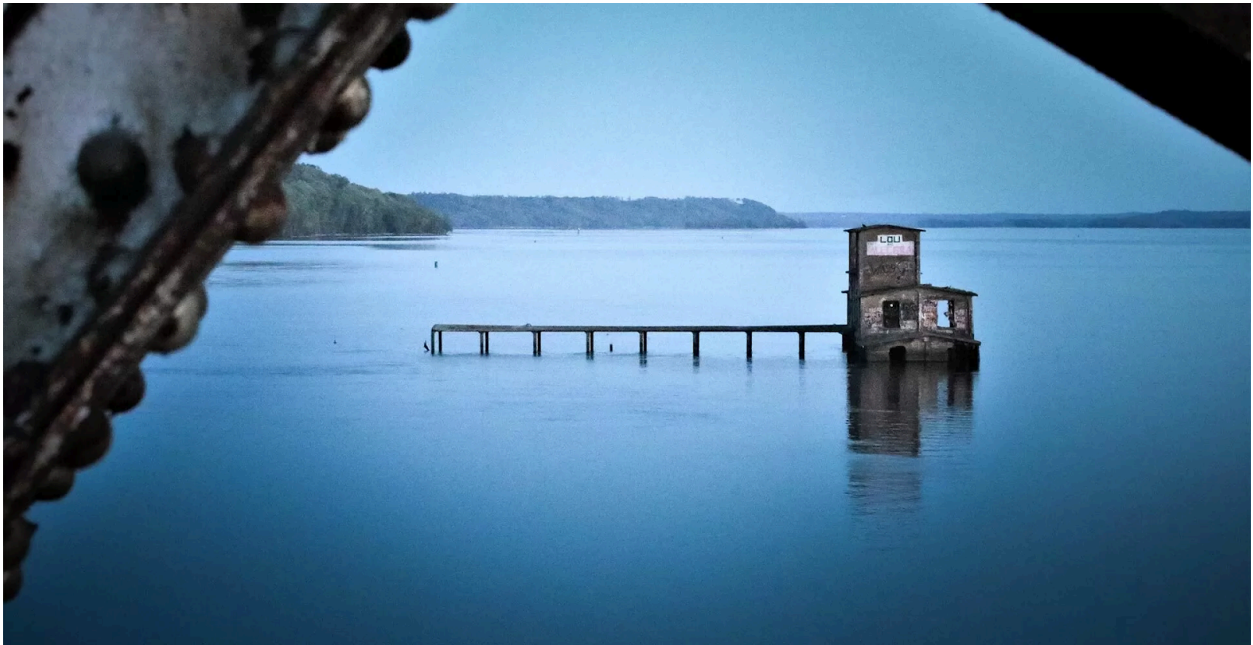


Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan

Preliminary Plan Review

Some pictures/editing will be added by 3-29-24



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Houston County Commissioners

Joey Brake	Mayor
William Agy	District 1
Stephanie Smith	District 1
Randall French	District 2
Steve Hall	District 2
Glenn Baggett	District 3
Jonathan Floyd	District 3
Darrell Kingsmill	District 4
Howard Spurgeon	District 4
Vickie Reedy	District 5
Jean Tolley	District 5
Garett Mathis	District 6
Fred Richardson	District 6
Carter Cary	District 7
Robert Earl	District 7

Erin Tennessee Mayor and Aldermen

Paul Bailey	Mayor
Paul Gooden	Vice Mayor
Cecil Baggett	Aldermen
Ted carson	Aldermen
Linda Bass	Aldermen
Jackqlyn Largent Smith	Aldermen
Lisa Moore	Aldermen
Jacquelyn Parchman	Aldermen
Jennifer Warren	Aldermen

Tennessee Ridge Mayor and Commissioners

Stony Odum	Mayor
Ray Bradley	Vice Mayor
Bryan Bumpus	Commissioner
Mathew Williams	Commissioner
Travis Wyatt	Commissioner
Kenneth Dunavant	City Manager

Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Focus Group

Melissa Barker
Donald Bateman
Bryan Bumpus
Kathy Freed
Kay French
Randall French
Polly Fussell-Miller
Betsy Ligon
Lisa Moore
Nanette Morford
Howard Spurgeon



Houston County Focus Group and Public

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Introduction

Houston County, and the cities of Erin and Tennessee Ridge have a long history of providing park and recreation amenities for their residents and the community. They have invested in community parks, regional parks, river-themed amenities, veterans parks, greenways and trails, athletic facilities that have become a fixture in the county. The leadership of Erin, Tennessee Ridge, and Houston began meeting in September of 2022 to discuss the need for a comprehensive, county-wide, parks and recreation strategic 10-year plan to prepare for the present and future leisure needs for the region.

A year later, Tennessee Ridge, Erin and Houston County developed a partnership to develop a comprehensive parks and recreation plan. The planning document will provide a plan that will allow all three government entities to be eligible for State of Tennessee Local Park and Recreation Funds and Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program grants, as well as Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund grants, Recreation Trail Program grants, and Tennessee Recreation Initiative Plan grants. These available resources can provide anywhere from fifty to eighty percent funding of public park and recreation projects and allow leveraging of taxpayer dollars. Completion of a systemwide plan for Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County to apply for Parks and Recreation grants individually or in partnership in 2024 and through 2029, and an update of the plan will allow them to apply for grants through 2034. The current practice of TDEC/RRD of offering grants for parks and recreation projects on a yearly basis, positions the entities to take advantage of every financial opportunity available.

A comprehensive park and recreation plan will provide Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County a roadmap for park and recreation projects, it also provides a strategic tool for the two cities and county to develop in a manner which will not only provide for its constituents, but also eliminate unnecessary duplication.

Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County, in addition to community organizations have provided parks and recreation amenities to the residents of Houston County for years, but there is a need to update existing parks and create new opportunities that will provide enhanced quality of life for present and future citizens. This plan affords the county to leverage public and private partnerships to the full extent to benefit its citizens. Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County should be commended for working together as one to develop this essential plan for improved quality of life for the whole of its citizens.

TDEC Recreation Resources Division

Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Requirements

Dates to be added

Minimum Criteria

Strategic Planning type component including a focus group that represents a cross section of the community. A Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (S.W.O.T.) Analysis is often included.

Community Recreational Needs Assessment/Survey

Facility inventory with facilities and current conditions included

Parks and Recreation Program offerings list

Short, Mid, and Long-Term Goals

Public Input on the preliminary draft of the plan to be completed, April

Acceptance of plan by Organization's Governing Board

The Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan must be created or updated with the criteria above within the last 5 years and it must be accepted by the governing body between May 4, 2019, and May 3, 2024.

