



LONE STAR LEGACY PARK CLASS OF 2022

HENDERSON PARK - BRENHAM
FORMERLY KNOWN AS NORTH END PARK



Lone Star Legacy Park

CLASS OF 2022 APPLICATION

Name of Park: _____

Year Park Established: _____ Agency Director: _____

Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____

Zip: _____ Email: _____

Signature of Agency Director: _____

1. Please describe the following: establishment date; information regarding the people or organizations who helped to found the park; reasons behind the parks creation.

2. Describe the park's original acreage, amenities and design as well as the current acreage and site facilities.

Lone Star Legacy Park

CLASS OF 2022 APPLICATION

3. Describe what makes this park unique to your community including site features, traditions, historic activities, and/or cultural topics.

4. Describe the natural characteristics within the park and efforts taken to conserve the natural environment.

5. Explain if the park played a significant role in the cultural or heritage development or preservation within the community.

Lone Star Legacy Park
CLASS OF 2022 APPLICATION

9. Please list previous awards given to park.

10. Please provide a summary of park usage and average annual attendance.

Lone Star Legacy Park

CLASS OF 2022 APPLICATION

Attachments:

1. **Attach letters of verification for historic designation** if applicable.
Texas Historic Commission or Local Historic Commission if locally designated landmark

2. **6-10 digital (jpeg) photos are required with the submission** that document park history including unique, natural and historic features of the park. A video representing the same is allowed; however, photos will still be required. Submit photos electronically.

3. **Include letters of support from at least three of the following:**
 - Resident/Park User
 - City Manager
 - Mayor/Commissioner
 - Park Advisory Board Member
 - Local Civic Club or Organization with ties to the Park
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local Historic Commission
 - Academic with specialization in landscape architecture, history, natural resources, etc.

4. **Include a copy of park site plan or master plan if available.**

5. **Include a narrative summary of 600 words or less for the award banner and website submission.**

6. **Include a timeline of park history** noting major milestones, historic events, renovations & improvements, or natural disasters regarding the park (limit one page).
Applications are due by Friday, December 17, 2021 or consideration.

Continued – #3 Baseball games at North End Park were another huge draw. A 1934 ad beamed that North End Park would host two days of the Negro World Series, played between the Austin Black Senators and Van Dyke’s House of David Team from Sioux City, Iowa. City teams frequently used names, such as the Tigers (Brenham, East End, La Grange, Smithville, Eagle Lake, Bellville, Texas City), Bears (Taylor, Wharton, Somerville), Dr. Pepper Bears (Bryan), Black Cats (Giddings, Caldwell, Navasota, Clay). Some were simply descriptive, such as the Southern Pacific Shop team. Others were unique, such as the Taylor Grand Prize, Southern Steamshippers, Galveston Sandcrabs, Houston Black Buffs, the Luling Gushers.

By the 1920s, Juneteenth Celebrations were an annual event coordinated by the Laboring Men’s Club and later the Businessman’s Club. A parade would precede the Celebrations through the business district with colorful floats and bands arriving at the park grounds for the baseball games, BBQ dinners, sometimes a carnival, and always a band with dances. Because they were highly anticipated, events would be rescheduled if rained out. In the 1920s and early 1930s, there was still a tradition of electing a Goddess of Liberty, who rode in the parade in a float decorated by flowers and accompanied by an attendant during the parade. By 1939 the Goddess of Liberty role evolved into the coronation of a Queen of Springtime.

A “Colored County Fair” was held at the park in early October. These were also preceded by a parade and accompanied by rodeos, ball games, bands, and dances. An advertisement for the fair from 1930 boasted the rodeo and carnival, which went on for a week, was “bigger and better than ever...featuring 7 Shows, 4 Rides, 200 People, and 25 Novelty Concessions,” with a Saturday afternoon matinee for all school children.” In 1934 county schools could participate for best school exhibit, stunt, and character impersonation. Home and livestock prizes were awarded for best jelly, thrift exhibit, quilt, bedspread, sewing, artwork, furniture, model house, poultry, turkeys, hogs, and horses.

The advent of the Second World War affected activities at the park. Although in his fifties, Henderson himself registered with the draft board, though he was never called in. He did his part for the war effort, coordinating activities among the Black business community for the Red Cross and acting as an agent for War Bond sales, including fundraising held at the park itself. At a single event in 1944, \$4000 of bonds were sold by auction with items contributed by Black stores. Following the war, a barrack was erected at North End Park in 1946 to supply housing for four families of Black war veterans mustered out of service. During the Juneteenth celebrations in 1948, Black veterans who had served in the war were presented the World War II Victory Medal.

