



The Role of Community and Collaboration in Creating Galveston's First Stormwater Park

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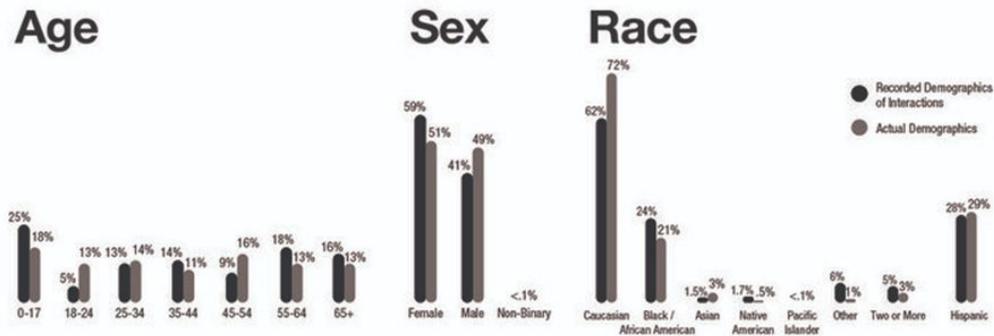
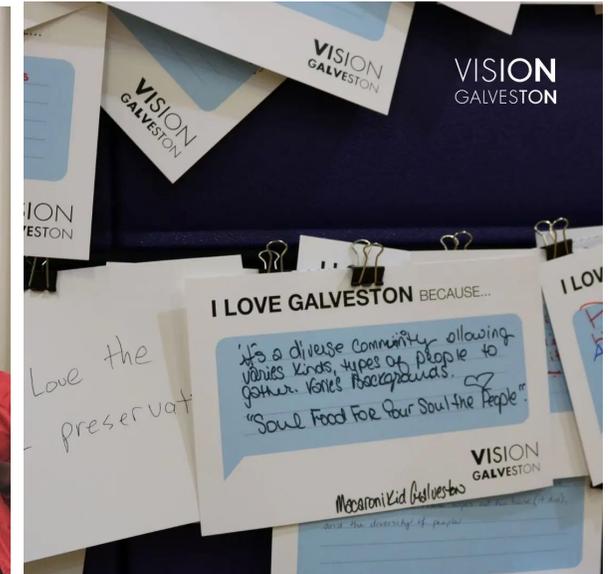
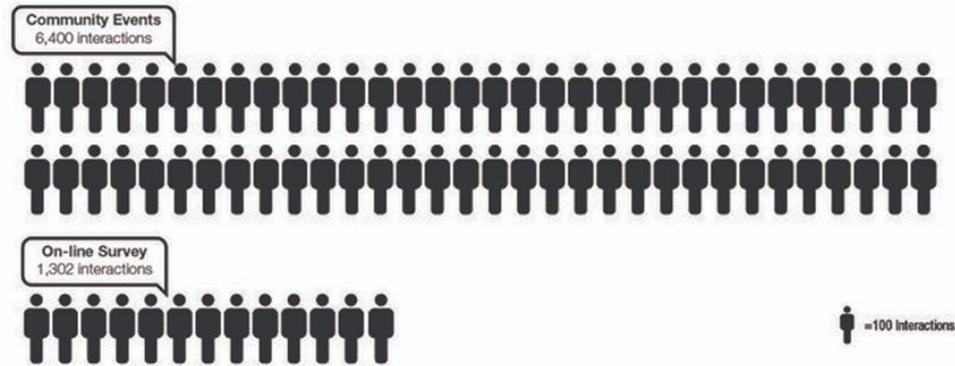
Background: Vision Galveston

A little bit about Galveston:

- Barrier island community of 50k people
- Vibrant community, Deep rooted culture and history
- Issues facing Galveston:
 - Education and Employment
 - Affordable Housing and Transportation
 - Overtourism and Overdevelopment
 - Air, Soil, and Water Pollution
 - Climate Change: Heat, hurricanes, flooding and sea level rise

Background: Vision Galveston

We have reached our goal of 7,500 community members (15% of Galveston)



