

Houston Parks and Recreation Department

NATURE PRESERVE ORDINANCE

Presented to Quality-of-Life Committee Meeting

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July 27, 2022



MAYOR SYLVESTER TURNER



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NATURE PRESERVE ORDINANCE OVERVIEW

The purpose of this ordinance is to preserve city-owned natural areas for the protection of ecological communities and native wildlife and for the ecosystem services they provide to the City of Houston.

NATURE PRESERVE ORDINANCE OVERVIEW

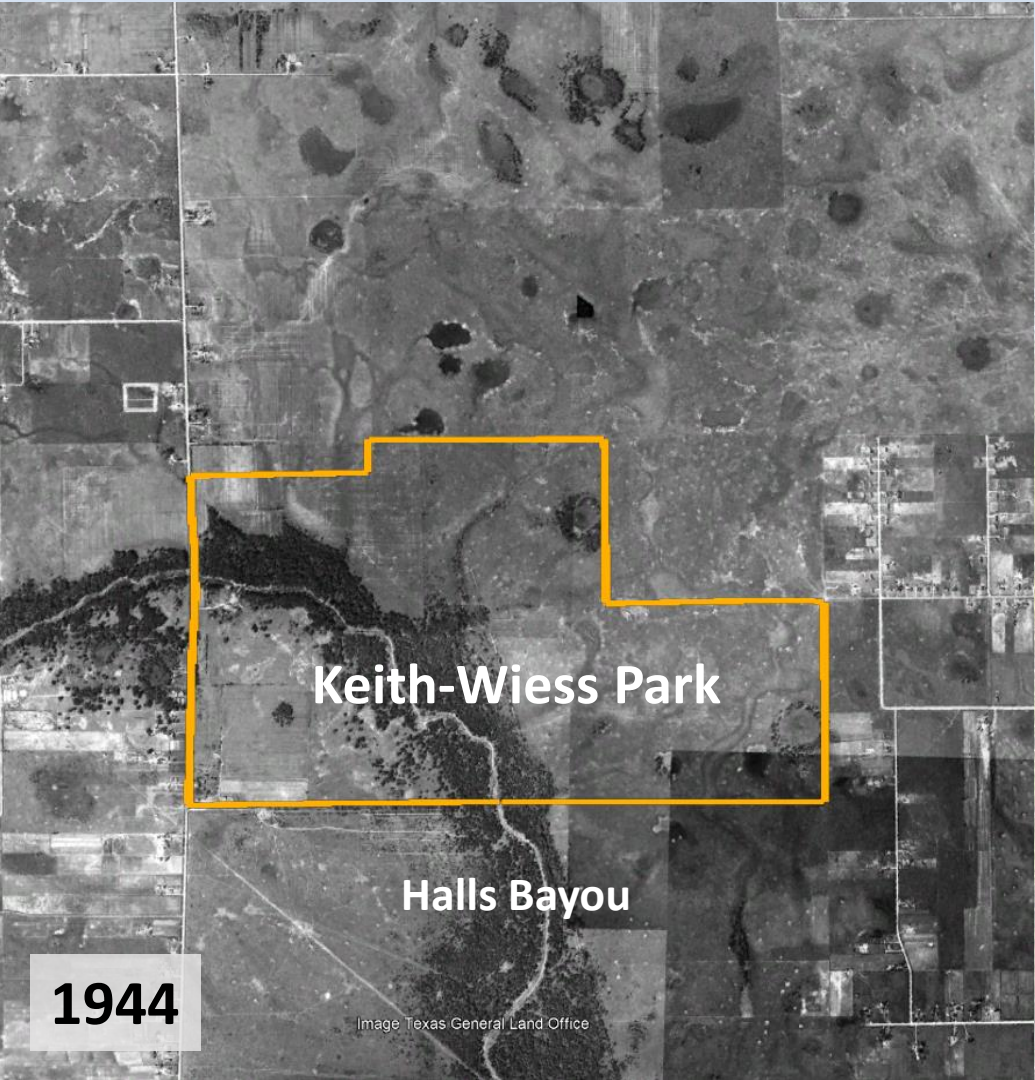
26 parks contain nature preserves of 7,423 acres which were selected by the HPARD Natural Resources Management Program based on significant natural resources:

- *Threatened ecosystems*
- *Important water resources*
- *Locally rare plant and wildlife populations*

Resilient Houston: “51.1 Lead by example by conserving city park land as nature preserves.”

Houston Climate Action Plan: Energy Transition Goal 3- “Restore, Protect, and Enhance Houston’s Natural Ability to Capture and Store Carbon.”

HOUSTON'S HABITATS



MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- *Preserve the local plants, wildlife, and natural resources, to maintain the biological diversity and long-term sustainability of the area's ecology.*
- *Preserve the aesthetic values of the area for all to enjoy and to contribute to the quality of life of the community.*
- *Provide a variety of opportunities for passive recreation.*
- *Support tourism in the community by providing public outdoor educational opportunities for visitors.*
- *Restore habitat in degraded areas of the preserve to as close to its undisturbed condition as possible by reestablishing diverse plant species and native ecosystem processes.*



REGULATIONS

Development is limited to:

- *Designated trails*
- *Benches*
- *Signage*
- *Trash cans*
- *Bird-friendly lighting*
- *Stormwater wetlands*

Additional rules:

- *Visitors must stay on trails*
- *Mountain biking prohibited*
- *No easements*



NATURE PRESERVE USES

Research



Trails



Bird Watching



Volunteering



Outdoor Education



NATURE PRESERVE BENEFITS

- *Flood prevention*
- *Educational opportunities*
- *Increased quality of life for residents*
- *Improved water quality*
- *Wildlife habitat*
- *Preserved natural heritage*
- *Carbon storage and air quality improvement*
- *Reduction of the urban heat island effect*

Resilient Houston Action 26.3: Promote natural infiltration and treatment of stormwater by wetlands, prairies, and woodlands.

"... Wetlands, prairies, and woodlands provide critical flood risk reduction by retaining stormwater on site and encouraging infiltration through the soil for plant absorption or groundwater recharge."

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Financial- Capital Expenditure, Operations and Maintenance, Replacement Cost

Social- Property Value, Heat Island, Recreational Value, Education, Flood Risk, Public Health

Environmental- Carbon Reduction, Air Pollution Reduction, Biodiversity, Water Quality



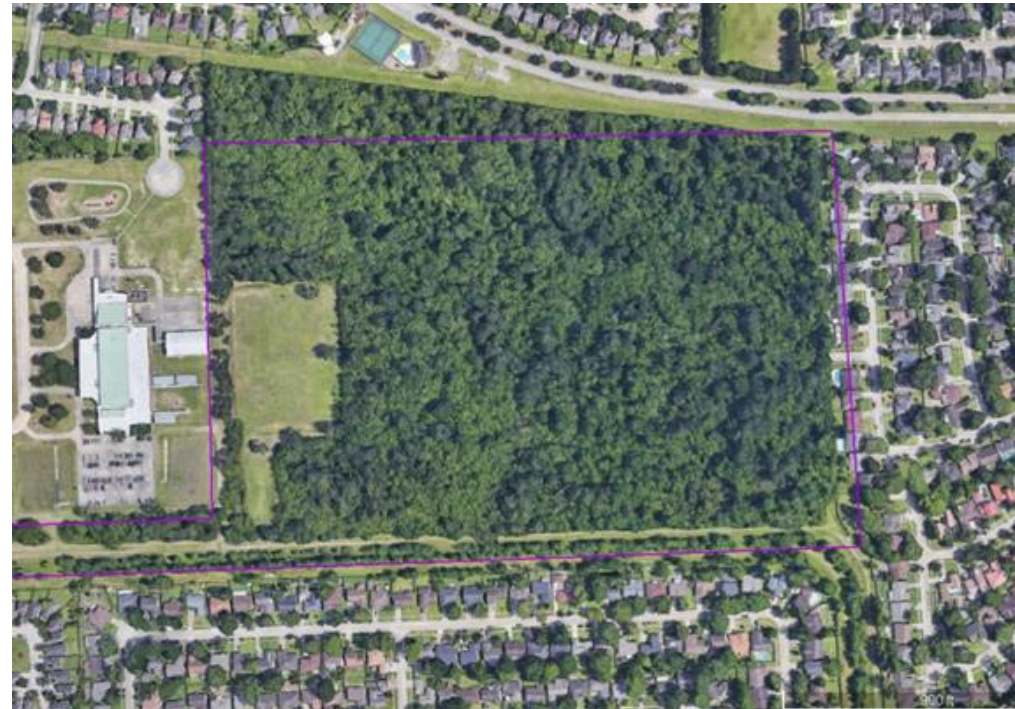
COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS - EXAMPLE