SCORP

Tennessee Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The 2030 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlines the recreation, parks, and conservation priorities for the State of Tennessee for the next 10 years (2020-2030). The main focus of the plan outlines the priorities that fulfill Tennessee's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which will serve as a guide for all public outdoor recreation in urban and rural neighborhoods, cities, and regions for our state. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is designed to be a framework for recreation planning at all levels of government. Action plans support successful partnerships, meaningful investment in infrastructure, and effective outreach and engagement that ensure an outstanding system of outdoor recreation for Tennesseans on the state, county, and local government level.

As the Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan was developed, there was an emphasis on aligning with the SCORP since it is designated as the Tennessee State Outdoor Recreation Plan. In addition, the Open Selection Process (OPSP) the Recreation Resources Division uses for scoring Local Park & Recreation Fund (LPRF), Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) includes a section for SCORP compliance.

Executive Summary: Tennessee's 2030 Vision Tennesseans Outdoors: Vision 2030, an update to the 2020 SCORP, will guide Tennessee parks and recreation priorities over the next ten years. The Tennessee State Park System is an important part of Tennessee culture, with an estimated State Parks visitor count of 34.7 million in 2020 alone. The importance of this system is emphasized by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as many other forms of recreation and entertainment were curtailed over the last year. The Tennessee State Park system also plays a large role in the State's economy, with a visitor impact of \$1.8 Billion in 2020. Spending by visitors to the State Parks system supported 13,629 jobs and \$487.6 million in household earnings and contributed \$1 billion to state GDP. The TN 2020, developed in 2010, was built around 10 strategic initiatives with supporting goals designed to address critical needs, the results of which are addressed in following chapters. The 2030 plan was developed in close collaboration with a statewide advisory committee representing various constituencies across the state that provide decision making guidance to local, state, and other outdoor recreation providers. One of the key themes that emerged throughout the planning process was the importance of equity and the need for equal access for all, and these themes were woven throughout every aspect of this plan. As the plan was developed, a series of guiding principles were identified:

- Elevate the importance of statewide recreational planning, particularly as it relates to achieving parks and recreation equity and access for all
- Identify high priority issues, needs, and investments from the possible opportunities presented over the course of the planning process
- Review the latest plan and make thoughtful determinations on whether to retain and/or modify uncompleted top actions
- Develop collaborative relationships and partnerships that extend well into the implementation phase of the planning process
- Attempt to quantify the public's outdoor needs and values to help in making data driven choices regarding prioritization and implementation
- Enhance citizen awareness and value of the outdoor resources Tennessee has to offer
- Satisfy the National Park Service priorities and meet Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) requirements.

Findings: Each section of this plan focuses on different aspects of outdoor recreation in Tennessee: Outdoor Recreation in Tennessee Today, Outdoor Recreation Demands and Needs, and Outdoor Recreation Challenges and Issues. Summaries of each section and their findings are included below. Outdoor Recreation in Tennessee Today This section includes an overview of the status of outdoor recreation in Tennessee today; recommendations for an inventory of facilities and activities, findings related to the importance of recreation, including social, health and wellness, economics, and environmental benefits; and context of the plan in terms of the roles of federal, state, local, and private partners in providing outdoor recreation. In early 2021, a Project Charter for the GIS Inventory Project was published. The inventory project would include developing a single comprehensive statewide parks, greenways, and trails inventory for public facilities in Tennessee. A single inventory would greatly benefit state agencies, researchers, non-profits, and the public in a variety of purposes. The inventory will help inform decisions as well as aid in monitoring and evaluating outdoor recreation facilities and activities over time to ensure equal access and investments. A study by the University of Tennessee also included in this section underscores the importance of recreation on the State's economy. Overall, State Park visitor economic impact to the state totaled \$1.7 billion for the year 2020. Parks also contribute to sales taxes via visitor and employee spending. This section concludes with highlighting the importance of coordination between programs and organizations to support outdoor recreation and increase funding and programming in Tennessee parks. Outdoor Recreation Demands and Needs This section includes a summary of user survey results and public feedback, trends and barriers of outdoor recreation, and demographic trends. Responses from the user survey and public feedback indicated that respondents felt the following themes were the most important to focus on in the 2030 plan:

1. Connectivity and Access

2. Land Acquisition and Stewardship

3. Plan for Future

4. Resource Management and Protection

They also felt that Conservation was the highest priority goal. Additionally, overall findings for trends and barriers of outdoor recreation indicated that Tennesseans do perceive some limitations overall—but not extreme limitations—to their participation in outdoor recreation. Interest in outdoor recreation was the biggest prerequisite for participation, whereas crowding and outdoor bugs/pests were the biggest barriers to outdoor recreation. Last, research indicated that changes in ethnicity and age can have direct effects on shifts in recreational behavior and preferences. Thus, as the state's population increases, challenges and opportunities related to outdoor recreation will shift.

Summary of Recreation Challenges and Issues This section draws on the findings from the previous sections to identify key challenges and issues to outdoor recreation. The Vision for the Future, summarized below, attempts to address key challenges and issues in planning for the future of outdoor recreation for all Tennesseans.

A Vision for the Future The 2030 Plan is guided by four overarching vision themes, each with supporting actions to help achieve the goal articulated by the vision theme. These vision themes were developed through intense collaboration among the members of the Core Executive Team, Tennessee Recreation Advisory Committee (TRAC), and TRAC Sub Committees. They were then presented to the public for review and further vetting, refinement, and prioritization. TDEC and the Department of Health will serve as leads to help achieve these goals.

Advocacy and Education Goal: Allow citizens to understand, appreciate, and have access to the recreation resources available in Tennessee. Provide exposure to the benefits of outdoor recreation and tools to create sustained healthy habits and responsible enjoyment of the outdoors.

Action #1—Identify or create relevant educational resources to share statewide

Action #2—Advocate for physical connectivity and access (to parks, trails, greenways)

Action #3—Create partnerships for distributing educational resources and education: How to get information into the communities—identifying needs, partners, and avenues.

Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success Goal: Build strategic coalitions to maximize the economic impacts of outdoor recreation and parks in Tennessee.

Action #1—Complete mapping and Inventory of recreational facilities

Action #2—Develop economic impact model / formula

Action #3—Development partnerships

Action #4—Identify communication strategies.