Photos: Vision Galveston

Background: Vision Galveston

- 78 Recommendations
- Currently have 5 Initiatives
 - Build Galveston – Housing
 - Incubate Galveston – Entrepreneurship
 - Green Galveston – Environment and Sustainability
 - Measure Galveston – Data
 - Engage Galveston – Outreach, Education, Civics
- Holistic view of community development

THE TEAM



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Green Galveston Principles:

- 1. Right to Green:** All Galvestonians have a right to the recreational, restorative, and social opportunities of high-quality parks and natural areas.
- 2. Green that Promotes Health:** Galveston's parks and open space should support the physical and mental health of the island's residents.
- 3. Green that Supports the Local Ecology:** Galveston's parks and open space should respond to and support the local ecological, and environmental conditions of the island.
- 4. Green that Supports the Local Economy:** Galveston's parks and open space should support local economic growth and development across the island.
- 5. Green that is Connected:** Galveston's parks and open space should be accessible for cyclists, pedestrians, residents utilizing public transportation, and through waterways.
- 6. Green that is Activated & Authentic:** Galveston's parks and open space should include programming and placemaking that reflect the cultures and histories of the Island.
- 7. Green that is Educational & Promotes Stewardship:** Galveston's parks and open space should provide immersive educational opportunities for residents that also support stewardship.

Parks and Green Space

GREEN RECOMMENDATIONS



- “Build an amazing destination park that will attract residents and visitors alike.”
- “Convert parts of large road rights-of-way, alleys, and vacant lots into a green urban network.”
- “Create public parks and access points along the Port waterfront.”
- “Improve parks and open space.”

Why Parks?

- Parks provide physical, mental and community health benefits
 - Standard is to have a park 10-min walk from every house
 - Jones is the only public park in a .5-mile radius for over 2000 kids that live and go to school nearby
- An opportunity for climate mitigation, while building community cohesion and resilience
- Can be proof-of-concept for green stormwater parks, public engagement, and public-private partnerships elsewhere on the island and regionally

- 1** Densify New Development in Already Developed Areas While Protecting Ecologically Sensitive Areas
- 3** Combine Dense Mixed-Use Development with Green Space in East End Flats
- 4** Integrate Nature in Development, both on the West End and in the Urban Core
- 5** Strengthen Partnerships Between Organizations Doing Conservation Work in Galveston
- 6** Convert Parts of Large Road Right-Of-Ways, Alleys, and Vacant Lots into a Green Urban Network
- 11** Create Multiple Connected Public Bayfront Access Points
- 12** Expand Opportunities to Kayak Along the Bay Side by Formalizing Paddling Trails
- 13** Create a Federally Designated Protected Area to Enhance Support for the Natural Ecosystems of Galveston Bay
- 14** Develop Robust Cross-Cultural, Cross-Generational Environmental Education Programs
- 15** Establish and Support a Coastal Innovation and Commercialization Center
- 16** Fund Multiple Interdisciplinary Research Groups Focusing on Various Aspects of Coastal Resilience
- 17** Set up a Coastal Protection Proposal Review Board that Evaluates Local Impact and Advocates for Benefits to the City and the Region
- 18** Reduce Flood Insurance Rates by Improving Galveston’s Community Rating System Status
- 19** Create a Comprehensive Drainage and Green Infrastructure Plan
- 20** Join Regional and Global Networks Addressing Climate Change Responsiveness
- 23** Develop a Regional Nursery Plan for Post-Disaster Vegetation Recovery
- 28** Create Public Parks and Access Points Along the Port Waterfront
- 29** Improve Parks and Open Space
- 30** Ensure that there are Quality Parks Within Walking Distance of Every Home
- 31** Build an Amazing Destination Park that will Attract Residents and Visitors Alike
- 32** Develop a Sustainable Tourism Strategy for Galveston
- 34** Support Efforts to Promote Ecotourism in Galveston
- 66** Implement Green Infrastructure and Drainage Improvements North of Broadway
- 71** Advocate for the State of Texas to act as a Reinsurer for Windstorm Coverage

Background: Jones Park

82°
Partly Cloudy

GALVESTON COUNTY
The Daily News.

