

OVERALL PARK SYSTEM LEVEL OF SERVICE

Denton's parks currently provide **8.15 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents**, which does not include the preserve park classification in the overall calculation. This is less than the national average of 9.9 acres per 1,000 residents and less than the national median of 8.9 acres per 1,000 residents for communities of similar size. Denton has approximately 5,004 acres of developed and undeveloped parks, and an additional 1,000 acres of future parks. Future parks are parks required through development agreements in planned communities or park land that is currently being donated or purchased. Of the existing 5,020 acres, 58%, or 2,912 acres, is designated as Preserve. For the purpose of establishing the overall park system LOS, the Preserve designation has been removed from the calculations because of the few amenities that exist within Preserves.

The recommended benchmark LOS goal for the overall park system is between 9.9 and 17.5 per 1,000 residents. The 17.5 acres per 1,000 figure represents the community-established target for long-term growth and development. As shown in **Table 4.13**, in 2021 there is a deficit of overall developed parkland to reach the desired LOS for the benchmarks, there is a surplus of acreage when undeveloped and future parkland is included based on the low range benchmark. In 2040, if no additional parkland is developed and no additional land is acquired for parks, there will be a deficit of both the low and high end benchmarks.

Table 4.13 Current and Benchmark LOS for All Parks

	2021 (DEVELOPED PARKS)	2021 (ALL PARKS)*	2040 (DEVELOPED PARKS)	2040 (ALL PARKS)**
Population	139,869	139,869	229,192	229,192
Acreage	1,035.41 acres	2,107.63 acres	1,035.41 acres	2,781.47 acres
Current LOS	8.15 acres per 1,000 population	15.35 acres per 1,000 population	5.07 acres per 1,000 population	12.14 acres per 1,000 population
Benchmark LOS (Low range)	9.9 acres per 1,000 population			
Acreage to acquire to meet Benchmark LOS	77.26 acre deficit	704.41 acre surplus	963.59 acre deficit	512.47 acre surplus
Benchmark LOS (High range)	17.5 acres per 1,000 population			
Acreage to acquire to meet Benchmark LOS	1,113.04 acre deficit	331.37 acre deficit	2,705.45 acre deficit	1,229.39 acre deficit

*Includes developed and undeveloped park acreage

**Includes developed, undeveloped, and future park acreage

REGIONAL BENCHMARKS

The Level of Service metric (acres per 1,000 residents) provides a useful measure to compare Denton Parks to other similar communities in our region. When comparing park acreage, the overall park system was used, less any natural/preserve lands. Preserve lands are not included due to the limited amenities they offer. Denton has a LOS that is average when compared to five similar communities in the region.

Denton Current Parks LOS: 8.15 acres per 1,000 Residents 58% of parkland is preserve/natural area	Plano Parks LOS: 15.0 acres per 1,000 Residents 30% of parkland is preserve/natural area	Frisco Parks LOS: 7.2 acres per 1,000 Residents 20% of parkland is preserve/natural area
McKinney Parks LOS: 8.1 acres per 1,000 Residents 38% of parkland is preserve/natural area	Lewisville* Parks LOS: 12.8 acres per 1,000 Residents 68% of parkland is preserve/natural area	Arlington Parks LOS: 11.3 acres per 1,000 Residents 51% of parkland is preserve/natural area

*Does not include LLELA

Source: Trust for Public Lands, Community Master Plans

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The following needs assessment evaluates existing facilities based on two sets of values: A level of service metric based on facility number and facility square feet per resident that allows for comparisons with peer cities, and resident demand derived from survey data. Based on these indicators, this section offers an assessment of system-wide needs for indoor recreation and aquatic facilities.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Currently, the City of Denton's indoor recreation facilities offer 145,461 square feet of space. Based on the 2020 population of 139,869 the 2020 level of service was 1.04 square feet per person. While the existing level of service is high, the quality of the facilities is relatively dated comparable North Texas cities. Based on current population projections, the population will increase by 64%, which will increase the demand on the already strained indoor recreation centers. The NRPA offers another useful metric that compares cities of similar size by dividing the total population by the number of indoor recreation facilities in a particular city. For cities similar in population to Denton this median figure was **53,550 residents per indoor recreation facility** in 2020. Denton is currently slightly ahead of this NRPA median, with **45,243 residents per indoor recreation facility**.

Denton Recreation LOS: 1.04 Square Feet per Person	Plano Recreation LOS: 1.08 Square Feet per Person	Frisco Recreation LOS: 0.65 Square Feet per Person
McKinney Recreation LOS: 0.72 Square Feet per Person	Lewisville Recreation LOS: 0.88 Square Feet per Person	Arlington Recreation LOS: 0.48 Square Feet per Person

It is important to consider population growth in future parks planning. Understanding where and how the city will grow will help planners proactively address underserved areas, ensuring equitable access to the parks system for all Denton residents. The recommended future square footage to meet a build-out population of approximately 325,000 beyond 2040 is 1.15 to 1.25 SF/person, which equates to a total of over 400,000 square of indoor recreation space feet beyond the year 2040. Recommendations to increase the level of service are found in the recommendations section of this chapter.



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

TRAIL LEVEL OF SERVICE

Trail Level of Service (LOS) is a method used to compare the miles of trails within a community to the total population to determine if the community is being optimally served compared to other communities. The LOS calculation is based on quantity, not quality of the trails, and includes trails that are of various surfaces and widths. A lower population-per-mile is representative of more miles of trail per capita and a higher LOS. For the DFW region, a regional benchmark of 1 mile per every 1,200 residents has been established; this LOS figure will serve as a target for this analysis.

Denton's trail system in 2021 has a level of service of one mile for every 2,227 residents for all trails, and one mile for every 15,270 residents based on paved trails greater than 10 feet in width. It is important to compare Denton's trail system to those of peer communities. When comparing this to other communities in the region, Denton is providing fewer miles of trails to its residents.



Based on the current population and trail mileage for all trails, an additional 54 miles of trails is needed to reach the target LOS of 1 mile per 1,200 residents. It is projected that Denton's population will increase to 229,192 people by 2040. Based on the population projections and the current trail mileage for all trails, the LOS in 2040 would be one mile for every 3,649 residents, requiring approximately 128 miles of additional trails to reach the regional LOS benchmark.

ALTERNATIVE TRAILS TARGET LEVEL OF SERVICE

The NRPA does not provide target level service for alternative soft-surface trails, such as hiking, biking, equestrian, and paddling trails, but these trails are important for diversity in the overall trails system. Alternative trails should be designed for and properly maintained to meet the needs of the identified users. These trails, which may not account for level of service, increase connectivity and encourage recreation, leading to healthier lifestyles. Alternative surface trails can be designed to compliment the area in which they are located and minimize disruption to the natural environment.