Conservation Goal: Sustain and grow Tennessee's outdoor recreation and conservation legacy

Action #1—Develop direct land conservation policies and strategies that address each of the focus areas to ensure equity and inclusion and meet the diverse needs of all Tennesseans

Action #2—Develop a land acquisition and stewardship plan that lays out strategies and actions for current and future public lands for outdoor recreation

Action #3—Develop a land acquisition and stewardship plan that lays out strategies, actions

and opportunities for improved access and use of private lands for outdoor recreation
Action #4—Increase funding for land acquisition and resource management
Action #5—Improve long-term capacity and effectiveness of resource management efforts and programs in all public and private conservation agencies.

Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access, Affordability (IDEAA) Goal: All Tennesseans will have access to and feel welcome at all local and state recreation facilities in which diversity is reflected in programs, operations, and staffing. Action #1—Ensure that all parks will be places where all communities can engage with nature in positive ways
Action #2—Encourage the creation of and support for groups promoting outdoor recreation with demographic groups currently underrepresented in park use
Action #3—Ensure that leadership in all levels of public parks and recreation agencies will represent the diversity of Tennessee
Action #4—Develop a statewide equity (DEAI) performance measure scale for use across the state as an evaluation tool to understand performance on the issue of equity. This scale will be used to assist agencies in setting goals and providing guidance in planning for sustaining a focus on equity performance.



2020 SCORP

Executive Summary

Houston County was established in 1871 by the Tennessee Legislature. The towns of Erin and Tennessee Ridge were both settled around 1780, and Erin was incorporated in 1906 and Tennessee Ridge in 1962. Houston County is blessed with an abundance of outdoor recreation and the communities have been blessed with leisure and recreation opportunities for years and the community embraces and supports their parks. After a meeting with local representatives in September of 2022, Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge decided in the summer of 2023 to pursue a park and recreation systemwide plan for all of Houston County. Starting in the fall of 2023 and until April of 2024, multiple citizen input meetings were held. Consultants spoke to political and civic organizations and to administrators at Houston County High School. Efforts were made to leave no stone unturned when researching and gathering information from the county and its citizens. All of this information was then compiled, analyzed, organized and edited into a document that represents input received through the process. The Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan is designed to provide a strategic direction for leisure activities and facilities for the next 10 years in Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge, Tennessee.



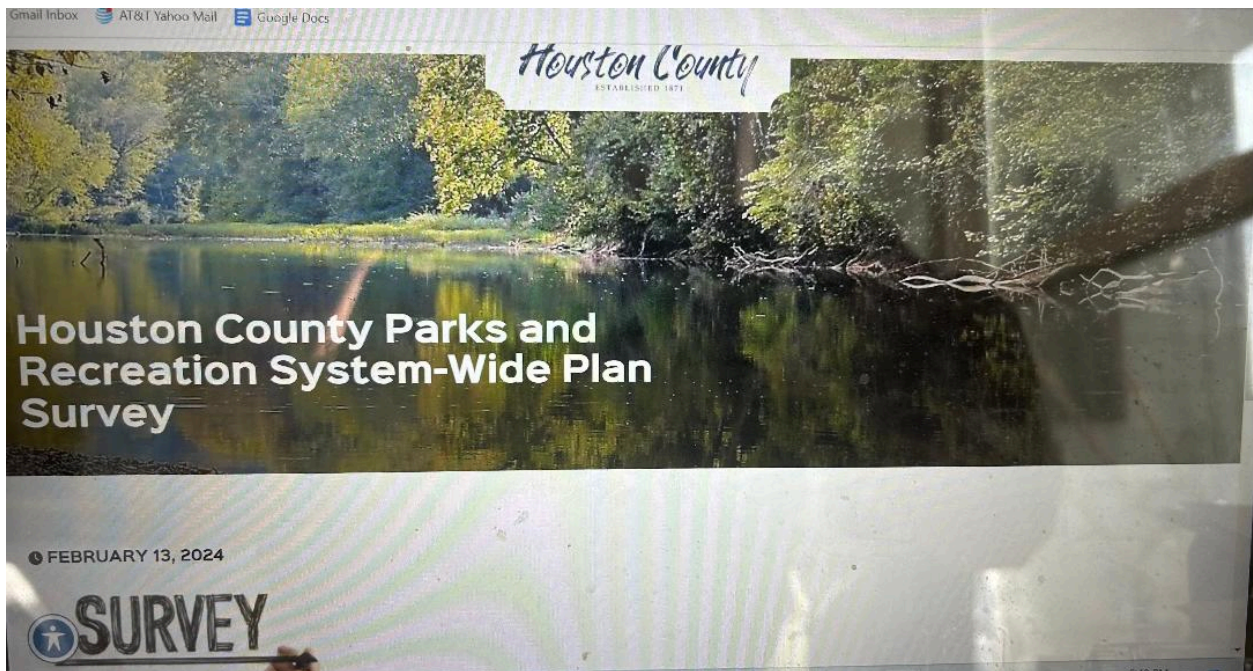
Systemwide Plan Development

Developing a plan which will meet the Tennessee department of Environment and Conservation regulations requires a strategic approach which maximizes public input, park facility and equipment inventory, determines existing and future park and recreation programs and facilities to ensure the plan reflects the intent of the citizens of the county. Consultants used their park and recreation experience and knowledge to lead the process that has developed a plan that will be an asset for development of leisure services for Houston County, Tennessee.



Public Input

The Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Kickoff Meeting was held at the Houston County meeting on November 14th, 2023. Over the course of several months, plan consultants held input meetings with: *Houston County, City of Erin and City of Tennessee Ridge, Houston County High School students, administrators and faculty, the Democratic and Republican parties of Houston County, the Houston County Chamber of Commerce, J D Lewis Senior Citizen Center, and the Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Focus Group.* Informal and formal methods were used to maximize the input from these groups as well as preliminary and final plan presentations and public input.. Further, a Recreational Needs Assessment Survey was distributed on the county website and other avenues and over 50 surveys were received. All of these methods were vital to develop the parks and recreation future for Houston County.





Discovery

The voices and surveys of the citizens rang-out loud and clear throughout the months of public input.