September 23, 2024
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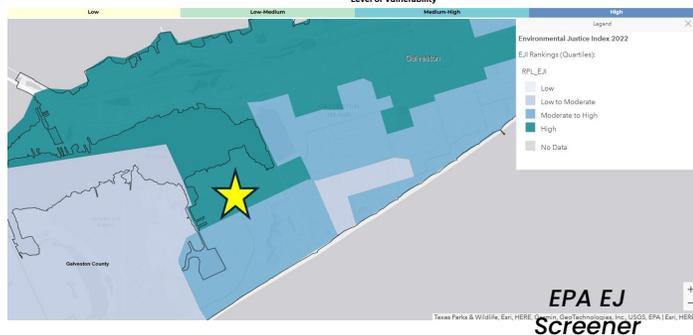
Local News

Galveston City Council wants to ask voters to approve demolition of two parks

By SAMANTHA KETTERER The Daily News Jan 23, 2017

The city of Galveston is planning to ask voters to decide the fate of two island parks.

The two recreational areas are Gus Allen Park, near 28th and Church streets, and Jones



Gathering Partners and Cheerleaders

- City of Galveston
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Engineering
 - Coastal Zone Management
 - Industrial Development Corporation
- Better Parks for Galveston
- Liz Murphy and Parker Elementary School
- Kathy Tiernan
- Asakura Robinson
- Later on: GBEP, TPWD, HARC
- Cheerleaders: Individual community members, John Listowski, Groundswell, Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council, Moody Gardens, A&M AgriLife and Forest Service, Galveston Daily News, many others!

Process: Jones Park

Q: What do you enjoy about parks?

(Students were asked to pick their top 4)

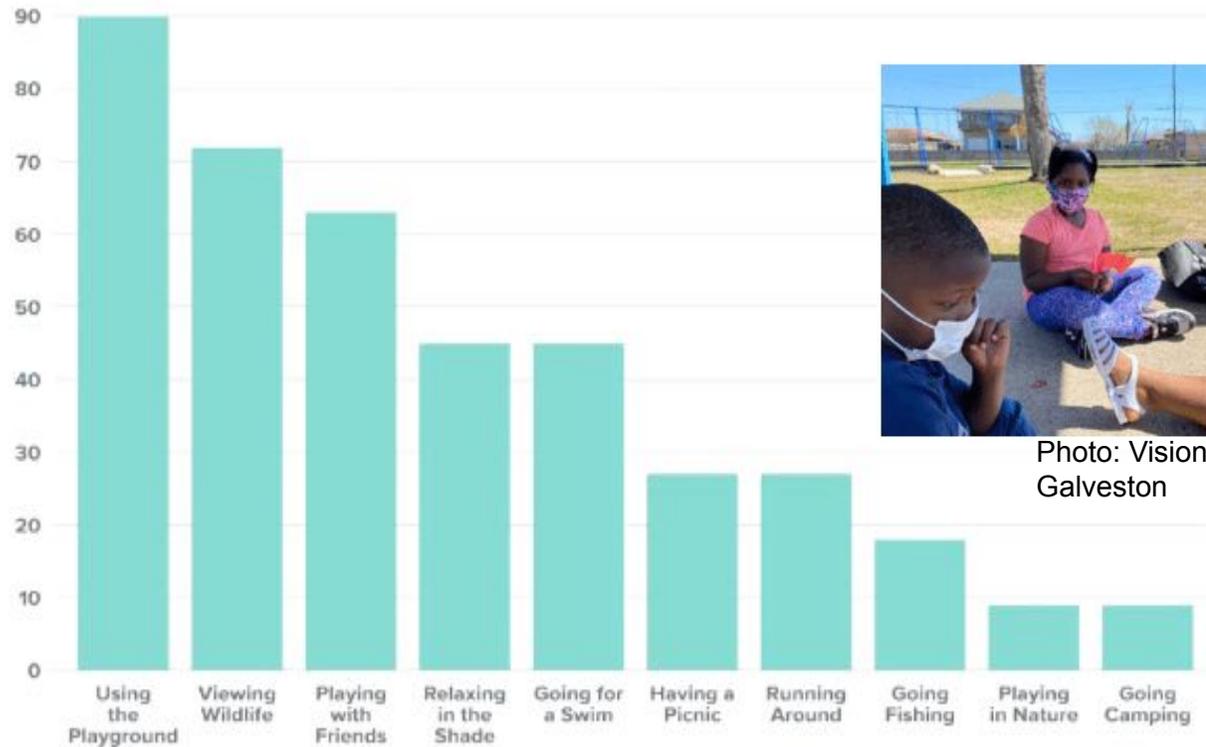
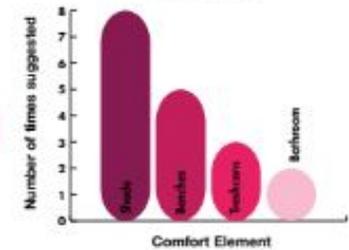
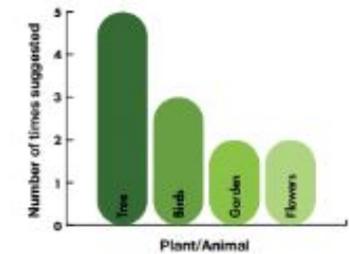
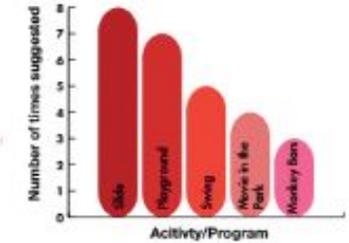


