibility, HUD requires the project to benefit the surrounding community by meeting its needs and supplying necessary amenities. The chosen schools that meet HUD's qualifications are contacted and an interview with school administrators is arranged.

SPARK, Inc. staff confirms eligibility by evaluating the community, site proximity to the neighborhood, business partnerships, available space for a potential park site, and safe access to the site by foot. Then, they present their findings to the SPARK, Inc. Board of Directors for site selections. District Council Members, School Board Trustees, school principals, and neighborhood representatives are then contacted and asked to pledge their support. After this commitment pledge by all essential parties, a formal letter is sent to the school announcing its selection. Once the parks are awarded to the selected schools, the next two steps are securing funding for construction (discussed in Section 1.3, Chapter 1) and designing the park.

A SPARK Park is a true end-user design project with different methods used to acquire the users' input. Methods used include: design charrettes, questionnaires, interviews, and community meetings. A local landscape architect is commissioned to coordinate the design with the school board. The final design must be approved by the school board and combine the school's needs and wants with the community's input.

	Year One:
January-February	Schools petition for a park by writing a letter of interest. Schools are contacted and are evaluated for eligibility.
April	Recipients are selected and notified.
May	Orientation meeting is held and the school forms a SPARK Park committee. Site visits to other SPARK Parks.
June-August	School makes park wish lists, plans fundraising.
August-October	SPARK staff presents to PTA / PTO, signage for future park is placed, fundraising starts, community involvement is on going, Corporate sponsors are solicited.
October-November	Plans are being designed and fundraising continues.
December	Plans approved by principal, community, and PTA.
	Year Two:
January	Plans approved by School Board.
February	Plans go to bid.
March	Bids are advertised and pre-bid meetings held.
April	Bids are awarded, contracts signed, and a pre-construction conference is held.
May	Groundbreaking ceremonies.
June-August	Park construction is monitored.
September-October	Volunteer tree planting days for the park.
November-December	Park is dedicated.

Figure 3.1.2--SPARK Park process time line from SPARK, Inc.

Once the Houston school board accepts a plan, construction of the park begins with a competitive bid process, which is required since governmental funds are being used. The

landscape architect, school representatives, and SPARK Inc. members inspect the construction stages for quality assurance. The SPARK Park process usually takes from eighteen months to two years to complete depending on the project's scope. A proposed timeline is shown in Figure 3.1.2 above. This time line is only an example; each individual SPARK Park project is adapted accordingly.

3.2 Adaptation of a SPARK Park Process to East Baton Rouge Parish

The Houston Spark Park process has demonstrated success since 1983. The process to acquire a SPARK Park at Banks Elementary followed the Houston process with little variance. However, for future SPARK Park projects in EBRP, an adapted local process should be followed to ensure the most responsible and efficient park development. Two elements of the Houston process should not be changed. Those elements are the funding eligibility criteria and the proposed time line.

Without funding, the parks cannot be built. Since HUD determines the funding criteria, this element cannot change. Proper organization and set goals allow the parks to proceed in a timely manner. Without such structure, delays can add to the project cost which in turn may limit the amenities installed unless more funds can be raised. In contrast, the rest of the process can be improved on to better meet the needs of EBRP. These areas of improvement include resource management of BRG, earlier school and community involvement, and site prioritization.

Initially, the petitioning process needs to be adapted to the resource limitations of BRG. Houston's SPARK Inc. has a Board of Directors, staff, and a separate budget. BRG's operations are more meager. The Education Director is solely responsible for the project from start to finish.

Until EBRP has a separate department concentrating only on SPARK Parks, a process adapted to BRG's conditions is needed.

The second area of improvement is promoting community involvement from the start. A better design comes from a better understanding of the client (community). According to David Gray and Donald A. Pellegrino, unsuccessful urban park projects are attributed to poor design with aesthetics over function and not serving the needs of the user (Gray & Peligrino, 1973.). With earlier community participation, a better understanding of local political processes is realized. With this understanding of how the system works, residents are able to initiate further improvements to their community allowing their community to become self-reliant.

The third improvement is to develop a uniform and equitable site selection prioritization process. As stated in the Horizon Plan, EBRP is deficient in open space. This proposed site selection prioritization process should be easily understood by the petitioning school, address more critical issues than just low-income areas, and be less subjective so favoritism is not implied.

The Horizon Plan's goal to improve the Parish-wide image is obtainable with a newly structured SPARK Park site selection process choosing the most deserving sites, involving the community, and conserving local resources. The adaptation of the Houston process will help satisfy EBRP need for urban open space, initiating responsible growth, needed requirements, and the revitalizing low to moderate-income areas.

3.3 Regional Issues and Concerns

With the Houston SPARK Park process adapted for the EBRP needs, local issues and concerns of pertinent governmental agencies will be identified and discussed, so that further

adaptation of the process can be made if necessary. Only the four most influential agencies in the process will be profiled: BRG, the DHCD, EBRP School Board, and BREC.

BRG has two concerns: fundraising and the school board's role in the SPARK Park process. The school and community need to assist more in fundraising for the park. BRG's fundraising efforts took an enormous amount of time away from managing the SPARK Park process. The second concern was that the school board wanted to assume management roles in the SPARK Park process, subsequently retarding the process and jeopardizing construction schedules. Hopefully for future projects, BRG will manage the process similar to that of SPARK, Inc. in Houston (Davis, Baton Rouge Green.).

The DHCD mentioned four concerns. These concerns were applying block grants to funding the parks, limitation of funds, site selection, and the amount of time to complete the project. The DHCD first concern with the EBRP SPARK Park program was determining how to utilize CDBGs to fund the parks. With Houston's assistance, this issue was resolved. The second concern was basic economics. Funds for EBRP were significantly less than Houston's, so the sites would have to be chosen wisely to maximize the community impact. The third concern was the site selection of Banks Elementary. The DHCD thought there might have been a better school site for the park. The fourth concern was the excessive time (over two years) that it took to complete the first EBRP SPARK Park project. For future projects, better organization and overall logistics were needed for future projects (Guinsler, Department of Housing and Community Development).

The EBRP School Board had three major concerns about a SPARK Park: vandalism, safety, and maintenance. Vandalism at the pilot program site increased the first three weeks after park completion, but subsided after the community started to police the area. Most of the safety

concerns were addressed in the site's design phase. The third concern was maintenance of the site. After completing the park at Banks Elementary, site maintenance increased 15%. A carefully thought out design will have the largest impact on this issue. Nevertheless, the Scotlandville community and Banks Elementary should assist in maintaining the park. (Howell, East Baton Rouge Parish School Board.)

BREC is a local governmental entity that has a stake in creating and improving parks in EBRP. BREC has been involved with similar park programs for over fifty years. BREC's concern was sustainability since many of the partnerships with the schools were ephemeral. Historically, changes in the school's administration altered their willingness to work with BREC. (Palmer, BREC.)

3.4 Establishing the Demographic Criteria for SPARK Park Site Selection

Houston's community need requirement relies solely on demographic income data for HUD funding and the need for park development in the area. For Houston's needs, this selection criteria works. These, by far, are the most important criteria to determine community need, but other factors should be considered to prioritize potential park sites. This is especially important in EBRP where this SPARK Park program is relatively new.

What if all communities qualify for funding and all the sites are deemed in need of updated facilities? How would the tie be broken if only these two factors are considered? Hence the reason for considering other issues that plague urban communities daily. What criteria, other than HUD's funding and lack of community parks, should be analyzed to determine community need for a SPARK Park?

The criteria that should be considered are population density, household density, and urban area locations. The reasons these criteria should be considered were discussed in Chapter

2, Section 2.2. Urban areas have the most people and the greatest need for open space. However, they have the least amount of recreational areas. Urban areas are where over 70% of Americans live. Space for new park development in urban areas is less likely than in suburbs since undeveloped land is less abundant and need for open space is greater in cities (Department of the Interior, 1978.).

Allowing other criteria beyond income data to be considered for a proposed site could lead to a more equitable and objective selection. For example, a rural area may qualify according to income criteria and not qualify for other criteria. Whereas, an inner-city community may marginally qualify according to income criteria, but have high need based on its urban location and its household and population densities. Which site deserves a park? From the review of literature in Chapter 2, the latter site is more deserving. Hence, a need to improve the Houston process by considering other factors than just income data.

To ensure equity and to facilitate the SPARK Park site selection process, the four criteria were graphically mapped to create Tool B: EBRP urban areas, households with 51% or more below \$43,500, households with four plus members, and EBRP population density. These maps will use a graduated colors map format to demonstrate increasing values. The graduated colors map intensifies (darkens) when the percentage or amount of the census tract increases. For example, EBRP areas having a higher percentage of households with 51% or more below \$43,500 are shown with a darker color (See Figure 3.4.2).

Once the four individual maps were complete, they were overlaid sequentially to demonstrate areas of greater need for park development. The areas in greater need for park development are also represented by a graduated colors map (Figure 4.3.1, East Baton Rouge

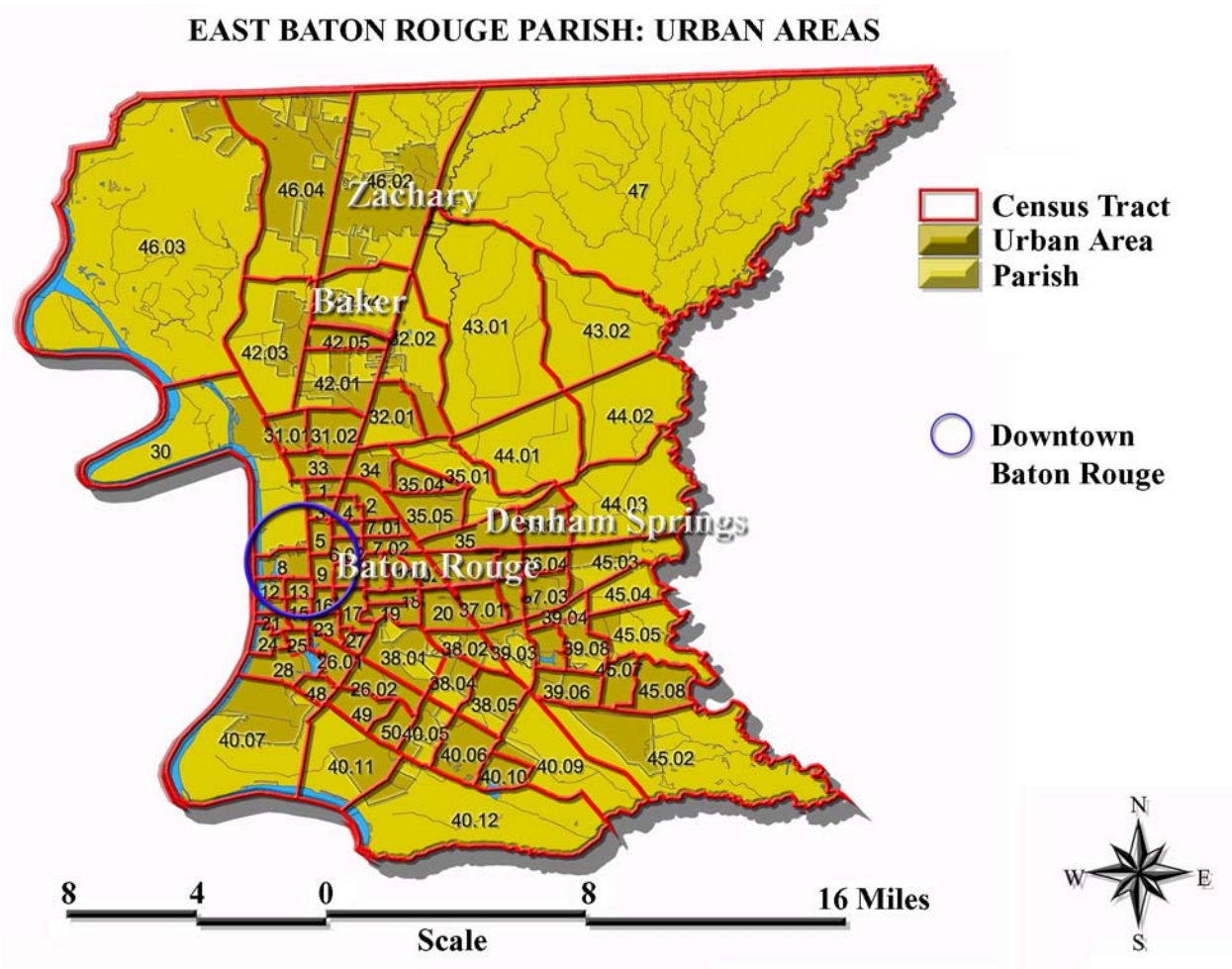


Figure 3.4.1--East Baton Rouge Parish base map with census tract boundaries and urban areas. Parish need for SPARK Park site summary map). This map of the four overlaid criteria will serve as a park development site selection Tool for BRG.

The map in Figure 3.4.1 above shows how the U.S. Census data is represented in census tracts (shown as a red outline). The numbers identify the individual census tracts for which information is referenced. This map uses a darker color to differentiate EBRP urban areas from less developed areas in the Parish. Figure 3.4.1 is the first of four sequential maps in the overlay process using ESRI Arc View GIS software and demographic data from the ESRI and the United States 2000 Census websites.

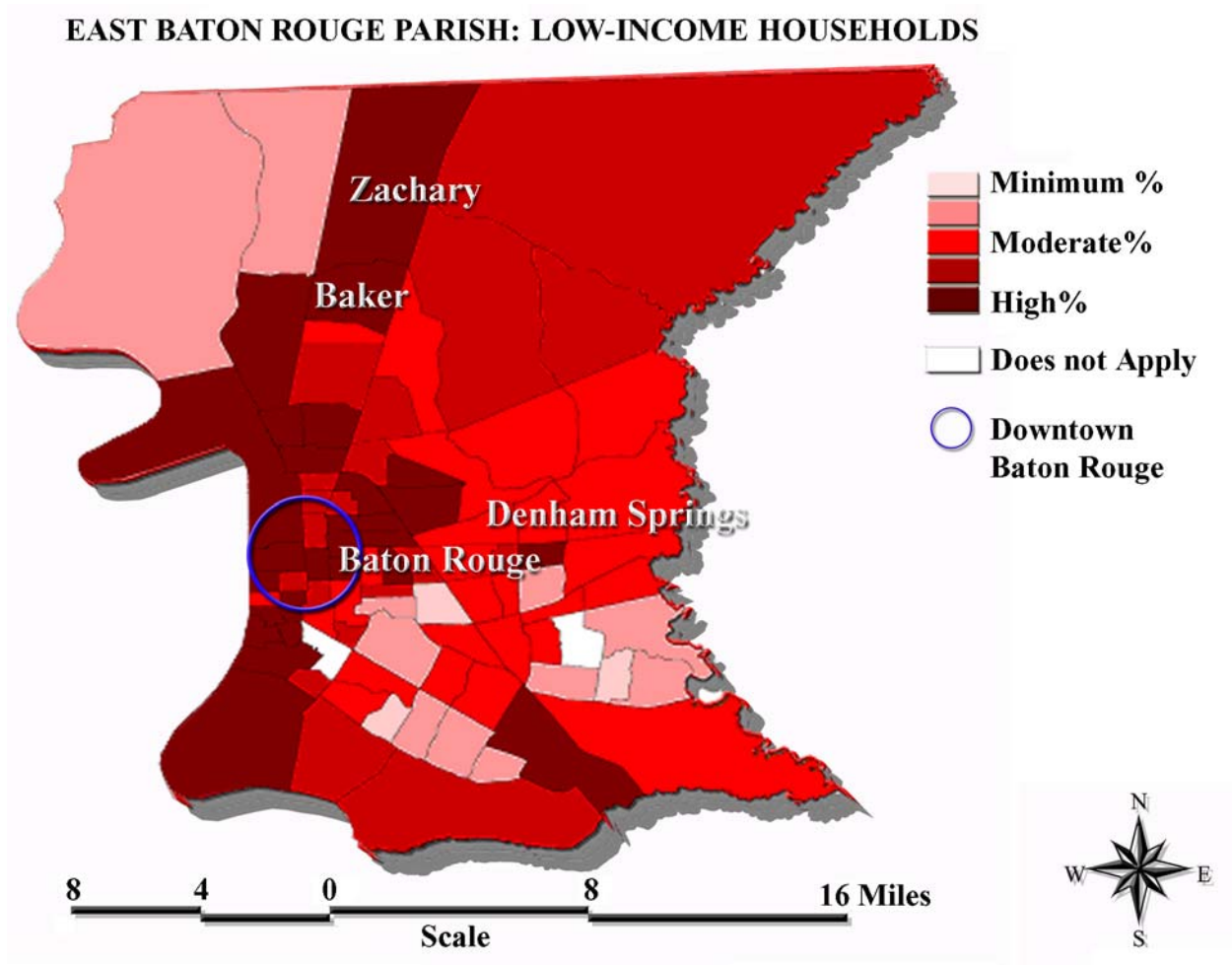


Figure 3.4.2--East Baton Rouge Parish households with 51% or more below \$43,500.

The second map used in the overlay process is income data for EBRP. Figure 3.4.2 above shows all census tracts that potentially qualify for HUD's funding based on household income levels. The darker areas have the larger percentage of households having incomes of \$43,500 or less. The minimum range of 51% (barely qualifying for HUD funding) is represented by a light pink color. The darkest areas have 90% or greater of household incomes of \$43,500 or less. The two white census tracts do not qualify as low to moderate-income areas, since less than 51% of the households have income of \$43,500 or less.