- They want park improvements, maintenance and upgrades that include state of the equipment and facilities in the parks near their homes, including new parks where needed.
- They want facilities where people can meet, socialize, recreate, exercise, participate in a variety of recreational opportunities, and of course are safe and open to all. community centers and a new location for an inaccessible senior center is needed. Splash pads, dog parks, exercise trails, disc golf, are just a few of the items mentioned in meetings and surveys.
- They want maintained trails that are expanded and connected to destinations and recreational opportunities.
- They want programs and activities for toddlers to seniors.

The Findings, Themes & Recommendations and Short-Mid-Long-Term Goals and Priorities sections give more descriptions and details on the voice of the Houston County resident.

- They want a plan that will address these items and move forward that will address funding and organizational structure.

Future Direction

One of TDEC's requirements for a Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan is a list of park and recreation items ranked by priority and **short-mid-long term** importance. Using all the factors and input outlined in the **Developing the Plan** section, implementation charts were developed for Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge to address the needs and concerns the citizens brought forward during the process. Everything can't be accomplished at once, but by aligning momentum, they can vastly improve their parks, programs and activities in a short period of time. Further, the document outlines how other items included within the plan can be accomplished by funding, organization and implementation.

Houston County History

To be inserted

Houston County Demographics

To be added

Houston County, Tennessee

Park and Recreation Systemwide Plan Input Process

Public Input Meeting, Houston County High School

A public input meeting was held on November 13, 2024, 12 noon at Houston County High School. There were 38 students included in the group of 50 who attended.

Tremendous input was received from the students who participated in identifying and ranking the park and recreation priorities for Houston County as well as items for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the county.

Major themes of the meeting were, the students would like safe, attractive facilities to go meet with their friends and participate in leisure and recreational activities. At present, they have no public places to gather and recreate and would support any efforts by Houston County, Erin or Tennessee Ridge to provide such facilities.

11-13-23, 12 noon

Houston County High School

38 students

Item	P1	P2	P3	P4	Total	Rank
Trails	2	1	1	2	15	10
Farmers mkt	3	3	1	3	26	5
Comm Cnr	5	6	3	5	49	2
Ex Library	0	0	0	3	3	16
Game Stop	1				4	14
Ex/Enh Ligon						
Shop cntr		2	13	4	36	4
Sports compl	7	4	1	2	44	3
Movie theatre	8	5	1	4	53	1
Food/Entertain			1	4	6	13
Career based						
Med facil						
Homeless sh	2				8	12
AirSoft	1	2		4	14	11
Drive in Th	1		5	2	16	9
Fast fd rest	1	3	1	2	17	6
Aquatic fac	2	2	1	1	17	6
Dog parks		1		1	4	14
Golf course		4	2	1	17	6



Public Input Meeting, Tennessee Ridge

A public input meeting was held at Tennessee Ridge City Hall at 5 pm on November 13th at 6 pm. There were about 13 people who attended and the input was great. The meeting included public input on Park and Recreation priorities and a SWOT Analysis. The citizens would like to see improved parks with more activities, a community center, an expanded walking trail, skate park, splash pad and expansion of the campground. They also feel there needs to be better signage and information online for those looking for the recreational amenities in the area. They believe with more advertising, more people would use the parks and amenities.

11-13-23, 5:00 pm

Tennessee Ridge Input, TR City Hall

Item	P1	P2	P3	P4	Total	Rank
Exp Campground		2		3	11	3
Trails/Gways			3	4	10	4
Splash Pads	1	2			10	4
Skate Park		1		1	4	6
Signage/Ad	1	1	2	1	12	2
Imp. Fac. Playgrounds/ New Pk/Comm Cntr	6	3			33	1
Safe PI Kids						

Public Input Meeting, Houston County Courthouse

A meeting with the Park and Recreation Systemwide Plan Focus group was held at 5:00 at the Houston County Courthouse, followed by a public input meeting. Over 30 people attended the meeting including the public. The meeting included public input on Park and Recreation priorities and a SWOT Analysis focus group and Houston County commissioners and administrators. The highest ranked items were a Community Center, Upgrade and Renovate Existing Parks, and further Develop Danville Landing.

11-14--23, 5:00 pm

Houston County Courthouse, Focus Group and Public, Erin, TN

Erin, TN

Item	P1	P2	P3	P4	Total	Rank
Trails	0		1	1	3	15
Exp Campgrd		2		3	9	7
Splash pad	1	1			7	10
Skate park	1			1	5	13
Advertising*	1	1	2	1	12	5
Upgrade parks	6	3			33	2
Shooting range			4	2	10	6
Equestrian Tr	1			4	8	9
Community Cn Pavilion	10	1	3	1	50	1
Danv Lnd Dev		9	2		33	2
Greenways/TR			1	2	3	15
Reno Ex Parks		1	3	4	13	4
Athletic Comp`1			2	1	5	13
Hist/Tour RC		1	1	1	6	11
Advertising*	1	1		2	9	7
Splashpad	1		2		6	11
State Park			1		2	17
Shooting Range						0



**Houston County Democratic Party Input Meeting
11/13/2023 Democratic Office**



A Parks and Recreation Input with the Houston Democratic Party, with 13 in attendance.

The items mentioned by the group, included:

Opportunities for activities, possibly a community center

Bike lanes

sidewalks/trail to river

Splash pad

Skate park

Swimming Pool

Lack of state parks in the area, can we get one?

Shooting range

Public hunting area

Athletic fields

Hensley park improvements

ADA improvements everywhere

Exercise

Disc Golf

J. D. Lewis Senior Citizen Center Input Meeting



Consultants visited the J. D. Lewis Senior Citizen Center on November 14, 2023. They visited with many of the 30-plus seniors at the center as well as the director, Lisa Moore. The facility has many logistical issues as it is an old structure, located on a hill with a severe slope. Ingress and egress to the building is very challenging and the parking lot, entrance and building does not meet ADA standards.

The center provides great programming which is well received and attended by the participants.

Some of the comments from the visit included:

- The building needs to be made ADA accessible, or a new site/facility is needed to house the center.
- Transportation was mentioned as a possible need.
- The center needs more room where additional types of programming could be added.
- The participants are enthusiastic about the center and are appreciative such a facility and activities available to them.



Houston County Area Chamber of Commerce Input Meeting

Houston County Area Chamber of Commerce



Houston County Area Chamber of Commerce

A meeting was held with members of the Houston County Area Chamber of Commerce at noon, November 14th in downtown Erin. Attendees and the consultant spoke about numerous items regarding the county, Tennessee Ridge and the City of Erin.