A formal dedication of Henderson Park in memory of Ed Henderson was memorialized in 1994 with a plaque that sits at the entrance to Henderson Park. Henderson Park is located just blocks away from historic Downtown Brenham across the street from Fireman’s Park. This 22-acre park has played a significant role in Brenham history and is part of the 2.84-mile Hike n’ Bike Trail that runs through several adjoining parks. The kitchen and the fields at Henderson Park can be rented for parties, events, and tournaments.

PRINT ADS FOR SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT



VISIT

ED HENDERSON'S

Colored Park

Where All The Celebrations Are Held

END OF MARKET ST.

BASE BALL

PICNIC GROUNDS

CAFE

COLD DRINKS

MUSIC

Open Day and

"Bring the whole family and
enjoy yourself."

BASE BALL
NEGRO WORLD SERIES
2 DAYS
 Thurs. Fri. Nov. 1—2

Van Dyke's House of David Team
 Of Sioux City, Iowa.
 —vs.—
 Austin Black Senators

— At —
NORTH END PARK
 Brenham, Texas.

Admission 25c
 Children 10c
 Game Time 3:30
 Each Day

Special Reservations
 for Whites.

Brenham Daily Banner, November 1-2, 1934

Brenham Banner Press,
 August 25, 1933 p3

HELLO EVERYBODY
 Don Albert And His
 10 Pals
 14 In All
 America's Greatest Swing
 Orchestra
 Come enjoy yourself.
NORTH END PARK
FRIDAY, AUG. 25
 Special Seats for Whites

BASE BALL
 NORTH END PARK
 SUNDAY, AUGUST 27
 CALDWELL BLACK CATS
 Vs.
 BRENHAM BLACK LIONS
 Exhibition Game
 Game Called at 4:30
 Special Seats for Whites

BASE BALL
 NORTH END PARK
 SUNDAY, SEPT. 3RD
 BELLVILE TIGERS
 Vs.
 BRENHAM BLACK LIONS
 Exhibition Game
 Game Called at 4:30
 Special Seats for Whites

Brenham Banner Press, September 1, 1933 p3

Basket Ball
 Giddings, Somerville, Caldwell
 and Navasota Colored High
 Schools will play at

NORTH END PARK
February 22, 1926

Admission 35—15c
 Special Seats for White

SINGING CONTEST
 Between the Four Schools from
 7 to 9 P. M.

BIG CHARLESTON BALL
 FROM 2—TILL 4

Brenham Daily Banner Press, February 17, 1926 p2

BOXING
 36 Rounds—36 Rounds
 At **NORTH END PARK**
 Monday Nite, May 25
MAIN EVENTS
 KID KELLY of Houston
 Vs.
 BABY JACK of Galveston
 3 Preliminary Bouts, 4 Rounds
 Each
BATTLE ROYAL
 Special seats for whites.

Brenham Daily Banner, May 25, 1936

BIG SHOW
At
NORTH END PARK
 Ida Cox from New York
 Company of Twenty
FRIDAY NITE
NOV. 17th.
 Special seats for whites

Brenham Banner Press, November 16, p4

Brenham Banner Press, October 2, 1933 p3

HELLO
EVERYBODY!
North End Park
Wed., Oct. 4
DON ALBERT
 and his
FOURTEEN PALS
 One of the Greatest Orchestras
 in America
 Special Seats for Whites

Brenham Banner Press,
 April 10, 1931, p4

BASEBALL
 North End Park
SUNDAY, SEPT. 17
 CLAY CATS
 Vs.
BREHAM BLACK LIONS
 Exhibition Game
 Game Called at 4:30
 Special Seats For Whites

Brenham Banner Press, August 16, 1933 p3

BASEBALL!
 Giddings Black Cats
 VS.
 Black Lions
 AT
NORTH END PARK
Sunday, April 27
 Special Seats for White
 People
3:30 P. M.
 Everybody Invited

Brenham Banner Press, April 26, 1930, p3

BASE - BALL
 Galveston Sandcrabs
 VS.
 Brenham Lions
 At
North End Park
Sun. April 12th and
Mon. 13th
ADM. 35c
 Game called at 3:30 o'clock

