

Agenda

- Presentation for PARs Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities and Programs (LRP) – 15 minutes
- Q & A – 5-10 minutes

The Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities and Programs will be referenced as the LRP

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/longrangeplan.htm>

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Purpose of the LRP

- Guide for future growth and development of Austin's parks and recreation system
- Covers the years 2011-2016
- Responds to citizens needs for parks, trails, programs, preservation of environmental and ecologically sensitive areas unique to the region, park standards, best management practices (BMP), land stewardship and national and departmental standards
- Provides an assessment of the Department's existing land, facilities and programs
- Update the 1998 Long Range Plan for Land and Facilities



Definitions and Standards

Definitions and Standards

- Park definitions and standards are:
 - Based on an analysis of various standards used by communities across the country and by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)
 - Guidelines for the acquisition and development of parks
 - Assist PARD in measuring its progress towards the equitable distribution of recreation resources
 - Guiding policy decisions on future resource allocation
 - Serve as a basis for determining and prioritizing needed park construction projects and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) bond funding necessary for their execution



Definitions and Standards

- **Metropolitan:**
 - Greatest diversity of recreational experiences
 - 201+ acres
 - Service Area: City-wide
- **District:**
 - Include major indoor and outdoor facilities
 - 31 - 200 acres
 - Service Area: 2 mi radius
- **Neighborhood & School:**
 - Close to home
 - 2 - 30 acres
 - Service Area: 2 mi radius
- **Special:**
 - Serve a specific function or protect a special feature
 - Varies due to diverse user groups
 - Service Area – various however often city-wide
- **Urban & Neighborhood Pocket:**
 - In locations where public green space is limited
 - up to 1.99 acres
 - Service Area – less than 1/4-mi radius



Definitions and Standards

- Greenways:

- Multi-functional linear park systems that often link to other types of parks, serve as wildlife corridors, provide areas for flood control, means of preserving water quality, contain routes for alternate modes of transportation and function as a possible utility corridor
- Minimum width of 50' however greater is more desirable
- Service Area – various due to size of feature

- Park Trail:

- Multi-purpose trails are located within parks, greenways, and natural resource areas

Multi-Use Trail (all users except equestrian):

- Urban – 12' width
- Suburban – 10' wide
- Rural – 8' wide



Existing
Facilities

Existing Facilities

Austin's Park and Recreation System has Over 18,000 Acres that include water recreation areas and:

- Over 115 miles of trails
- 1 Blueway / Paddle trail
- 24 Metropolitan Parks
- 13 District Parks
- 74 Neighborhood Parks
- 20 School Parks
- 38 Special Parks
- 20 Pocket Parks
- 40 Greenways
- 15 Nature Preserves
- 5 Golf Courses
- 4 Tennis Centers
- 50 Aquatic Facilities
- 20 Recreation Centers
- 3 Senior Activity Centers
- Designated over 5 City Cemeteries



Goals & Objectives

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives provide the basic framework for the Dept. and describe the ultimate outcomes the Dept. will achieve for its stakeholders

- Provide accessible parks and facilities to all citizens
- Provide a diversity and sufficiency of recreational opportunities
- Design and maintain parks and facilities to achieve environmental sustainability
- Foster collaboration, coordination, and partnerships throughout the community
- Employ an ongoing system of organizational evaluation
- Maintain fiscal responsibility throughout the Dept