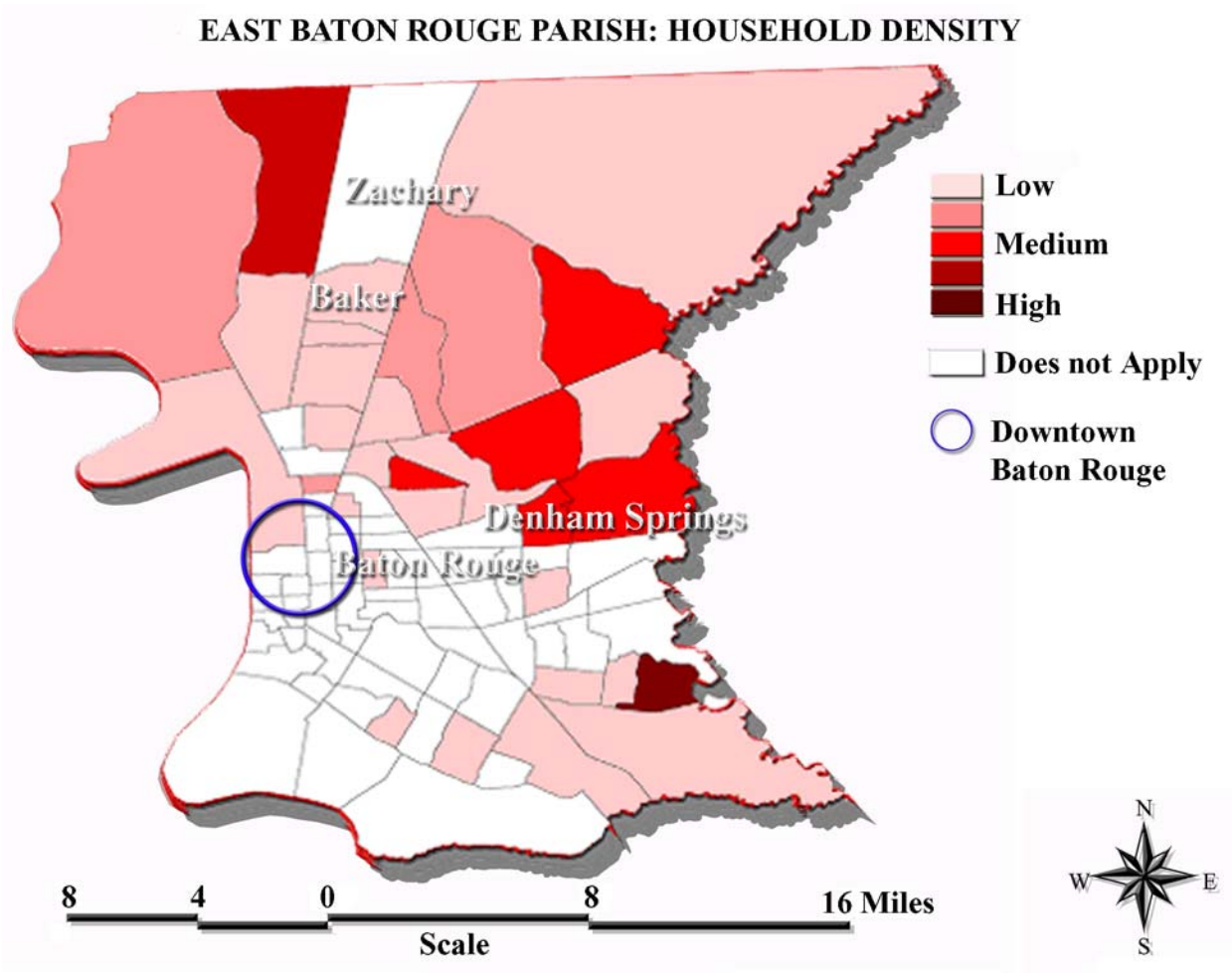


Figure 3.4.3--East Baton Rouge Parish households with four plus members.

Since these maps are based on census tracts and not an individual community, some of the census tracts that do not meet household income criteria based on Figure 3.4.2, may have individual communities that can still qualify for HUD grants. This is a limitation of the maps in Figures 3.4.1 through 3.4.4. These graduated colors maps only demonstrate the most probable qualified areas.

In the third map (Figure 3.4.3), census tracts with the greatest household densities are shown. HUD's criterion requires a qualifying household to have four or more people, as defined in Chapter 3, Section 3.1. In Figure 3.4.3, household density represents the average household size of a given census tract. Those census tracts averaging only four people are

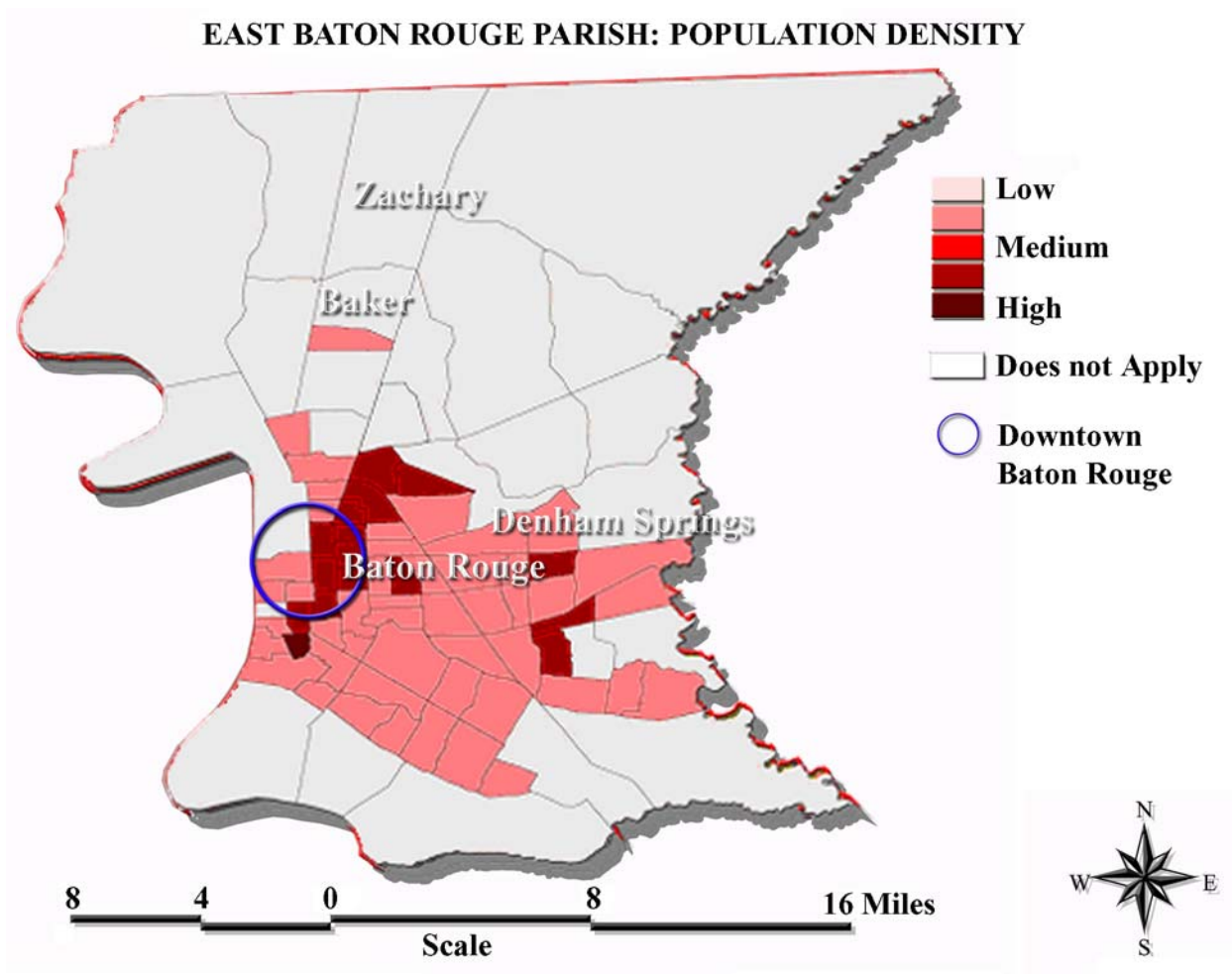


Figure 3.4.4--East Baton Rouge Parish population density.

represented by the light pink color. The census tract's color increases in intensity in direct correlation to an increase in average household size. Figure 3.4.3 represents those census tracts with the highest densities of households that average four or more people. The white areas, on average, do not qualify for HUD Funding.

The fourth map (Figure 3.4.4) to be used in the overlay process represents EBRP population density. Population density is calculated by dividing the total number of people of a census tract by the total area. This provides a number that represents people per square acre. The more people per square acre, the denser the population. Differentiating total population and density is crucial. It is important to note that darker census tracts in Figure 3.4.3

do not necessarily infer that these sites have a higher population, but they have a greater number of people per acre in their area.

Figures 3.4.1 through 3.4.4 provide an abundance of demographic information that will be overlaid to determine community eligibility for park development. Each criteria map could stand alone in justifying need for park sites, but the findings would be limited and biased. By combining these maps to prioritize the highest need census tracts for park development in EBRP, objectivity and equity are added to the SPARK Park site selection process. These overlaid maps will create a useful tool for BRG to quickly assess a site's eligibility.

There seems to be a theme from evaluating the Houston process, adapting it to EBRP, and addressing the local concerns. A site selection prioritization process can better resolve most of the issues from the Horizon Plan and local officials. The adapted EBRP site selection process is described in Chapter four.

3.5 Overlay Process of the Demographic Criteria

Now begins the overlay process of the four sequential criteria maps (Figures 3.4.1 through 3.4.4). This overlay process will create BRG's new tool for park site selection prioritization (Tool B, Figure 4.3.1). This process will demonstrate how using only one criterion could skew the results of determining areas of greatest need for park development, but combining several criteria provides an equitable site selection process.

In Figure 3.5.1, the Urban Areas map is overlaid Low-Income Households. As a result of this overlay, the majority of the darker census tracts tend to be in downtown Baton Rouge. This would be expected since much of downtown is commercial with very few households to contribute income data, hence the skewed results.

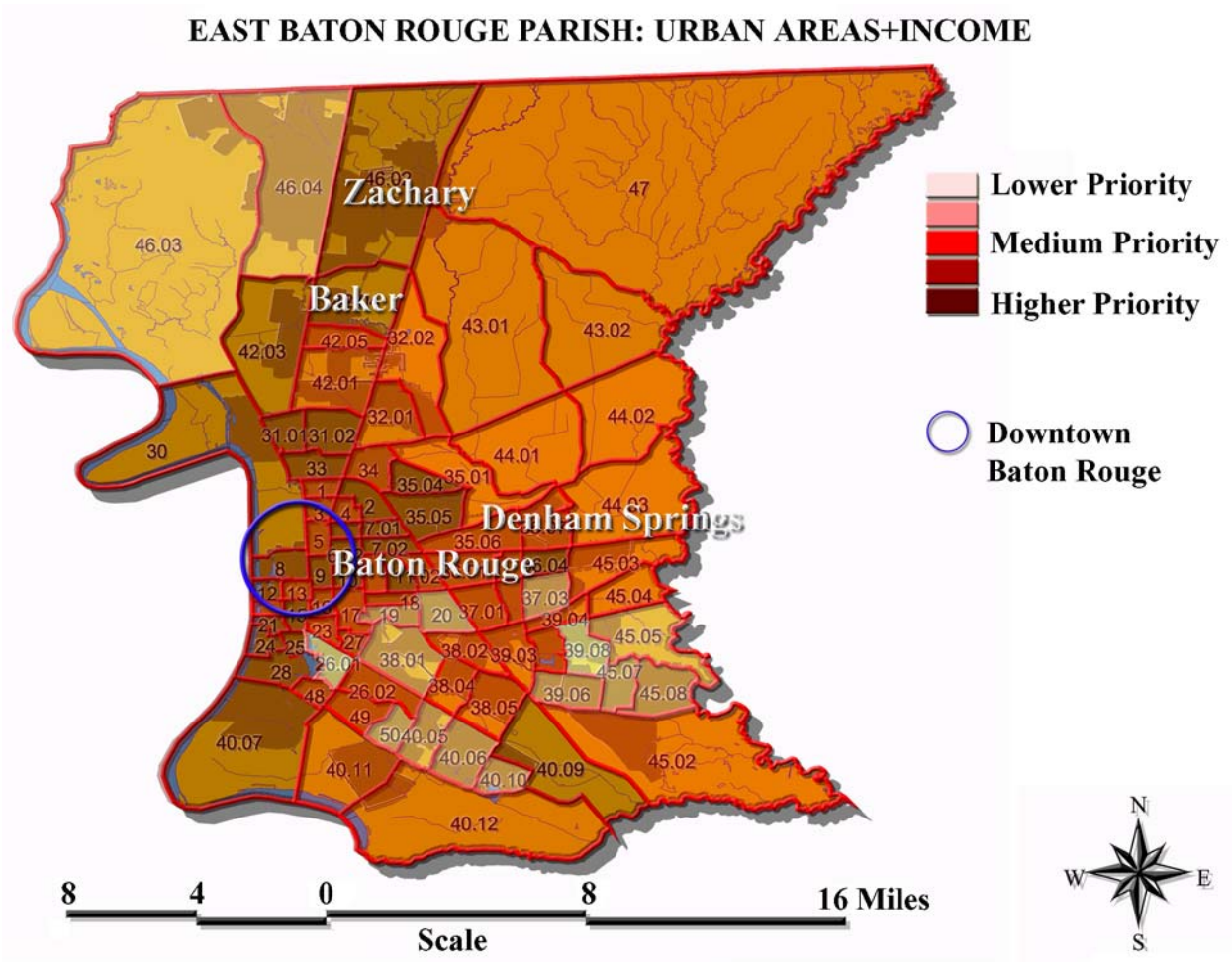


Figure 3.5.1--Base map overlaid with household income data map.

The next progression in the overlay process is to add Household Density data to Figure 3.5.1. Adding this data to create Figure 3.5.2 lightened the downtown census tracts that were previously darker in Figure 3.5.1. This also reflects the lack of residents living in downtown Baton Rouge and should be expected by adding household density. As a result, some of the suburban census tracts darkened, since families have migrated outside the urban areas in EBRP.

If income were the sole criteria, then downtown Baton Rouge would be the highest priority for park development. Overlaying household data shows that some downtown census tracts may not be the only areas eligible for a SPARK Park. The purpose to create an equitable site selection process is better validated with the multiple-criteria overlay process.

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH: URBAN AREAS+INCOME+HOUSEHOLD

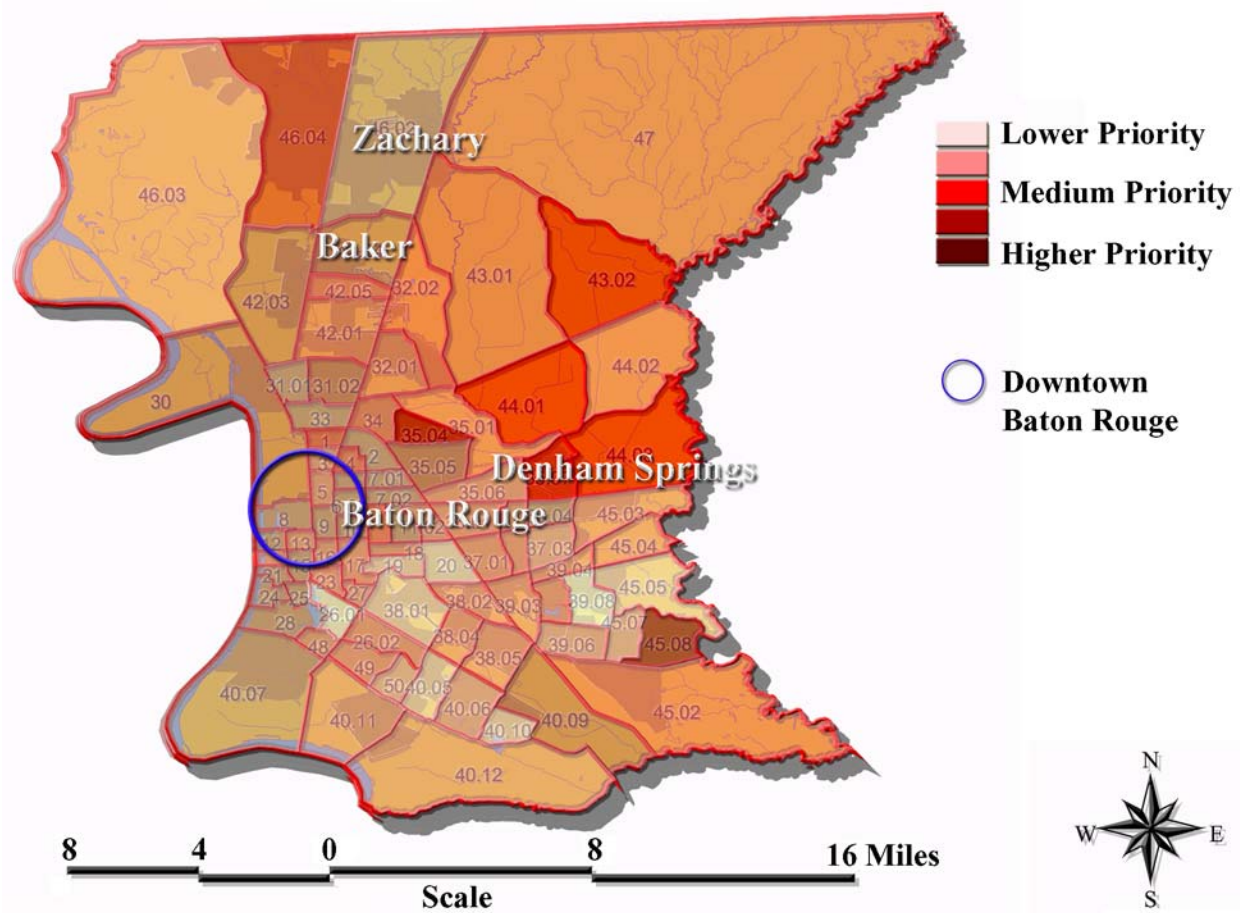


Figure 3.5.2--Base map overlaid with household income data and household size.

