



Parks No Mowing Areas

Parks Board - September 8, 2022

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Overview

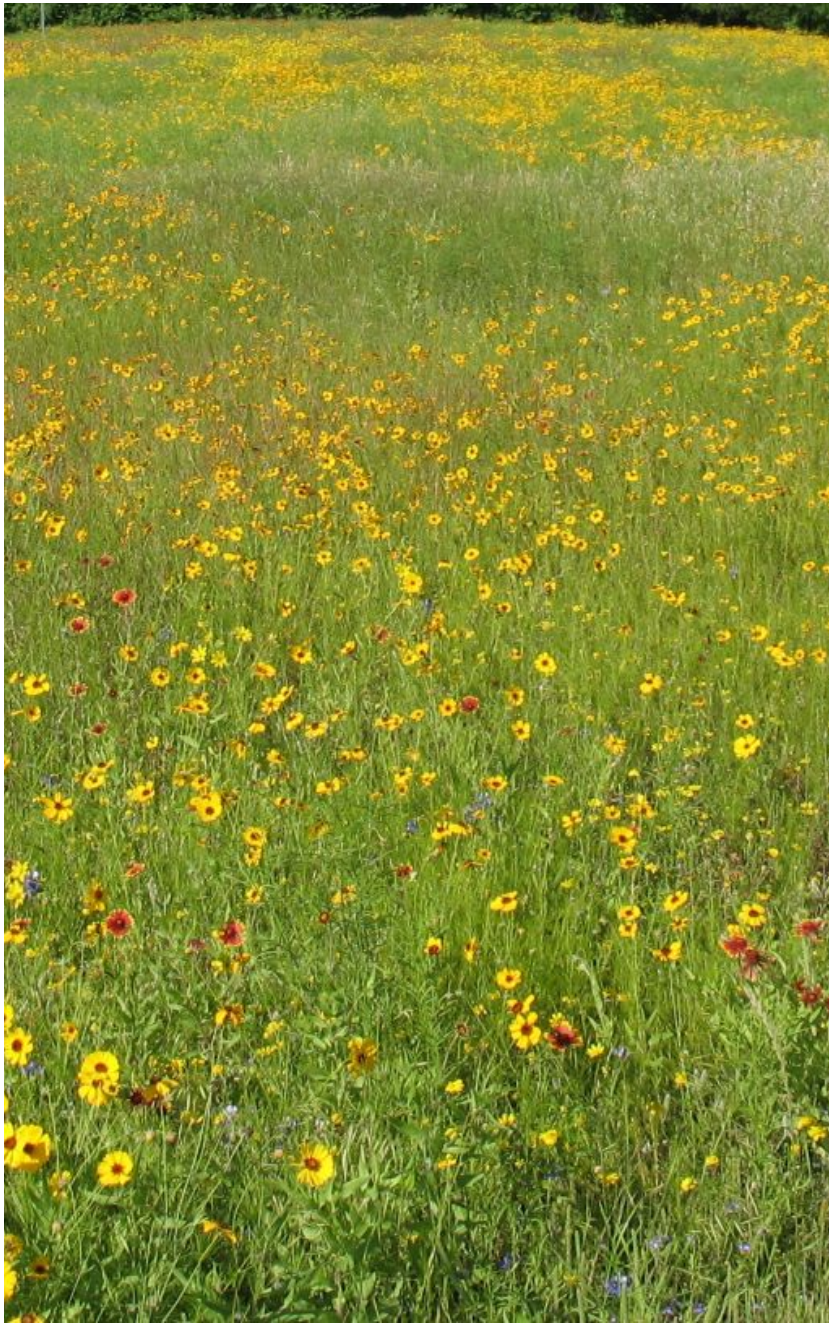
1. What Are No Mowing Areas?
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What are No Mowing Areas?

- Areas identified for conservation, erosion control, and maintenance cost control
- Sections of park land that naturally lend themselves to conservation (natural areas)
- Require no maintenance, minimal maintenance, or volunteer-led maintenance
- Three types identified in Burleson parks
 - **Natural Areas** - riparian buffers along creeks or drainage areas, forest areas, unprogrammed conservation areas that allowed to grow wild
 - **Wildflower Areas** - areas primarily comprised of natural and/or seeded wildflowers
 - **Prairie Areas** - areas featuring native prairie soils, plants and features



Benefits of No Mowing Areas

- Reduce maintenance cost
- Deep rooting plants retain soils and reduce erosion
- Help prevent/filter grass clippings, litter, and other toxin from regularly entering waterway
- Promote pollinator activity
- Protect natural and native resources
- Provide food and cover for native wildlife
- Help air quality through reduced equipment emissions
- Carbon sequestration
- Provide educational and outdoor learning opportunities
- Help qualify for grant opportunities