Photo: Vision Galveston

Jones Park Community Feedback



- Check-ins with City and Community stakeholder team at 30-60-90-100% Design, 100% Construction Documents

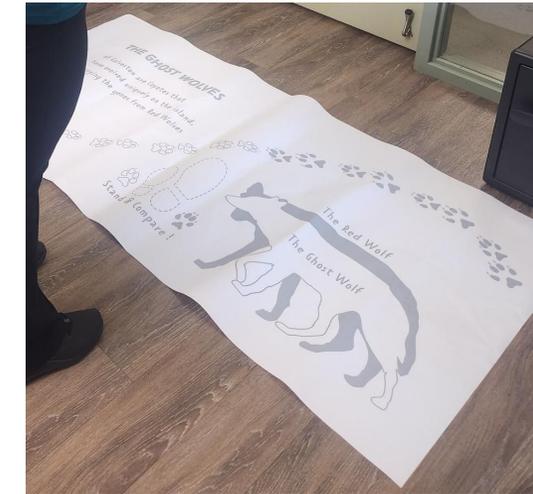
Design Highlights: Park amenities

SITE PLAN

- 1 ON-STREET PARKING
 - 2 PARKING LOT W/ POWERBLOCK PAVER DRAIN SYSTEM
 - 3 VEGETATED SWALE
 - 4 BASKETBALL COURT
 - 5 FENCED PICKLEBALL COURTS W/ SOUND BARRIER
 - 6 RELOCATED GRANITE MONUMENT
 - 7 FITNESS AREA W/ CANOPY
 - 8 NATIVE GRASS SEED MIX
 - 9 BIORETENTION W/ ACCENT WETLAND PLANTING
 - 10 CONCRETE BOARDWALK
 - 11 PAVILION W/ PICNIC TABLES (6) AND PAINTED PLAYGROUND GAMES (e.g. 4 SQUARE)
 - 12 PLAYGROUND W/ INCLUSIVE EQUIPMENT AND PIP SURFACE
 - 13 ARTIFICIAL TURF MOUND W/ ACCESSIBLE SLIDES AND STEPPERS
 - 14 PARK ENTRY SIGN
 - 15 OPEN LAWN (SOD)
-  EXISTING PALM TREES TO REMAIN
 -  NEW PALM TREES
 -  NEW SHADE TREES
 -  NEW SMALL / ORNAMENTAL TREES
-  SPORT COURT LIGHT
 -  PEDESTRIAN LIGHT
 -  GROUND LIGHT



