

HOUMA-TERREBONNE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Task Force on Recreation

August 2017 Recommendations

ISSUE

The Bayou Country Sports Park (BCSP) is a Terrebonne Parish economic development and quality of life project. Funding from the State of Louisiana will become more difficult to obtain in our current economic climate. Terrebonne Parish has no dedicated funding stream for construction or annual maintenance. Completion of Phase 1 is potentially years away and an additional multi-million-dollar sports park on the Airbase in East Houma has been proposed.

MISSION

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce (HTCC) formed this task force with cooperation from other civic organizations in order to examine the issues that have led to the current situation, assist the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG) and its Recreation Districts in securing available funds, to investigate alternative methods that will lead to the expedited completion of both sports parks, and to assist in developing long-term sustainability of recreational activities in Terrebonne.

GOAL

To unite our community behind recreational opportunities that build a stronger Terrebonne.

Executive Summary

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce (HTCC) Task Force on Recreation has been meeting for several months after it became apparent that the Bayou Country Sports Park (BCSP) was not progressing as planned due in part to the state and local economy. The following is a summary of the Task Force on Recreation's findings and recommendations:

1. HTCC sees a need for improving recreation in Terrebonne Parish for our community's health, wellbeing, and quality of life;
2. HTCC is in support of the BCSP and the proposed East Houma Airbase Complex for both community quality of life as well as economic development opportunities in sports tourism;
3. HTCC advocates that the TPCG use its authority under the law to gain financial oversight and management of the BCSP and the proposed East Houma Airbase Park. And thus, these parish-wide Community Parks should be operated and maintained by TPCG to benefit all residents of the parish.
4. Considering budgetary constraints, HTCC recommends that TPCG and the BCSP examine the Master Plan and design to determine if cost savings can be realized with more appropriate and reasonable design standards.
5. HTCC offers parish leaders, all recreation districts, and our state representatives support in acquiring any and all outside funding for the improvement of parish recreation;
6. HTCC, through its Task Force on Recreation, has examined the current millages collected for recreation across Terrebonne Parish and compared them to other Parishes of similar population. Based on the results of this analysis, HTCC currently cannot support any additional tax proposals for recreation;
7. HTCC calls on TPCG and all recreation districts to provide operations and maintenance estimates on any proposed project before approval;
8. HTCC calls for greater transparency and accountability for the use of public funds in the recreation districts through public notices for meetings and improved accounting procedures;
9. HTCC sees a need to educate the taxpayers of Terrebonne regarding the current taxes and system in place;
10. HTCC sees the need to promote greater efficiency and productivity within the Terrebonne Recreation System.
11. HTCC would like to promote greater public participation within the recreation districts by having a uniform board size for each.
12. HTCC sees the need for a citizen board or foundation to assist parish officials with the building, promotion, and operations of our recreational opportunities.