The final progression of the overlay process is adding population density to Figure 3.5.2. Figure 3.5.3 is the result of this overlay. Census tracts located in downtown and midtown Baton Rouge seem to be credible potential sites again. Also ten sites in the north and east show they potentially qualify as shown in Figure 3.5.3. The darkest census tracts should represent the areas of greatest need for park development in EBRP.

With the Houston process analyzed and adapted to the EBRP, the regional issues and concerns addressed, and the demographic criteria for SPARK Park site selection established and overlaid to create a SPARK Park site prioritization map, two tools can be created to improve the SPARK Park site selection process in EBRP. These tools will be discussed in Chapter Four.

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH: URBAN AREAS+INCOME+HOUSEHOLD +POPULATION

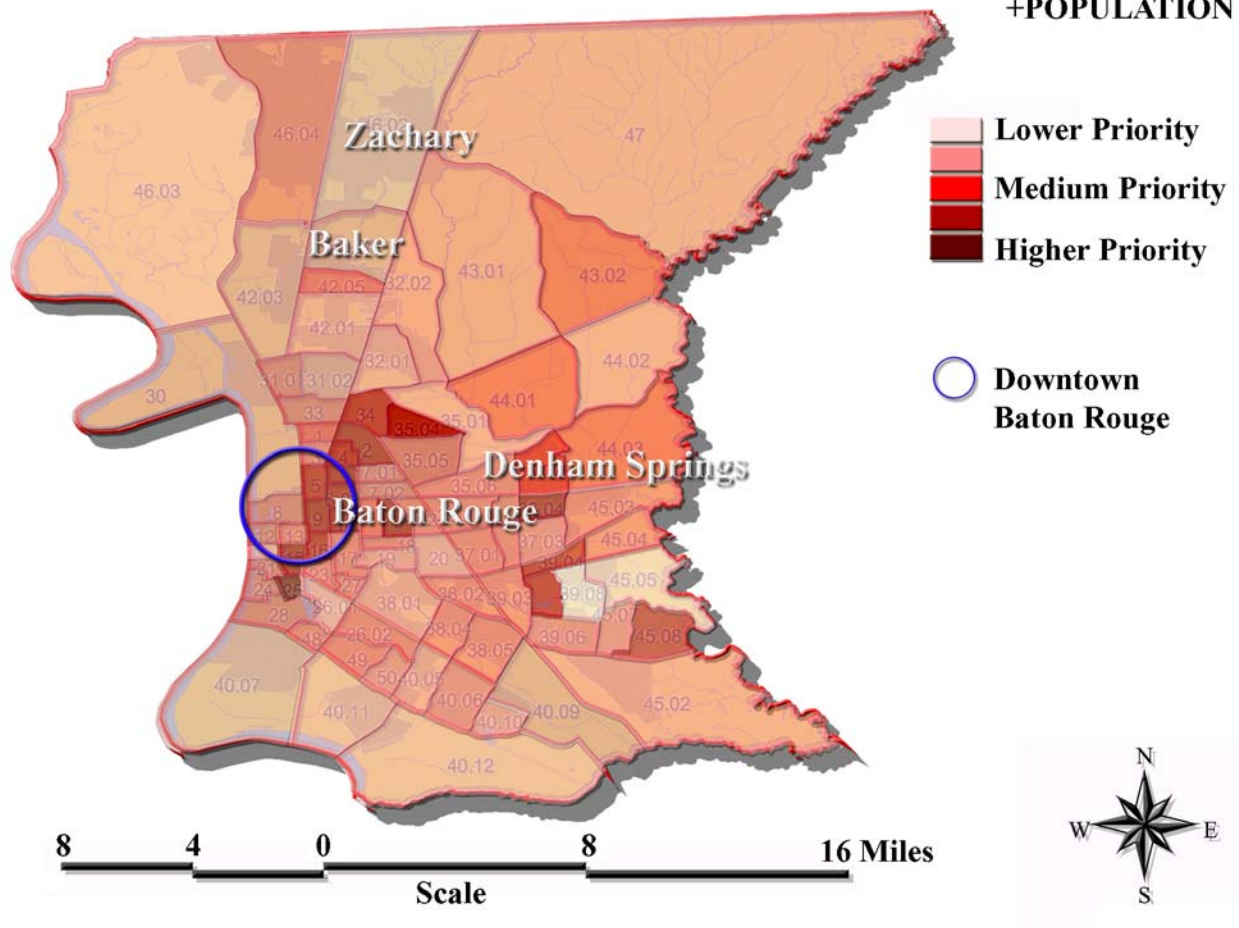


Figure 3.5.3--Base map overlaid with household income data, household size, and population density

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The proposal for a SPARK Park site selection process in EBRP was created by combining the analysis of the proven Houston SPARK Park process, the adaptation of this process to EBRP, and addressing regional issues and concerns. Two tools to improve the SPARK Park site selection process in EBRP were created as a result. The *School and Community Petition Guide for East Baton Rouge Parish—A Comprehensive Guide to Assist Parish Schools in Acquiring a SPARK Park* (Appendix A), hereafter known as Tool A, and the East Baton Rouge Parish need for SPARK Park site summary map (Figure 4.3.1), hereafter known as Tool B. These two Tools will be used to expedite the petition process, demonstrate site need, prioritize community need, and increase community involvement. Additional potential funding sources acquired through research are also discussed in this Chapter to address HUD’s funding limitations.

4.1 Petition Process

Tool A is composed of sequential checklists that schools can complete in a relatively short amount of time. These checklists assist a school in gathering and presenting necessary data for SPARK Park consideration. These checklists address basic school information, site need, community need, and community involvement. As a result, the pressure imposed on BRG’s limited time resources will be greatly reduced. In Houston, the SPARK Inc. staff does the initial evaluation, which could take several hours each. If this time is multiplied by twenty requests per year, that could mean several weeks for a single member of BRG to finish.

If each of the EBRP schools could perform the initial analysis, then BRG could quickly choose the ten most likely sites and visit them to confirm the provided information. Tool A must

SITE SELECTION PETITION INFORMATION

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 1 OF

PETITIONING SCHOOL:

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

MAILING ADDRESS:

IF DIFFERENT FROM PHYSICAL ADDRESS

SCHOOL CONTACT NAME:

EXT

PRINCIPAL IF DIFFERENT:

IF DIFFERENT FROM SCHOOL CONTACT NAME

EXT

PARK COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

IF APPLICABLE--THESE CAN BE TEACHERS,

STAFF, COMMUNITY LEADERS, OR MEMBERS

OF THE ADJACENT COMMUNITY--ANYONE

THAT WILL ASSIST IN THE EFFORTS TO GET THE

SPARK PARK AT THE ABOVE SITE.

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR SCHOOL WOULD BE A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A SPARK PARK?

Figure 4.1.1-- Site Selection Petition Information (Appendix A.2).

not bog the school down with paperwork for it to be a useful tool. According to BRG, if schools have too many responsibilities placed upon them by this process, it will not be completed. The school staff's priority is educator duties (Davis, Baton Rouge Green). Therefore, comprehensive, yet simple, checklists seem the best solution. Tool A will be submitted with the letter of interest to show school and community commitment to the SPARK Park process.

In Figure 4.1.1, Tool A provides BRG with all vital contact information. The school must appoint a SPARK Park committee. With formation of this committee, a school's commitment is confirmed and the workload is distributed. The checklist's benefits will be discussed in the next two sections.

4.2 Site Need

Tool A's checklists guide the school in analyzing site need. The checklists are created in a short answer format. Not only will Tool A checklists assist in expediting BRG's site selection, they provide schools a means to better document possible site concerns. Risk of liability may be altered as a result.

The first checklist section of Tool A addresses the size and ownership of the parcel of land. Land acquisition is not a part of the SPARK Park process. If a school does not qualify for the land requirement, then there is no need to proceed with the checklist. Therefore, it is the first question of the checklist (See Figure 4.2.1).

The second checklist section of Tool A in Figure 4.2.1 addresses playground equipment issues. The school inventories the amounts and types of equipment, and their condition. The checklist provides space to attach representative photographs for BRG's review. Examples of inadequate playground facilities show the need for repair and/or replacement of equipment that has deteriorated due to age, weathering, abuse, and/or normal use. These are a few of the types of equipment issues to be documented in the site need inventory. More examples of equipment issues are discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2. An excellent reference for schools in assessing their playground equipment (and the basis for this section of analysis in this checklist) is Where Our Children Play—Community Park Playground Equipment by Donna Thompson and Louis

SITE NEED CHECKLIST—PLAYGROUND/RECREATION EQUIPMENT

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 2 OF

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE INFORMATION:

IS THERE A PARCEL OF IN YOU CONTROL OR OWNED BY YOUR SCHOOL THAT COULD HOST THE PROPOSED PARK?

YES	NO
1	0

APPROXIMATE SIZE OT THE LAND PARCEL	ACRES / SQ. FT
-------------------------------------	----------------

SITE NEED:**PLAYGROUND / RECREATION EQUIPMENT:**[illegible]

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT NEED BELOW.

Figure 4.2.1-- Site Need Checklist—Playground/Recreation Equipment (Appendix A.4).

Bowers. This playground equipment guide addresses issues of safety, adequacy of numbers, amount of use, and type.

Since the park will be open to more users, the potential for injuries increases. Litigation concerning playground facility hazards has risen consistently since the 1960's. The plaintiffs have won 40% of these cases nation-wide, not including those cases settled out of court. Another disturbing fact is that the state of Louisiana, with 16% of the total litigation nation-wide, is second only to New York City in regard to total number of litigation cases concerning playground injuries (Thompson & Bowers, 1989.).

The next checklist section of Tool A (Figure 4.2.2) addresses site hazards that may also cause potential injury. All hazards place great liability on the school. The costs of lawsuits,

legal fees, and negative publicity are much greater than the cost to address these concerns in the design process. Inventory and analysis of these hazards benefits the schools in three ways. First, they can map the locations and reduce the risk of injury by taking measures accordingly. Second, they can rank the severity to know which issues should be addressed first. And third, the school becomes aware of other potential hazards by critically analyzing the site in depth. This can prevent a possible hazard from materializing or becoming worse.

Similar to completing the assessment process for Figure 4.2.1, all site hazards are inventoried by type, location, and severity as shown in Figure 4.2.2. All tripping hazards, safety issues, and inaccessible areas should be inventoried and photographed. An efficient way to compile these elements in a comprehensive site inventory of hazards is by mapping their locations on a site map. This makes future referencing of these hazards easy. Examples of tripping hazards can be abrupt changes in grade, exposed tree roots, foreign objects in paths, single steps, and uneven pavement or damaged areas. An extensive site need inventory of the school grounds may uncover more potential hazards.

Other hazards may exist on the site that may often be overlooked. These hazards still pose a potential danger to the site user. Examples of other types of hazards are declining trees, severe erosion, and lack of visibility and/or lighting. The park sites should be free from safety concerns. Children should be free to play without excessive risk of injury. Grandparents should be able to access the site to watch their grandchildren play. Physically challenged people should be able to use the site for recreation and not simply stay on the perimeter watching others enjoying themselves.

The third checklist section of Tool A (Figure 4.2.3) addresses accessibility. The parks must be accessible to and within the site for all users. Since many of the schools in EBRP were

SITE NEED CHECKLIST—SITE HAZARDS

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 4 OF

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE HAZARDS:

TYPE	LOCATION	HAZARD		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF HAZARD ISSUES BELOW.

Figure 4.2.2-- Site Need Checklist—Site Hazards (Appendix A.5).

built prior to ADA guidelines, achieving this compliance is critical. The parks are for all members of the community and need to be constructed as such.

Accessibility is defined both physically and visually. Physical accessibility is the ability of all intended users to enter and maneuver on the site. Just because there are paths, does not mean they are accessible. Various physical barriers can make accessibility difficult or impossible. See examples in Figure 5.1.6. People who are arthritic, elderly, or disabled may have a difficult time using these circulation paths. For instance, they may not be able to safely leave a path to enjoy unpaved spaces in the park.

Along with physical accessibility, visual access to the site is crucial. This issue is more subjective than the physical accessibility. Inventorying this element may be difficult, but it does

SITE NEED CHECKLIST—SITE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 7 OF

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES:

TYPE	LOCATION	DIFFICULTY		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES BELOW.

Figure 4.2.3-- Site Need Checklist—Site Accessibility Issues (Appendix A.6).

not reduce its importance. Many times this is overlooked but vital to the success of the site. Examples of visual accessibility include are an uninviting entry to a park site, excessive amounts of razor wire, and play equipment appearing not structurally sound due to rust. If noticed, they should be documented with photographs to confirm site need. The landscape architect hired for the site design should address these issues in the design/development phase.

Not all of the needs of the school are addressed by resolving potential hazards on the site. The site's overall purpose is to facilitate learning. Park facilities should not only promote physical education, but assist educators in other course work. To accomplish this in EBRP, BRG has made the addition of outdoor classrooms to SPARK Park(s) a required element. Teaching

science courses by demonstrating natural processes in an environment other than a typical classroom setting facilitates interest and learning (Davis, Baton Rouge Green.).

4.3 Community Need

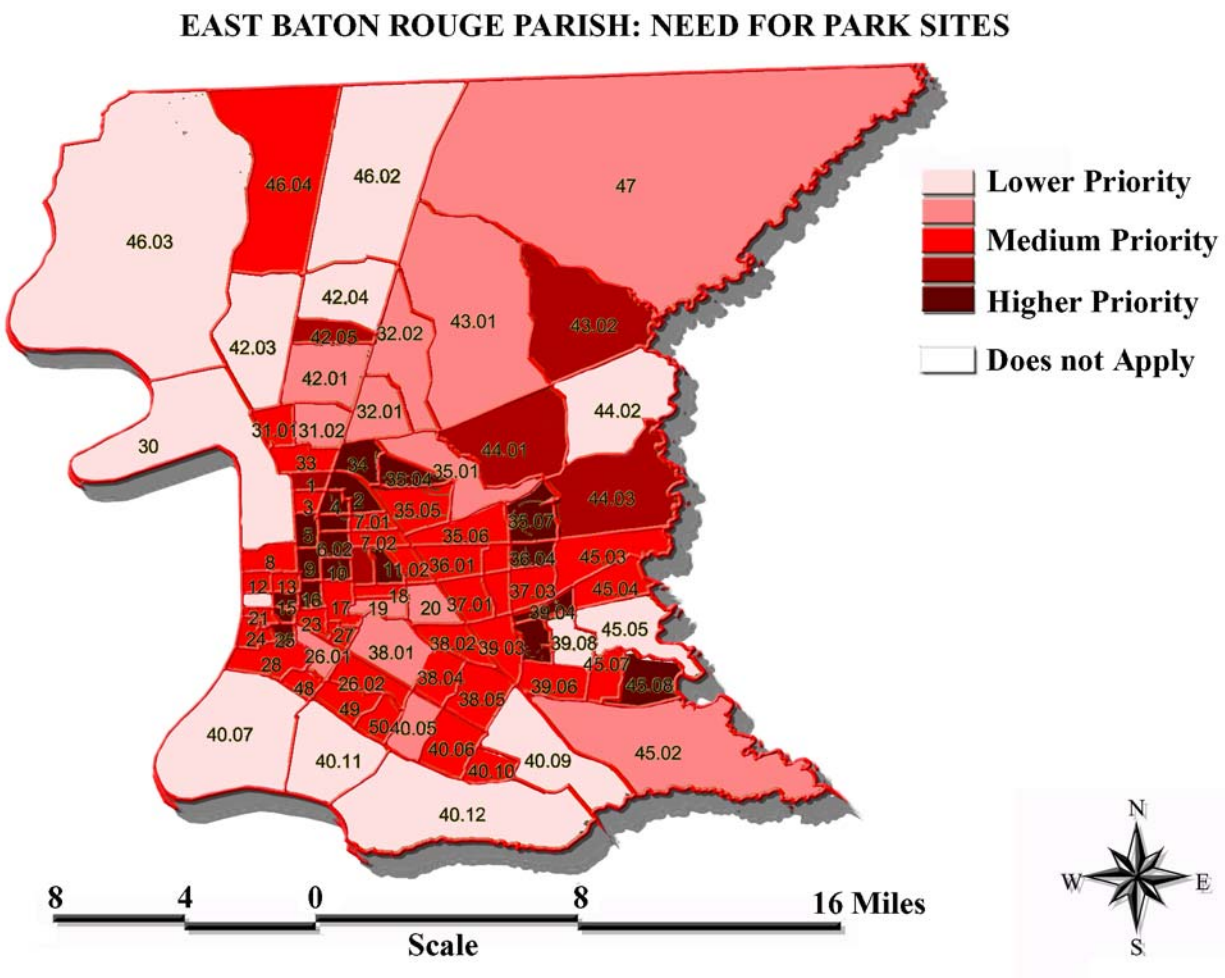


Figure 4.3.1--East Baton Rouge Parish need for SPARK Park site summary map.