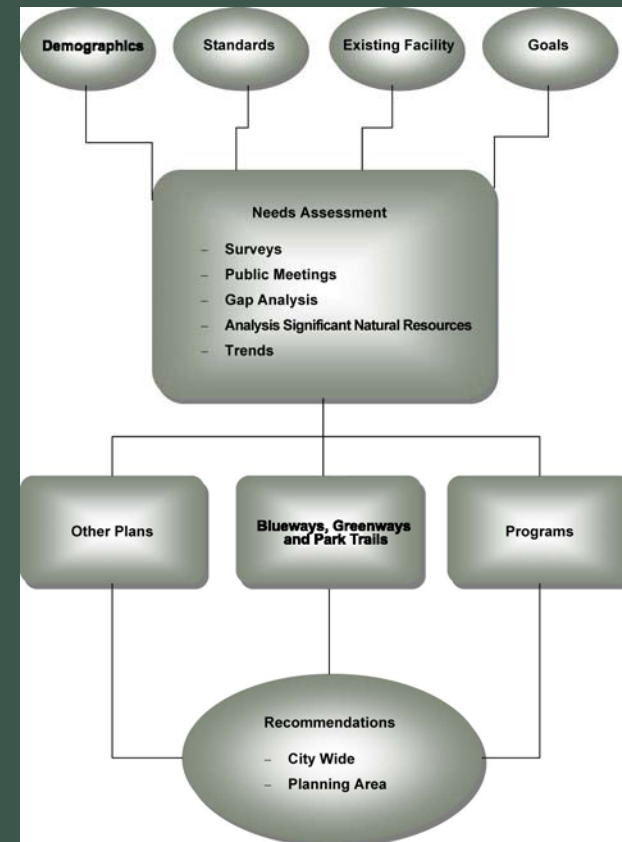
Planning
Process

Planning Process

Because the community has a broad range of issues and needs, a variety of approaches were used in the planning process which include:



Planning Process





Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment: Telephone Survey

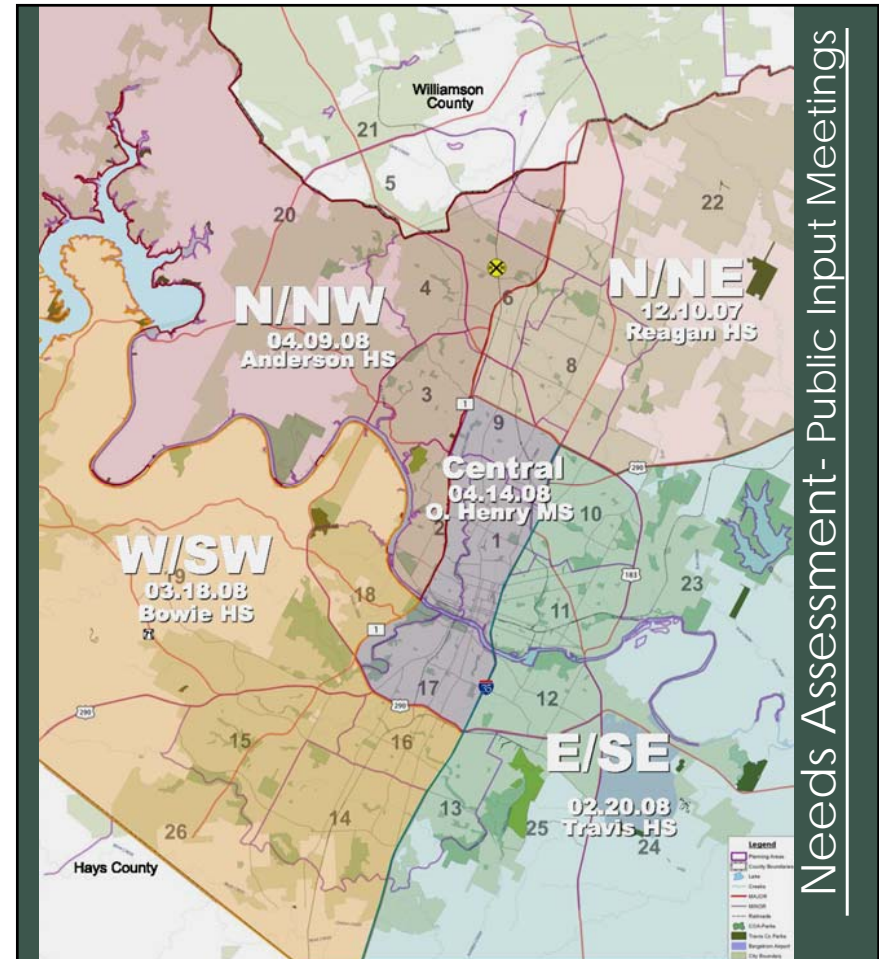
A random telephone survey of citizens of Austin & Travis County was conducted in 2004.

