

CITY OF CHANDLER **RIVER PARK (16 acres)**



River Park is a hidden jewel of a park and is becoming a popular regional destination park supporting nature tourism. Continued improvements to this park fit into one of the City of Chandler's Comprehensive Plan goals of providing a diversity of parks and recreation opportunities for all age groups. The park provides some of the best river access fishing in the region, as well as bird watching and paddling access.

When was River Park established?

River Park had its beginnings in 1971 with a joint agreement between Henderson County and the Upper Neches River Authority. It covered 3.17 acres and included picnic tables and asphalt boat ramp.

When did the city take control of the park?

In 2006 Chandler's city limits were extended out to the Neches River in an effort to better control crime and dumping in the River Park area and to have increased maintenance of the park. City Council voted to take the necessary steps to assume control over the park.

In January of 2007, the county transferred its lease with the Upper Neches River Authority for the 3.17 ac. river park to the city. At that time, the city began regular maintenance, improved the boat ramp and cleared out much of the underbrush.

In July 2012, the city extended the River Park area through a long term lease for 12.5 additional acres on the north side of Hwy 31. This lease was done in partnership with the Woods and Waters Foundation. At that time, a 100 space parking lot was added in partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Highway Department, Henderson County and the Randy Parker Family. River Park is now just under 16 acres on the north and south sides of Hwy 31.

The City of Chandler has cut over a mile and a half of nature trails along the river to facilitate bank fishing as well as nature walks. This river ecosystem offers unique views of wildlife and nature.



What improvements have recently been completed at River Park?

Phase II of the River Park Improvements were completed in 2014 and linked the north side of the park with the south side, both on a pedestrian level, as well as a vehicular one. The City of Chandler received a grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to connect the north and south sides of River Park with a concrete walk under Hwy 31. In addition, the grant funded an improved boat ramp and parking lot on the south side with an improved access drive off of Hwy 31. The north park drive was aligned with the south drive and TXDOT constructed a median break between the two drives allowing for direct access by car from one side to the other.



Are concession opportunities offered at River Park?

In 2015, a concession agreement was entered into with Creekside Sports, a local sporting goods business. They offer fishing supplies, drinks and snacks and canoe and kayak rentals. River Park provides a unique opportunity to paddle the Neches River to Lake Palestine and back. The trail to the lake is about 4 miles one way but paddlers can make it as long or as short as they desire. Application has been made with the State of Texas to be an official part of the Texas Paddle Trail System.

What improvements are proposed at River Park?

Phase III of the River Park project may include the extension of water and sewer to River Park and the installation of restrooms.