

Nature Trail Park Hondo, Medina County

The City of Hondo applied for grant assistance from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to develop 20 acres of City-owned non-parkland as the Nature Trail and Park located in the north area of the City, at the corner of Castro Avenue and FM 462.

The proposed development includes a 5.0-acre wetland/open space dedication, 1.0-mile trail, playground, 2 gazebos, open play field, 10 picnic tables, 12 benches, 2 observation decks, wetlands garden, bird habitat, xeriscape demonstration garden, interpretive signs, irrigation, and project signs.

The local match of \$180,988 (matching funds requested from Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission) consists of City funds, the value of the City-owned non-parkland, and private donations of cash, labor, equipment, and materials.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission staff recommended support of the project. The City was notified via a letter from Tim Hogsett, CPRP, Director of Recreation Grants Branch, that the City's application for grant assistance was scheduled for review at their public hearing on Thursday, January 26, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. at Department Headquarters in Austin.

Outdoor Recreation Grants are made available from the Texas Recreation and Parks Account and the Land and Water Conservation Fund to Texas local governments for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation sites. As of July 31, 2005, Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission received 22 eligible applications requesting \$8,772,302 in matching fund assistance. Their staff recommended support for six projects for \$2,032,323 with the City of Hondo being one of the six projects recommended. Based on site visits and analyses, the projects were ranked in descending order of priority : (1) El Cenizo Municipal Park with a score of 113 points requesting \$245,895; (2) Taylor East Williamson County Park with a score of 107 points requesting \$500,000; (3) Harlingen Pendleton Park with a score of 103 points requesting \$500,000; (4) Belton Harris Park with a score of 102 points requesting \$269,579; (5) Hondo Nature Trail and Park with a score of 100 points requesting \$180,988; and (6) Odessa McKinney Park with a score of 100 points requesting \$500,000.

Our community is fortunate to have the Garden Club with a vision and a most supportive City Council and citizens who were instrumental in the commitment of matching funds to move this project forward.