PROPOSED SIGNAGE GRAPHICS

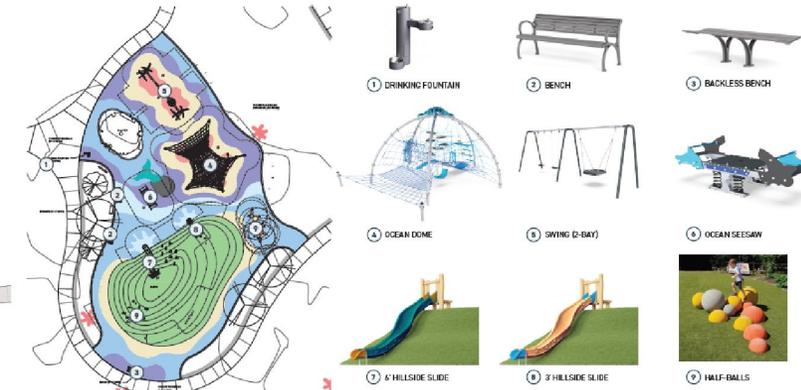


- Ocean-themed, local touches
- ADA accessible
- Interpretive signage designed by experts, reviewed by experts

PLAYGROUND SURFACING DESIGN



PLAYGROUND ELEMENTS



Design Highlights: Nature-based Solutions

SITE PLAN

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PLANT PALETTE

PERENNIALS



PLANT PALETTE

SHRUBS



ORNAMENTAL GRASSES



- CHARACTERISTICS**
- Salt Tolerance
 - Flood Tolerance
 - Biological Control of Mosquitoes

PLANT PALETTE - PHASE ONE

SHADE TREES

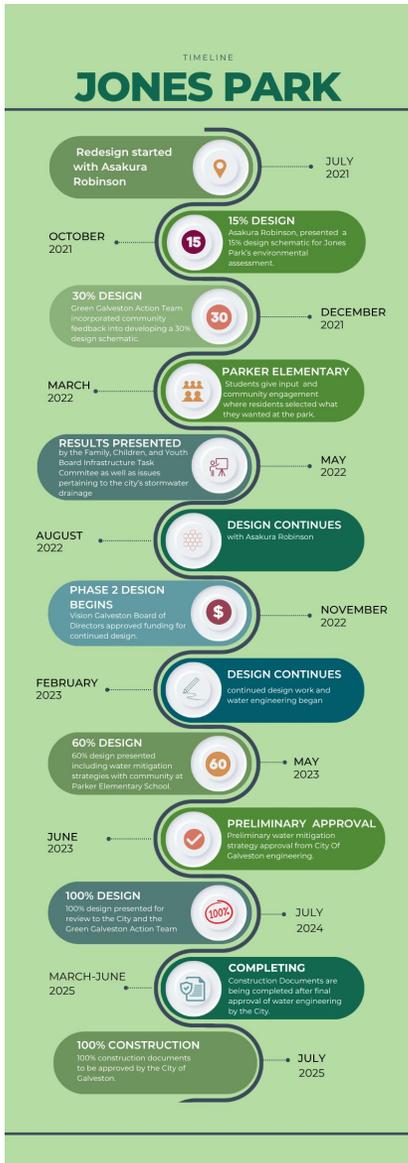


TURF AND GRASSES



- Native plants, trees
- Pocket Prairie
- Bioswales

Milestones: Jones Park



- 2017 – Failed vote to sell park
- 2020 – Vision Galveston is officially formed
- July 2021 – Asakura Robinson identifies park for redevelopment, begins Phase I redesign
- Nov 2022 – Phase II redesign and water engineering begins
- June 2023 – Water engineering approved by City
- July 2024 – 100% Design Documents
- July 2025 – 100% Construction Documents
- October 2025 – Waiting on funding to be approved, working to get ground moving

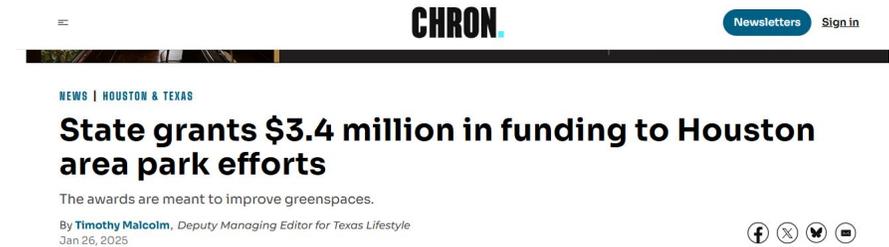
Nonprofits did good job with Jones Park plan in Galveston