Items discussed were:

- The significance of the railroad display at Betsy Ligon Park. The list of Irish railroad workers in the pavilion, the railroad cars, and the landscaping hedge which accurately outlines the engine turntable. The turntable was used to turn the engine around, where it could assist in pushing the next train up the 250 foot incline from Erin to Tennessee Ridge.
- The City of Erin has purchased the former Brake Building and is considering uses for the building and site.
- The need for a Community Center(s) to serve Erin, Tennessee Ridge and the County was discussed, as well as avenues to make it a reality.
- The Library was discussed. It is the only one in the county and it is land-locked and needs expansion and additional parking.
- The trail on the former railroad line is greatly used and many would like to see it expanded and possibly connected to other trails.
- The need for facilities and activities developed for youth and children.
- The possibility of obtaining the Armory in Tennessee Ridge which is no longer used by the Tennessee National Guard.



Houston County SWOT Analysis

Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats

STRENGTHS

Kentucky Lake/Tennessee River

Land Available

Community Support & Involvement

Closeness of Community

Good Family Environment

Downtown Erin

Natural Areas and Undeveloped Land

Irish Celebration

Hallmark Town

History of County & Historical Venues

Established Parks

Welcoming Community

Volunteer Involvement

Wildlife

Cattle Industry

Family Owned Businesses

Community Collaboration

Public Transportation

Low Crime Rate

Business and Financial Support

Cost of Living

Food Outlets

WEAKNESSES

Lodging

Lack of dollars/funding

Communication

Affordable Housing

Lack of Business/Retail

Infrastructure Underdeveloped

Lack of Safe Places for Youth and Children

Lack of Community Gathering Places, Community Centers

Not Enough Traffic/Stop Lights

City Isn't Walkable

ADA Issues

Lack of Attractions

Increasing Real Estate Cost

Available Buildings for Development

Lack of a Variety of Food

Lack of Outside Activities

Lack of Retail Variety

Need more Funding for Library

Not Business Friendly

Lack of Good Job Opportunities

Movie Theatre shut down, limited opportunities socially for youth

Lack of Medical Facilities

Lack of Bike Trails

OPPORTUNITIES

More Signage for Amenities
Kentucky Lake
Fishing/Hunting Opportunities
Sports
Community Center
Sonic/Fast Food
Movie Theatre
Adult Education
Empty & Abandoned Buildings
Events
Grant\$
Diverse Development Opportunities
Hunting-Fishing Market
Skate Park
Kayak and Canoe Blueway/Waterway Trails
Tennis Courts
Tap into Volunteer base

THREATS

Lack of Completion of Projects
Not on Main Highways
Location-Isolated
Apathy
Tax Base
Population only 8,400, is it sustainable
TVA Shutdown
Lack of Funding Ability
Large Amount of Private Land
Abuse/Misuse of Public Land and Facilities
Not Enough Housing
Lack of High Income Jobs

Community Recreational Needs Assessment

TENNESSEE RIDGE-Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Survey

As part of the Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan, the County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge are distributing this survey to collect input from their citizens and the users of park facilities within the cities and county. Please fill out the survey and send or deliver to Erin or Tennessee Ridge City Hall, Houston County Offices, or email to georgebrogdon@att.net. Thank you for your participation. Circle one answer for each question, unless other instructions are provided.

1. Where do you live?
 - a. Erin
 - b. Tennessee Ridge 23
 - c. Another area in Houston County
 - d. Outside of Houston County

2. How would you describe your relationship with Houston County?
 - a. Full-time resident 23
 - b. Part-time resident
 - c. Non-resident

3. What race/ethnicity best describes you?
 - a. Black/African American
 - b. White/Caucasian 23
 - c. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - d. Latino/Hispanic
 - e. Native American
 - f. Other

4. How many people live in your household?
 - a. 1 2
 - b. 2 11
 - c. 3 4
 - d. 4 3
 - e. 5 3
 - f. 6
 - g. More than 6

5. How satisfied are you with the parks and other recreational facilities in Erin, Tennessee Ridge, Houston County. (Circle one entity and one field below)
- a. Highly Satisfied
 - b. Satisfied **7**
 - c. Neutral **10**
 - d. Unsatisfied **2**
 - e. Highly Unsatisfied **2**

If you are unsatisfied, let us know why below:

Need an ALL iNCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND for disabled Children. Need more activities for Tenns. Parks are not well maintained. No bike lanes, walking trail needs improving, Trail connection between Erin and Tennessee Ridge. McKinnon CC needs renovation.

6. How often do you visit the following places? (select the best option per row)

	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Never
Armory County Park					
Athletic Fields	2	1	2	5	13
Playgrounds		5	4	3	11
Pavilion		1	1	9	12
Exercise Equipment	1			4	18
Basketball Court				5	18
Batting Cages			1	3	19
Walking Trail		1			22
Other	1			3	19
Betsy Ligon Park					
Walking/Running Trail, Greenway	5	3	4	8	3
Pavilion/Restroom	2	1	5	8	7
Playgrounds	2	3	2	4	12
Picnic Area	1	2	2	8	10
Other		1		3	19
Rotary Park					

Pickleball Courts		2	2	2	18
Playgrounds	1	6	4	3	9
Pavilion	1	2	4	2	14
Other		1	1	1	20
Hensley-Midway Park					
Walking Trails	1				22
Pavilion	1				22
Playground		1			22
Athletic Field					
Basketball					
Other					
J D Lewis Senior Center					
Activities	2			1	20
Other	1	1			21
White Oak Creek at Magnolia Park					
Swimming			4	4	15
Picnicking			4	1	18
Other			3		20
Tennessee Ridge Veterans Park					
Pavilion	1	4	1	7	10
Playground	1	7	1	3	11
Other		2		5	18
Tennessee Ridge Walking Trail					
Walking/Running/Biking	6	1	3	6	7
Dixie Youth Fields					
Baseball/Softball	2	1		6	14
Houston County Recreation Fields					

Baseball		1	1	6	15
Danville Landing					
Boat Ramp	6	3	3	5	6
Camping	1			1	21
Playground		1	2	4	16
Picnicking	3	2	2	2	14
Fishing Piers	2	7	1	4	15
McKinnon Community Center					
Activities		3			20

Are there other parks or recreational facilities in the county that you visit? If so, please indicate the place (and the frequency with which you visit it) in the box below.