S. P. PICNIC

TUESDAY, JULY 21
NORTH END PARK

BRENHAM
FREE BARBECUE
BASEBALL - DANCE

Brenham Lions
Vs.
Morgan Line Club
Of Houston
Game Called at 3 p. m.
Section Reserved for Whites

BOXING

North End Park Gym
BRENHAM

Monday, Night, Feb. 10th.
8:00 O'CLOCK

Tiger Barns vs Kid Sampson
Houston Brenham
10 ROUNDS

Cyclone Davis v. Kid Abbs
Columbus Brenham
8 ROUNDS

Battle Royal
4 OTHER THREE ROUND
PRELIMINARIES

Special Seats for Whites

Brenham Daily Banner, February 10, 1936

Brenham Daily Banner, September 28-October 2, 1937

**BIG CARNIVAL
ATTRACTIONS
AT
North End Park
RIO GRANDE SHOWS**

**Beginning TUESDAY NITE,
Sept. 28th and lasting until
Sat. Nite, Oct. 2nd.**

The Public Is Invited.

**AT
North End Park
Brenham, Texas
Thanksgiving Nite
Thursday
November 29**

**RHAPSODY IN TAN
All Colored Musical
Comedy**

**40—PEOPLE—40
SINGERS - DANCERS
COMEDIANS**

**16 Fast Stepping Girls
Doors Open 6:30 P. M.
Seats Reserved for Whites
Admission 25c and 35c.**

ONE NIGHT ONLY

Special Seats for Whites—50c

MONDAY, NOV. 19

WILLIE CRISP

**HIS PIANO AND HIS RECORDING
ORCHESTRA**

From New York

NORTH END PARK

Page 12

Brenham Daily Banner, November 29, 1934

Brenham Daily Banner, November 19, 1945

Coming to Brenham
APRIL 29
At
North End Park
ERNIE FIELDS
and ORCHESTRA

Direct from New York. An all colored revue rated with Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, Chick Webb and Andy Kirk the country's foremost swing Bands.

Everybody Cordially Invited!

Brenham Banner Press, c.1930s

HELLO EVERYBODY!
CHESTER BOONE
and his
GREATER ORCHESTRA
of Houston, Texas
Will Entertain You
MON. NIGHT, DEC. 11TH
With A BIG Dance

At The
NORTH END PARK
Brenham, Texas

Special Seats for Whites

Brenham Banner Press, December 9, p4

Leo Davis
 AND HIS ORCHESTRA
11 Colored Musicians 11
 THE TOAST OF
HOLLYWOOD
 Direct from the Famous
Club Montmartre
 Radio Artists
N. B. C. and C. B. S.
 Stations
 Appearing

Tues., Mar. 27, 1934
 BRENHAM
 AT NORTH END PARK
 ADMISSION 50c
 Special Reservations for Whites

Brenham Daily Banner, March 26, 1934 p2

Hurt Presents
Gertrude Calloway
 And Her
Twelve Blue Devils
 Direct from St. Louis
THE BRONZE BOMBSHELL
 See her truck—hear her sing—
 Watch her direct!
 At The
NORTH END PARK
Friday Night, Nov. 29
 Reservations For Whites

Brenham Daily Banner, November 29, 1936

NORTH END PARK
MON. MARCH 19
 L. C. Toland's
CHOCOLATE
RHYTHM

That Red Hot Black and Tan
 Revue direct from Harlem, just
 played "Days of '49" for white
 Elks.

With Their
RED HOT ORCHESTRA
ONE NIGHT ONLY

Admission—10 and 25c
 Doors Open 7:15 P. M.

SEATS FOR WHITES
Big Dance After Show

Brenham Daily Banner, March 15, 1934 p3

LOOK! FUN! MUSIC!

The Alamo Shows and Rodeo No. 2
*Bigger And Better Than Ever Will Exhibit
 In Brenham, Texas*

All Next Week
 Auspices Washington Co. COLORED Fair Assn.

BEGINNING
Monday Sept. 29
 Closing Saturday October 4

FEATURING
 7 Shows 4 Rides
 200 People 25 Novelty Concessions

Also Saturday Afternoon Matinee For All School Children, All Rides and Shows Will Be Five Cents To Them During The Hours Between 1 and 6 O'clock. Bring The Kiddies We Like Them.

LOCATION
NORTH END PARK
 No Gate Admission Until Friday

Brenham Banner Press, September 27, 1930 p4

Washington County
COLORED FAIR
 Big Street Carnival
 Opens
Thursday Night
OCTOBER 5TH

FRIDAY — Baseball, Austin Black Senators vs. Brenham Black Lions. Last game of season. Admission 35c. Special seats for whites.