By MICHAEL A. SMITH The Daily News Aug 18, 2025

EDITOR'S PICK CENTERPIECE FEATURED

Galveston prepares island parks for major renovations

By B. SCOTT McLENDON The Daily News Feb 18, 2025



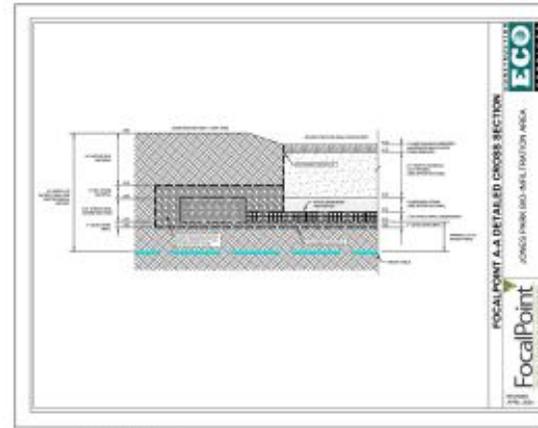
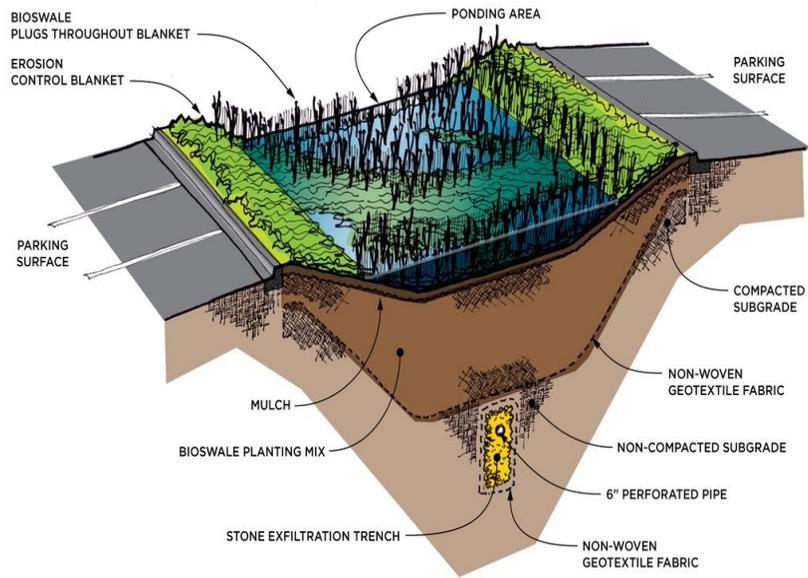
Vision Galveston completes design plans for redeveloped Jones Park

By SAGE SCOTT The Daily News Jul 30, 2025

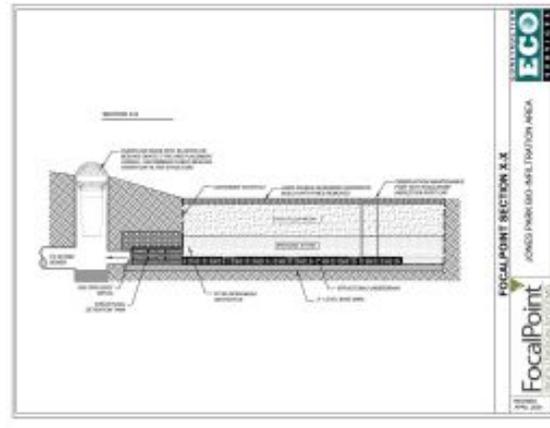
- Funding – very different funding streams for park vs NbS infrastructure
- Brownfield pollution (not an issue at Jones but a problem in Galveston more generally)
- Green gentrification
- Building trust
 - Community is overpromised and underdelivered
 - City is overburdened and underfunded
- Communities are tired of being studied – they want solutions
 - Keeping the community engaged over the length of this process
- Communicating and justifying the benefits of a stormwater park, despite the longer planning process and expense