West Mount Houston Park

Triple Bottom Line - Financial, Social and Environmental

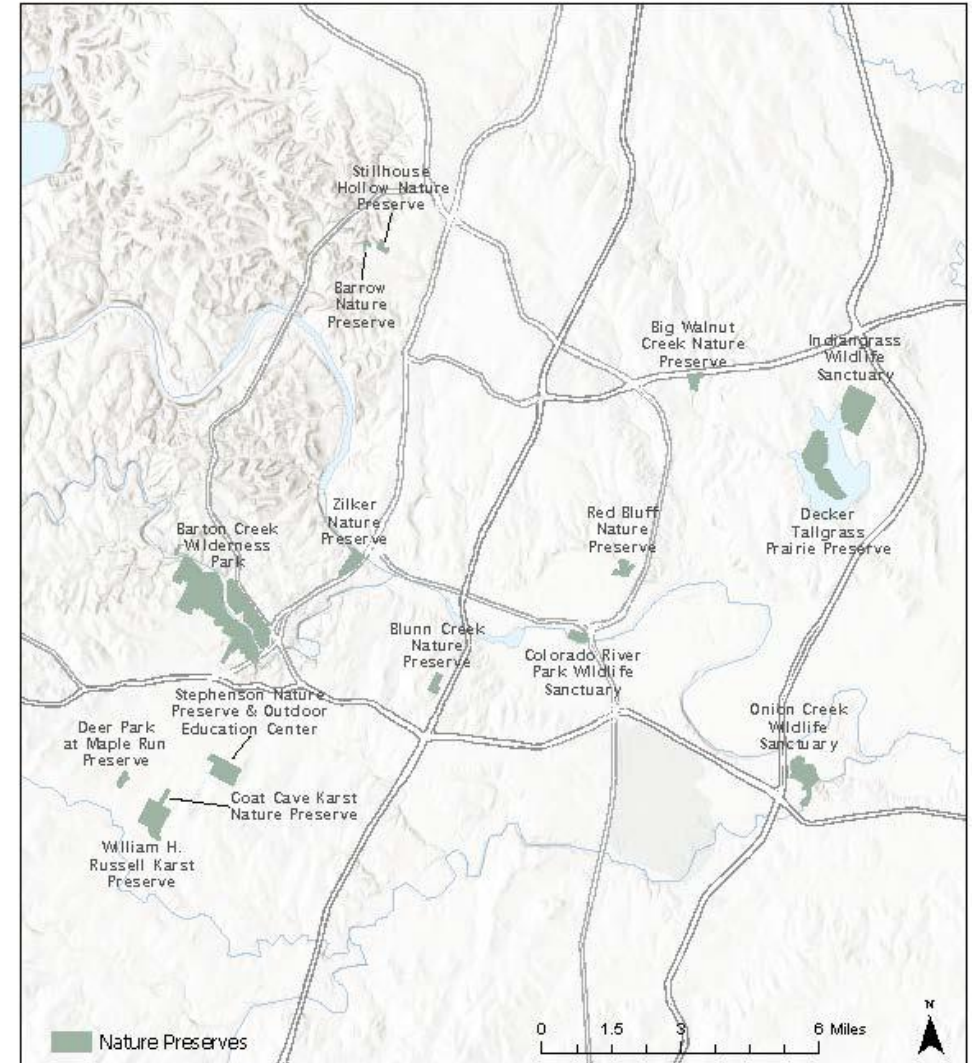
(\$27.2M)

\$1.7M



EXAMPLE OF OTHER CITIES

- **Austin, TX**
 - Began in 1935
 - Preserves of 2,200 acres
 - Ordinance: “NATURE PRESERVE means a parcel of land or place designated for the protection and preservation of wildlife, including a wildlife sanctuary, and unique ecological and scenic features.” (§ 8-1-1)
- **Miami, FL**
 - 98 preserves
 - 26,000 acres
- **New York City, NY**
 - 135 Parks
 - 12,300 acres
- **Chicago, IL/Cook County**
 - 70,000 acres



Austin Nature Preserves

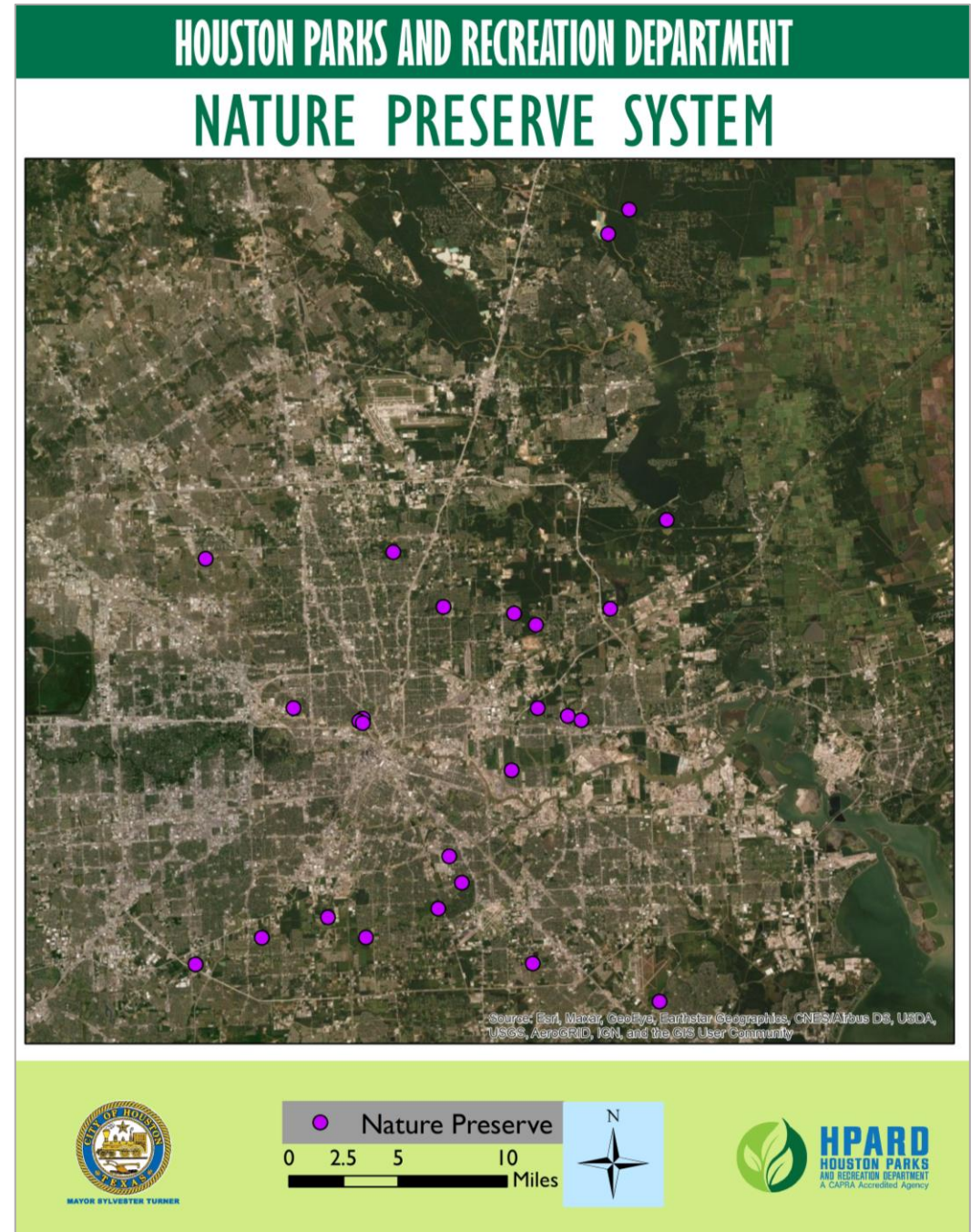
September 30, 2019

The Austin Nature Preserve Systems are a special set of environmental areas. Due to these sensitive areas, PARD manages these spaces with care by excluding dogs and cycling. Please enjoy these spaces as natural areas where one can connect with nature.

