Welcome!

Give us a snapshot of your parks maintenance system through this poll:

pollev.com/christinajan159
Parks Maintenance Standards & Assessments

Agenda:

• Workshop Series Overview
• Houston Parks Board- Trent Rondot, Conservation & Maintenance Director
• Breakout Groups
• Closing
About 10-Minute Walk®

Trust for Public Land envisions a future where every community has safe, equitable access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk of home.

• In collaboration with cities and partners, we address pressing questions and challenges to park equity

• Launched in 10-Minute Walk Program launched in 2017 with partners National Recreation and Park Association and ULI, we have been working to expand assistance, reach and focus

• The 10-Minute Walk Program is an award-winning national effort to improve safe, easy access to parks and green spaces
10-Minute Walk® Mission: Closing the Park Equity Gap

1 in 3 U.S. residents do not have a park or green space within a 10-minute walk of home.

We call on mayors to accelerate the creation of parks that drive equitable, healthy and thriving communities.
How We Work

The 10-Minute Walk Program helps cities expand access to quality parks and green spaces for everyone. We focus on:

• Peer Learning & Networking
  • Our 10-Minute Walk Community of Practice provides a platform for cities to connect, workshop ideas, and learn from each other

• Tailored Support
  • Our Park Equity Accelerator brings resources and support to cities to test and share promising policies and practices that advance park equity

• Policy Recommendations
  • The 10-Minute Walk Policy Platform will provide cities with high-impact policy recommendations to scale support and accelerate actions to close the park equity gap

• City Leadership Engagement & Partnerships
  • Our Mayor Panels and engagement work to make the case and amplify work to expanding park equity
  • Our partnerships amplify and accelerate actions to ensure residents in all U.S. cities have access to a close-to-home park
Park Equity Communities of Practice

Parks Maintenance: Policies and Funding

Community Power: Civic Engagement for a Healthy Democracy

Parks Plus: Affordable Housing
Parks Maintenance: Funding and Policies

Series Overview:

- Oct 25- Maintenance standards and assessments
- Dec 13- Maintenance funding- traditional models
- Feb 7- Maintenance funding- nontraditional models
- April 3- Maintenance staff, capacity, partnerships
- June 5- Maintenance policies
**Operations and Maintenance**

*Trends in Parks and Recreation Agencies*

- Wave of boomers retiring continues
- Decreasing numbers of younger people entering trade professions
- More opportunities in private industry, other governmental agencies, and nonprofits
- Increasing climate change challenges and impacts, such as extreme heat, wildfires, droughts, flooding, tree care, among others.

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2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review
Meet the team

Facilitators

Christina Jang  
Associate Director,  
10-Minute Walk

Jennifer Yip  
Sr. Manager,  
10-Minute Walk

Mike Schnall  
Sr. Manager,  
10-Minute Walk

Ali Goldfarb  
Sr. Program Coordinator,  
NY Programs

Sam Savin  
Associate Director,  
10-Minute Walk

Charlie McCabe  
Parks, Open Space and Placemaking

Brendan Shane  
Climate Director,  
Land & People Lab

Taj Schottland  
Climate Associate Director,  
Land & People Lab

Kim Wolff  
GIS Analyst,  
Land & People Lab

Violet Jarvis  
Op. Coordinator,  
N. Rockies
Discussion questions

20 minutes

1. What are your top maintenance priorities and key concerns in your parks system and/or program?
2. Which standards and assessments have adjusted in your maintenance system? What has been your approach?
3. Have you seen sustained demand and usage in parks since the pandemic? What type of impact has this had on parks maintenance?
4. What climate change related challenges are you seeing in your parks system? What are you most concerned about?
5. How have you adjusted (or not) daily operations and maintenance to respond to these climate challenges? Where have you seen success?
Thank you!

Next session
Wednesday, December 13th – Funding models

Contact Us
Christina Jang
christina.jang@tpl.org
Our mission is to expand, improve, and protect parks and greenspace in the Houston region.
Park and Greenspace System Expansion

With the launch of Bayou Greenways within Houston city limits, our bayous are a network of linear parks and trails that make our lives happier, healthier, and more connected.

3,000 Acres of new greenspace
150 Miles of trails
9 Bayous

With the launch of Bayou Greenways within Houston city limits, our bayous are a network of linear parks and trails that make our lives happier, healthier, and more connected.
Maintenance Principles

- Long-term 80-year agreement with committed funding from a City of Houston Economic Development grant
- Coordination with multiple entities
- Assurance, especially to donors, that the improvements would be maintained at a high level
Maintenance Standards

- Lawns
- Prairies, Grassland Buffers and Seasonal Meadows
- Native and Ornamental Landscape Beds
- Woodland, Forests and Riparian Areas
- Wetlands

Site Amenities/Assets
- Parking Areas
- Multi-Use Trails
- Secondary Trails
- Pedestrian Bridges
- Seating Areas
- Benches
- Trash/Recycling
- Drinking Fountains
- Bicycle Repair Stations
- Signage

