



## GENE GREEN BELTWAY 8 PARK Presentation Abstract

The Gene Green Beltway 8 Park presentation will focus on Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and water conservation measures employed within the park including:

1. Dual use of the existing HCFCD N-500 detention basin for park facilities.
2. Bio-swales for storm water filtration and dissipation within the 90 car parking lot.
3. Meander stream for storm water filtration and dissipation of outfall from the adjacent Liberty Lakes subdivision and the park facilities through the detention basin to Carpenter's Bayou.
4. Meander swales and crushed concrete filter berms at other drainage outfalls to the existing basin.
5. Mechanical water re-circulation system for the Splash Park facility.
6. Other low water fixtures within the Multi-Purpose Bldg.
7. Minimizing irrigation water for native plantings.

### A brief project summary is provided below for context and general information:

**Owner:** Harris County Precinct Two Parks Department encompasses over 4000 acres of parks within the eastern portion of Harris County. Commissioner Sylvia R. Garcia has maintained an active role in the park's design and implementation.

**Process:** The initiation of Gene Green Beltway 8 Park started in 1997 when Harris County Precinct Two entered into a multiple-use park partnership with the Harris County Flood Control District. An Inter-local Agreement was executed in which the 173 Acre Carpenter's Bayou Regional Detention Basin-N-500 was allowed to include recreational facilities. To further facilitate park development, Harris County Precinct Two purchased 57- acres of land adjacent to the detention basin for additional park land. In December of 2003, a steering committee was created to assist in developing a Park Master Plan. The committee consisted of community leaders, park staff, a local little league board president, a local justice of the peace, a leader of a running club, the president of the North Channel Chamber of Commerce and design consultants Asakura Robinson Company LCC. On February 5, 2005 a public meeting was held at the Galena Park ISD administration building. The park steering committee personally invited many members from local Community Centers, Skateboard, BMX, Little league, Soccer, Football, Tennis, Running, School, and Church groups. The main focus of the public meeting was to gain community input on desired elements for the park. All facilities included in the final design were evaluated and ranked highly during the public participation and Steering Committee meetings. On January 11, 2008 Commissioners Court approved the official naming, Gene Green Beltway 8 Park in recognition of Congressman Greens' commitment to public service. Gene Green served as a Texas State Representative from 1973 to 1985, Texas State Senator from 1985 to 1993, and in 1993 was elected to serve in the United States Congress representing Texas in the 29<sup>th</sup> District .

**Facilities:** The Park's core facilities include a multi-purpose restroom/meeting space building, an extensive skate park, BMX dirt track, rolling wall, adventure playground, splashpark, amphitheater, basketball courts, tennis courts, bar-b-q pits, picnic tables, low-water plantings and parking. The park is particularly designed as a safe-haven for teenagers; the "lost population", who are generally overlooked in parks design. The BMX track is another first for Harris County and is in the process of becoming a sanctioned tournament course through the American Bicycle Association (ABA). Sports fields include soccer, football, softball fields and event overflow parking. A link to a future Harris County Regional Trail System provides inter-modal access to the park and encourages pedestrian and bicycle activity within the park.

**Education:** An educational theme of "Adventure in Motion" is featured throughout the park. The laws of physics, exhibited by BMX bikes, skateboards, zip-lines and adventure play equipment are featured via signage within the park. The reverse side of the sign illustrates sustainable design features including bio-swales, gabion walls and meandering streams.

**Beauty and Preservation:** The park strives to preserve existing natural areas, retain existing detention capacity, protect and promote wildlife and provides a visually beautiful park for visitors. Through the US Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification process, the park design incorporates sustainable construction methods, materials, energy and water efficiency and reduces life-cycle maintenance costs. This LEED Silver application is a first for Harris County and is anticipated for completion in 2009. Existing Carpenter Bayou banks, wetlands and forested areas are preserved within the park. These areas feature trails through drainage-ways, detention areas and native habitats. Areas are planted with native prairie grasses, wildflowers and riparian plants to add native vegetative beauty.

**Water Quality:** Various water filtration methods provide mitigation for onsite and offsite storm water outfall to the existing basin and to Carpenter's Bayou. The native prairie grass plantings, recycled-concrete riprap berms, meandering outfall stream alignment with native bank vegetation and bio-swales are among the storm-water filtering techniques employed.

**Waste Management:** Gene Green Beltway 8 Park is currently being evaluated as a potential LEED Silver building and park site. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program (LEED) is an internationally recognized standard for earth friendly design and construction sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council. This Park is the first project developed by Harris County to be registered for LEED certification. Earth friendly features include low water and electricity use fixtures, recycled building materials, native plants and innovative storm water management. As part of the LEED Certification process, over 90% of all construction waste generated by this project was recycled and diverted from area landfills. The LEED outline also requires the building implement a thorough recycling program for glass, paper, cardboard, plastic and metal. Many materials used within the park design include recycled materials such as the recycled crushed concrete seen in the gabion benches, ramps, rolling wall and amphitheatre.

**Budget:** Phase I of Gene Green Beltway 8 Park is a \$5 million project that was primarily funded by Park Fund Bonds passed by Harris County voters in 2001. Some additional funds were provided by Harris County Floodplain mitigation funds for the 300 trees planted on site.

**Future Plans:** After years of detail design and construction we have a large beautiful environmental friendly park that answers to the needs of the community. Harris County Pct Two has committed to maintain this multiple-use park, known as Gene Green Beltway 8 Park. We hope that as funds become available, our recently inaugurated park will continue to grow with the growing needs of our communities.

**Awards:** 2008 Mayor's Proud Partner Award, Keep Houston Beautiful  
2006 Houston-Galveston Area Council's Parks and Natural Areas Best Practices Honor Award, Planning category

**GENE GREEN BELTWAY 8 PARK**

**GRAND OPENING 8-8-08**



**“Splash Park on a Hot August Day”**

**GENE GREEN BELTWAY 8 PARK**

**GRAND OPENING 8-8-08**



**Opening Ceremony at the Amphitheatre**

**GENE GREEN BELTWAY 8 PARK**

**GRAND OPENING 8-8-08**



**Multi-Purpose Building**

**GENE GREEN BELTWAY 8 PARK**

**GRAND OPENING 8-8-08**



**Fireworks!**