Ideal Locations for No Mowing Areas

- Areas of existing, undisturbed, native soils of a historic ecological region as evidenced by native plants, animals, and insects present (e.g. forests and prairies)
- Areas prone to erosion such as sloped areas in parks and along creek embankments
- Areas that are easily accessible for proper maintenance equipment such as discs, tillers, boom sprayers, and rough-cut mowers (wildflower areas require periodic special maintenance)
- Areas of inconsistent grade that offer little value for open space play opportunities
- Areas not presently feasible for irrigation and agronomic programs
- Undeveloped and conservatory park land to minimize maintenance costs and capital funding commitment to beautify an area

Existing No Mowing (Natural) Areas

Forested and Riparian Areas

- Bailey Lake Park - 17.45 acres
- Chisenhall Hike/Bike Trail - 70.33 acres
- Coyote Loop Trail (Wakefield) - 48.42 acres
- Oak Valley Park/Trail - 24.42 acres
- Prairie Timber (East) - 11.25 acres
- Russell Farm - 12.02 acres
- Shannon Creek Park - 9.54 acres
- Shannon Creek (east of Candler) - 9.74 acres
- Village Creek Trail - 6.81 acres
- Willow Creek Park - 2.97 acres

Prairie Areas

- Coyote Loop (Wakefield) 3 acres

Natural Area Acreage: 215.95

Mow/Litter Cost Avoidance: \$110,674.00/year



Best Practices for Maintenance

Natural Areas (forested, wild, and embankment vegetation strips).

- Maintain outside edges
- Maintain a buffer at least 6 feet away from shared property lines, trails amenities and programmed areas
- Post ID signage at riparian and wild areas
- Recruit volunteers to assist with annual or quarterly clean-up
- Annual mowing in wild and riparian areas to manage invasives



NO MOW AREA

WILDFLOWER AREA



NO MOW AREA

PRAIRIE AREA



NO MOW AREA

NATURAL AREA



Sample On-site
ID Signage

Best Practices for Maintenance (continued)

Prairie and Wildflower Areas

- Maintain outside edges
- Preparation by purging invasives and light tilling
- Seeding during the Fall
- Maintain a buffer at least 6 feet away from shared property lines, trails amenities and programmed areas
- Post ID signage
- Recruit volunteers to assist with annual or quarterly clean-up
- Recruit volunteers to help manage invasives prior to flowering or seeding
- Strategic annual or semi-annual mowing to allow for seeding and to manage invasives
- Supplemental plantings or seeding as needed
- Selective herbicide use to manage invasives as needed





Proposed NEW Wildflower Areas

- Chisenhall - paved trail near Windmill
- Meadow Crest - sloped area
- Oak Valley South - near creek
- Oak Valley Trail - pockets along trail
- Old Mulch Site - behind dog park
- Wakefield Heights - supplement existing area
- Willow Creek - open space near pond

5 new acres total

Education and Outreach Opportunities

Webpage for Now Mow Areas

- Category descriptions and inventory
- Location maps
- Benefits
- Volunteer opportunities
- FAQs
 - Managing expectations - seasonal appearance
 - Relying on natural rainfall
 - Mowing and seeding strategy
 - Invasive species management

On-site standard signage

- Area type
- QR code linking to website

Interpretive signage (if funded and applicable)

Outdoor programming and classroom partnering with public schools, home school groups and Master Naturalists

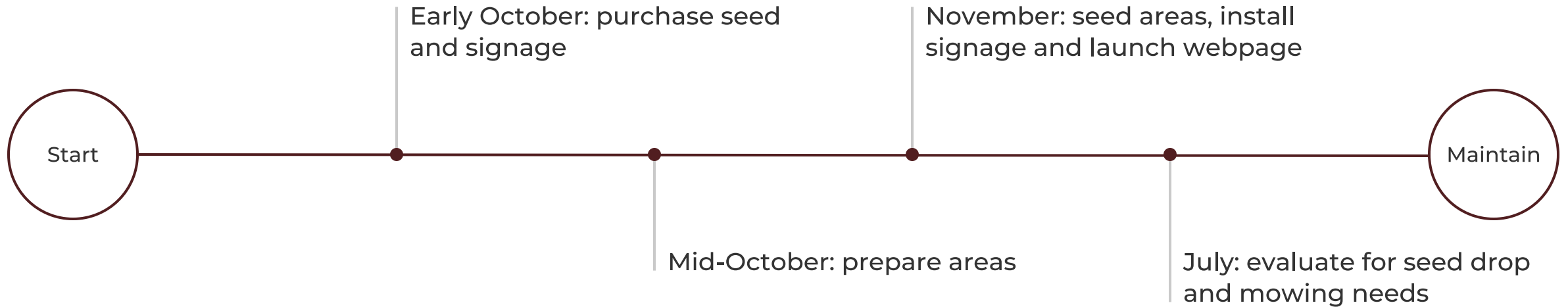




Fiscal Impact for New Areas

- Seed costs: \$2,500
- Site prep costs: \$220
- Signage costs: \$660
- Mowing savings: \$3,000
- **Total Year 1 costs: \$380 (costs - savings)**
- **Total Year 2 savings: \$3,000**

Timeline for New Wildflower Areas



Questions, Answers and Feedback

