

RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

CITY-BROOKS PARK MASTER PLAN + LAKES VISION SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes

The City-Brooks Park Master Plan + Lakes Vision Special Committee met at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2026, at the Eugene A. Young Administrative Offices at Milton J. Womack Park, Room 1800, 6201 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by BREC Chair Commissioner Mike Polito, at 2:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Committee Members present: Mike Polito, Carl Stages, Rob Stuart, Chris Meyer, Jason Andreasen, Michael Raby, Randy Albarez, and Janet Simmons.

Committee Members absent: Cricket Gordon, Zach Corbin and Christina Melton.

BREC Staff present: Angela Harms, Maurice Velaquez, members of Sasaki, Fred Raiford, Thomasina Joseph, Gerald Sansoni, Mark Goodson, Terri Dreyer, Blake Rambo, and the public were also present.

III. Information Items/Presentations

a. University Lake Governance Plan

i. Governance Structure Deep Dive

Josh Brooks with Sasaki presented an overview of governance options for the University Lakes system, emphasizing the need for a long-term governance structure to support operations, maintenance, investment, and future implementation while emphasizing establishing an effective governance framework would help guide implementation and community engagement moving forward.

ii. Operation & Maintenance Survey & Interview Recap

Josh Brooks summarized findings from the operations and maintenance survey and interviews conducted with stakeholders and partner agencies. The recap highlighted existing operational responsibilities, maintenance challenges, and the current funding environment affecting the lake system. The discussion noted that projected operations and maintenance costs include not only landscape maintenance but also administration, programming, security, and other operational needs.

iii. Capital Projects & Phasing

Josh Brooks reviewed the anticipated capital improvements associated with the University Lakes project and discussed the importance of phasing strategies to support long-term implementation.

iv. Discussion

The committee discussed long-term governance and funding options for the University Lakes system, acknowledging that years of limited investment by LSU and the City have contributed to current maintenance needs. Members explored the potential for an Economic Development District (EDD) and other funding mechanisms, while expressing

concerns about public support for new taxes, legal constraints, and the lack of Louisiana precedents.

The discussion also focused on whether the lake system and City Park should be managed by a single entity or separate organizations. Committee members shared differing perspectives on governance models, including the roles of BREC, a conservancy, and phased implementation approaches. Participants emphasized the importance of protecting and maintaining existing assets while developing a governance structure that can support long-term operations, funding, coordination, and public engagement. Josh Brooks concluded that the committee had provided sufficient input to refine the governance recommendations and proceed with more detailed analysis.

b. City-Brooks Park Master Plan

i. Review of Stakeholder and Public Feedback

Josh Brooks reviewed stakeholder and public engagement findings, highlighting strong support for transforming City-Brooks Park into a regional destination with expanded recreation, improved connectivity, enhanced access to the water, and more community-focused programming. Feedback also emphasized maintaining golf while optimizing its footprint, preserving the park's character, and creating a vibrant civic space that better serves surrounding neighborhoods.

ii. Emerging Plan Concepts

Josh Brooks presented the planning framework developed from stakeholder feedback, including guiding principles, ten "bold moves," and two preliminary concept alternatives. The framework emphasizes improving connectivity, enhancing recreation and lake access, revitalizing Brooks Park, maintaining golf with a reduced footprint, and creating vibrant community destinations. He noted that the concepts are preliminary and will continue to be refined before being presented to the public.

iii. Discussion

Committee members discussed the preliminary park concepts, expressing both enthusiasm and concerns about proposed changes. Topics included maintaining a functional golf course, improving connectivity and bicycle access, evaluating traffic impacts, and refining parking and roadway designs. Members emphasized the importance of broader community engagement—particularly with surrounding neighborhoods—and encouraged the project team to continue developing phased implementation strategies and funding approaches. Josh Brooks noted that implementation will require coordination among multiple organizations and confirmed that additional stakeholder and public meetings are planned to gather feedback on the evolving concepts.

IV. New Business – NONE

V. Committee Member Questions

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 4:00 p.m., Approved by unanimous consent

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Angela M. Harms". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Angela Harms
BREC Director of Planning & Engineering