Tool B (Figure 4.3.1) is a summary of the overlay process in Chapter 3, Section 3.5. Tool B is intended to be BRG's site selection tool to expedite the process of qualifying proposed SPARK Park sites. Tool B will be used to prioritize census tracts into greatest to least need. Although these results should prove to be effective for BRG, an individual community in a low-potential census tract may possibly qualify for a SPARK Park. Tool B merely shows areas where BRG should concentrate their resources for further eligibility studies. Specific schools can

SITE NEED CHECKLIST—COMMUNITY NEED

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 10 OF

COMMUNITY NAME: _____

COMMUNITY CONTACTS: _____

COMMUNITY NEED:

LIST NEAREST PARKS TO THE SCHOOL SITE	APPROX.DISTANCE

HOW WOULD THIS COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM A SPARK PARK?

Figure 4.3.2-- Site Need Checklist—Community Need (Appendix A.7).

also determine community need eligibility with this map created. It allows them to quickly see if their area qualifies.

Tool A (see Appendix A) will help to open the communication lines between the school and community. It addresses the community need and gathers vital community information. A list of community members committed to assisting the school is required. This partnership is critical for the success of the project. Figure 4.3.2 provides information concerning other parks

4.4 Community Involvement

PLEASE LIST PROPOSED FUNDRAISING IDEAS:

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal black lines across the entire width of the page, typical of notebook or legal stationery. The background is a uniform off-white color. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Figure 4.4.1-- Site Need Checklist—Community Involvement (Appendix A.9).

58

to ensure successful park design. The formal design process should incorporate the following seven steps:

- 1) Have meetings with key members of the school and community to set goals.
- 2) Answer the questions of why certain site conditions exist.
- 3) Observe actual site activities and uses.
- 4) Analyze all of the information gathered.
- 5) Present the findings to the entire community.
- 6) Present all of the information to the landscape architect designing the park.
- 7) Refine the conceptual design into a master plan.

The space created by following this formal design process will be more sustainable, serving the needs of the community and school for years. This is a result when a strong partnership is established initially (Madden, 2000).

4.5 Potential Additional Funding Sources

The final area of improvement to the Houston SPARK Park process is locating additional funding sources. Since HUD grants are limited in number and will not pay for all costs of a SPARK Park, other funding sources are needed. Numerous funding sources will allow several parks to be created simultaneously, expediting the SPARK Park movement in EBRP. Several grant opportunities are available to create improvements that enhance the students' educational experience. The following sources are just a few examples of the potential funding opportunities available for eligible SPARK Park sites. Each has specific eligibility criteria and is briefly describe below.

AmeriCorps offers assistance for projects that will strengthen a community. The scope of the project must address education, safety, and site environment. A SPARK park addresses all of

these. Facilities must be updated to comply with OSHA standards and ADA guidelines, while creating a usable green space for its community to address (www.americorps.org).

The National Endowment for the Arts allots funding to assist in the creation of park art. Students of the recipient school work with a local artist(s) to add local culture to the site and give them a sense of ownership of the park. This is a key element of a SPARK Park and qualifies it for said funding. Also, such art makes each site unique, while addressing individual community issues (Davis, Baton Rouge Green).

Congress enacted the DOE's 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to address the education, public health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of a community during after-school weekday hours, weekends, and summers for rural and inner-city public schools. The program's focus is to create a safe and drug-free environment to expand the learning opportunities for area children. Adding program elements that promote literacy would improve a site's chances of receiving a grant from this funding source (www.ed.gov).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers an Environmental Education Grant Program for educational projects that enhance the public's skills, awareness, and knowledge to assist in informed decisions concerning environmental quality. Public educational agencies are eligible for these grants with the creation of exterior learning facilities that incorporate environmental processes and awareness. Students can learn about recycling, natural processes, animal habitats, and plant eco-systems. Not only will these programs qualify the park for EPA funding, they will assist in the teaching of natural science courses (www.epa.gov).

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPRR) program under the National Park Service provides matching grants for distressed urban communities to create a recreational system recovery plan. This program subsidizes the development and planning aspects of

community park construction. Eligible program elements are playgrounds, recreation centers, neighborhood parks, sporting fields and courts, swimming pools, hiking and biking trails, and picnic areas. These grants are for rehabilitation projects only, not for new construction (www.nps.gov).

With Tool A and Tool B created to improve the Houston process, EBRP should be prime for a SPARK Park movement of its own. Tool A and Tool B will expedite the process and increase the number of park sites in the Parish. In Chapter 5, Tool A and Tool B will be applied in an example situation to show merit and ease of use.

CHAPTER 5: APPLICATION OF THE SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PROCESS

Tool A and Tool B were created as a result of analyzing the Houston process, adapting it to meet local needs, and addressing regional issues and concerns. The next step is to apply these SPARK Park site selection Tools to demonstrate how schools use Tool A and BRG uses Tool B. In Section 5.1, schools are shown how to use Tool A. Brownsfield Elementary is used as the example site for demonstrating this step-by-step process. Applying Tool A in this manner will help illustrate the kinds of information a petitioning school should provide BRG to be considered a SPARK Park candidate.

In Section 5.2, use of Tool B will be demonstrated. Tool B will be a vital resource to BRG in objectively determining sites in the Parish that have the greatest need for park development. This method of site selection for park development will help promote responsible growth as defined by the Horizon Plan. Finally, the results of the application of Tool A and Tool B will be discussed in Section 5.3 and their adaptability in Section 5.4.

5.1 Brownsfield Elementary

Brownsfield Elementary was once considered a SPARK Park candidate; Tool A will be applied to this site to serve as an example for other petitioning schools to follow. Brownsfield Elementary is located in census tract 32.01 in the northwest section of EBRP near the municipal airport (as shown in Figure 5.1.1 below). It is a member of the Brownsfield subdivision and centrally located in the neighborhood. Brownsfield Elementary has an open parcel of land adjacent to the school on the south side.

The first step in the petition process is for the school's principal to write a letter of interest showing his/her commitment to assisting the SPARK Park process. This letter is to be attached to Tool A. The next step is for school officials to complete Tool A.

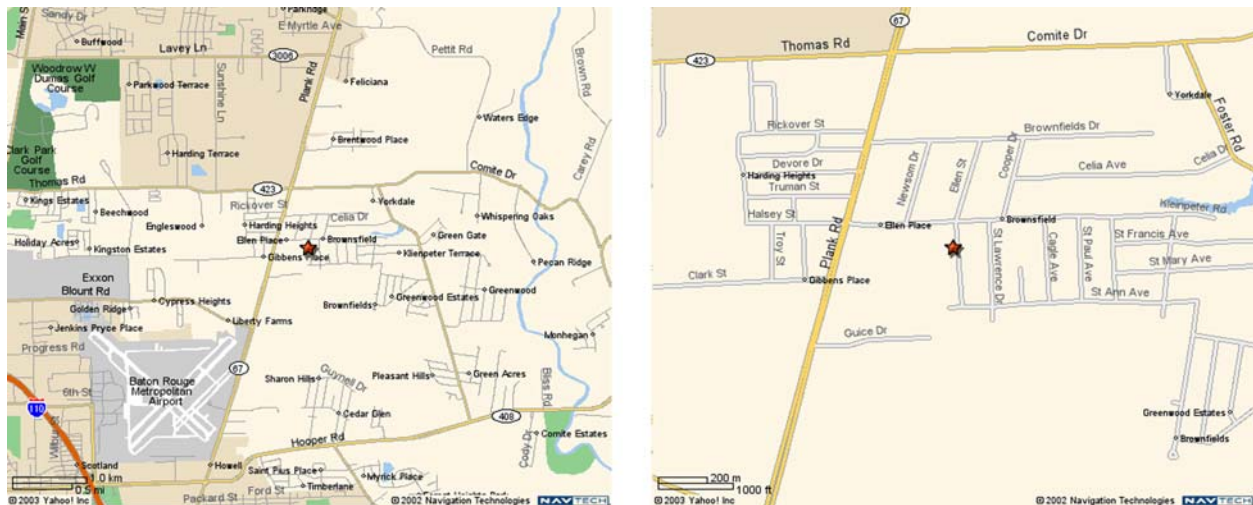


Figure 5.1.1--Brownsfield Elementary maps from www.mapquest.com.

Tool A's first step is to provide basic information concerning the school as shown in Figure 5.1.3. Site need is divided into three categories: playground/recreational equipment, site hazards, and site accessibility issues. Next, community need is analyzed by a school providing community contacts, nearby park inventory, how this community will benefit from park development, and a map designating the need category. This step gives the community the opportunity to further demonstrate its need, uniqueness, and how they would benefit from park development. For example, Brownsfield Elementary is located in census tract 32.01 which, according to the 2000 United States Census, has an equal distribution of ethnic diversity. The final Tool A checklist initiates community involvement by requiring fundraising ideas and ways the community is going to be involved in the SPARK Park process.

Figures 5.1.2 through 5.1.7 demonstrate how a school might complete the remainder of Tool A. Again, Brownsfield Elementary will be used as an example in this demonstration. Both real and fabricated data will be used to complete the checklists in Tool A. This data is used for example purposes and in no way can its accuracy be guaranteed. The data entered is represented by the red text.

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PETITION

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 1 OF 1

PETITIONING SCHOOL: Brownsfield Elementary Magnet School

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: The Schools Location Goes Here

East Baton Rouge Parish

MAILING ADDRESS: Same as Above

IF DIFFERENT FROM PHYSICAL ADDRESS

SCHOOL CONTACT NAME: The Principal's Name Here EXT

PRINCIPAL IF DIFFERENT: Same as Above EXT

IF DIFFERENT FROM SCHOOL CONTACT NAME

PARK COMMITTEE MEMBERS: A Faculty or Staff Member's Name TITLE Teacher

IF APPLICABLE--THESE CAN BE TEACHERS,

A Faculty or Staff Member's Name TITLE Teacher

STAFF, COMMUNITY LEADERS, OR MEMBERS

A Faculty or Staff Member's Name TITLE Teacher

OF THE ADJACENT COMMUNITY--ANYONE

A Faculty or Staff Member's Name TITLE Staff

THAT WILL ASSIST IN THE EFFORTS TO GET THE

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

SPARK PARK AT THE ABOVE SITE.

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

And SO On....If applicable TITLE And SO On

WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR SCHOOL WOULD BE A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A SPARK PARK?

We have a school in need of updated facilities and a supportive faculty and staff. The PTA is strong and will assist in getting a SPARK Park. We have a large park next to our school that can benefit the children, teachers, and community. This is why Brownsfield is the best candidate for a SPARK Park.

NOTE: TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION AS A SPARK PARK RECIPIENT, PLEASE ATTACH A LETTER OF INTEREST ON SCHOOL LETTERHEAD.

Figure 5.1.2--Completed Site Selection Petition Information (Appendix A.2).

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 2 OF 2

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE INFORMATION:

IS THERE A PARCEL OF IN YOU CONTROL OR OWNED BY YOUR SCHOOL THAT COULD HOST THE PROPOSED PARK?

YES	NO
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	0

APPROXIMATE SIZE OT THE LAND PARCEL

5+/- ACRES / SQ. FT

SITE NEED:

PLAYGROUND / RECREATION EQUIPMENT:

TYPE	LOCATION	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Swing Set	West side playground	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	2
Swing Set	West side playground	0	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monkey Bars	West side playground	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
Slide	West side playground	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
Basketball Goals	West side playground	0	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT NEED BELOW.



TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE 2 7

Figure 5.1.3.--Completed Site Need Checklist—Playground/Recreation Equipment (Appendix A.4).

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 4 OF 4

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE HAZARDS:

TYPE	LOCATION	HAZARD		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
Large step off	Playground	✓	2	3
Large step off	Science Building	✓	2	3
Large step off	Cafeteria	1	✓	3
Dead Limb Hanging	Park Area	1	2	✓
Damaged concrete	Basketball Court	1	2	✓
Damaged concrete	Parking Lot	✓	✓	3
Large pot hole	Parking Lot	✓	2	3
Large step off	Parking Lot	✓	2	3
Large step off	Park Area	1	✓	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF HAZARD ISSUES BELOW.



Large step off



Damaged concrete



Dead Limb Hanging

TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE 4 **16**

Figure 5.1.4 --Completed Site Need Checklist—Site Hazards (Appendix A.5).

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 7 OF 7

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES:

TYPE	LOCATION	DIFFICULTY		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
Narrow Walk		✓	2	3
Large Step-off		1	✓	3
Uninviting Entry Bridge		1	✓	✓
Large Step-off		✓	2	✓
Narrow Walk		✓	2	3
Narrow Walk		✓	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES BELOW.



Uninviting Entry Bridge



Narrow Walk



Large Step-off

TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE 7 **10**

Figure 5.1.5 --Completed Site Need Checklist—Site Accessibility Issues (Appendix A.6).

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PETITION

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 10 OF 10

COMMUNITY NAME:

Brownsfield Subdivision

COMMUNITY CONTACTS:

Community Member Name

Community Member Name

Community Member Name

Community Member Name

And So on.....

And So on.....

And So on.....

And So on.....

And So on.....

And So on.....If Applicable

COMMUNITY NEED:

LIST NEAREST PARKS TO THE SCHOOL SITE	APPROX.DISTANCE
<u>BREC Golf Course</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>BREC Park</u>	<u>7</u>

HOW WOULD THIS COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM A SPARK PARK? Y

The Brownsfield Community is comprised of families with lots of children. Many of these children attend school at Brownsfield Elementary. They have no assessable park space for families to use for recreation. This is a tight-knit community and supportive of the school. They would be a wonderful partner with the school.

NOTE: TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION AS A SPARK PARK RECIPIENT, PLEASE ATTACH A LETTER OF INTEREST ON SCHOOL LETTERHEAD.

Figure 5.1.6--Completed Site Need Checklist—Community Need (Appendix A.7).

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 12 OF 12

PLEASE LIST PROPOSED FUNDRAISING IDEAS:

Bake Sale, School Fair, Penny Drive, Collect Aluminum Cans, Brick Paver Sales, Sponsor a Tree, Car Wash

PLEASE LIST PROPOSED WAYS TO INCORPORATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT :

Community Day at the Park, School and Community Clean-up Day, Monthly Meetings, Community Representatives at PTA Meetings, AN Appointed Community Liaison.

Figure 5.1.7 --Completed Site Need Checklist—Community Involvement (Appendix A.9).

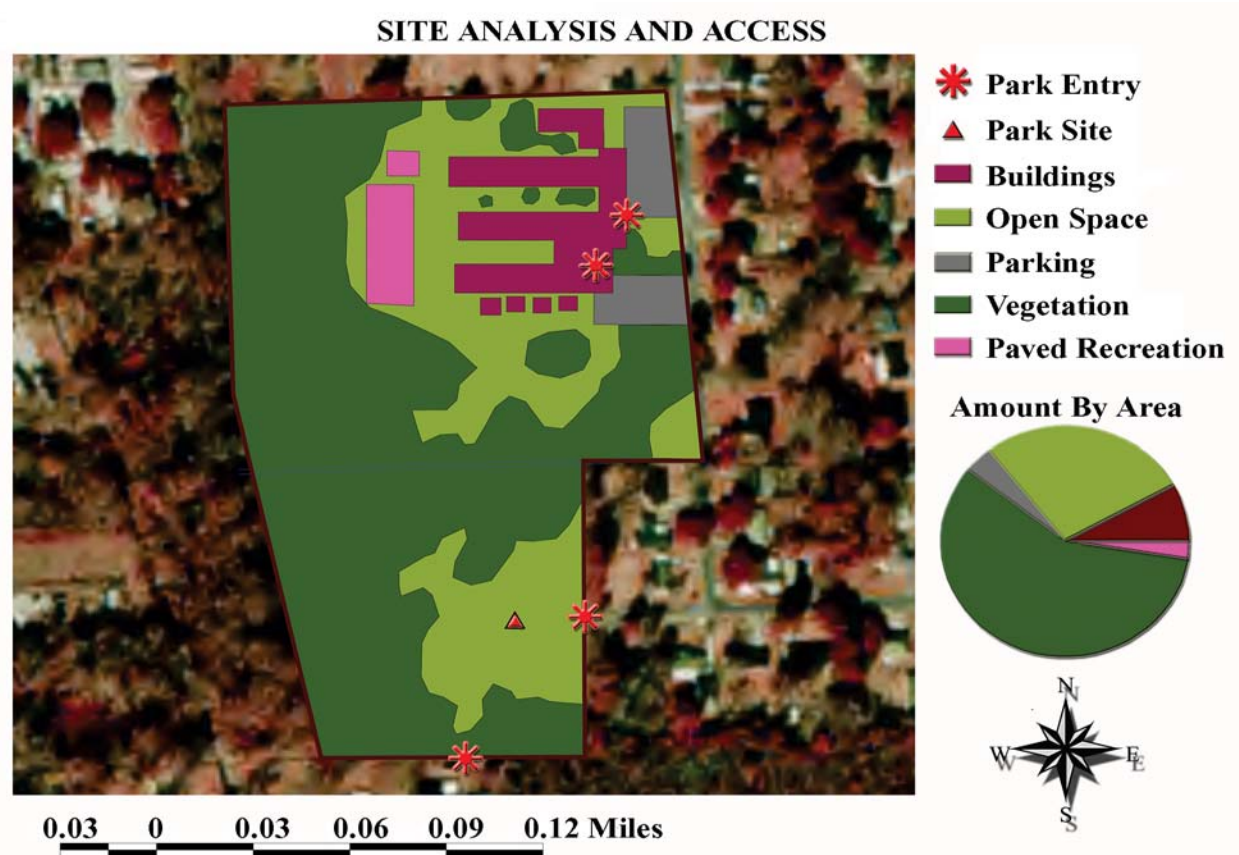


Figure 5.1.8--Site Analysis and Access for the Brownsfield Elementary School.