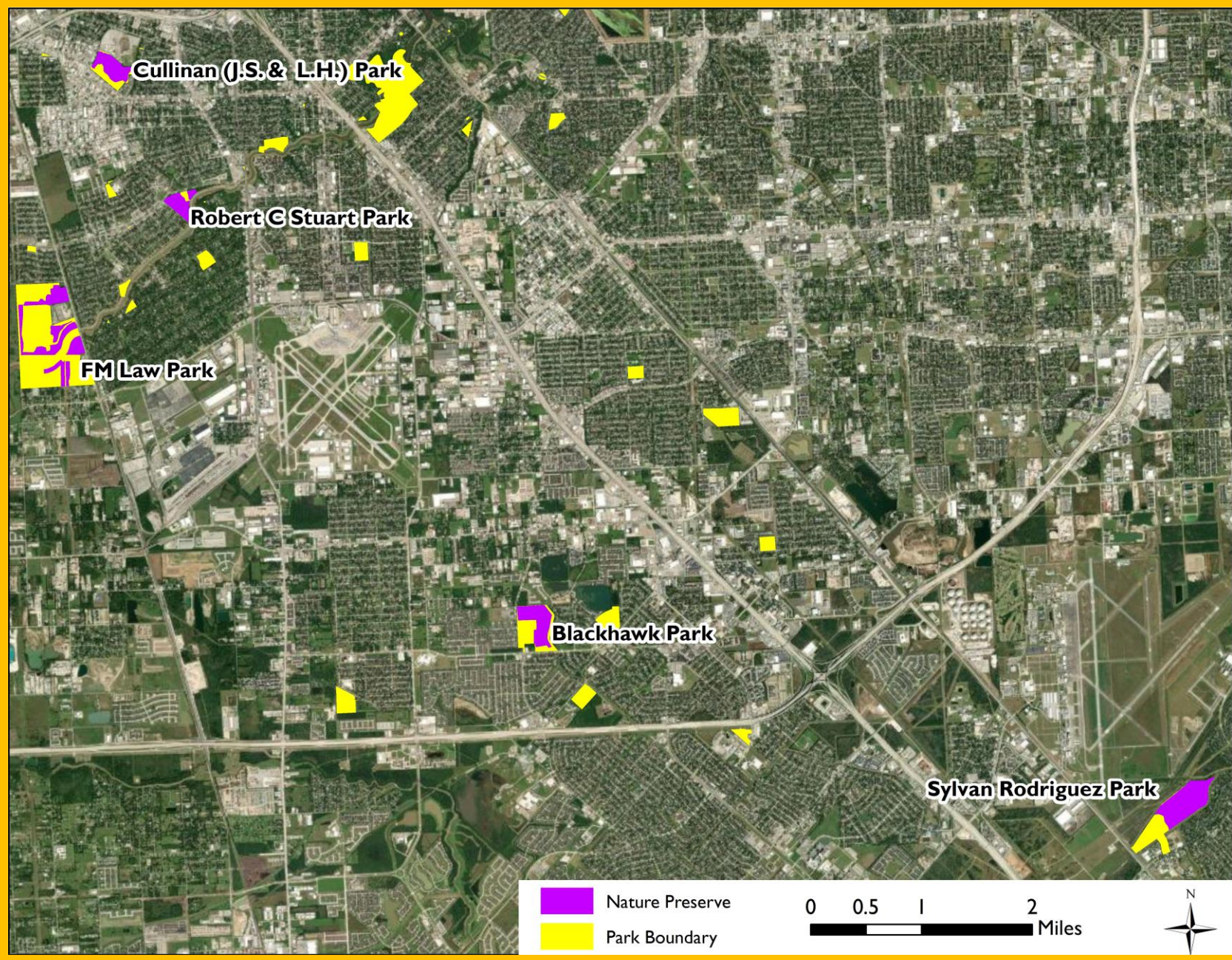
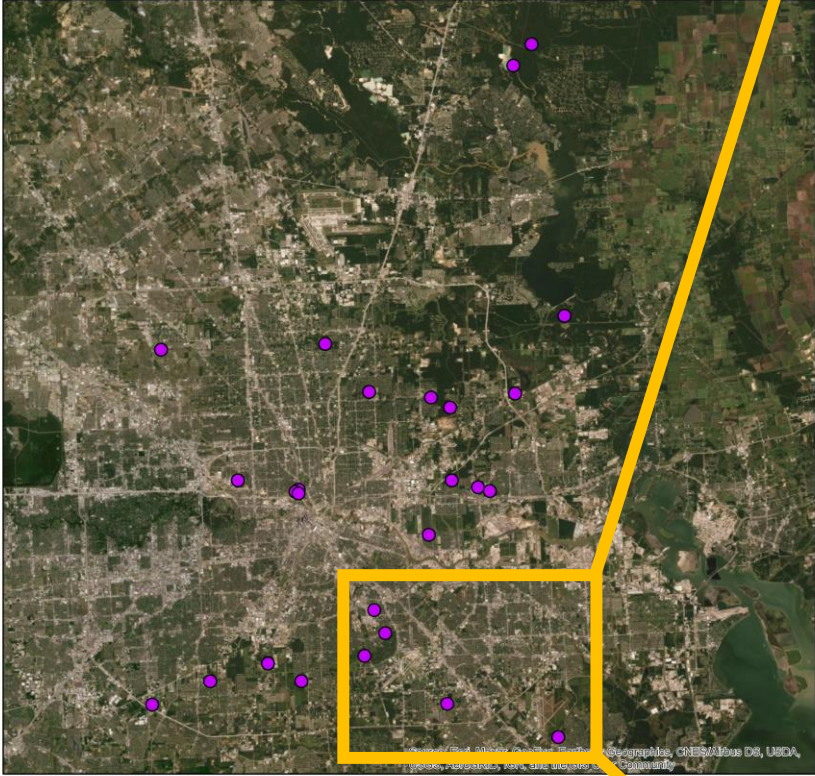
This map has been produced by the Parks and Recreation Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

PROPOSED LOCATIONS FOR THE CITY OF HOUSTON

1. Blackhawk Park
2. Brock Park
3. Cambridge Village Park
4. Clinton Park
5. Crooker/Moody Park
6. Cullinan (J.S. & L.H.) Park
7. East Tidwell Park
8. Eisenhower Park
9. Farnsworth Park
10. FM Law Park
11. Freed Art & Nature Park
12. Furman Street Greenspace
13. Herman Brown Park
14. Keith-Wiess Park
15. Lake Houston Wilderness Park
16. Maxey Park
17. Robert C. Stuart Park
18. Sheldon Park
19. South Main Estates
20. Sylvan Rodriguez Park
21. Taylor (E.R. And Ann) Park
22. The Lorraine Cherry Nature Preserve
23. Tidwell Park
24. West Mount Houston Park
25. White Oak Parkway
26. Woodland Park



HOUSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT NATURE PRESERVE SYSTEM



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● Nature Preserve
0 2.5 5 10 Miles