- Natural Surface Trails
- Delitter Only Zones
### STANDARD: Routine Maintenance - Lawn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape/Facility Type</th>
<th>General Maintenance Standard</th>
<th>Key Tasks</th>
<th>Minimum Frequency (More often if needed)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawn</td>
<td>Well groomed, except after flood events and during droughts. Kept usable for events. Regularly mowed and clear of litter and debris. May have tree cover, but enough light filters through to support turf growth.</td>
<td>Mow and trim to a height of 2-3&quot;</td>
<td>28x/year. Cycles according to the following: January - February (1), March (2), April - October (3), November (2), and December (1)</td>
<td>Mowing frequencies are subject to seasons, periods of drought, and rainfall. During the height of turf growing season, mowing cycles in general are to be every ten (10) days, but no sooner than eight (8) days after the previous cut.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Edge/trim along pavement edges, fences, structures, signage, etc. Do not damage trees or shrubs, fences, or structures with string trimmers.</td>
<td>28x/year when mowing occurs</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Blow grass clippings, gravel, mulch, leaves, etc. from all paved surfaces, surrounding areas, and the surface/openings of catch basins. Do NOT blow grass clippings, either by mowers or blowers, into landscape beds</td>
<td>28x/year when mowing occurs</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Remove litter and debris, with emphasis on immediately prior to mowing cycles</td>
<td>Zone A - 52x/year. Zone B - 32x/year. Cycles according to the following: January - February (2), March - October (3), November - December (2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Inspect and clear leaves from surface of catch basins</td>
<td>28x/year when mowing occurs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seed bare or thin spots</td>
<td>As needed, upon detection</td>
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### STANDARD: Routine Maintenance - Delitter Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape/Facility Type</th>
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<th>Minimum Frequency (More often if needed)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delitter Only</td>
<td>Managed in coordination with Harris County Flood Control District</td>
<td>Remove litter and debris, with emphasis on immediately prior to mowing cycles</td>
<td>Zone A - 52x/year. Zone B - 32x/year. Cycles according to the following: January - February (2), March - October (3), November - December (2)</td>
<td>Areas mowed by others (HCFCD, Harris County Precincts, HPARD, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Report the development of sinkholes, slope failures, or severe erosion to HCFCD where they pose a hazard to Greenway users, adjoining properties, and at any high profile areas</td>
<td>As needed, upon detection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Routine Maintenance on nearly 100 Miles of Greenways

- Pedestrian Bridges: 57
- Benches and Tables: 374
- Kayak Launches: 8
- Drinking Fountain: 13
- Trash/Recycling Cans: 365
- Bicycle Fixit Stations: 13
- 3,285 Acres
  - Woodland: 34.2%
  - Turf: 13.9%
  - Prairie and Landscape Beds: 5.6%
  - Trails and Parking: 4.4%
  - Woodland: 34.2%
  - Wetland: 0.2%

Delitter Only: 41.7%
Long-Term “Life Cycle” Replacements
Routine Maintenance Challenges
Routine Maintenance Challenges
Unanticipated Repairs and Issues
Climate Extremes - Temperature

2021
3 Straight Days Below Freezing

Photo courtesy of Houston Chronicle

2023
45 Days at 100° or Above

Photo courtesy of Click2Houston
Climate Extremes - Drought

Worst single-year drought in 2011

5 Million Trees Died

2011

$320K Watering since July ‘23

2023
Climate Extremes - Flooding

Four of the top ten flood events in the last 45 years occurred between 2015 and 2017.

2017

100,000 Homes Flooded
More than 1/2 were outside a floodplain

More than 1/3 of the county is within a FEMA floodplain

66 Flood Events since 2014
Including 6 Events with +10” of Rainfall

Photo courtesy of Houston Chronicle
Hurricane Harvey – August 25-29, 2017

Some of our trail segments go under 25’ of flood waters...thankfully they are constructed to withstand it!

$1.3M for Flood Cleanup
Silt, Sinkholes, Debris and Downed Trees
Flood Cleanup Since 2014

3,016 Dump Truck Loads of Silt and Debris Removed

$3.3M for Flood Cleanup
Using the Flood Control District rain/stream gauges, we know which trail segments will flood first, and about how deep the flooding will be.

We concentrate on opening trails first, since many people use the trails to commute to work or school.
## Funding Buckets and Purposes

### Operating
- Routine maintenance
  - mowing
  - litter/debris removal
  - graffiti
  - forestry and bed maintenance
- Conservation program
  - prairies
  - wildlife habitat
  - invasive vegetation removal
- Staffing and support
- Equipment and supplies

### Maintenance Reserve (20% Contingency)
- Flood cleanup
- Unexpected repair/replacement of capital assets

### Capital Replacement Reserve
- “Life Cycle” replacement
  - Trails
  - Bridges
  - Retaining Walls
  - Railings
  - Lights
  - Benches
  - Trash receptacles
  - Drinking fountains
  - Signs
  - Parking areas

### Funding Buckets
- **$10M** Annually
- **$2M** Annually
- **$12M** Rollover Available for Projects

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greenspace Management</th>
<th>Conservation</th>
<th>Asset Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff: 5</td>
<td>Staff: 11</td>
<td>Staff: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model: Contractors</td>
<td>Model: Hybrid</td>
<td>Model: Contractors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In-house Crew
- Contractors
- Partners
  - TX Conservation Corps
  - Student Conservation Assoc.
- Volunteers
  - Community
  - Corporate Partners

Biggest Operational Challenge – No Maintenance Facility
QUESTIONS?

Trent Rondot
Conservation and Maintenance Director

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