Now that Tool A is complete, it should be submitted to BRG for further consideration. BRG will assess all of the petitions choosing the sites showing greatest need for park development. With the most probable sites chosen, BRG will confirm the data presented to them by the schools. BRG's analysis of the school site and the provided information is more comprehensive than just analyzing the information provided in Tool A alone. In addition to those need criteria provided by the school in the Tool A; BRG will assess the physical access to the site from the community, the community make-up, and lack of open space. Accessibility to the Brownsfield Elementary site is shown in Figure 5.1.8.

The surrounding community will be defined based on a walking distance from the school site, usually a half-mile radius. Figure 5.1.9 shows an analysis of the Brownsfield community

OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS



COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

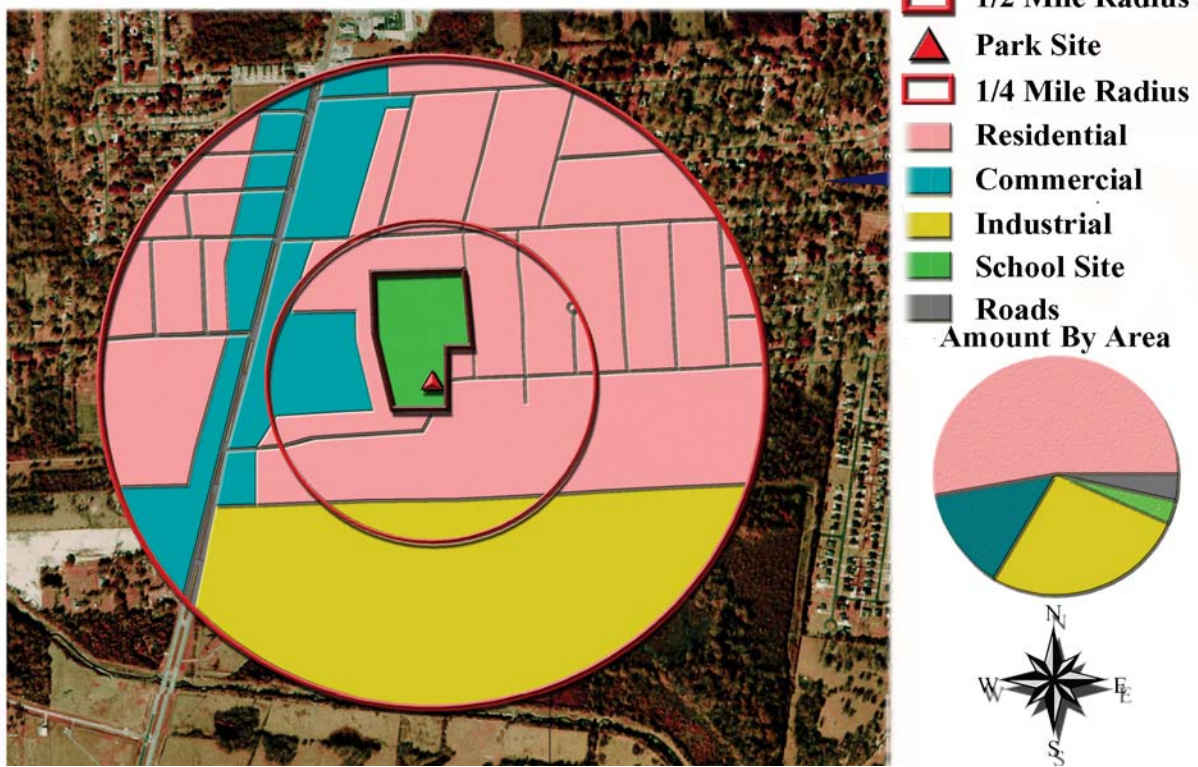


Figure 5.1.9--Open Space and Community Analysis for the Brownsfield Subdivision.

and its relation to various land uses. Large industrial and numerous commercial tracts infer a lack of open space. Figure 5.1.9 shows a potential lack of open space for community recreational use. With this additional information, the site's potential is better understood. A SPARK Park designation takes into account many factors, not just income. That is why it is such a successful program. People are heard, and their needs addressed. The final section of the petition process challenges the school and community to start planning fundraising and meetings. This involves all parties earlier in the process, which reduces the demand on BRG.

Next, BRG would assess community need using Tool B, created exclusively for EBRP. According to Figure 5.1.10, Brownsfield Elementary is a low to medium priority rating for park development. HUD's confirmation of funding eligibility for the community also is necessary. According to 2000 EBRP Census Data in Appendix C, 85.81% of the households are considered low to moderate-income, so funding is potentially available.

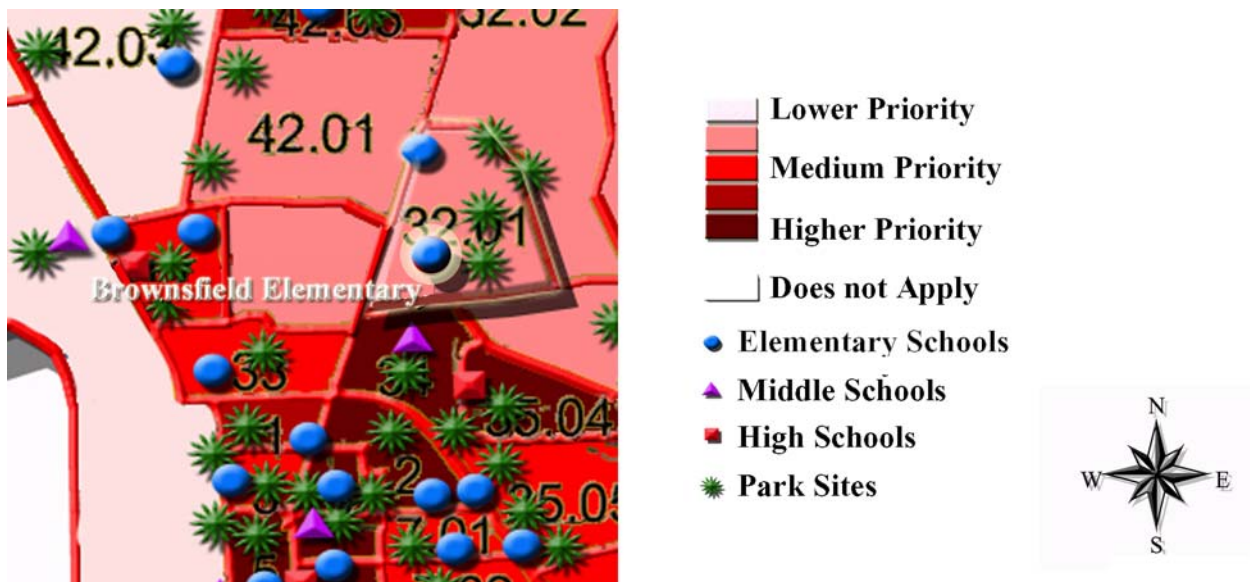


Figure 5.1.10--Enlarged Potential site summary map with school and park sites.

5.2 Using the East Baton Rouge Parish Need for SPARK Park Site Summary Map

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH: POTENTIAL SPARK PARK SITES

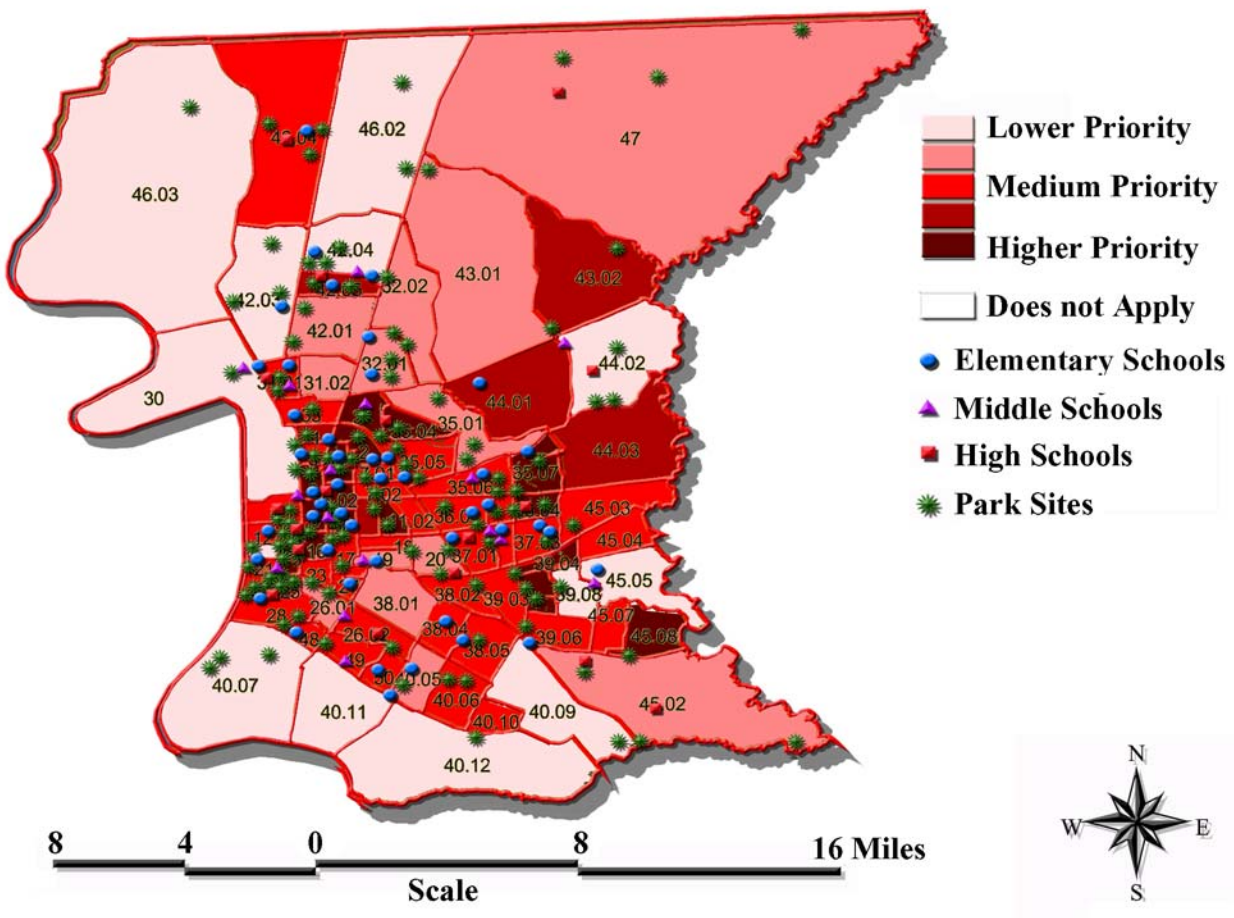


Figure 5.2.1--Potential site summary map with school and park sites plotted.

The final application of the process will demonstrate how BRG will use Tool B to systematically select potential SPARK Park sites. A list of sites will be chosen this way to prove the validity of the rating process of Tool B. Figure 5.2.1 will be used to select potential sites by utilizing this prioritization process.

According to the data shown in Figure 5.2.1, the census tracts that should take priority in EBRP for park development are: 2, 4, 5, 6.02, 9, 10, 16, 35.07, 36.04, and 42.05. Three other tracts are considered high priority but are disqualified since they do not have school sites

Census 2000 Tract id	Households Counted	Avg. Size	Total Households Below \$43,500	Total Households Above \$43,500	Below \$43,500
2	887	2.7	831	56	93.69
4	242	4.3	215	27	88.84
5	383	3.9	327	56	85.38
6.02	410	3.9	385	25	93.90
9	542	3.1	497	45	91.70
10	558	2.9	508	50	91.04
16	880	2.0	727	153	82.61
35.07	271	6.0	205	66	75.65
36.04	690	3.2	662	28	95.94
42.05	485	4.2	382	103	78.76

Figure 5.2.2--East Baton Rouge Parish priority areas 2000 Census tract data (Appendix C).

Located in them. These tracts are 39.04, 39.05, and 45.08. With so many census tracts considered high priority, how should they be prioritized? The answer to this is sub-prioritizing by using HUD's funding criteria (income data) since it is the most crucial element for park construction.

The 2000 EBRP Census Data in Appendix C is summarized in Figure 5.2.2 and shows the ten census tracts that contain the largest percentages of Parish households considered low to moderate-income. From this data, the sub-prioritization of the census tracts is as follows: 1) 36.04 at 95.94%, 2) 6.02 at 93.90%, 3) 2 at 93.69%, 4) 9 at 91.70%, 5) 10 at 91.04, 6) 4 at 88.84%, 7) 5 at 85.38%, 8) 16 at 82.61%, 9) 42.05 at 78.76%, and 10) 35.07 at 75.65%. Schools in these areas petitioning for a SPARK Park should be rated according to the above top ten list.

The top three school sites that should be considered for a SPARK Park according to the findings are: Prescott Middle School, North Highlands Elementary School, and Glen Oaks Middle Magnet School. Figure 5.2.3 shows that these sites fall in the higher priority census tracts and appear to pose the greatest need for park development based on income, urban areas, household density, and population density criteria in the Parish.

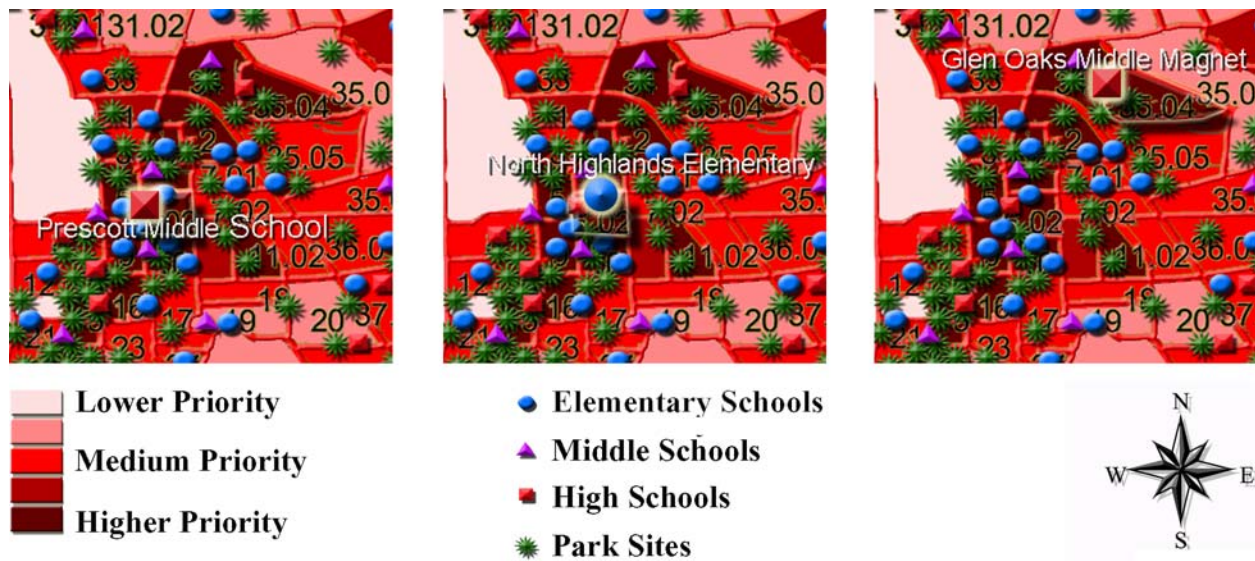


Figure 5.2.3--Top three sites for park development need in East Baton Rouge Parish.

5.3 Discussion of the Results of the Application Process of Tool A and Tool B

The initial intents of Tool A and Tool B were to expedite decision-making and free up the limited labor resources of BRG, and promote responsible park development throughout EBRP. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 will discuss if and/or how Tool A and Tool B benefited the site selection process and accomplished the initial intent after they were tested.

How will Tool A and Tool B individually impact the site selection process and the amount of resources needed to make a decision? By amending the Houston SPARK Park petition process and creating Tool A, two benefits are realized: 1) earlier and increased participation of the school and community and 2) creating documentation that can assist in acquiring potential funding for site improvement projects.

With Tool A, the roles of the school and the community in the park acquisition process are defined and increased. It requires the school and community to be active participants in the SPARK Park process. They gather the data that BRG was once solely responsible for collecting. Tool A guides a school through a site and community analysis to pre-qualify them for a SPARK Park.