TOP 20 RECREATION ACTIVITIES CITY AND COUNTY WIDE TRAIL AND ROADWAY WALK-BIKE-JOG-RUN COMBINED			
Activity	Rating	Multiple Responses Allowed	Latent Interest (unmet demand)
All Trail, Roadway, Sidewalk Related*	1	81+	
Swimming in Outdoor Pools	2	67	8
Cultural activities or arts-indoors	3	57	13
General Fitness	4	56	
Cultural activities or arts-outdoors	5	55	17
Swimming in natural waters	6	54	13
Picnicking	7	52	17
Using playgrounds	8	48	7
Exercise equipment	9	43	23
Visiting nature/outdoor Ed. Center	9	43	30
Arts and Crafts	10	39	39
Weight training	11	38	18
Using water parks	12	37	18
Bowling	13	34	16
Residential Wildlife Viewing	13	34	13
Boating activities overall	14	33	
Painting/Drawing	15	31	16
Camping in a tent	16	30	21
Swimming in indoor pools	16	30	30
Aerobics	17	28	23
Fishing	18	27	20
Using community gardens	19	24	22
Basketball at outdoor courts	19	24	14
Miniature golf	19	24	24
Wildlife viewing trips - 1mi. Distance or more	20	23	23

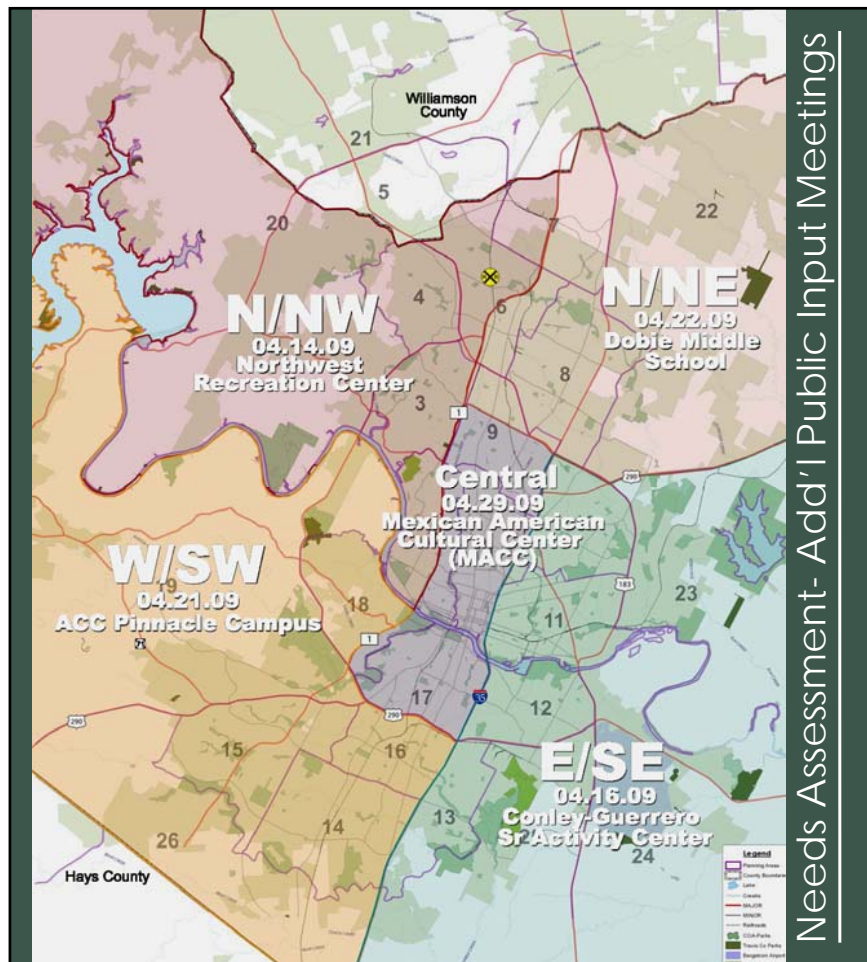
Needs Assessment: On-Line Survey

A recreation survey was conducted in March 2007 to determine recreation priorities for the Austin community.