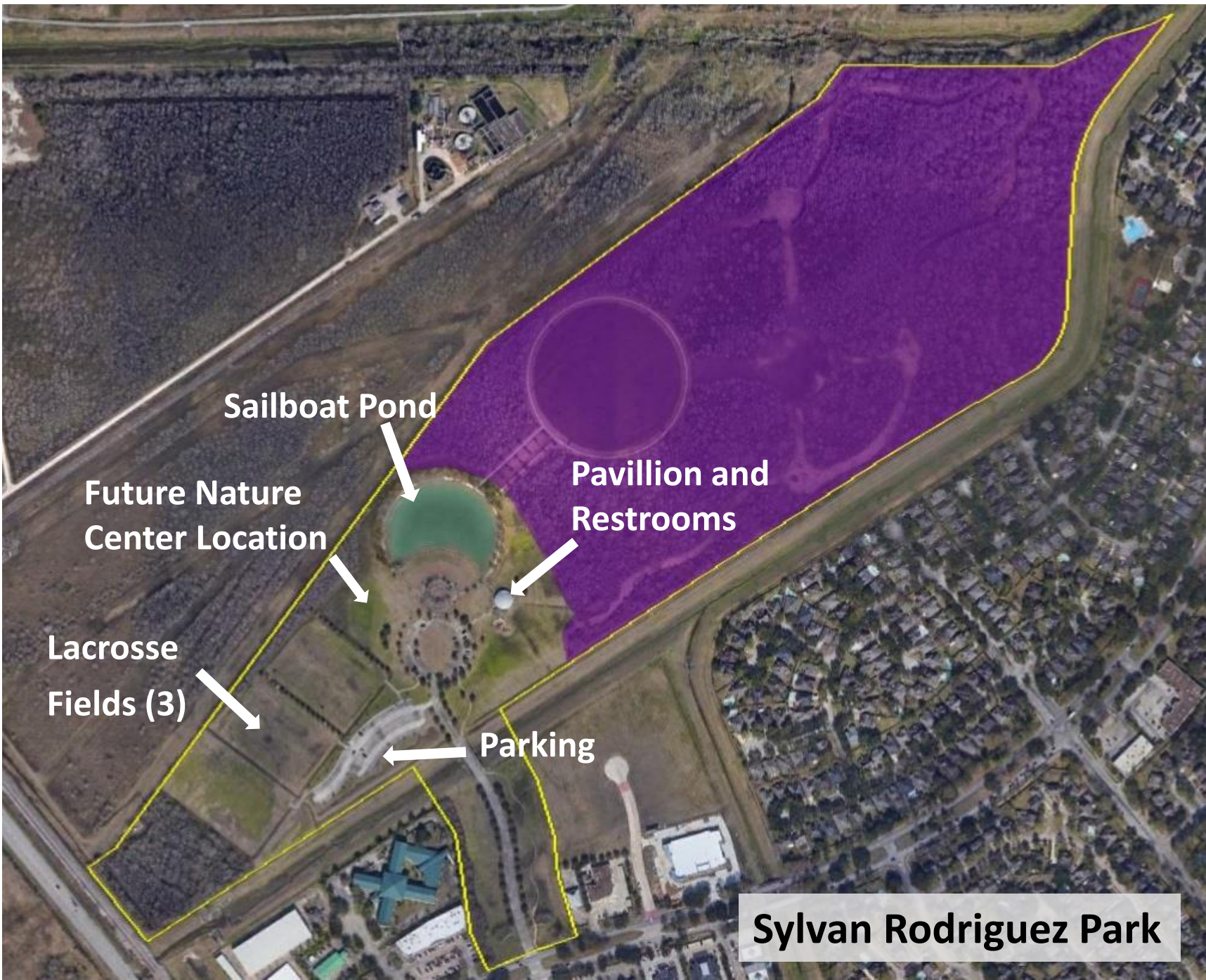
■ Nature Preserve
■ Park Boundary

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



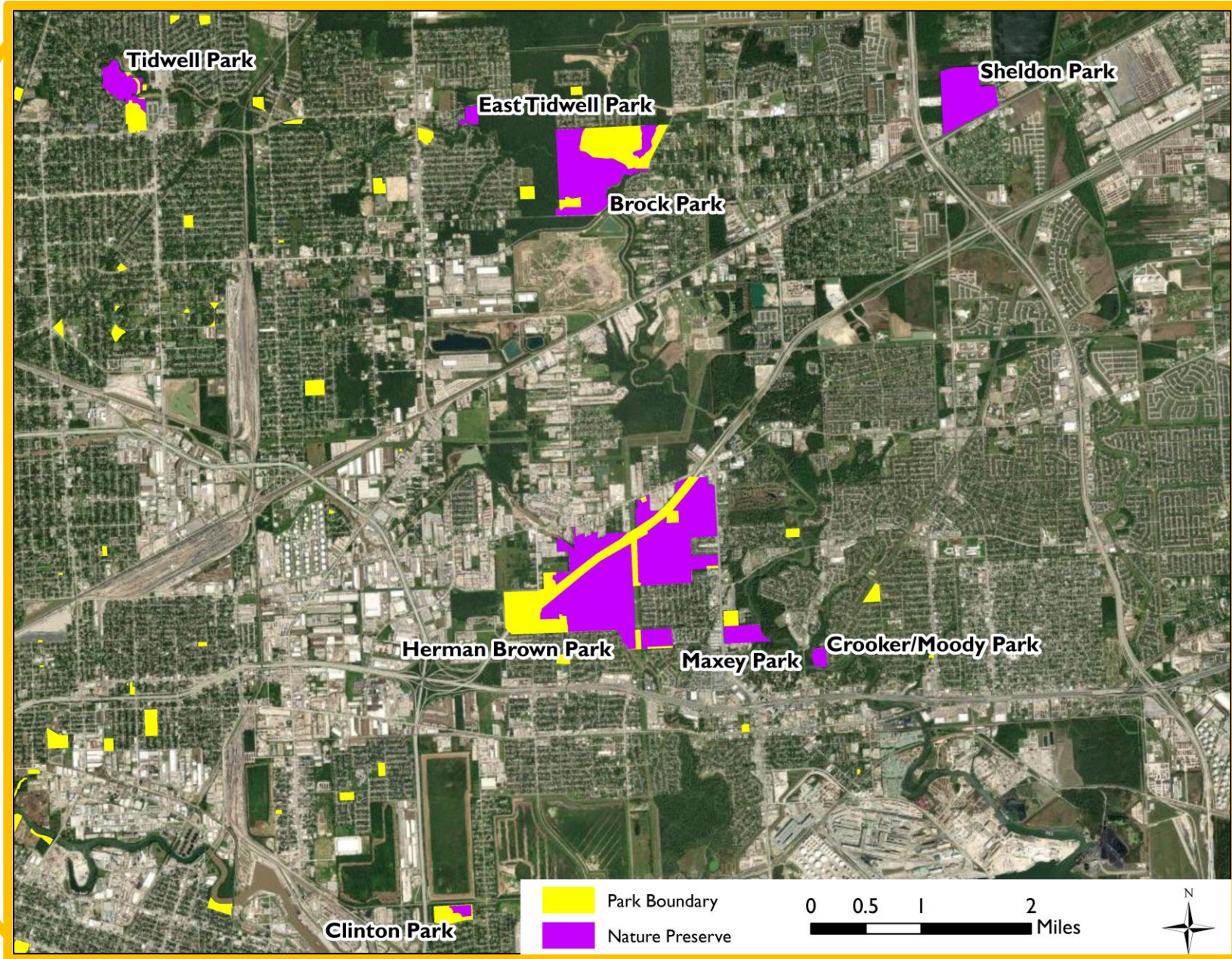
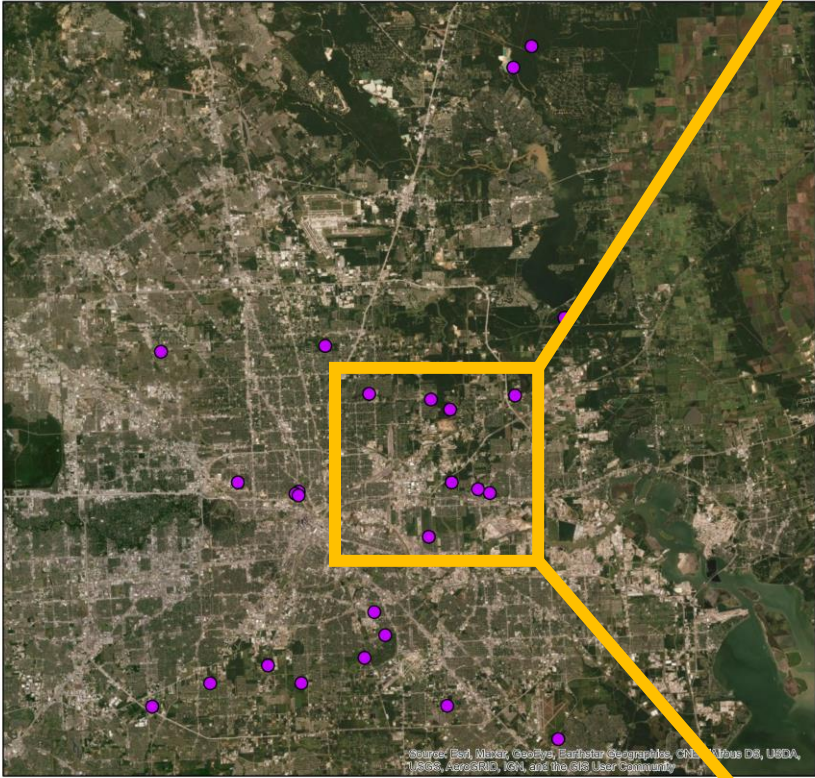
Sylvan Rodriguez Park



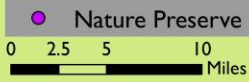


Sylvan Rodriguez Park

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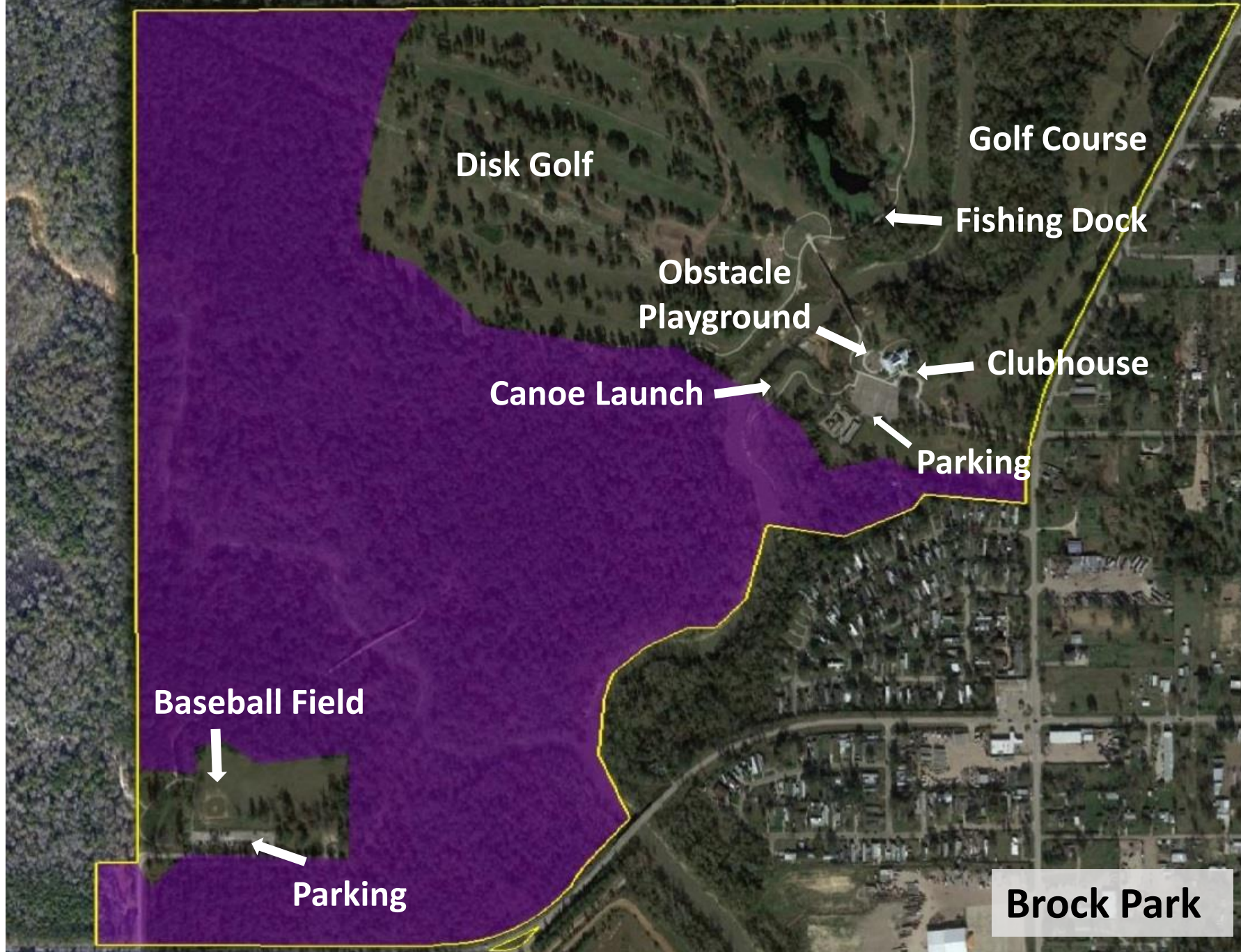