By collecting initial data using Tool A, schools and communities will become better aware of their site and its potential impact on the users. Site opportunities and constraints will be better documented, which will assist in the preparation of a comprehensive management plan to mitigate problems prior to them worsening. Such a preventive management plan will help to greatly enhance the user's on-site experience. The park site can be an asset to the community, students, and staff, rather than a place with pockets of potential danger.

With early involvement, a line of communication between the school and community can be opened. Through dialogue, a partnership for a common goal (a SPARK Park) is established and roles are defined. The process will work best with an organized and focused effort from all involved. Tool A identifies the school and community team to assist in fundraising efforts, park design meetings, planting trees, policing the park, and maintaining the park.

A better park design will also come from early community input. End-user input allows valuable ideas to be gathered and assists in creating a space to better serve their needs and a sentiment of park ownership is created. The design must be specific for a community to create a sense of place. The only way to accomplish this is by interactive participation of the residents throughout the entire process (Gray & Peligrino, 1973).

As a result of considering the data of Figure 5.1.10, other sites in the Parish should be considered in greater need for park development than Brownsfield Elementary. However with the supporting documentation of Tool A, Brownsfield Elementary demonstrates its potential as a valid choice for a SPARK Park in the future.

This leads to the second benefit of Tool A. It will assist EBRP schools in documenting their needs for site improvements in an easily understandable format. Tool A organizes supporting documentation for grant writing, saves many hours of research time by supplying

demographic data, and provides available funding sources. This documentation will help to procure increased funding for these projects.

Tool A could readily fulfill the EBRP need for a better petition process, at least until a separate SPARK Park department can be created. It will lower the demand on BRG's resources, so the agency can concentrate on its role as project managers and less as facilitators. Tool A has proven through its application in Section 5.1 that it has accomplished its original intent of time resource reduction of BRG.

Tool B was created to assist and compliment Tool A in the SPARK Park site selection process. It benefits are: 1) the reduction of resources that BRG would spend on qualifying sites as SPARK Park candidates and 2) equitable and responsible park development in EBRP.

Like Tool A, Tool B's first benefit is the time saved that BRG will realize in assessing potential sites for SPARK Parks. Tool B (Figure 4.3.1, page 56) will allow BRG to strategically maximize its limited resources and concentrate on those areas in EBRP that need park development first. Until the creation of Tool B, BRG has had no other means to verify eligibility without completing the full process of demographic verification by HUD.

This process requires the time resources of two agencies (BRG and DHCD), thus increasing the cost to taxpayers with no guarantee that the site is a viable one. With Tool B, the questionable outcome of a site not qualifying should be greatly reduced. This benefit alone should justify Tool B implementation as a useful instrument for BRG.

Tool B has a second benefit of mapping responsible park development in EBRP. Since so many areas in the Parish qualify for SPARK Parks based solely on income (as shown in Figure 3.4.2), Tool B will prioritize these potential sites according to the greatest need. Tool B will remove the inference of impartiality in the site selection process due to political agendas,

favoritism, or other subjective criteria. The result is BRG restoring environmental equity to communities that have been neglected in the past, thereby responsibly reducing EBRP's urban open space deficit as directed by the Horizon Plan and giving merit to the SPARK Park site selection process.

How does Tool B accomplish responsible park development in EBRP? When BRG was considering sites for a SPARK Park, three schools were on their list: 1) Banks Elementary (the recipient), 2) Brownsfield Elementary, and 3) McKinley Middle School. According to Section 5.2, none of these sites were in the top three choices for Parish park development. Does this mean that Tool B is flawed? Not at all, these sites were chosen based on their relationships with BRG. This selection process was the only means in the absence of Tool B. All of BRG's proposed sites were viable candidates for various reasons, but they may not have been the best selection at the time to achieve responsible Parish park development.

For Example, where is Banks Elementary in the SPARK Park site selection prioritization process? Could the DHCD have valid concerns that this is not the best site for a SPARK Park? Banks Elementary is located in census tract 33, as shown in Figure 5.3.1 below, which shows a medium need for park development in EBRP. Banks Elementary may not have been the best choice to start the movement based upon these findings.

According to Tool B, DHCD's concerns were valid. Tool B also shows (in Figure 5.1.10) that Brownsfield Elementary is a lower priority for park development. This data (in Figures 5.1.10 and 5.3.1) does not imply that Banks Elementary or Brownsfield Elementary are improper choices for a SPARK Park site. However, it does suggest that other areas in the Parish had greater need for park development based on income, urban areas, household density and

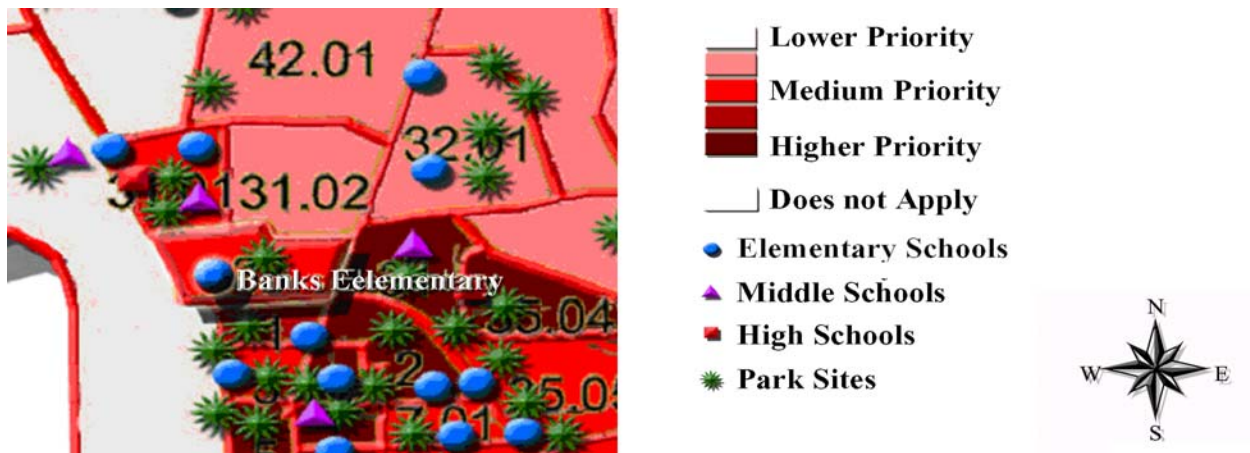


Figure 5.3.1--Banks Elementary map site potential map.

population density. Thus, justifying a need for Tool B. Site selection will now be based on need, not just relationships.

5.4 Adaptability of Proposed Site Selection Process to Other Community Park Initiatives

How this process could benefit petitioning schools, BRG, and other park development initiatives will be discussed below. Both Tool A and Tool B can be applied to similar community improvement initiatives, whether local or adapted for other regions. Tool A provides a basis for how the Houston SPARK Park process can be manipulated into a regional process to better serve the precise needs of a local movement. *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* is the next step in adapting and streamlining Houston's process. It can be a vehicle for others to use as their foundation for urban park development.

Another way that this process benefits other communities by its adaptability to other agencies or types of development. Tool B shows how governmental agencies, land planners, landscape architects, and other design professionals can use GIS mapping to determine community need for development projects. GIS mapping can acquire and generate clear demographic results faster and more efficiently than a manual analysis. Using this technology to

help facilitate the *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* can have a positive impact on any community improvement initiative.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Houston has creatively addressed its need for urban park development with the creation of SPARK Parks. These parks have utilized the unique relationship a school has with its surrounding community by impacting the city's image, sense of place, and revitalize a school's community stature. For twenty years, the SPARK, Inc. staff has addressed these needs in Houston. EBRP has just begun. Although the Horizon Plan has suggested the need for similar urban park development in the Parish, BRG has only a three-year solo effort on the part of its Education Director in creating a SPARK Park in EBRP.

Therefore, the need for the *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* is justified to address BRG's past limitations and to equitably create additional SPARK Parks in EBRP. It will introduce school and community involvement in the process early, provide a basis for funding acquisition, expedite the SPARK Park acquisition process, promote objectivity in the site selection process, and provide a model for similar park initiatives.

Tool A of the *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* will benefit the EBRP schools in two ways: 1) by promoting school and community involvement early in the SPARK Park process and 2) by documenting a school's need for funding through grant writing.

School and community involvement early in the SPARK Park process is the first benefit of Tool. Both become aware of their surroundings, establish a partnership from the inception of the petition process, and provide park development input from the start. Increased participation also creates a park unique to the community, a working relationship between the school and community, a better understanding of the local political process, and the means to facilitate future community improvements initiatives.

Second benefit of completed Tool A is that a school will have organized documentation for funding acquisition purposes. Tool A saves them vital research time by providing them with accessible and simple demographic data to show site and community need. This documentation can serve as the basis for future grant applications.

Tool A and Tool B will also benefit BRG in two ways: 1) by subsidizing BRG's limited resources and 2) by creating responsible park development in EBRP. First, BRG's resource limitations will likely become less significant with the use of these Tools. Tool A and Tool B can substitute for a full staff at BRG, thereby reducing the amount of time spent on each school and providing assistance to several schools simultaneously.

Tool A will provide BRG with vital site information that in the past they would have to physically collect. With Tool A completed by the petitioning school, BRG can concentrate their resources on those sites more likely to qualify for a SPARK Park. BRG experiences benefits from the schools and communities initiating their meetings and fundraising events themselves. This once took valuable time away from BRG's duties as a project management duties, which jeopardized the timely completion of the SPARK Park project.

The implementation of Tool B will also benefit BRG in the saving of resources. Tool B will assist BRG in the selection process, but it will also save the DHCD's resources by only performing demographic confirmation of those sites that should qualify for park development.

Second, having a comprehensive map that shows those sites where park development in EBRP is greatly needed, will facilitate equity in the site selection process. Those sites in greatest need will be first to benefit from Tool B. This Tool assists in achieving the Horizon Plan's goal for responsible park development in the Parish. It also removes the inference of impropriety in the selection process.

Finally, the *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* will benefit other communities due to its adaptability to similar development projects. Whether the project is open space, redevelopment districts, or beautification efforts, these Tools could be adapted and applied to suit need. Tool B can serve as a vital planning resource for all types of professions. The *SPARK Park Site Selection Process in East Baton Rouge Parish* also demonstrates how a twenty-year successful program in Houston can be improved upon and customized for an individual city or community. Hopefully, someone will take these Tools and build upon them.

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APPENDIX A: PETITION GUIDE



School and Community Petition Guide for East Baton Rouge Parish

Comprehensive Guide to
Assist Parish Schools in
Acquiring a SPARK Park



Figure A.0.1 Baton Rouge Green and SPARK, Inc. logos and image of a SPARK Park.

A.1 How to Use This Guide

The following petition and checklist will assist a school and its surrounding community in assessing their SPARK Park eligibility. This guide will also aid BRG in the decision-making process by providing information necessary for SPARK Park site selection. The quantity of information provided by the petitioning school may increase their eligibility.

This guide takes into consideration the limited amount of time that school administrators have to invest in such an endeavor. The format of this guide has minimized the time needed to provide this crucial information. This guide is written in a format that is easy to follow while providing pertinent information to BRG. It is organized such that schools and communities can understand their roles and assist in the park acquisition process. To validate one's eligibility for a SPARK Park, a school is advised to provide documentation and related images to show need.

This guide is divided into eight sections. Each section is in a checklist or short answer format. Each page should be reproduced as needed to fully document individual site need. These sections are:

1. Site Selection Petition Information
2. SPARK Park Petition Letter Example
3. Site Need Checklist—Playground/Recreation Equipment
4. Site Need Checklist—Site Hazards
5. Site Need Checklist—Site Accessibility Issues
6. Site Need Checklist—Community Need
7. Site Need Map
8. Site Need Checklist—Community Involvement

By answering the questions pertaining to the site and community conditions, points are gained based on need. These points are totaled at the bottom of each page. These points are just a quick prioritization tool for BRG only. Those sites with the highest totals will be confirmed first for eligibility. However, these points do not ensure eligibility; they just prioritize sites to be analyzed further. Prior to confirmation of site eligibility, all sites have to be physically inspected by BRG to confirm the information provided.

Once this guide is completed, a copy of this information should be kept on file, since it can serve as a reference for grant writing. The completed guide can be forwarded along with other supporting evidence to BRG. Please feel free to attach additional comments concerning the site, school, and/or community that may strengthen candidacy for a SPARK Park along with this petition guide. A letter of interest on school letterhead is required to be submitted with this petition guide. An example of a petition letter is included in Appendix A.3 for reference. If a site is deemed eligible and selected for a SPARK Park, then BRG will notify the school.

Using this guide, many eligible sites will get “SPARKed” so that local schools and communities can benefit from this enormously successful. Any questions concerning SPARK Parks, please contact BRG or visit www.sparkpark.org for further information.

A.2 Site Selection Petition Information

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PETITION

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE _____ OF _____

PETITIONING SCHOOL:

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

MAILING ADDRESS:

IF DIFFERENT FROM PHYSICAL ADDRESS

SCHOOL CONTACT NAME:

EXT

PRINCIPAL IF DIFFERENT:

IF DIFFERENT FROM SCHOOL CONTACT NAME

EXT

PARK COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

IF APPLICABLE--THESE CAN BE TEACHERS,

STAFF, COMMUNITY LEADERS, OR MEMBERS

OF THE ADJACENT COMMUNITY--ANYONE

THAT WILL ASSIST IN THE EFFORTS TO GET THE

SPARK PARK AT THE ABOVE SITE.

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

TITLE

WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR SCHOOL WOULD BE A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A SPARK PARK?

NOTE: TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION AS A SPARK PARK RECIPIENT, PLEASE ATTACH A LETTER OF INTEREST ON SCHOOL LETTERHEAD.

A.3 SPARK Park Petition Letter Example

ALCOTT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
5859 BELLFORT STREET
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77033

April 12, 1999

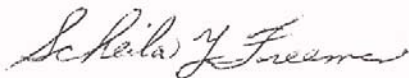
Kathleen Ownby
Spark Park Program
Office of the Mayor
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251

Dear Ms. Ownby,

Alcott Elementary School's playground is in dire need of park development. Therefore, we are interested in being selected as a site for a Spark Park. We accept the commitment to help plan and fund the park.

To schedule a site visit or to obtain additional information, you may contact me by calling (713) 732-3540.

Sincerely,



Scheila Y. Freeman,
Principal

A.4 Site Need Checklist—Playground/Recreation Equipment

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE _____ OF _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE INFORMATION:

IS THERE A PARCEL OF IN YOU CONTROL OR OWNED BY YOUR SCHOOL THAT COULD HOST THE PROPOSED PARK?

YES	NO
1	0

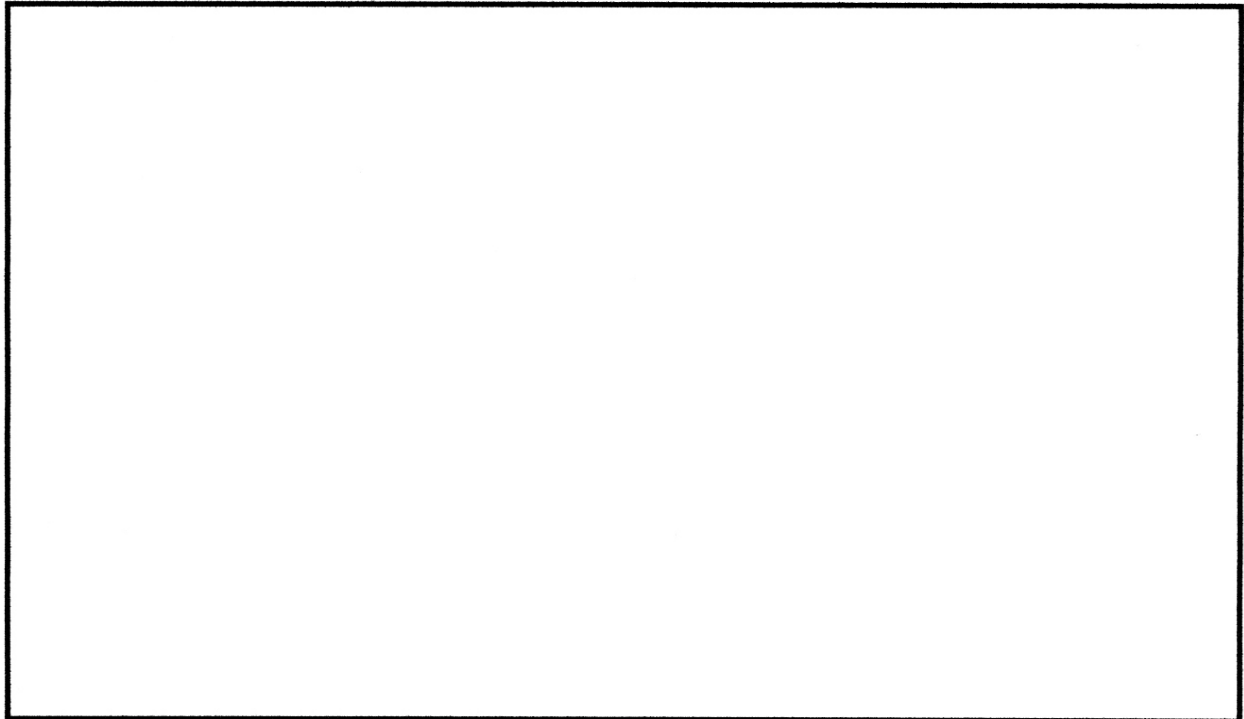
APPROXIMATE SIZE OT THE LAND PARCEL _____ ACRES / SQ. FT

SITE NEED:

PLAYGROUND / RECREATION EQUIPMENT:

TYPE	LOCATION	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2
		0	1	2

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT NEED BELOW.



TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE

A.5 Site Need Checklist—Site Hazards

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE _____ OF _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE HAZARDS:

TYPE	LOCATION	HAZARD		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF HAZARD ISSUES BELOW.

TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE

A.6 Site Need Checklist—Site Accessibility Issues

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE _____ OF _____

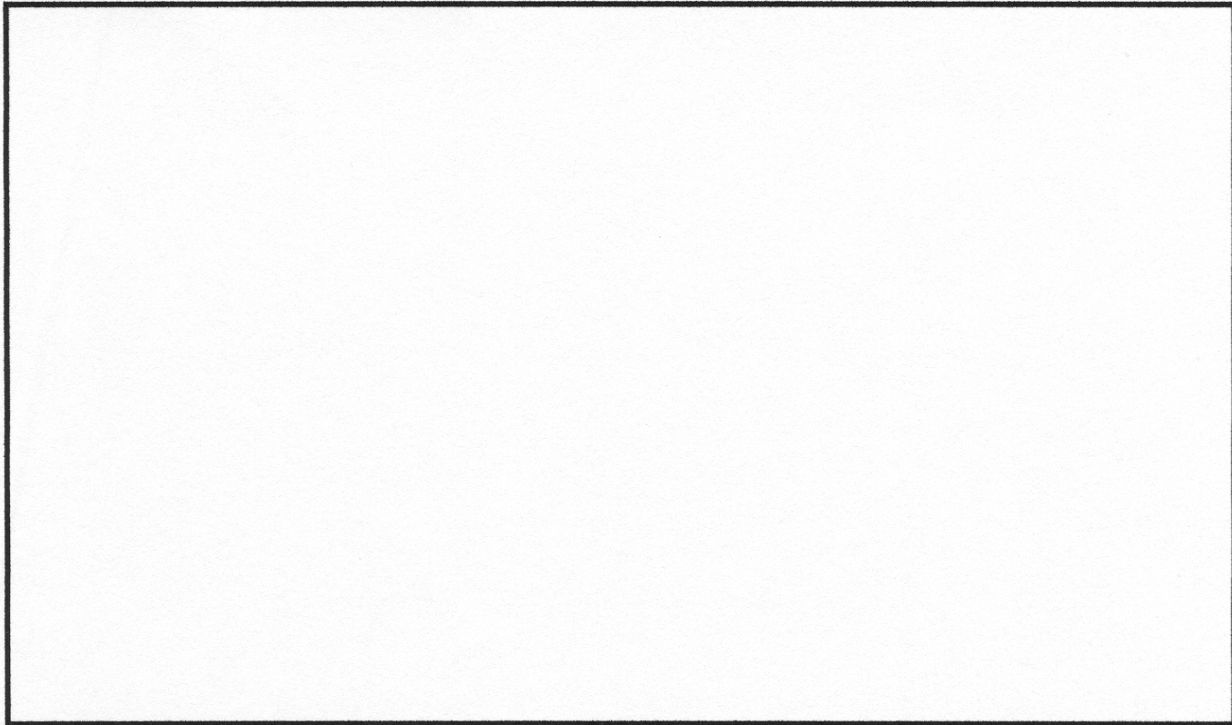
PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

SITE NEED:

SITE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES:

TYPE	LOCATION	DIFFICULTY		
		LOW	MID	HIGH
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3
		1	2	3

PLEASE ATTACH A SUPPORTING IMAGE(S) OF ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES BELOW.



TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION PETITION

PAGE 10 OF

[illegible][illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

95

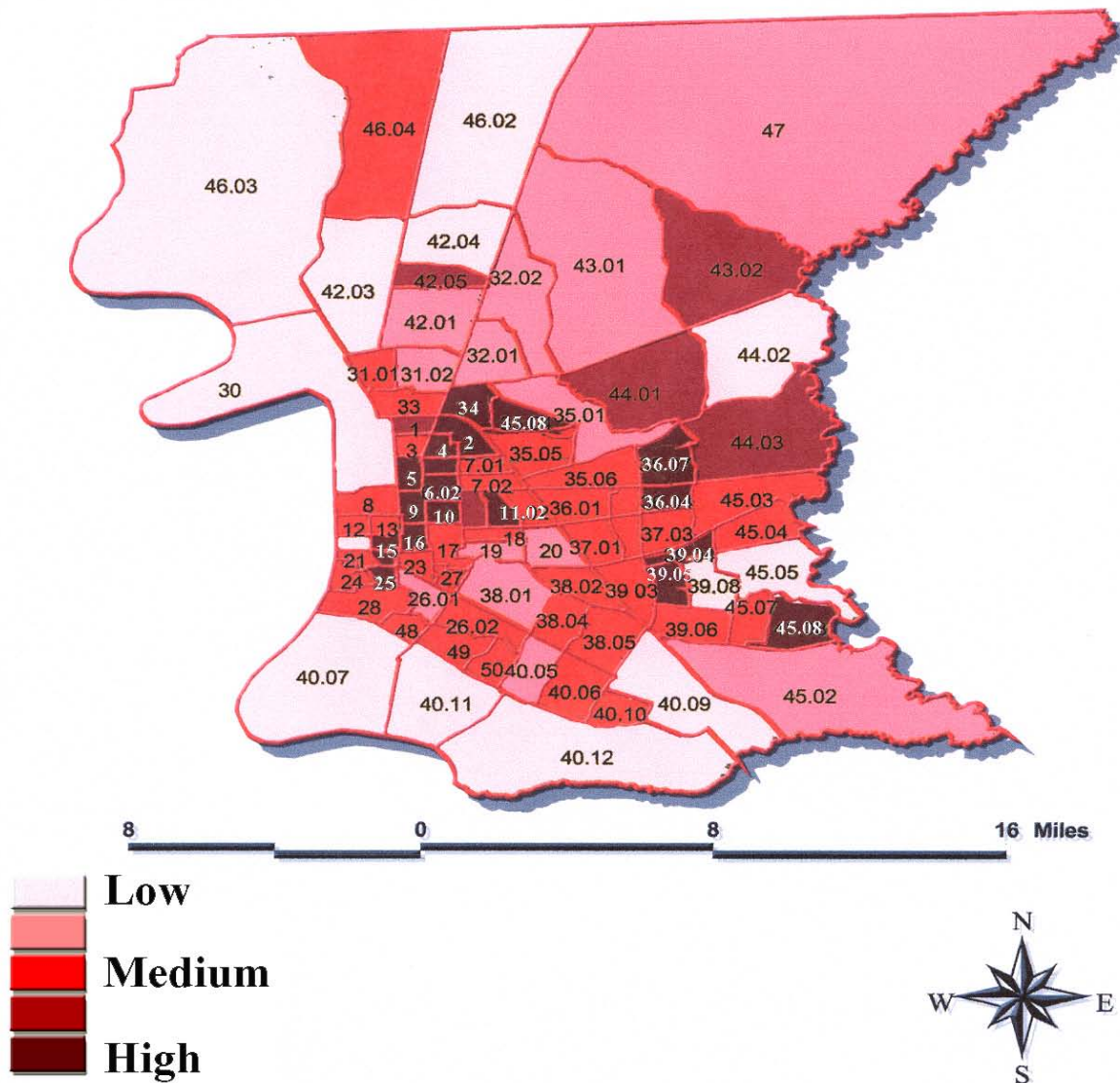
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 11 OF

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR SCHOOL SITE AND COMMUNITY.

Potential SPARK Park Areas



WHICH CENSUS TRACT ARE THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LOCATED?

LOW	20	
	40	
MED	60	
	80	
HIGH	100	

TOTAL POINTS ON PAGE 11

--

A.9 Site Need Checklist—Community Involvement

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SPARK PARK SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

PAGE 12 OF

PLEASE LIST PROPOSED FUNDRAISING IDEAS:

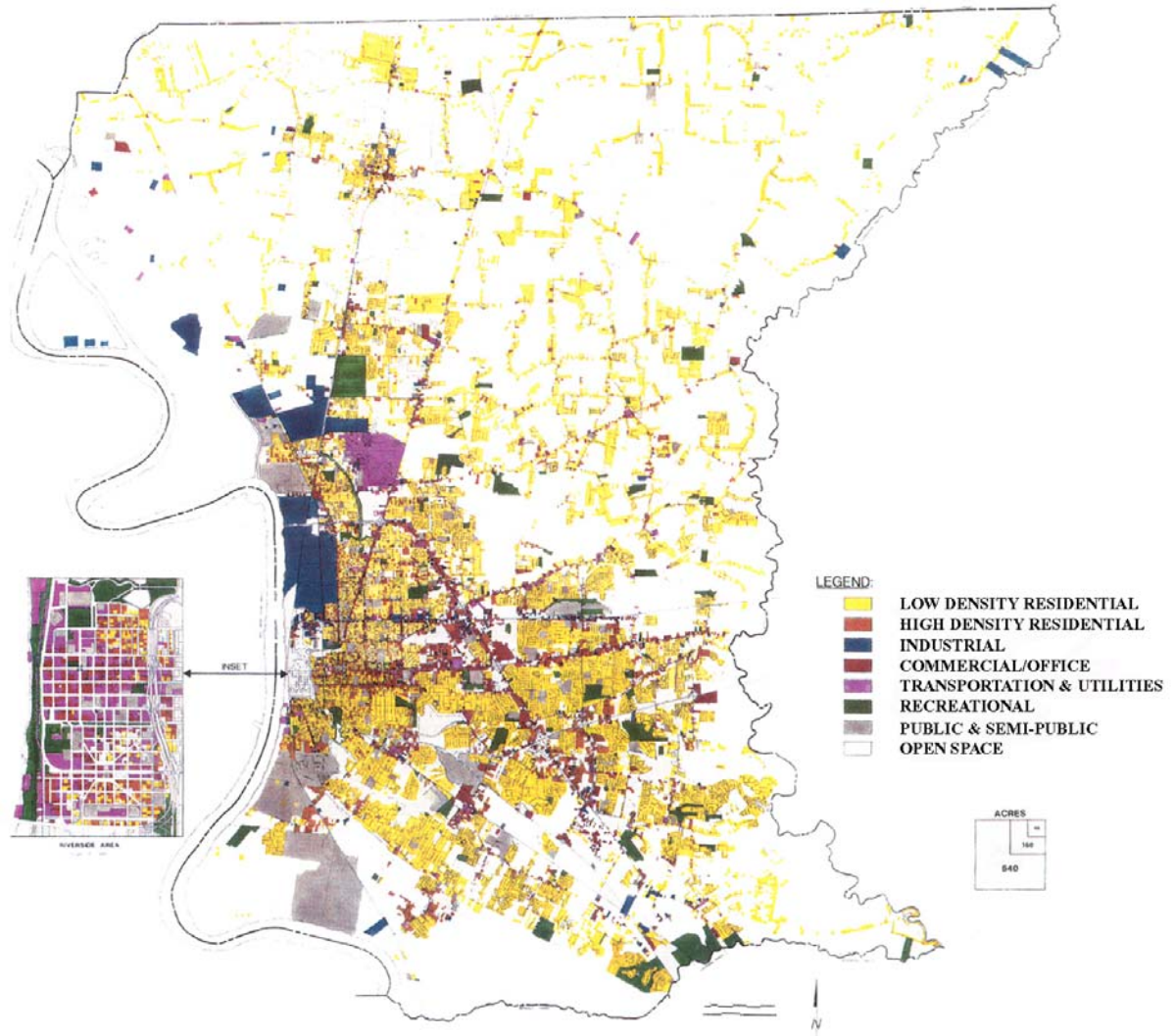
[illegible]

PLEASE LIST PROPOSED WAYS TO INCORPORATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT :

[illegible]

APPENDIX B: EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LAND USE

The following two pages demonstrate the need for green space in the Parish as stated in the Horizon Plan. This gives basis for creating a SPARK Park movement in EBRP.



EXISTING 1988 LAND USE

Horizon Plan

Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plan
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

WILBUR SMITH ASSOCIATES
EVANS-GRAVES ENGINEERS
CHENEVERT SODERBERG ARCHITECTS

EXISTING 1988 LAND USE SUMMARY
Horizon Plan
Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plan
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

DIST.	RESIDENTIAL		COMM /OFFICE	TRANSPORT. UTILITIES	INDUST.	PUBLIC/ SEMI- PUBLIC	REC.	OPEN SPACE	TOTAL ACREAGE
	LOW DENSITY	MED/HIGH DENSITY							
1	5,393 8.9%	70 0.1%	182 0.3%	883 1.5%	1,022 1.7%	115 0.2%	221 0.4%	52,836 87.0%	60,720 100.0%
2	10,641 12.9%	37 0.0%	288 0.3%	1,371 1.7%	1,065 1.3%	155 0.2%	705 0.9%	68,306 82.7%	82,570 100.0%
3	1,831 12.4%	77 0.5%	204 1.4%	825 5.6%	1,095 7.4%	808 5.5%	879 6.0%	9,056 61.3%	14,775 100.0%
4	803 6.2%	96 0.7%	104 0.8%	2,430 18.8%	425 3.3%	985 7.6%	150 1.2%	7,947 61.4%	12,940 100.0%
5	2,434 24.6%	237 2.4%	354 3.6%	991 10.0%	71 0.7%	241 2.4%	331 3.3%	5,236 52.9%	9,896 100.0%
6	6,288 27.3%	117 0.5%	296 1.3%	841 3.6%	118 0.5%	494 2.1%	320 1.4%	14,599 63.3%	23,072 100.0%
7	1,235 20.1%	109 1.8%	179 2.9%	998 16.3%	2,029 33.1%	195 3.2%	89 1.5%	1,297 21.2%	6,131 100.0%
8	785 18.2%	219 5.1%	328 7.6%	1,056 24.5%	138 3.2%	176 4.1%	220 5.1%	1,390 32.2%	4,311 100.0%
9	1,330 42.4%	173 5.5%	305 9.7%	746 23.8%	17 0.5%	244 7.8%	71 2.3%	251 8.0%	3,137 100.0%
10	1,356 31.2%	213 4.9%	553 12.7%	817 18.8%	45 1.0%	318 7.3%	182 4.2%	864 19.9%	4,348 100.0%
11	1,888 35.3%	256 4.8%	574 10.7%	972 18.2%	46 0.9%	246 4.6%	64 1.2%	1,310 24.5%	5,355 100.0%
12	2,060 28.2%	334 4.6%	313 4.3%	815 11.2%	52 0.7%	100 1.4%	219 3.0%	3,418 46.8%	7,310 100.0%
13	821 9.0%	342 3.7%	69 0.8%	405 4.4%	16 0.2%	2,718 29.6%	201 2.2%	4,596 50.1%	9,168 100.0%
14	2,983 29.6%	241 2.4%	557 5.5%	1,219 12.1%	45 0.4%	917 9.1%	305 3.0%	3,826 37.9%	10,094 100.0%
15	2,635 25.9%	144 1.4%	344 3.4%	789 7.7%	39 0.4%	185 1.8%	290 2.8%	5,766 56.6%	10,191 100.0%
16	4,192 11.0%	328 0.9%	616 1.6%	1,541 4.0%	430 1.1%	1,458 3.8%	1,024 2.7%	28,538 74.8%	38,127 100.0%
TOTAL Percentage	46,675 15.4%	2,994 1.0%	5,265 1.7%	16,699 5.5%	6,652 2.2%	9,355 3.1%	5,270 1.7%	209,233 69.2%	302,144

APPENDIX C: 2000 U.S. CENSUS DATA FOR EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

The following pages are census demographic data used to base need for park sites in the Parish. All numbers in the gray areas are either manually entered or manipulated mathematically in Microsoft Excel for the purpose of this thesis. The Census Tract id (identification) column and the Census 2000 Tract id column is information from census data that was manually entered in several tables so they would have a common element to join these tables in Arc View GIS. Average household size was manually added to the joined table from census data by adding a field. The Total Households Below \$43,500 column and Total Households Above \$43,500 column are derived from adding total number of households that fall within the parameters. The Households Counted column is a total of the household for which income data was available. Percentage Below \$43,500 is a percentage derived from the Households Counted column and the Total Households Below \$43,500 column. All other data is verbatim from the 2000 United States Census.

P53. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999 (DOLLARS) [1] - Universe: Households

Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data

NOTE: Data based on a sample except in P3, P4, H3, and H4. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, non-sampling error, and definitions see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf3.htm>.