DANCE—Friday and Saturday nights Jack Ransom and his orchestra. Special seats for whites.

Brenham Banner Press, October 3, 1933, p4

**FALL FESTIVAL
NORTH END PARK
FRIDAY and SATURDAY
OCTOBER 11 AND 12
POULTRY and EGG SHOW**

Exhibition of Household Articles and Clothing made
from Sack Material sponsored by Colored County
Home Demonstration Council.

MOTION PICTURES TAKEN AT 2:30 P. M.

F O O T B A L L

Pickard High vs. Mexia, 3:30 p. m.

**CARNIVAL ATTRACTIONS
BIG DANCE EACH NIGHT
OUR WHITE FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO
VIEW EXHIBITS.**

Brenham Daily Banner, October 11-12, 1946

BASEBALL

Rosenburg Cubs
vs.
Brenham Black Lions

AT NORTH END PARK

Sunday, May 4th

Special Seats for White
People

3:30 P. M.

EVERYBODY INVITED

Brenham Banner Press, May 2, 1930 p5

BIG DANCE
NORTH END PARK
FRIDAY NIGHT
JUNE 1ST

Music by
Boots And His Buddies
Great Orchestra of
San Antonio

Brenham Daily Banner, June 1 1934

DANCE

"The Lucky 13" Presents
Boots & His Buddies
 Texas Favorite Orchestra
At The
NORTH END PARK
Mon. Nite, May 4th

Latest Victor Recordings—
 How Long, How Long, Vamp,
 Swing, Coquette, Marie, Wild
 Cherry, by Boots and His Bud-
 dies Orchestra.

ADMISSION 45c
 Special reservation for whites.

Brenham Daily Banner, May 4, 1936

LET'S GO!!

PEOPLE'S
STREET FAIR
SHOWS

—At—
 WASHINGTON
 COUNTY
 COLORED FAIR
 Week Starting
MONDAY, SEPT. 28
 Red Hot Minstrel
 With 15 People
 Featuring
SUGAR FOOT
GREEN

Giant Riding Devices
 Fun For Everybody
NORTH END PARK

ATTENTION - ATTENTION

**Burdick's Greater
SHOWS**

**BENEFIT ELKS CRIPPLED
& CHILDREN'S FUND**

DUE TO THE FACT THAT A CARNIVAL WILL
APPEAR AT **NORTH END PARK** EARLY IN OC-
TOBER FOR COLORED PEOPLE—THE ELKS
BENEFIT CARNIVAL HAS

CANCELLED Friday
NIGHT FOR COLORED PEOPLE.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE—COME OUT FOR
A BIG TIME AND HELP A GOOD CAUSE.

SCHOOL CHILDREN'S DAY

IS SATURDAY AFTERNOON FROM 2 TO 6 P. M.
AND ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL BE ADMIT-
TED TO THE GROUNDS, FREE.

**COME OUT AFTER THE
FOOTBALL GAME**

Brenham Daily Banner, 1946

LETTERS OF SUPPORT





P.O. Box 2476
Brenham, Texas 77833

December 12, 2021

Dear Lone Star Legacy Park Selection Committee:

It is with great pleasure that we submit this letter in support of nominating the City of Brenham's Henderson Park as a Lone Star Legacy Park.

Henderson Park was known also as 'North End Park.' During the 1880's the 19th of June was held in Brenham at the Henderson Park. The park hosted such legendary musicians as BB King and his famous guitar 'Lucille', and Little Richard. The Black community had notable little league teams playing at Henderson, the Blue Jays and the Red Sox.

During the 1950's and early 1960's Field Day activities were held there. The parade would march downtown and wind up at Henderson Park for the big celebration. There were festival activities including a carnival.

Also located in Henderson Park was a popular teenage spot called "Snakes Place." It was a safe haven for black teenagers.

The Brenham Activist Association proudly support our heritage by nominating Henderson Park as a Lone Star Legacy Park. We hope and pray you will award it the honor we believe it deserves.

Sincerely,

Gloria Wills
President
Brenham Activist Association



Mayor
Milton Y. Tate, Jr.