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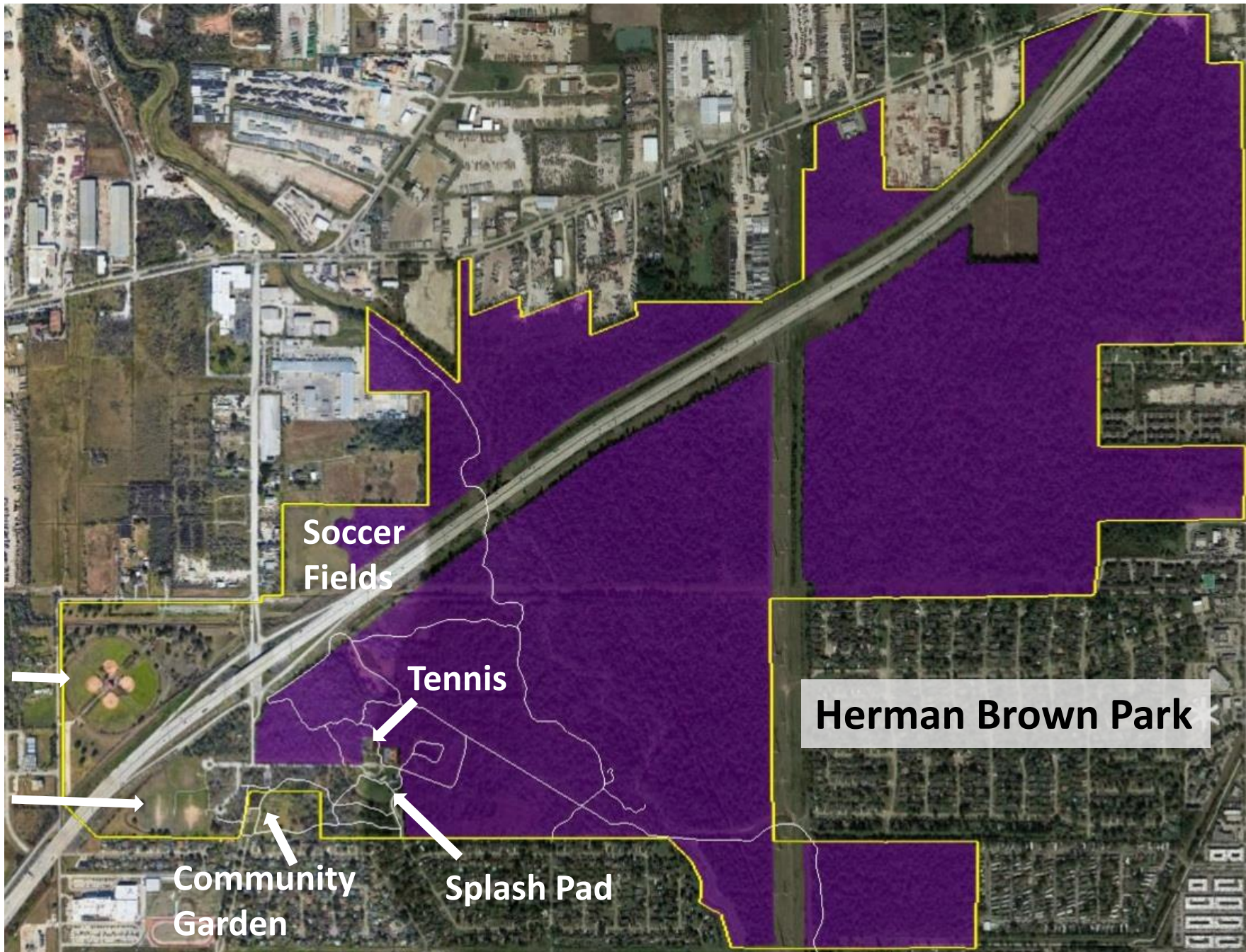


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Soccer
Fields

Tennis

Herman Brown Park

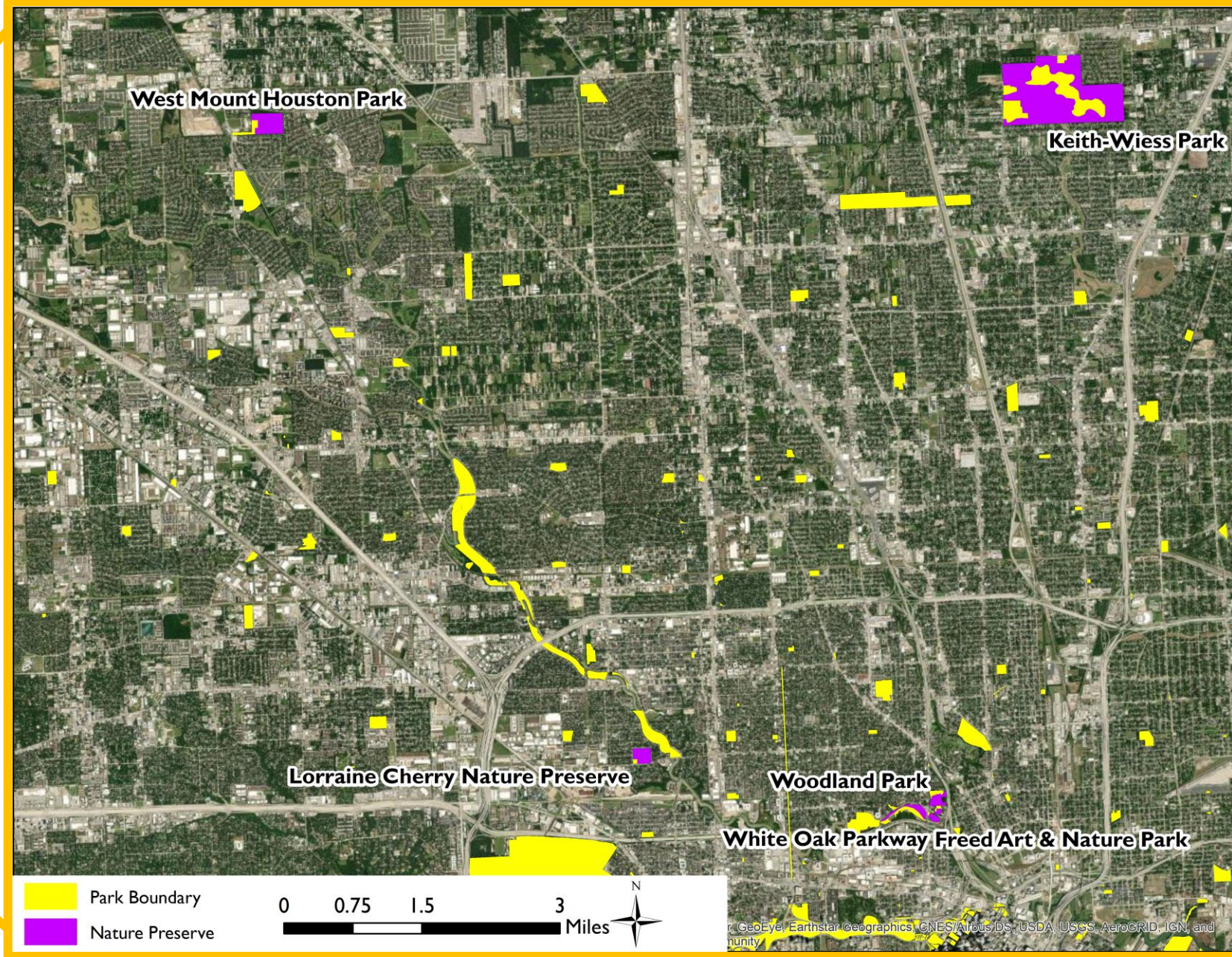
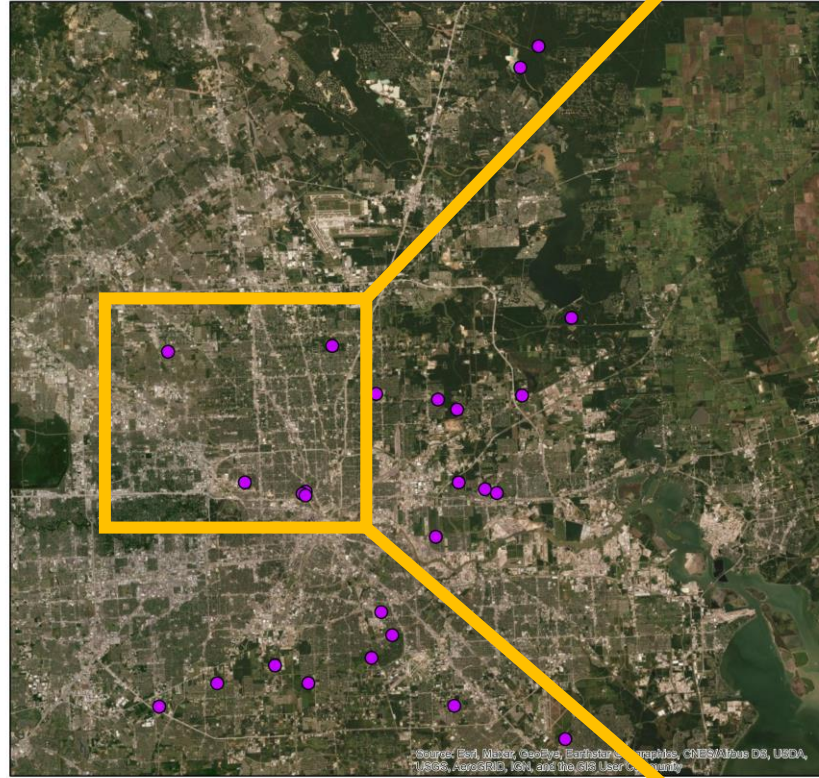
Community
Garden