Bioswale in a Bag

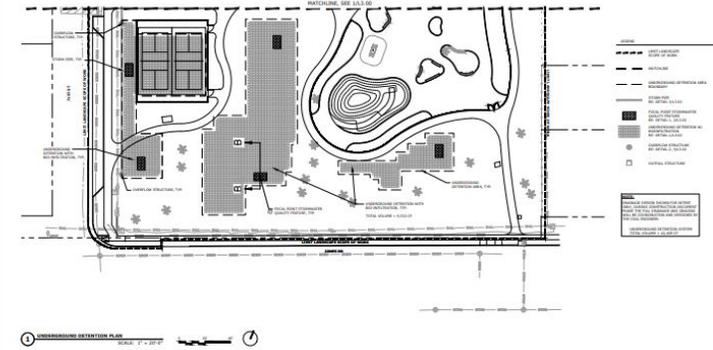
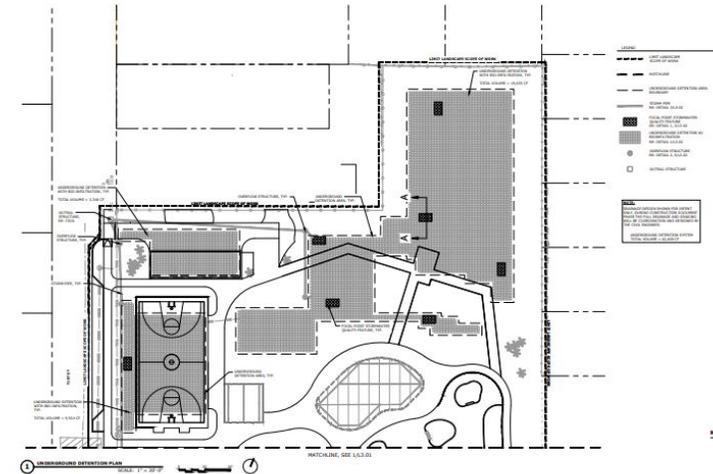
- Created to demonstrate what words and diagrams cannot