7. Are Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County's parks and recreational activities accessible to all, regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, or physical ability?
 - a. Highly Accessible 3
 - b. Accessible 9
 - c. Neutral 6
 - d. Inaccessible 3
 - e. Highly Inaccessible

8. Are you in favor of new or existing financial methods to expand and enhance recreational activities in Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge?
 - a. Yes 6
 - b. No

9. How important do you think it is to provide new or improved parks and recreational facilities and activities for our community?
 - a. Highly Important 17
 - b. Important 3
 - c. Neutral 1
 - d. Not Important
 - e. Very Not Important

10. If you have any additional thoughts pertaining to Erin, Tennessee Ridge or Houston County parks, recreational facilities, or future programs / activities, please provide them in the box below:

RV Park needs services to bring out Campers. Accessible playground and splash pad. Connect trail from Erin to Tennessee Ridge. Need a Ballfield complex. Community activities for everyone to engage in. Physical activities, events to grab people's interest. If it weren't for the Rotary Club and donations of individuals and business Houston County would have little to no support for parks and recreation facilities or any future projects. Water parks, larger parks are needed. Besty Ligon and Armory Parks need to be updated.

ERIN-Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Survey

As part of the Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan, the County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge are distributing this survey to collect input from their citizens and the users of park facilities within the cities and county. Please fill out the survey and send or deliver to Erin or Tennessee Ridge City Hall, Houston County Offices, or email to georgebrogdon@att.net. Thank you for your participation. Circle one answer for each question, unless other instructions are provided.

1. Where do you live?
 - a. Erin 22
 - b. Tennessee Ridge
 - c. Another area in Houston County
 - d. Outside of Houston County

2. How would you describe your relationship with Houston County?
 - a. Full-time resident 21
 - b. Part-time resident 1
 - c. Non-resident

3. What race/ethnicity best describes you?
 - a. Black/African American
 - b. White/Caucasian 21
 - c. Asian/Pacific Islander 1
 - d. Latino/Hispanic
 - e. Native American
 - f. Other

4. How many people live in your household?
 - a. 1 2
 - b. 2 8
 - c. 3 2
 - d. 4 5
 - e. 5 4
 - f. 6
 - g. More than 6 1

5. How satisfied are you with the parks and other recreational facilities in Erin, Tennessee Ridge, Houston County. (Circle one entity and one field below)
 - a. Highly Satisfied
 - b. Satisfied 5

- c. Neutral 9
- d. Unsatisfied 7
- e. Highly Unsatisfied

If you are unsatisfied, let us know why below:

Restrooms are never open or completely unavailable. Betsy Ligon always has teenagers hanging out and acting vulgar. Crowds of men gather openly drinking and smoking dope, and this makes people feel unsafe. Parks are in terrible shape and minimal effort to improve them is not being done. No parks on the East side of the County. Walking and biking trails are needed. Downtown park is not well kept, and the MidWay park also needs attention. Need a new baseball and softball complex for weekend tournaments. Need a splash pad.

6. How often do you visit the following places? (select the best option per row)

	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Never
Armory County Park					
Athletic Fields	4	1	3	4	10
Playgrounds	2	3	2	3	12
Pavilion	4		2	4	12
Exercise Equipment		1		1	20
Basketball Court	1	1		1	19
Batting Cages	2	2		1	16
Walking Trail				1	21
Other		3		1	18
Betsy Ligon Park					
Walking/Running Trail, Greenway	6	6	6	1	3
Pavilion/Restroom	3	4	7	3	5
Playgrounds	3	8	3	3	5
Picnic Area	1	6	4	4	7
Other	1	2	5	1	12
Rotary Park					
Pickleball Courts	4	3	1		13
Playgrounds	2	5	5	2	8

Pavilion	1	6	4	2	9
Other	2	2	1	1	15
Hensley-Midway Park					
Walking Trails					22
Pavilion					22
Playground					22
Athletic Field					22
Basketball					22
Other					22
J D Lewis Senior Center					
Activities		2	1		19
Other	2				20
White Oak Creek at Magnolia Park					
Swimming	1	1	1	3	16
Picnicking	1	1	1	3	16
Other	1	1			21
Tennessee Ridge Veterans Park					
Pavilion	1	4	2	3	12
Playground	2	2	3	3	12
Other	1	1		4	16
Tennessee Ridge Walking Trail					
Walking/Running/Biking	3	2	1	2	13
Dixie Youth Fields					
Baseball/Softball	4		3	7	8
Houston County Recreation Fields					
Baseball		2	4	6	10
Danville Landing					

Boat Ramp	2	4	2	5	9
Camping	2		1	1	18
Playground	1	2	2	2	15
Picnicking	1	1	3	3	14
Fishing Piers	2	2	1	5	12
McKinnon Community Center					
Activities		1			21

Are there other parks or recreational facilities in the county that you visit? If so, please indicate the place (and the frequency with which you visit it) in the box below.

7. Are Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County's parks and recreational activities accessible to all, regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, or physical ability?
 - a. Highly Accessible 5
 - b. Accessible 9
 - c. Neutral 6
 - d. Inaccessible 1
 - e. Highly Inaccessible 1

8. Are you in favor of new or existing financial methods to expand and enhance recreational activities in Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge?
 - a. Yes 4
 - b. No

9. How important do you think it is to provide new or improved parks and recreational facilities and activities for our community?
 - a. Highly Important 13
 - b. Important 9
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Not Important
 - e. Very Not Important

10. If you have any additional thoughts pertaining to Erin, Tennessee Ridge or Houston County parks, recreational facilities, or future programs / activities, please provide them in the box below:

Improved what we have instead of building new facilities. If you want more participation in Parks and Recreation facilities/events, spend money and prioritize. If you build it they will come. More Parking at Danville. Focus of KY Lake. Improve walking trails. Facilities in the County are unserved/underserved. Indoor activities and facilities. Connect trail from Erin to Tennessee Ridge. Need various options all around the County, not just in Erin. Youth Center, YMCA. Cameras installed in parks. More recreation activities for Youth.

HERE IS A LIST OF ITEMS THAT IS NEEDED AT ARMORY PARK

1. Concession Stand addition for more storage of an office meeting area. This would also create a are for registration and keep necessary documents organized.
2. Replace the current wooden top field dugouts with concrete blocks
3. Add two dugouts to the third field
4. Replace the current wooden score boxes, with concrete block and add a new one to field 3
5. Bleachers need replacing on all three fields.
6. Batting cage needs some work on it replacing fencing with permanent fencing. Additional pavilion for batting machine so it can be used if it rains and to get out of the sun when using the electric pitching machine.
7. Additional parking and paving widen the road to bottom fields.
8. Remove fencing at current armory area to allow more parking or install a walk through gate
9. Addition of handicap accessible playground equipment.
10. Replace dilapidated playground equipment.
11. Playground safety surface for safe play and accessible issues.
12. Sidewalks to the all park entities
13. Walking trail around the park.
14. Permanent trash receptacles throughout the park.