Splash Pad

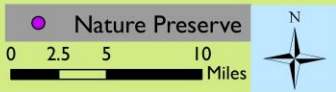
Baseball
Fields (4)

Soccer
Fields (3)

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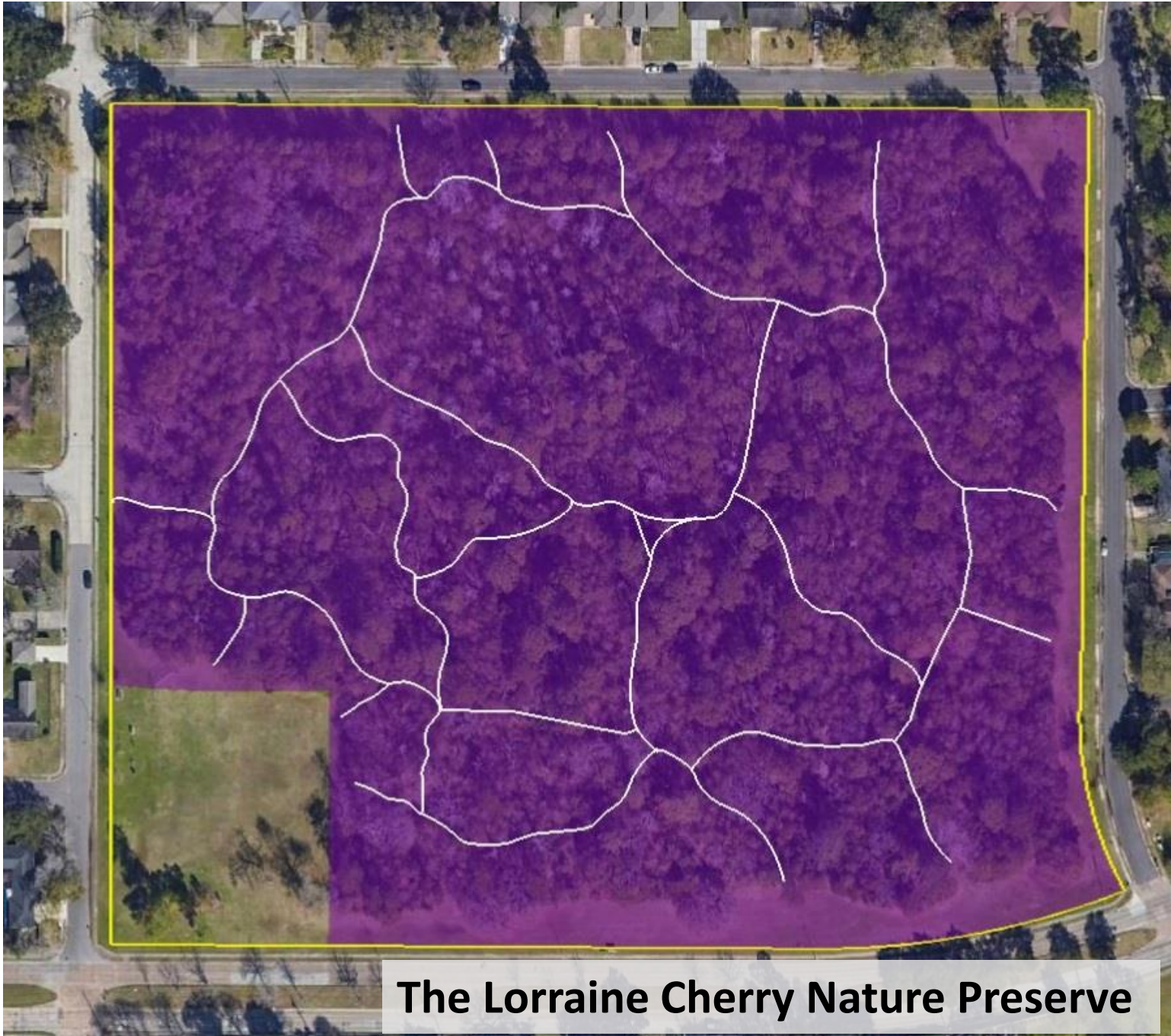


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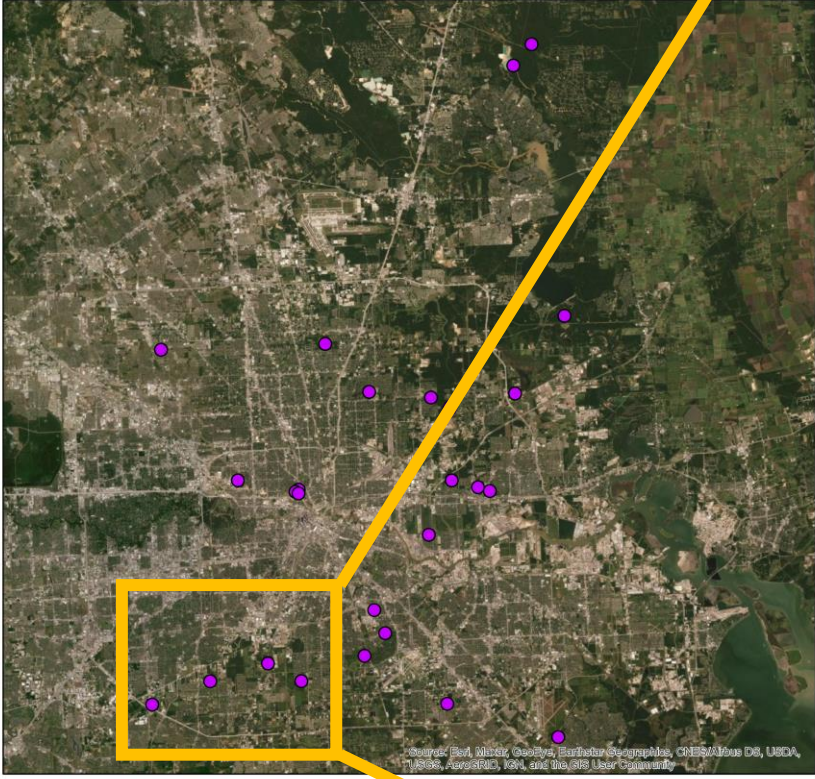
White Oak Parkway



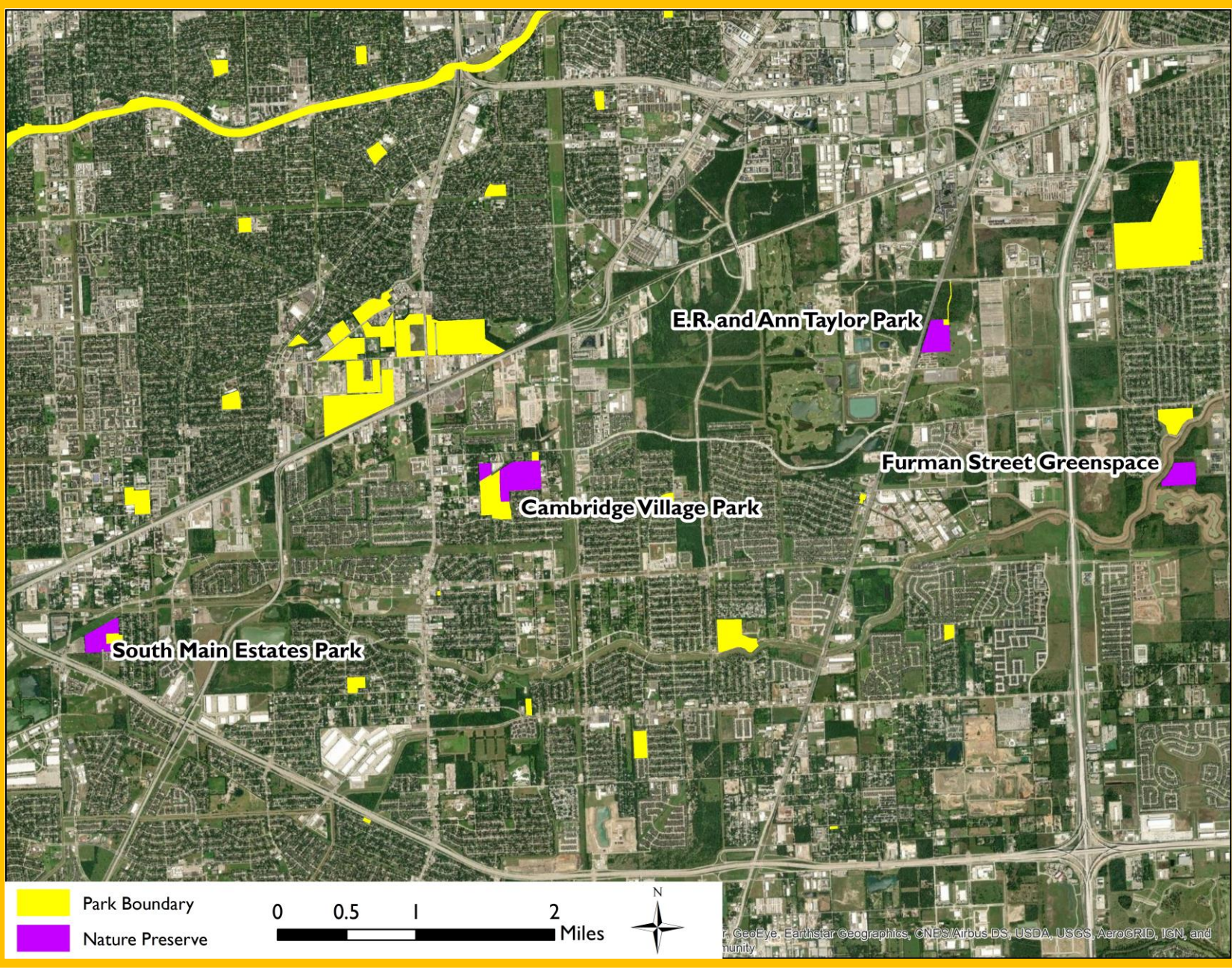
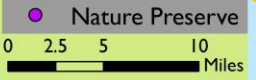


