

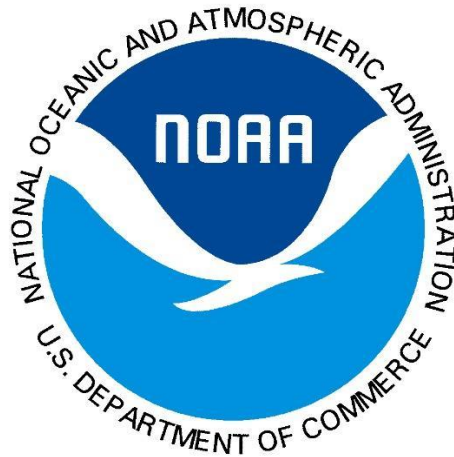
Clear Creek Connections Paddle Trail – Kayak Launches

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Final Report

September 30, 2023

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Project Background:

To connect citizens and visitors to the waters of Clear Creek and Clear Lake, the City of League City (the City) opened the Clear Creek Connections Paddle Trail, which stretches from the upper limits of Clear Creek within the City to downstream into Clear Lake near Galveston Bay. The Paddle Trail, a partnership between the City and Galveston County, combines facilities within one county park with those in two city parks, resulting in three diverse and geographically separate points of entry along Clear Creek. Kayak launches are currently located at Lynn Gripon Park at Countryside, Walter Hall Park (Galveston County) and Heritage Park.

The City planned to use CMP Cycle 25 funds to add two new kayak launch sites to the paddle trail system: one at Kansas Avenue in the City and another at the Highway 270 boat ramp in Dr. Ned and Fay Dudney Clear Creek Nature Center. Both sites would include vehicle and trailer parking, Americans with Disability Act (ADA) ramps and walkways, educational and interpretive signage and a floating ADA accessible kayak launch system. The new access points are part of the 2018 City Council Strategic Plan and were identified in the 2017 League City Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. Each new launch would provide accessibility to the Clear Creek Watershed. Additionally, this project would create additional eco-tourism opportunities for residents and visitors to the City and Galveston County by adding to an already successful system of kayak launches and paddling trails.

Initially, this project proposed to complete construction and install signage; however, the City requested a scope of work reduction in February 2022. The scope of work was revised because the project would have been unable to complete construction by the project end date. The project experienced several delays, including needing an archeological survey at both proposed kayak sites and a Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) at the Kansas Avenue site. Additionally, the project had a NOAA Special Award Condition (SAC) in place that restricted the project from spending any federal funds until the 80% designs were complete and reviewed by NOAA. The SAC was not released until February 2022, when the scope of work was reduced to no longer include construction activities.

The revised project scope only includes engineering and permitting for the two kayak launch sites. The work plan was revised to have two tasks: “Engineering Design and Permitting” and “Project Monitoring and Reporting”. Despite this reduction in scope, the project was still unable to complete all promised deliverables. The deliverables that were completed, and the reasons why certain deliverables were not completed, are described below.

Task 1: Engineering Design and Permitting

The City could not complete all deliverables under this task. Below is a summary, by kayak site, that describes the deliverables that were completed over the project period.

Kansas Avenue site

The City elected to complete an archeological survey in May 2021. The archeological survey was approved by the Texas Historical Commission in June 2021; however, the City requested that a Phase I ESA also be carried out at the Kansas Avenue site. The Phase I ESA was requested

because the City wanted to address any current or future concerns about what might be buried at the Kansas Avenue site. The Phase I ESA was completed in September 2021.

The Phase I ESA findings recommended the City complete a Phase II ESA. The City elected to wait to sign a contract with an ESA contractor until another project the City was working on with non-CMP funds that also required an ESA could be rolled into the same contract. Once a proposal for completing the ESA at the two sites was received in January 2022, it took the City several months to approve the proposal and execute a contract with an ESA contractor. The Phase II ESA was not completed until October 2022.

Once the Phase II ESA was completed and approved, the project engineer moved forward with completing the topographic and geotechnical surveys and provided them to the City in February 2023. The project engineer also submitted preliminary designs in February 2023, but the City had several comments and requested revisions. The City initially wanted to wait to send the designs to the GLO until all the City's comments were addressed. However, the 30% designs were sent to the GLO for review in May 2023, even though the City still had outstanding comments. Due to these delays, the project was not able to receive GLO comments on the 30% designs and did not complete the 60% or 90% designs, nor was a USACE permit application submitted for this site.

List of completed deliverables for the Kansas Avenue site:

- Archeological survey
- Phase I ESA
- Phase II ESA
- Topographic and geotechnical surveys
- 30% designs

Ned and Fay Dudney Clear Creek Nature Center (Nature Center site)

The City also elected to complete an archeological survey for this site. The archeological survey was completed in May 2021 and submitted to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in June 2021. THC reviewed the survey results and required the City to either move the kayak site or do additional archeological survey work due to the finding of oyster shell at some of the survey sites.

The City elected to do additional archeological survey work because the Nature Center site is the best kayak launch site the City owns. The additional archeological survey work was submitted to THC for review in October 2021. In January 2022, the City received written confirmation that the additional sampling was adequate and the City could proceed with kayak site development.

The topographic and geotechnical surveys for the Nature Park site were then on hold until the surveys could also be completed at the Kansas Avenue site. In July 2022, the City discussed splitting the two kayak launch sites to allow the surveys to proceed for the Nature Center site, but this did not occur. Therefore, the City received the topographic survey for the Nature Center site in December 2022, at the same time the City received the 30% designs for this site. The City received the geotechnical survey in February 2023. The engineer submitted 60% designs in March 2023, but there were several errors that needed to be revised. In May 2023, the engineer

submitted revised 60% designs to the City for review before the designs could be submitted for the USACE permit. However, there will still several outstanding City comments that needed to be addressed by the engineer before the GLO could review the designs. In July 2023, the engineer submitted 90% designs to the City. Again, the City had several comments that needed to be addressed. In September 2023, the engineer submitted the USACE permit application for the Nature Center site using the 60% designs.

List of completed deliverables for the Nature Center site:

- Archeological survey
- Topographic and geotechnical surveys
- 30% designs
- 60% designs
- 90% designs
- USACE application

Task 2: Project Monitoring and Reporting

Under this task, the project completed monthly progress report and reimbursement requests. The City's monthly progress reports were frequently late and towards the end of the project, the GLO stopped receiving monthly progress reports. The GLO reached out to the City's project manager multiple times, but no progress reports were received for several months. GLO staff ultimately completed the final report on behalf of the City.