ANOTHER AREA- Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Survey

As part of the Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan, the County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge are distributing this survey to collect input from their citizens and the users of park facilities within the cities and county. Please fill out the survey and send or deliver to Erin or Tennessee Ridge City Hall, Houston County Offices, or email to georgebrogdon@att.net. Thank you for your participation. Circle one answer for each question, unless other instructions are provided.

1. Where do you live?
 - a. Erin
 - b. Tennessee Ridge
 - c. Another area in Houston County 14
 - d. Outside of Houston County

2. How would you describe your relationship with Houston County?
 - a. Full-time resident 14
 - b. Part-time resident
 - c. Non-resident

3. What race/ethnicity best describes you?
 - a. Black/African American
 - b. White/Caucasian 14
 - c. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - d. Latino/Hispanic
 - e. Native American
 - f. Other

4. How many people live in your household?
 - a. 1 1
 - b. 2 10
 - c. 3 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5
 - f. 6
 - g. More than 6

5. How satisfied are you with the parks and other recreational facilities in Erin, Tennessee Ridge, Houston County. (Circle one entity and one field below)
 - a. Highly Satisfied
 - b. Satisfied 4

- c. Neutral 7
- d. Unsatisfied 2
- e. Highly Unsatisfied 1

If you are unsatisfied, let us know why below:

Trails need improving. Need exercise stations along the trail. Playground needs updated. Trail needs to be connected from Erin to Tennessee Ridge. Few opportunities in the West End of the County. Magnolia park is underdeveloped. McKinnon CC needs to be renovated.

6. How often do you visit the following places? (select the best option per row)

	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Never
Armory County Park					
Athletic Fields	1	1		1	11
Playgrounds		2		1	11
Pavilion		1		4	9
Exercise Equipment		1			13
Basketball Court		1			13
Batting Cages			1		13
Walking Trail		1			13
Other				1	13
Betsy Ligon Park					
Walking/Running Trail, Greenway	2	1		4	7
Pavilion/Restroom	2			5	7
Playgrounds	2	1			11
Picnic Area	2			4	8
Other	1				13
Rotary Park					
Pickleball Courts	1		1		12
Playgrounds	2	1			11
Pavilion	1		1	2	8

Other	1			1	12
Hensley-Midway Park					
Walking Trails					14
Pavilion					14
Playground					14
Athletic Field					14
Basketball					14
Other					14
J D Lewis Senior Center					
Activities		2			12
Other		1	1		10
White Oak Creek at Magnolia Park					
Swimming		1	1	2	10
Picnicking		1	1	2	10
Other				2	12
Tennessee Ridge Veterans Park					
Pavilion				3	11
Playground			2		12
Other				1	13
Tennessee Ridge Walking Trail					
Walking/Running/Biking			1	2	11
Dixie Youth Fields					
Baseball/Softball			1	1	12
Houston County Recreation Fields					
Baseball			1	1	12
Danville Landing					
Boat Ramp	2		1	4	7

Camping				2	12
Playground	2	2	1		9
Picnicking			2		12
Fishing Piers	1	3		2	8
McKinnon Community Center					
Activities		5	1		8

Are there other parks or recreational facilities in the county that you visit? If so, please indicate the place (and the frequency with which you visit it) in the box below.

7. Are Erin, Tennessee Ridge and Houston County's parks and recreational activities accessible to all, regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, or physical ability?
 - a. Highly Accessible 3
 - b. Accessible 6
 - c. Neutral 5
 - d. Inaccessible
 - e. Highly Inaccessible

8. Are you in favor of new or existing financial methods to expand and enhance recreational activities in Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. How important do you think it is to provide new or improved parks and recreational facilities and activities for our community?
 - a. Highly Important 5
 - b. Important 8
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Not Important
 - e. Very Not Important

10. If you have any additional thoughts pertaining to Erin, Tennessee Ridge or Houston County parks, recreational facilities, or future programs / activities, please provide them in the box below:

Trails at Danville Landing. Enjoy monthly event at McKinnon C.C. Trails must be maintained and clean. Restrooms must be open and clean daily. Let new residents know what is offered in Houston County. McKinnon needs renovated. Magnolia needs more development.

Program List added here

Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan Facility Inventory

More pictures to be added to this section for all parks

Veterans (Armory) Park					
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	ADA ISSUE	COMMENTS
Athletic Fields			X	X	
Playgrounds			X	X	Needs replacing, Pea gravel
Pavilion		X		X	
Exercise Equipment			X	X	
Basketball Court		X		X	
Batting Cages		X		X	
Walking Trail		X			Gravel, ADA issues
Other Park is in real bad shape playgrounds need replacing, total park needs ADA improvement and a maintenance plan.					













Betsy Ligon Park

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	ADA ISSUE	COMMENTS
Walk/Run/Greenway	X				
Pavilion/Restroom		X			
Playgrounds			X	x	Accessibility Issues Playground Safety surfacing
Picnic Area		X		x	Accessibility issues
Other					Walking trail is an asset for this park.

Rotary Park

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	ADA ISSUE	COMMENTS
Pickleball Courts	X				
Playgrounds	X				
Pavilion	X				
Other					Park is in great shape

Hensley-Midway Park					
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	ADA ISSUE	COMMENTS
Walking Trail	X				
Pavilion	X				
Playground	X				
Athletic Field		X			
Basketball Court		X			
Other					

J. D. Lewis Center					
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	ADA ISSUE	COMMENTS
Activities	X			X	
Other					Parking there is no accessible parking
White Oak Creek at Magnolia Park					
Swimming			X	X	There are several issues with this area. Not clean area trees and other obstacles are present
Picnicking			X	X	
Other					No parking for ADA
Tennessee Ridge Veterans Park					
Pavilion	X				
Playground		X			
Other					

****Pictures to be added to all facility inventories**

Short-Mid-Long-Term Goals & Priorities Houston County

	Highest Priorities	Priorities	Important
Short Term 1-3 Years	Community Center Danville Landing Dev Upgrade/Renovate Parks Splash Pad	Advertise Parks Expand Campground	
Mid Term 3-5 Years	Skate Park Greenways & Trails Farmers Market Athletic/Sports Complex	Expand Campground Shooting Range Equestrian Trail Walking Trails	
Long Term 5-10 Years	Athletic/Sports Complex	Equestrian Trail Golf Course	