The Lorraine Cherry Nature Preserve

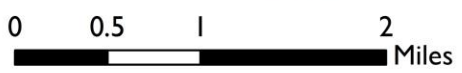
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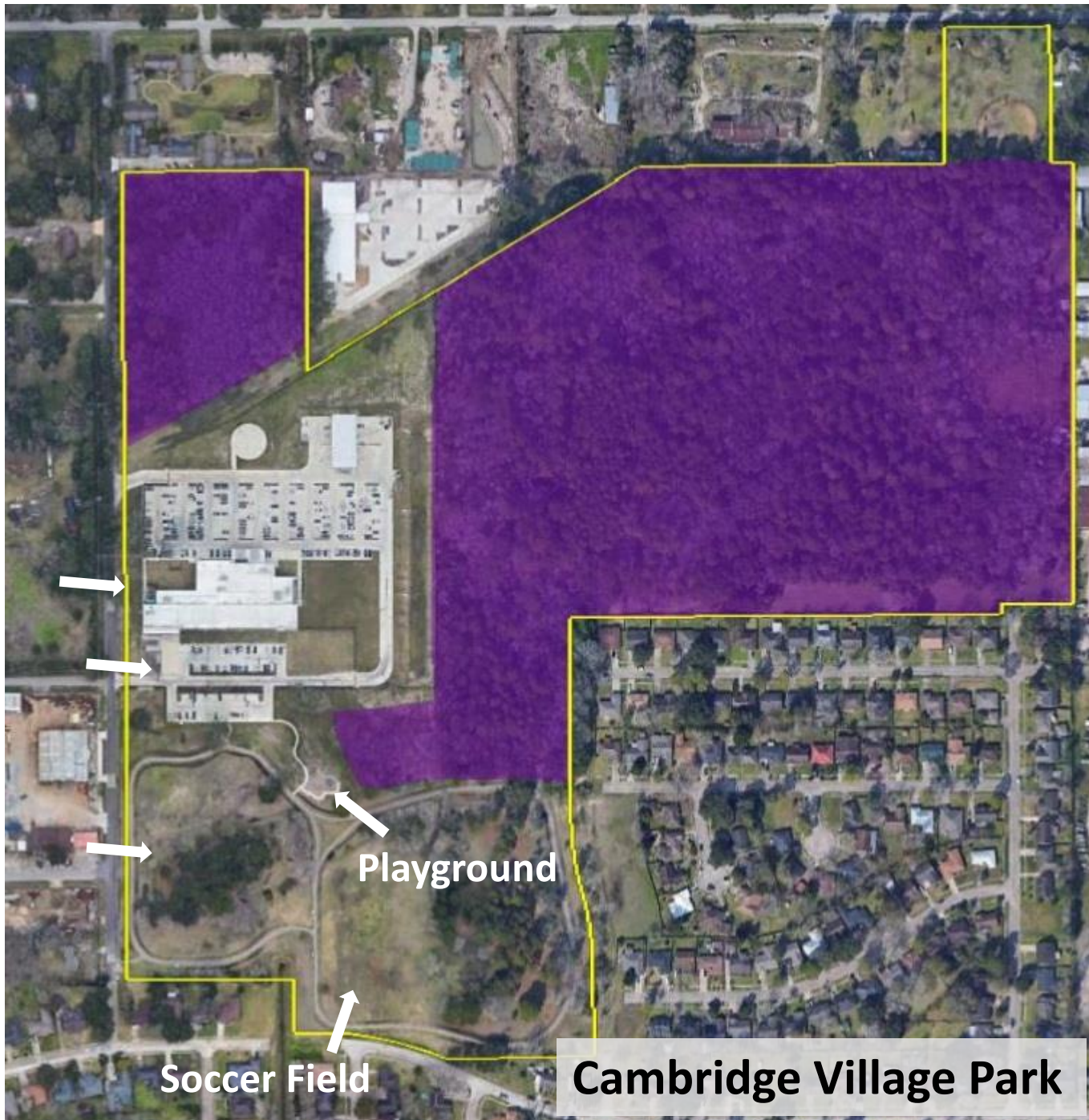
Source: Esri, Intel, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



- Park Boundary
- Nature Preserve



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Police Station

Parking

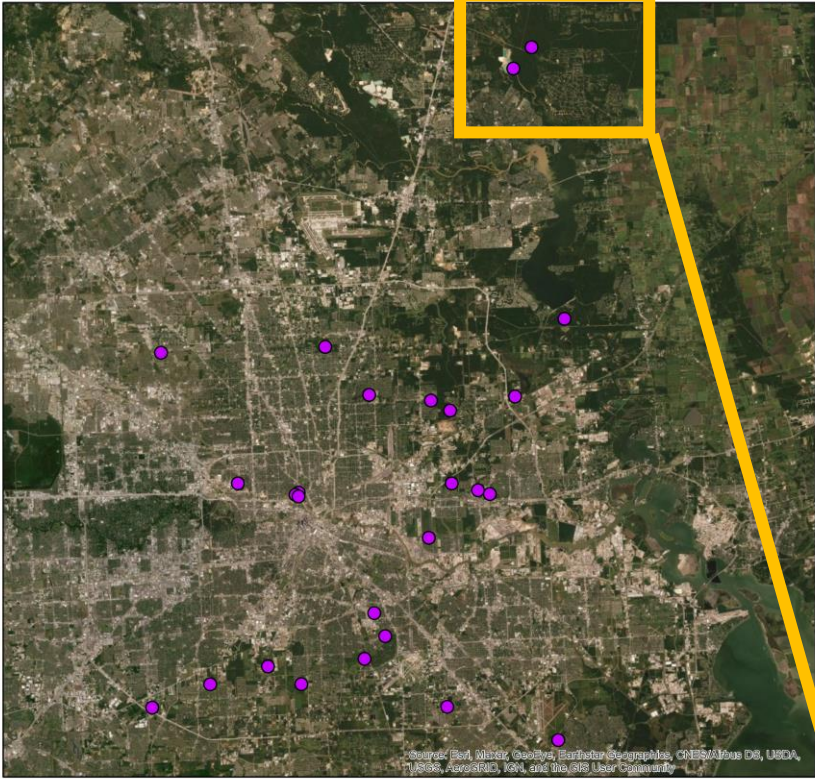
Future multi-use detention pilot project

