

Shield Park

Project Narrative

Location: 33rd Street & Church Street, Galveston, TX 77550 - District 1

Community Vision: Park Improvements that create an outdoor event space, new sport courts (basketball and small games), and new play area.

Next Steps: Environmental Assessment - Phase 1 & Phase 2 Assessments

IDC Requested Amount: \$10,000

Currently there is a divide between “natural” and urban spaces on the island: Vision Galveston wants to bring nature and the city together. This means improved health for communities, improved resilience against issues like flooding and heat, and improved opportunities to attract new residents with a set of high-quality and well designed green spaces that provide a chance to connect with nature and serve as “community backyards”. Vision Galveston is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that connects the vision for Galveston to the resources that make them happen. Vision Galveston envisions a community defined by diverse voices, collaborative growth and exceptional way of life for all.

During the community engagement efforts that resulted in the Vision Galveston Comprehensive Report, one of the main guiding principles was to make Galveston a “historic walkable Gulf Coast City embedded in nature.” The effort also included an assessment of existing park space which found both Shield and Jones Park having low rankings in terms of condition and quality of space.

Shield park, located in District 1 at 33rd and Church Street is in a historically industrial area of Galveston. The Falstaff Brewing Company is directly west of the park, Texas Gas Service is north, to the East is the City of Galveston’s fleet facility, and to the south are single family houses. There has not been much investment in the park or the amenities located there. Currently Shield Park has three basketball courts, as well as two rectangular concrete pads. One of these concrete pads has four-square paint striping. An unused concrete pad sits at the southwest corner of the park and is the foundation of the previously demolished restroom. There are two small parking areas in the park.

The future Shield Park will be a place for community members to gather with friends and family, play, and enjoy movies in the park and other outdoor entertainment. It balances cultural programming with sports courts and family-oriented playgrounds with the ecological benefits of rain gardens, native planting beds, and large shade trees. One of the major design moves is the creation of a central “event lawn” facing a stage on the west side of the park. This lawn slopes up from west to east, creating a hilled berm on the northeast side of the park. This hill provides the change in elevation for a large slide, as well as buffers the park from a children’s Nature Play area at the northeast side of the park. Two basketball courts and an outdoor game table plaza are located south of the play area, and a restroom facility is between these two locations. The park also captures and infiltrates all rainfall that falls onto the park via

rain gardens and other native planting areas and pollinator gardens. Large shade trees provide relief from Galveston's hot summer heat.

There is evidence of historic contamination at Shield Park. The first step of our project (and work proposed in this IDC funding request) includes environmental assessment work at Shield Park; Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental assessment performed by Watearth environmental engineering and water resources firm. This step will determine what can or cannot be proposed for the park improvements and what actions should be taken to remediate the conditions, if any.

Galveston is a great city for investing in open space and parks.

Fiscal Impact

Galveston is a great city for investing in open space and parks. Park systems create "hedonic value" for businesses and private properties. This value add is derived from the ability of parks to increase foot traffic to nearby businesses and create attractive environments that increase the location's desirability. Increased sales, property values, and jobs expand the tax base and serve as a boost to the local economy (Trust for Public Land 2009). Many studies find significant increases— up to 40 percent— in the value of properties adjacent to parks and open space (Urban Land Institute 2018). For Shield Park in particular, the area is seeing new development in the surrounding industrial parcels and will be changing over the next few years. Park investments support that growth while at the same time providing amenities to the neighborhood(s) to the south of the park.

Community Impact

Competitive Impact

Jones Park

Project Narrative

Location: 71st Street & Jones Drive, Galveston, TX 77551 - District 5

Community Vision: Park Improvements that mitigates flooding, creates new sport court (basketball), and new play area.

Next Steps: Schematic Design to produce Opinion of Probable Construction Costs (OPCC)

IDC Requested Amount: \$25,000

Currently there is a divide between “natural” and urban spaces on the island: Vision Galveston wants to bring nature and the city together. This means improved health for communities, improved resilience against issues like flooding and heat, and improved opportunities to attract new residents with a set of high-quality and well designed green spaces that provide a chance to connect with nature and serve as “community backyards”. Vision Galveston is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that connects the vision for Galveston to the resources that make them happen. Vision Galveston envisions a community defined by diverse voices, collaborative growth and exceptional way of life for all.

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Jones Park is a neighborhood park with playgrounds, swing sets, and covered picnic tables; many of these amenities are broken and or have been removed. It frequently floods and holds ponded water after rainfalls, and is unusable by the community when it is in this condition. This project includes schematic design work for the Park including an opinion of probable construction costs. The schematic design work will be performed by Asakura Robinson providing landscape architecture services, and Watearth providing stormwater management modeling and design.

The future Jones Park will bring pedestrians into the park via a curving, sweeping pathway that provides a view and opportunity to step into a wetland "bioretention pond" that features many of Galveston's native plants. This feature, along with its adjacent bioswale, will infiltrate and mitigate flooding onsite. The basketball court, which is paved with pervious paving, also infiltrates all water that hits its surface. Families that visit the park may picnic on the sloped lawn, relax at a picnic table, choose from a variety of swings at the "swing gallery," or play at a playground at the park's northwest corner. Tall vegetation borders the north, east, and south side of the park, protecting visitors from traffic. Parking, along with a bus drop-off, is available off of 71st St.

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