1 FOCAL POINT A-A DETAILED CROSS SECTION SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



2 TYPICAL FOCAL POINT STORMWATER QUALITY FEATURE SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



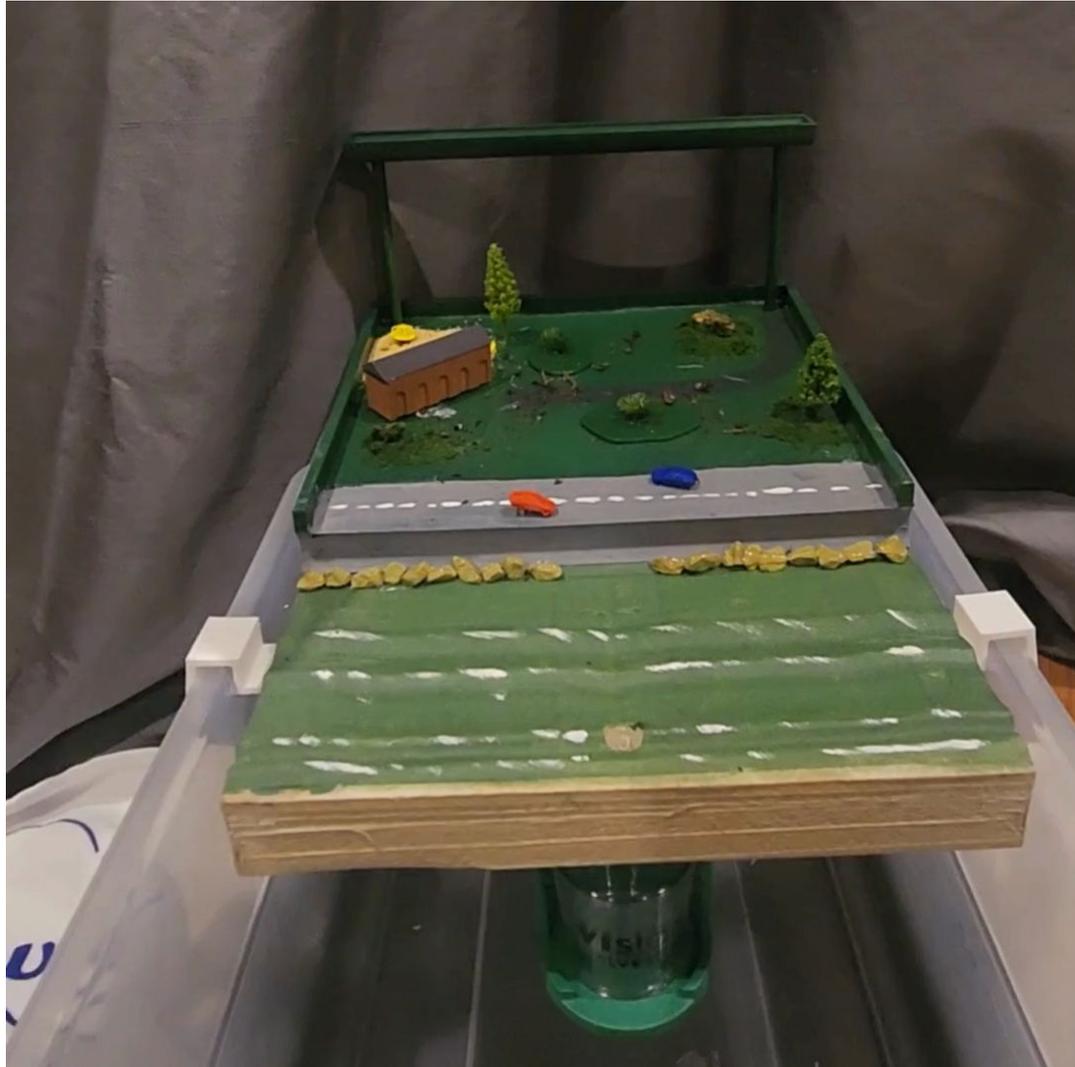
JONES PARK

GRADING & DRAINAGE PLAN - UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE SYSTEM L3.00

JONES PARK

GRADING & DRAINAGE PLAN - UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE SYSTEM L3.01

Bioswale in a Bag



- Based on Jones Park

• Models:

- Provide a hands-on, experiential way to view concepts in action
- Systems-view
- Can be quick or part of a bigger lesson



• Why create this tool?

- I can't be everywhere
- Create a culture of knowledge around green infrastructure in Galveston

Feedback:

Hi Anna,

I had my first successful deployment of Bioswale in a Bag! We had a Water and Energy Conservation Workshop last night at Boca Raton's Downtown Library. After a presentation on the topic by local nonprofit [Dream in Green](#), I gathered the attendees (~10) to do a pilot demo of Bioswale in a Bag. I explained Vision Galveston's impetus for designing the product and gave a brief overview of how bioswales function both from a water capture and pollutant scrubbing standpoint. After the demo, everyone was really impressed to see the difference in infiltration between when the bioswales were present versus when they were not. One of the photos shows the capture cups to the side of the bin and you can see the stark difference. The attendees started commenting that Boca should install bioswales in all our parks 😊

I wrapped up by talking about how locally, our mangroves are a natural version of a bioswale, absorbing tidal flooding, storm surge, and runoff, that's why they're so important to protect and restore. I stressed that we should consider bioswales as nature-based solutions where we encounter flooding in our parks, HOAs, and private yards, and that, wherever possible, bioswales and other natural water infiltration features should be built into landscaping plans before development of any property begins.

I'm really looking forward to using Bioswale in a Bag as a teaching tool at our future outreach events. Thank you again for putting the effort into making these models and sending one my way!

Hi Anna,

I just wanted to say thank you. I've been using Bioswale in a Bag, and it's made a big difference in my work. You really did an excellent job putting it together! It's clear how much thought ~~was~~ effort was put into it.

Conclusions/Final Thoughts:

- Nature-based solutions are important but getting community buy-in is even more so
 - We all want the same thing – less flooding – how will you convince people nature-based solutions are the best option? What is opposition really about?
- Identify your community partners and cheerleaders early on, and keep community informed throughout the process
- What are the consequences of your project – good and bad? Who can you work with to mitigate them?
- Community-based work is hard but patience, being willing to listen, and compromise can help