Playground

Soccer Field

Cambridge Village Park

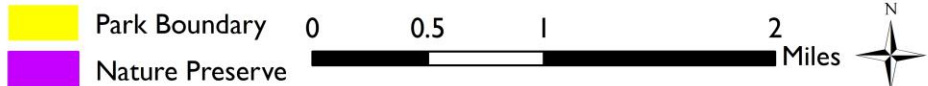
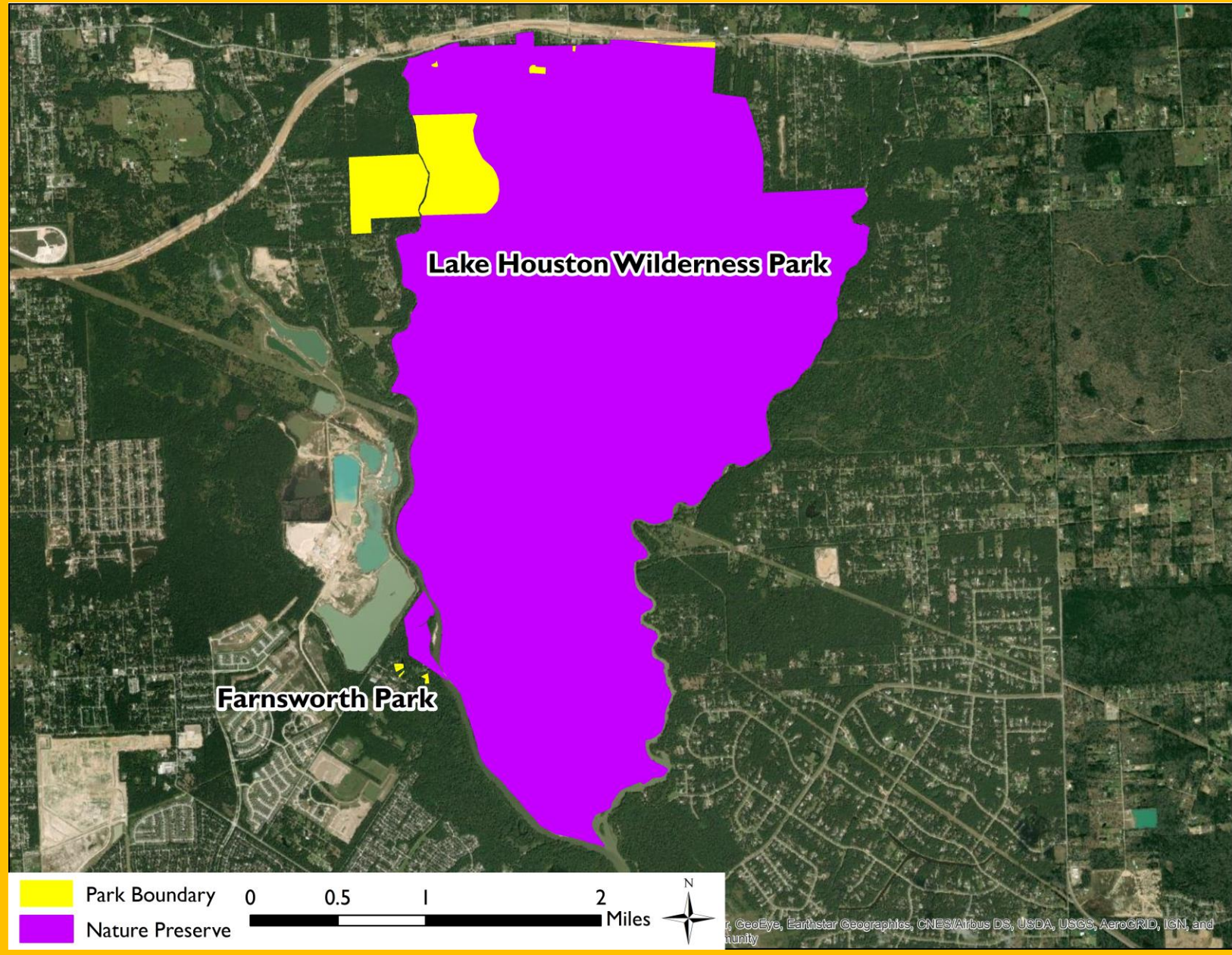
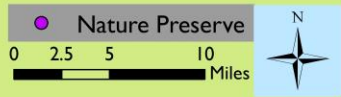
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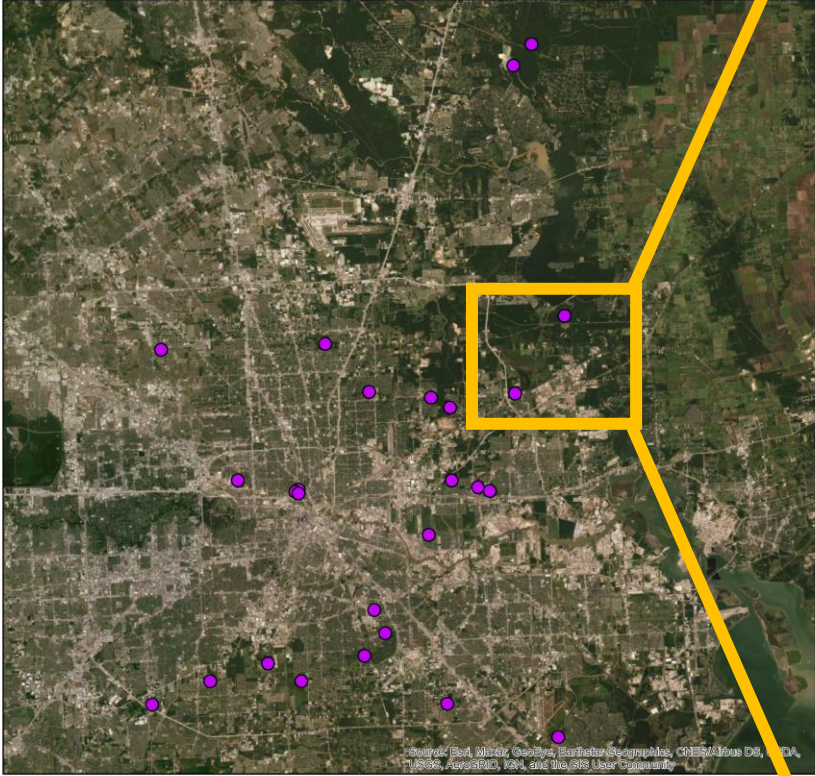
Lake Houston Wilderness Park



Lake Houston Wilderness Park



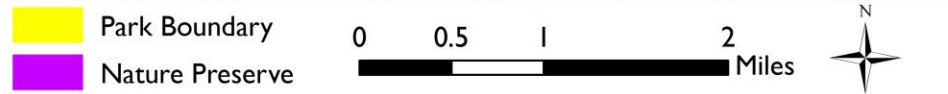
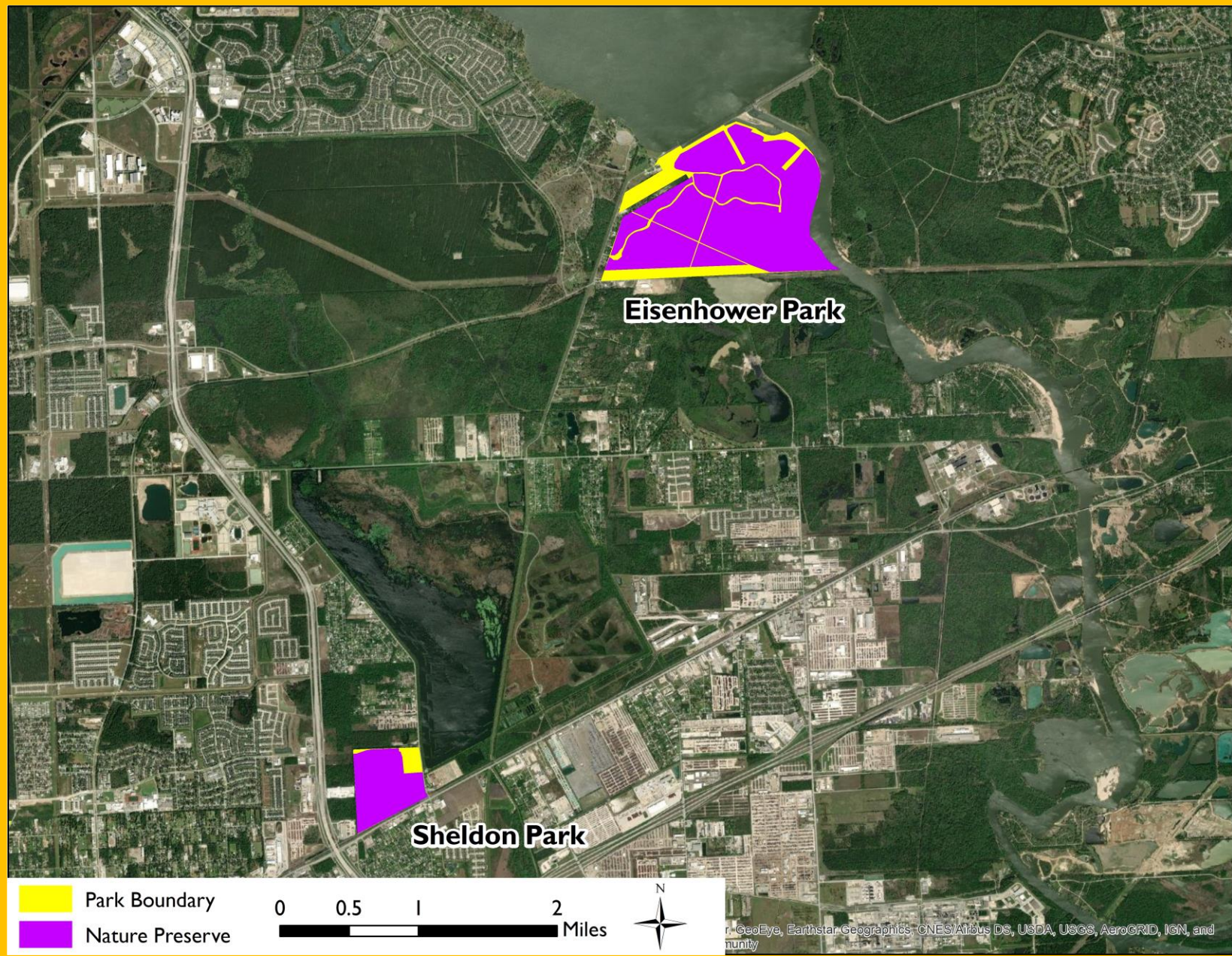
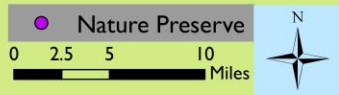
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THANK YOU



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