Location	Census Tract id	Population Total:	Household Total:	Median Household Income in 1999
Census Tract 1, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	1	553	110	26,118
Census Tract 2, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	2	2,437	887	17,170
Census Tract 3, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	3	656	198	22,000
Census Tract 4, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	4	1,050	242	26,146
Census Tract 5, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	5	1,502	383	19,955
Census Tract 6.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	6.01	1,238	324	19,824
Census Tract 6.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	6.02	1,587	410	21,693
Census Tract 7.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	7.01	867	311	26,588
Census Tract 7.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	7.02	1,478	515	23,783

Census Tract 8, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	8	791	315	18,089
Census Tract 9, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	9	1,673	542	20,323
Census Tract 10, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	10	1,633	558	15,900
Census Tract 11.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	11.02	1,541	942	20,776
Census Tract 11.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	11.03	1,125	277	25,956
Census Tract 11.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	11.04	1,435	565	12,444
Census Tract 12, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	12	782	635	19,208
Census Tract 13, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	13	438	209	18,688
Census Tract 14, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	14	295	209	32,679
Census Tract 15, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	15	872	363	16,725
Census Tract 16, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	16	1,735	880	24,769
Census Tract 17, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	17	2,365	1,286	35,489
Census Tract 18, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	18	1,356	778	29,322
Census Tract 19, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	19	1,173	464	51,250
Census Tract 20, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	20	1,468	506	52,439
Census Tract 21, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	21	807	257	12,737
Census Tract 22, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	22	697	351	16,250
Census Tract 23, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	23	1,337	615	49,788
Census Tract 24, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	24	1,396	734	15,472
Census Tract 25, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	25	1,626	907	17,883
Census Tract 26.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	26.01	1,702	765	61,429
Census Tract 26.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	26.02	1,754	793	43,000
Census Tract 27, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	27	758	280	26,750
Census Tract 28, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	28	1,605	1,145	11,397
Census Tract 30, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	30	1,226	267	20,093
Census Tract 31.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	31.01	1,659	515	16,063
Census Tract 31.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	31.02	448	113	11,935
Census Tract 32.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	32.01	1,330	310	35,893
Census Tract 32.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	32.02	1,374	265	50,278
Census Tract 33, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	33	1,578	458	23,605
Census Tract 34, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	34	2,267	460	23,089
Census Tract 35.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	35.01	1,058	224	35,921
Census Tract 35.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	35.04	2,025	322	28,451
Census Tract 35.05, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	35.05	1,546	354	30,694
Census Tract 35.06, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	35.06	2,624	747	41,672
Census Tract 35.07, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	35.07	1,619	271	46,707
Census Tract 36.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	36.01	1,371	497	44,707
Census Tract 36.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	36.03	1,231	515	28,484
Census Tract 36.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	36.04	2,232	690	24,414
Census Tract 37.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	37.01	2,497	756	51,099
Census Tract 37.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	37.02	1,354	394	51,739
Census Tract 37.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	37.03	2,198	480	61,667
Census Tract 38.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	38.01	2,813	1,384	53,983
Census Tract 38.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	38.02	2,738	1,460	41,082
Census Tract 38.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	38.04	2,223	1,122	41,801
Census Tract 38.05, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	38.05	2,272	743	43,912
Census Tract 39.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	39.03	3,327	1,823	35,790

Census Tract 39.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	39.04	2,599	1,174	36,404
Census Tract 39.06, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	39.06	2,915	637	67,713
Census Tract 39.07, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	39.07	2,580	1,103	49,274
Census Tract 39.08, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	39.08	1,121	325	65,785
Census Tract 40.05, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.05	2,208	779	44,392
Census Tract 40.06, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.06	3,000	724	77,668
Census Tract 40.07, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.07	5,000	3,636	17,723
Census Tract 40.09, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.09	1,672	362	49,706
Census Tract 40.10, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.10	1,806	458	64,643
Census Tract 40.11, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.11	1,958	846	24,848
Census Tract 40.12, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	40.12	3,119	959	40,442
Census Tract 42.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	42.01	2,069	466	31,143
Census Tract 42.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	42.03	1,181	266	35,772
Census Tract 42.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	42.04	1,455	365	30,216
Census Tract 42.05, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	42.05	2,047	485	37,174
Census Tract 43.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	43.01	2,294	447	49,085
Census Tract 43.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	43.02	1,980	309	51,337
Census Tract 44.01, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	44.01	1,724	275	55,000
Census Tract 44.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	44.02	1,937	399	46,306
Census Tract 44.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	44.03	1,835	294	55,058
Census Tract 45.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.02	4,384	1,071	55,370
Census Tract 45.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.03	2,132	601	43,257
Census Tract 45.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.04	2,183	674	50,625
Census Tract 45.05, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.05	1,969	500	47,928
Census Tract 45.07, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.07	1,599	380	61,684
Census Tract 45.08, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	45.08	2,594	310	78,509
Census Tract 46.02, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	46.02	1,838	488	33,063
Census Tract 46.03, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	46.03	1,194	213	50,722
Census Tract 46.04, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	46.04	2,508	360	62,772
Census Tract 47, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	47	1,846	415	38,375
Census Tract 48, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	48	1,634	998	31,111
Census Tract 49, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	49	2,076	648	68,684
Census Tract 50, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	50	1,322	271	73,333

Census Tract id	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$19,999	\$20,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$29,999	\$30,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$44,999
1	20	18	12	9	23	10	5	0
2	426	177	73	35	64	30	5	21
3	65	38	23	14	22	8	6	0
4	49	38	47	27	23	17	14	0
5	160	35	41	29	0	40	10	12
6.01	140	58	68	17	16	0	6	6
6.02	98	84	89	70	10	14	20	0
7.01	73	55	82	0	46	15	13	12

7.02	212	99	53	53	27	0	28	0
8	127	46	74	17	19	0	8	0
9	241	62	57	22	27	41	26	21
10	307	55	62	27	5	36	16	0
11.02	338	184	61	78	53	34	51	28
11.03	108	37	16	6	0	18	16	9
11.04	270	91	49	46	24	14	19	29
12	245	65	64	79	54	24	25	21
13	90	6	12	17	29	16	17	0
14	17	6	37	33	10	13	36	7
15	106	63	37	72	5	32	4	11
16	261	87	58	105	65	44	75	32
17	319	105	131	96	120	45	94	58
18	152	148	85	56	60	39	53	78
19	46	44	26	73	51	44	32	0
20	31	51	67	20	22	33	54	21
21	141	48	7	16	10	10	0	0
22	132	72	53	50	8	11	0	8
23	66	39	51	70	60	111	27	30
24	268	161	77	50	66	18	8	33
25	376	124	145	32	82	45	32	24
26.01	107	71	40	48	32	35	22	28
26.02	124	61	48	43	63	70	80	85
27	76	53	14	20	22	20	11	21
28	602	167	106	101	52	25	21	0
30	140	26	28	35	9	8	0	5
31.01	283	56	54	36	0	9	24	6
31.02	69	14	10	4	7	0	0	0
32.01	66	83	0	31	37	24	13	12
32.02	87	26	66	8	6	13	4	0
33	164	74	39	69	19	18	31	13
34	128	101	35	89	32	10	0	10
35.01	35	31	7	15	32	24	12	11
35.04	138	26	36	19	28	22	30	0
35.05	79	39	27	57	30	63	37	0
35.06	95	138	117	27	66	42	29	58
35.07	25	18	20	61	38	17	6	20
36.01	26	30	63	68	35	41	37	51
36.03	81	44	34	88	62	65	42	17
36.04	224	84	97	100	45	47	45	20
37.01	53	107	47	53	80	116	61	30
37.02	46	55	68	34	37	7	40	9
37.03	27	22	46	49	47	26	47	40
38.01	226	97	107	128	80	152	84	9
38.02	223	84	122	190	146	131	61	103
38.04	179	93	84	154	79	98	108	67
38.05	80	30	63	70	98	59	108	32

39.03	175	123	151	166	207	155	242	177
39.04	149	117	122	139	165	73	122	43
39.06	89	22	46	44	73	81	22	46
39.07	155	86	88	119	131	105	84	71
39.08	20	24	16	27	28	6	22	18
40.05	133	103	51	59	44	55	35	60
40.06	42	46	66	29	77	90	37	85
40.07	1,497	469	438	261	289	185	127	88
40.09	58	51	36	60	47	29	19	27
40.10	50	18	33	23	17	76	40	30
40.11	145	108	138	90	52	57	69	63
40.12	175	110	98	138	88	67	51	48
42.01	116	24	62	67	29	65	12	0
42.03	107	46	27	9	18	4	19	13
42.04	58	61	36	56	32	37	38	15
42.05	64	53	57	75	35	16	52	30
43.01	117	44	38	70	65	19	0	19
43.02	51	26	49	52	35	15	28	18
44.01	45	67	8	43	30	7	0	7
44.02	69	20	34	77	23	43	14	24
44.03	31	32	28	29	43	42	9	19
45.02	78	62	87	128	67	154	73	112
45.03	42	30	55	114	69	41	37	48
45.04	62	74	81	35	71	89	47	39
45.05	39	38	68	36	16	59	13	31
45.07	0	12	25	47	25	32	34	40
45.08	15	26	22	31	34	42	13	19
46.02	97	143	56	43	22	23	29	32
46.03	32	16	21	15	35	0	0	11
46.04	40	9	26	51	64	24	8	15
47	116	62	42	38	34	19	22	14
48	340	155	96	58	35	69	41	39
49	184	52	60	51	38	41	6	35
50	11	27	21	20	26	24	12	13

Census Tract id	\$45,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$59,999	\$60,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$124,999	\$125,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 or More
1	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	38	13	0	0	0	0	5
3	0	12	10	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	29	8	0	7	0	12	0	0
6.01	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0
6.02	12	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
7.01	7	8	0	0	0	0	0	0

7.02	27	7	0	0	9	0	0	0
8	0	6	9	9	0	0	0	0
9	12	13	20	0	0	0	0	0
10	16	17	17	0	0	0	0	0
11.02	13	38	42	10	12	0	0	0
11.03	0	22	6	9	16	0	0	14
11.04	8	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	14	21	14	0	0	0	0	9
13	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	26	14	0	10	0	0	0
15	0	8	14	6	5	0	0	0
16	22	29	15	37	0	5	25	20
17	84	60	47	84	21	13	9	0
18	29	54	15	9	0	0	0	0
19	15	28	41	22	21	0	0	21
20	24	50	29	64	25	0	0	15
21	17	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
22	0	5	0	12	0	0	0	0
23	40	39	28	30	14	0	10	0
24	0	38	7	0	0	0	0	8
25	7	20	20	0	0	0	0	0
26.01	70	68	76	56	43	19	13	37
26.02	6	57	39	84	13	7	13	0
27	0	20	0	8	15	0	0	0
28	4	21	13	0	18	8	7	0
30	9	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
31.01	0	12	35	0	0	0	0	0
31.02	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32.01	12	20	6	6	0	0	0	0
32.02	0	19	24	12	0	0	0	0
33	7	18	0	0	0	0	6	0
34	9	26	10	10	0	0	0	0
35.01	18	28	0	11	0	0	0	0
35.04	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35.05	7	8	0	7	0	0	0	0
35.06	47	9	95	0	0	0	11	13
35.07	22	14	24	6	0	0	0	0
36.01	57	44	22	23	0	0	0	0
36.03	17	39	11	0	8	7	0	0
36.04	15	4	0	9	0	0	0	0
37.01	51	37	57	26	0	7	22	9
37.02	21	11	22	37	7	0	0	0
37.03	23	65	39	26	12	11	0	0
38.01	42	76	128	155	35	44	12	9
38.02	64	114	99	28	24	9	30	32
38.04	77	54	65	55	9	0	0	0
38.05	31	40	46	39	17	11	6	13

39.03	75	137	109	66	8	15	17	0
39.04	54	102	28	44	8	8	0	0
39.06	14	84	58	50	8	0	0	0
39.07	38	91	67	40	0	0	19	9
39.08	24	22	60	38	20	0	0	0
40.05	41	39	64	71	14	10	0	0
40.06	28	64	50	63	14	12	0	21
40.07	66	62	39	74	9	23	0	9
40.09	4	11	12	8	0	0	0	0
40.10	8	78	22	49	7	0	7	0
40.11	26	41	46	11	0	0	0	0
40.12	34	49	52	15	18	0	9	7
42.01	12	36	17	26	0	0	0	0
42.03	0	6	5	12	0	0	0	0
42.04	6	4	22	0	0	0	0	0
42.05	37	27	7	32	0	0	0	0
43.01	17	36	11	11	0	0	0	0
43.02	0	26	9	0	0	0	0	0
44.01	6	20	17	13	4	0	8	0
44.02	17	26	27	4	21	0	0	0
44.03	17	16	19	0	9	0	0	0
45.02	47	60	103	37	33	19	0	11
45.03	23	46	56	18	22	0	0	0
45.04	32	50	34	26	14	0	0	20
45.05	0	42	80	50	0	0	28	0
45.07	23	57	13	23	12	0	37	0
45.08	14	34	16	16	14	0	14	0
46.02	10	7	0	18	4	0	4	0
46.03	7	35	17	24	0	0	0	0
46.04	17	62	0	33	11	0	0	0
47	11	26	13	12	6	0	0	0
48	28	24	63	26	7	6	7	4
49	10	58	52	16	15	7	23	0
50	13	49	27	20	0	0	0	8

Census 2000 Tract id	Households Counted	Avg. Size	Total Households Below \$43,500	Total Households Above \$43,500	Percentage Below \$43,500
1	110	5.0	97	13	88.18
2	887	2.7	831	56	93.69
3	198	3.3	176	22	88.89
4	242	4.3	215	27	88.84
5	383	3.9	327	56	85.38
6.01	324	3.8	311	13	95.99
6.02	410	3.9	385	25	93.90
7.01	311	2.8	296	15	95.18

7.02	515	2.9	472	43	91.65
8	315	2.5	291	24	92.38
9	542	3.1	497	45	91.70
10	558	2.9	508	50	91.04
11.02	942	1.6	827	115	87.79
11.03	277	4.1	210	67	75.81
11.04	565	2.5	542	23	95.93
12	635	1.2	577	58	90.87
13	209	2.1	187	22	89.47
14	209	1.4	159	50	76.08
15	363	2.4	330	33	90.91
16	880	2.0	727	153	82.61
17	1286	1.8	968	318	75.27
18	778	1.7	671	107	86.25
19	464	2.5	316	148	68.10
20	506	2.9	299	207	59.09
21	257	3.1	232	25	90.27
22	351	2.0	334	17	95.16
23	615	2.2	454	161	73.82
24	734	1.9	681	53	92.78
25	907	1.8	860	47	94.82
26.01	765	2.2	383	382	50.07
26.02	793	2.2	574	219	72.38
27	280	2.7	237	43	84.64
28	1145	1.4	1074	71	93.80
30	267	4.6	251	16	94.01
31.01	515	3.2	468	47	90.87
31.02	113	4.0	104	9	92.04
32.01	310	4.3	266	44	85.81
32.02	265	5.2	210	55	79.25
33	458	3.4	427	31	93.23
34	460	4.9	405	55	88.04
35.01	224	4.7	167	57	74.55
35.04	322	6.3	299	23	92.86
35.05	354	4.4	332	22	93.79
35.06	747	3.5	572	175	76.57
35.07	271	6.0	205	66	75.65
36.01	497	2.8	351	146	70.62
36.03	515	2.4	433	82	84.08
36.04	690	3.2	662	28	95.94
37.01	756	3.3	547	209	72.35
37.02	394	3.4	296	98	75.13
37.03	480	4.6	304	176	63.33
38.01	1384	2.0	883	501	63.80
38.02	1460	1.9	1060	400	72.60
38.04	1122	2.0	862	260	76.83
38.05	743	3.1	540	203	72.68

39.03	1823	1.8	1396	427	76.58
39.04	1174	2.2	930	244	79.22
39.06	637	4.6	423	214	66.41
39.07	1103	2.3	839	264	76.07
39.08	325	3.4	161	164	49.54
40.05	779	2.8	540	239	69.32
40.06	724	4.1	472	252	65.19
40.07	3636	1.4	3354	282	92.24
40.09	362	4.6	327	35	90.33
40.10	458	3.9	287	171	62.66
40.11	846	2.3	722	124	85.34
40.12	959	3.3	775	184	80.81
42.01	466	4.4	375	91	80.47
42.03	266	4.4	243	23	91.35
42.04	365	4.0	333	32	91.23
42.05	485	4.2	382	103	78.76
43.01	447	5.1	372	75	83.22
43.02	309	6.4	274	35	88.67
44.01	275	6.3	207	68	75.27
44.02	399	4.9	304	95	76.19
44.03	294	6.2	233	61	79.25
45.02	1071	4.1	761	310	71.06
45.03	601	3.5	436	165	72.55
45.04	674	3.2	498	176	73.89
45.05	500	3.9	300	200	60.00
45.07	380	4.2	215	165	56.58
45.08	310	8.4	202	108	65.16
46.02	488	3.8	445	43	91.19
46.03	213	5.6	130	83	61.03
46.04	360	7.0	237	123	65.83
47	415	4.4	347	68	83.61
48	998	1.6	833	165	83.47
49	648	3.2	467	181	72.07
50	271	4.9	154	117	56.83

VITA

James M. McCord was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and lived there for almost all of his life. He started his own business in landscape management at the age of fourteen due to his father's death. This business funded James' furtherance of his education. He attended the University of Memphis in the fall 1987 and studied business finance for three years. There he was an active member of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity. He then transferred to Mississippi State University to study landscape construction in the fall of 1991. At Mississippi State, James was a student member of the Association of Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), a participant of the Cooperative Education program, and a Dean's Scholar. Upon graduation, he returned to Memphis and worked in the landscape industry for several years, where his work has won numerous awards. On November 18, 1995 he wed his wife Carolyn. In 2000, James decided to return to the academic life to pursue a Master of Landscape Architecture degree at Louisiana State University. During his studies there, he and John L. Brian, a classmate, won first place in the 2002 American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) National Student Design Competition for team graduate research. He was also a student member of ASLA and ALCA. He currently resides in Fort Meyers, Florida, where he is a practitioner. He has aspirations of one day teaching.