Erin

	Highest Priorities	Priorities	Important
Short Term 1-3 Years	Community Center Splash Pad/Amenities for Children	Upgrade/Renovate Parks Advertise Parks	
Mid Term 3-5 Years	Splash Pad/Amenities for Children		
Long Term 5-10 Years			

Tennessee Ridge

	Highest Priorities	Priorities	Important
Short Term 1-3 Years	<p>Improved Facilities >Playgrounds >New Park >Community Center</p> <p>Signage/Advertise Amenities</p> <p>Expand Campground</p>		
Mid Term 3-5 Years	<p>Improved Facilities</p> <p>Trails & Greenways</p>	<p>Splashpad</p> <p>Amenities for Children & Youth</p> <p>Skate Park</p>	
Long Term 5-10 Years	<p>Improved Facilities</p>	<p>Amenities for Adults and Seniors</p>	

Findings, Themes & Recommendations

Community Center

The top Park and Recreation priority in all of the input meetings was a full-service community center. In the meeting with the 38 students at Houston County High School, they expressed the need for a safe and fun place to gather with friends. Preferably a destination that had a variety of opportunities for them and their friends. However, a center should be designed, staffed and programmed to offer services for all of the community, regardless of their age, race or national origin. It should not only offer athletic opportunities, but programs for toddlers to seniors, arts and crafts, social, educational, do-it-yourself, fitness, and self-improvement, to name a few areas. Such a facility is not inexpensive to build, staff or operate, so a joint effort should be made between the three Houston County government entities. Fortunately, the two main population bases in the County are only six miles apart, so focus could be made to support one full-service community center.

Parks Improvements and Makeovers

In addition to maintenance, all of the parks need improvements, repairs and the addition of new, current, amenities and equipment. There are opportunities to add splash pads, dog parks, skate parks, new playground equipment, and many other activities that would attract park visitors and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Houston County. Public Input meetings and surveys revealed families, teens, children and seniors are looking for places and opportunities for improved leisure

Community Parks in Unserved Areas

The areas around Erin and Tennessee afford multiple park and recreation opportunities for the community. However, there are not any parks in the eastern portion of Houston County. The surveys also brought to light additional park amenities that are needed in the far western area as well. An effort should be made to identify the specific needs in these areas and develop a plan to meet the needs of these residents. Park properties should be identified and acquired if possible. State grant dollars are available for the purchase of park land.

Erin-Tennessee Ridge-Houston County Parks and Recreation Director

Park Maintenance

Houston County revealed all need better attention to park maintenance and accepted park standards. A comprehensive inspection of all the government owned parks in Houston County was made. Some were better than others, all of the parks have

maintenance, ADA, safety and access issues. Whether it is developed by each government entity or a collaboration of the three, a comprehensive maintenance plan should be developed and implemented to provide safe, operable and current park amenities to park users. There could be economic benefits to a partnership in some areas to reduce duplication of equipment as well as other areas, and would be worth looking at for Houston County, Erin and Tennessee ridge.

There are also statewide maintenance workshops available for staff to learn the latest methods in maintaining park facilities as well as acceptable, professional standards for Parks and Recreation.

Maximizing and Leveraging Partnerships

Houston County is unique in that it has several non-government organizations and clubs who assist in providing facilities and programs for the entire community. Rotary Park is an incredible example of a civic club who has gone above and beyond to provide park state of the art facilities for the citizens of Houston County and beyond. Dixie Youth and Houston County Athletic Association provide programs as well. These efforts improve the opportunities for the community and assist the government by raising funds and providing volunteers to deliver services.

Efforts should be made to maximize funding by partnering with any of the government entities to use funds raise to receive matching and even 20/80 State grants.

Park and Recreation Commision /Board/Committee

The Houston County Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan details many ideas to improve leisure services for the county and the surrounding area. One of the challenges of communities like Houston County, Erin and Tennessee Ridge, is to move the details of the plan forward in the present and future in a sustainable manner.

An Advisory Park and Recreation Board or Committee appointed by the BMA could serve as a consistent catalyst to implement the plan. There are hundreds of park boards and committees in Tennessee which have proved to be successful and invaluable for their Communities.

Park Boards can be as small as five or seven members or larger and are allowed as per T.C.A. 11-24-05. The boards usually have staggered, rotating terms and work closely under the direction of the BMA. Most park and recreation boards have a designated alderman as a voting or advisory member of the board. TDEC-RRD offers park board training through their PARTAS consultants. PARTAS has helped develop a similar park board in Lake County, that includes the county, and the cities of Tiptonville and Ridgely. A sample of responsibilities of a Parks and Recreation Board in Houston county could include, but not be limited to:

- Development of Rules and Policies to be submitted to and approved by the BMA.

- Develop an Annual Report of the Status of Parks and Recreation for Houston County.
- Serve as or recruit Park Ambassadors to assist with parks and programs.
- Develop and assist in implementing Special Events, Activities, Programs and activities in the parks and facilities.
- Develop an adoption program to pay for selected items to enhance and improve parks.
- Recruit and attract Park Grants, Sponsors for Special Events, Activities, Programs and Events in the parks.
- Continually maintain, monitor and update the 2024 Parks and recreation Systemwide plan.
- Sponsor Park Improvement days and activities.
- Serve as a conduit to the community to continue and ensure the parks serve the needs of the citizens and the community.
- Serve as ambassadors of parks in Houston County and promote park events and activities through the County website, Facebook or other public communication venues.

Funding

Houston County Comprehensive Trail System

One of the highest needs for citizens across the state and country are safe, accessible trails, greenways or greenbelts near their home where they can walk with friends or by themselves on a frequent basis. The cities of Erin and Tennessee Ridge are blessed to have walking trails, but many other areas of the county are void of these opportunities. Connectivity is a major theme across the country and there are opportunities within Houston County to develop a plan that would not only connect existing trails but provide new opportunities for underserved areas. The park board of a special committee could be formed to look at the possibilities that exist in the county and work with government entities to develop a long range plan for trail development. Recreation Trail Grants (20%-80%) are available through TDEC for development of trails and greenways.

Narrative/pictures added below

Activities and Programs

Funding

Possible Land