Council Members
Clint Kolby, Mayor Pro Tem
Shannan Canales
Leah Cook
Atwood C. Kenjura
Adonna Saunders
Albert Wright

Interim City Manager
Carolyn D. Miller

December 16, 2021

Texas Recreation & Park Society
18593 FM 1431
Jonestown, TX 78645

Re: Designation of Henderson Park as a Lone Star Legacy Park

From the Office of Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.

Dear Lone Star Legacy Park Selection Committee:

On behalf of the City of Brenham, I would like to personally nominate Henderson Park for the Texas Recreation and Park Society's 2022 Lone Star Legacy Park program; and express my most sincere support of both Henderson Park and the program. Henderson Park has withstood the test of time and is an iconic fixture within its Brenham neighborhood, and Washington County.

Named after Mr. Ed Henderson, a local entrepreneur and community activist, this 22-acre park has played a significant community role in Brenham history; and was originally farmland. Henderson Park became Brenham's premier gathering park for its African American citizens in the late 1920s and have continued to be "the place to be" for decades. Throughout the years, this familiar meeting place has served as the location for many pivotal moments in Brenham's history including the Colored County Fair, a World War II Victory Medal Veterans' presentation for African American war heroes, and Juneteenth Celebrations. In short, Henderson Park is a place of relaxation, reflection, recreation, celebration, competition, conservation, and preservation.

Henderson Park is a few blocks away from Downtown Brenham; and plays a key role in the City's two-mile Hike and Bike Trail. While the community has changed over the years, this particular park remains a location for people to gather and take advantage of the scenery and varied amenities.

Because of the significance of Henderson Park to Brenham and the surrounding communities, the designation of a Lone Star Legacy Park is one that I and the leadership of this community fully recommend and support. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor

Carolyn D. Miller
Interim City Manager

December 13, 2021

Dear Lone Star Legacy Park Selection Committee,

It is with great honor that I draft this letter of support for Henderson Park to be designated as a Legacy Park in the State of Texas. Henderson Park is the companion park to Fireman's Park which is located directly across the street. Traditionally, Henderson Park was a safe place for the area's black community to come gather and play while Fireman's Park was traditionally a place where white families gathered. Today, these parks know no racial boundaries and children come and play at both parks without any knowledge or awareness of the segregation of the past. Both parks have a rich history, but the story of Henderson Park must be preserved and celebrated lest it be forgotten.

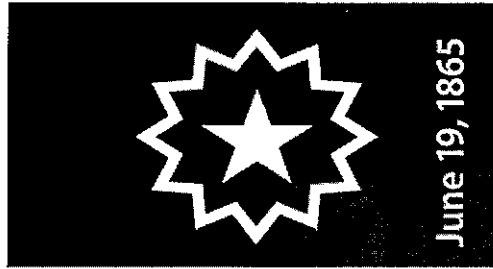
Henderson Park was home to laughter, music, festivals, and baseball over the years, and it is critical that this story is recognized and shared with the community today. Mr. Henderson, a black entrepreneur, donated this land so the black community could come together in a safe place. In recent years, the City of Brenham has made significant investments into the park. Working alongside the Brenham Activist group they have enhanced the amenities of the park and restored areas such as the open pit BBQ, the baseball field and the clubhouse with the goal of preserving the story of Mr. Henderson and the celebrations and activities that took place in Henderson Park. By designating this park as a Legacy Park, future generations will know the rich history of Henderson Park and the role it played in enhancing the quality of life for black community.

Thank you for considering Henderson Park for the Legacy Park designation.

Sincerely,



Wende Ragonis Anderson
CEO & President
Washington County Chamber of Commerce.



**WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL JUNETEENTH ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 2365
BRENHAM, TEXAS 77834**

December 15, 2021

Dear Lone Star Legacy Park Selection Committee:

The Washington County Historical Juneteenth Association is pleased to submit our letter of support for Henderson Park's nomination for the Lone Star Legacy Award. Located in the City of Brenham, the park, originally known as the North End Park is now named Henderson Park. The park's legacy is that it is a place that offered the local community, families, friends, and visitors a central location to enjoy and celebrate various events and annual celebrations.

From a historical perspective, Mr. Henderson sold the land in 1950 to pay off some property liens. Since that time, Henderson's historical vision of social development plays an integral role in preserving the Afro-American heritage. Over decades, the grounds have hosted dances featuring renowned performers, hosted athletic events, and hosted semi-professional baseball teams. In addition, Juneteenth Celebrations and family reunions are tributes to our rich culture since the 1880s.

The Washington County Historical Juneteenth Association was officially established in 1982 with the intent to formalize and organize our annual Juneteenth Celebrations. With the exception of these past two years due to COVID (2020,2021) we have held an annual celebration each year to continue the legacy set forth by Mr. Henderson. Our Juneteenth Celebrations are over two days, starting with a musical performance at the park the night before the parade. Our parade proceeds through downtown Brenham and concludes at the park with another celebration.

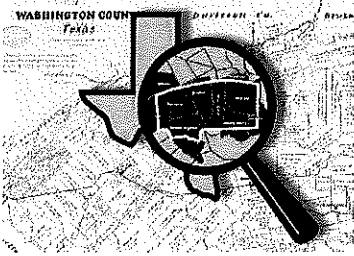
The City of Brenham has made the enhancement of its parks a priority. Henderson Park offers a rich history, prime location, beautiful sceneries, and upgraded amenities. The park itself has contributed to the City's vision of enhancing what they have. The history of Henderson Park helped establish and maintain a quality of life within the surrounding community, as it contributes to the economic and well-being of the community at large. Henderson Park is truly worthy of being nominated and awarded the Lone Star Legacy Park Award. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Betty C. Wilson, President

Washington County Historical Juneteenth Association



Texas Ten Historical Explorers, Inc

P.O. Box 588

Brenham, TX 77834

December 14, 2021

Lone Star Legacy Award Selection Committee:

It is with profound pleasure that we submit this letter of support for the City of Brenham's nomination of Henderson Park for this prestigious award. The oral history of who Ed Henderson was and what he did for the Black community during a time when things were not so inclusive has loomed for decades. It was our pleasure to put it on paper. In the early part of the century, the North End Park as it was known, hosted many celebrities and events. Entertainers such as BB King and Lucille, Little Richard, and Joe Turner to name a few graced the Park's stage to perform for Brenham audiences and is recognized as being the place that hosted baseball tournaments, the Colored Fair, and Juneteenth Celebrations, among many other public events. Henderson Park is a true gem with a rich history and beautiful settings.

Texas Ten Historical Explorers was honored to assist in researching and documenting the many great activities held at the park over the century. To the Black community, Henderson Park was a safe haven, especially through segregation. It is a place where citizens come to hold family reunions, play baseball games, barbecues, hold dances, host teen hangouts, and just about any entertainment one could think of. Mr. Henderson left a legacy by using his role as a leader to ensure his events were open to all people, regardless of color. The City of Brenham has brought Mr. Henderson's vision to fruition by making it a place where residents thoroughly enjoy its amenities.

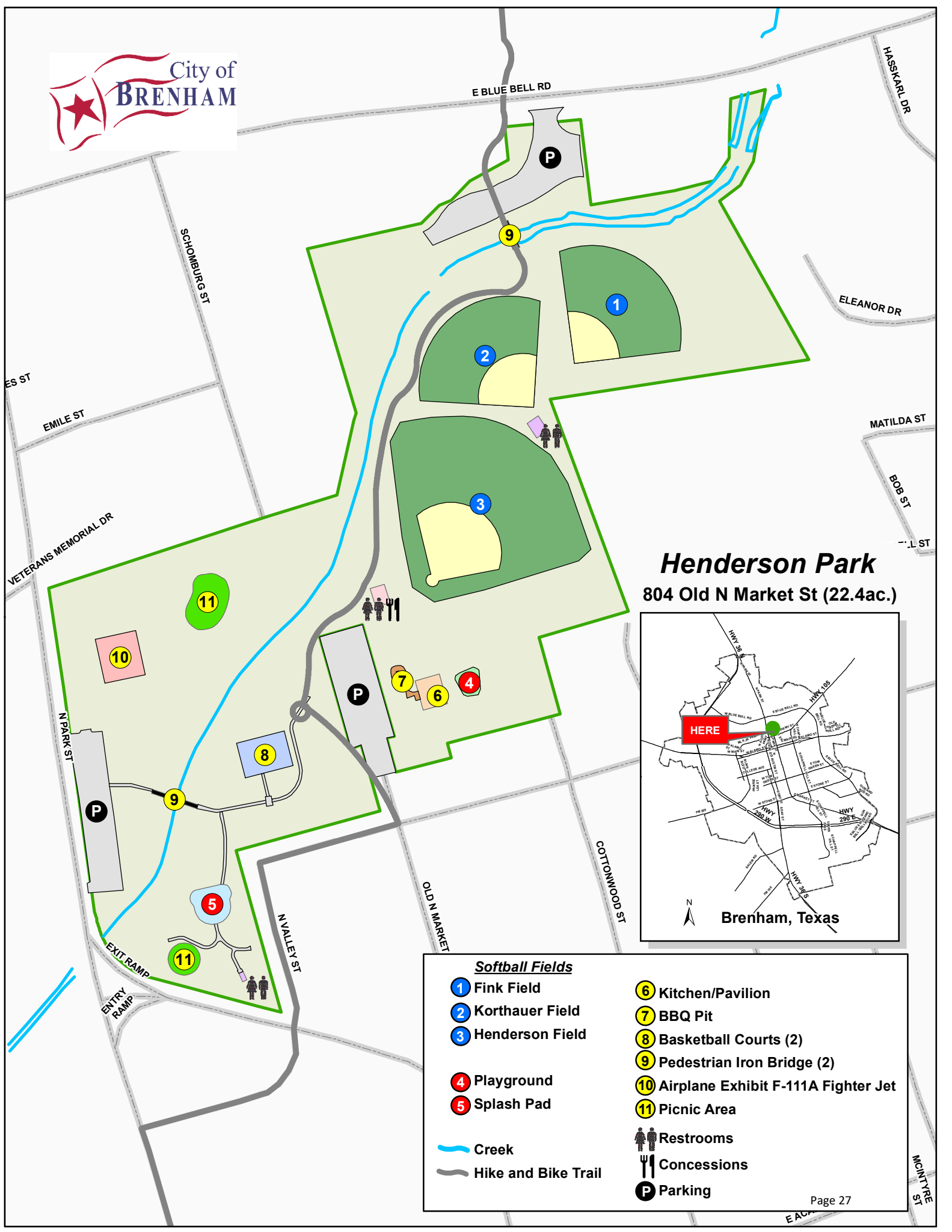
Henderson Park is a staple and a jewel of a success story in Brenham's history, thus well deserving of this Lone Star Legacy Award recognition. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

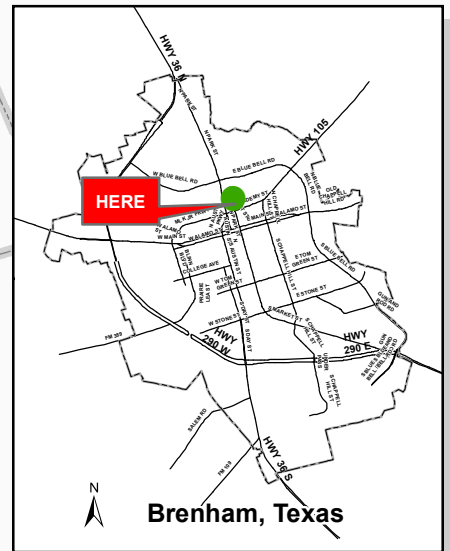
Tina Henderson, PhD
Chair, Texas Ten Historical Explorers, Inc.

PARK SITE PLAN





Henderson Park
804 Old N Market St (22.4ac.)



- Softball Fields**
- 1 Fink Field
 - 2 Korthauer Field
 - 3 Henderson Field
 - 4 Playground
 - 5 Splash Pad
 - 6 Kitchen/Pavilion
 - 7 BBQ Pit
 - 8 Basketball Courts (2)
 - 9 Pedestrian Iron Bridge (2)
 - 10 Airplane Exhibit F-111A Fighter Jet
 - 11 Picnic Area
- Creek
 Hike and Bike Trail
 Restrooms
 Concessions
 Parking

NARRATIVE SUMMARY



Historic Beginnings

The story of North End Park and its transformation into Henderson Park is integral to understanding the Black community in Brenham during the heart of the Jim Crow Era around the turn of the century and to knowing Mr. Ed "Daddy Ed" Henderson, who was an entrepreneur and an avid supporter of his community. Managing several local cafés, he loved to entertain and wanted a place to host grand events and a sports field where Blacks could play safely. Henderson allotted parts of his corn, cotton, and tree fields to create a park that became the "go-to" place. It hosted many significant events, including baseball games, football games, Juneteenth Celebrations, the Colored Fair, dances, music concerts, training sessions, bond drives during the war, and annual field days for schools. Mr. Henderson's vision and legacy were inclusivity. In 1943 to pay off some property liens, Mr. Henderson began selling the land for \$4,250 to the City of Brenham and was finalized in 1950. The sale came with a few stipulations: it remained a park for "colored people," it's named Henderson Park, there are improvements, and he would live on the property until death (1961). Today the park's amenities and its coveted history are enjoyed by everyone.

Heritage Preservation

Since the 1880s, Emancipation Celebrations were held in Brenham with North End Park as the leading area to congregate for these activities, renamed Juneteenth Celebrations. By the 1920s, Juneteenth Celebrations were an annual event coordinated by the Laboring Men's Club and later the Businessman's Club. The Celebrations would be preceded by a parade showcasing an elected Goddess of Liberty, later renamed Queen of Springtime, through the business district with colorful floats and bands arriving at the park grounds for baseball games, BBQ dinners, sometimes a carnival, and always a band with dances.

Musical events were a big hit at the park, with a long string of performances appearing at North End Park. Along with such notable performers as B.B. King and his guitar Lucile, Joe Turner, and Little Richard, there were many other headliners.

Baseball games were another huge draw. In 1934 the North End Park hosted two days of the Negro World Series, played between the Austin Black Senators and Van Dyke's House of David Team from Sioux City, Iowa.

The 1933 advertisement for the "Colored County Fair" boasted the rodeo and carnival, which went on for a week, "featured 7 Shows, 4 Rides, 200 People, and 25 Novelty Concessions" with a "Saturday afternoon matinee for all school children."

Community of Support

Texas Ten Historical Explorers, Inc. focuses on discovering the untold history of African-Americans in Washington County. City staff is working with Texas Ten to capture and incorporate several local parks' history and untold stories.

The Brenham Activist Association advocates for inclusion and fair representation. In 2014 they attended a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting to present a case of failing facilities at Henderson Park. This prompted the City to prioritize this park's improvements to better serve the community's needs.

Summary of Park Usage

Henderson Park amenities are booked for family reunions, birthday parties, school trips, sports tournaments, and Little League practices. The splash pad is open from April 1 to September 30 and draws thousands of residents and visitors each year. Annual Juneteenth Celebrations are held at Henderson and Fireman's Park, respectively. Passive park usage like pick-up basketball games and picking pecans are also popular.

The Hike and Bike Trail is the only bicycle and pedestrian-friendly trail in Brenham's park system and averages 320 users per week, more than 16,600 users per year.

TIMELINE OF PARK HISTORY



Henderson (North End) Park Timeline

- 1880s Emancipation Celebrations, i.e., Juneteenth, baseball and football games, boxing matches, and concerts
- 1930 Colored County Fair – parade, rodeo and carnival, ball games, bands, and dances
- 1934 North End Park hosted two-day of the Negro World Series – Austin Black Senators and Van Dyke’s House of David team from Sioux City, Iowa
- 1937 Ed Henderson's Club House burned down and subsequently rebuilt
- 1950 Ed Henderson deeded North End Park to the City of Brenham, known today as Henderson Park
- 1951 Pickard High School Wins State Football Championship
- 1962 Pickard High School State Baseball Championships in 1962, 1963, 1966 – Pickard High School played on Henderson Field
- 1970 Received grant funding through Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Park Program for CITY PARKS IMPROVEMENTS to Henderson and Fireman's Parks for \$141,563.08
- 1993 City acquired additional 5.195 acres to add softball fields
- 1994 Formal Dedication of Henderson Park in memory of Ed Henderson – memorialized with a plaque which sits at the entrance to Henderson Park; Tommelson Creek Iron Bridge moved to Higgins Creek, Henderson Park, for a pedestrian crossing
- 1995 Fink and Korthauer softball fields constructed
- 2003 2.84-mile Hike n' Bike trail constructed
- 2015 City Council adopted the 2015-2025 Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Master Plan. The number one priority under park development goals was to evaluate Henderson Park usage and better utilize the site to meet surrounding area needs
- 2017 Hosted Special Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting at Henderson Park to discuss park revitalization initiative
- 2018 Phase I Improvements funded by the Brenham Community Development Corporation (BCDC) included: new playscape added near the kitchen, swing set, park connectivity, BBQ pit, sidewalks, and lighting
- October 2018 Refurbished F-111A Fighter Jet Memorial add in Henderson Park
- 2019 Phase II Improvements funded by BCDC included: conversion of Henderson Field from softball to 60/90 baseball, restroom upgrades, and bleacher seating
- June 2020 Brenham's first splash pad opened to the public