- Walking and biking trails
- Nature and science center / Preserves – tie
- Museums
- Outdoor swimming pools / Running / Walking track - tie
- Community gardens
- Indoor exercise & fitness facilities / Cultural centers / Art galleries – tie
- Recreation Centers
- Indoor swimming pools
- Tennis Courts
- Performing arts / studios
- Playgrounds for children
- Dog play areas
- Indoor gymnasiums
- Outdoor court sports (basketball etc.)
- Senior activity centers
- Golf courses
- Youth baseball & softball fields
- Skateboarding parks
- Adult baseball & softball fields
- BMX parks



Needs Assessment- Public Input Meetings



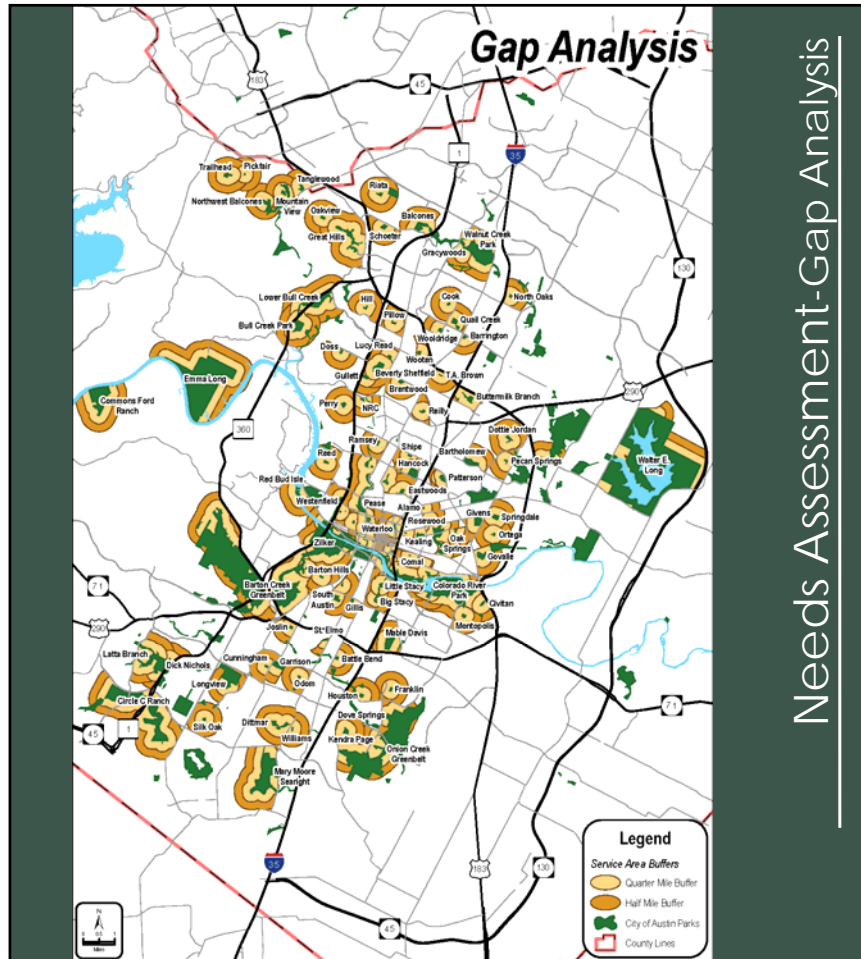
Needs Assessment- Add'l Public Input Meetings

Needs Assessment

Public Input Meetings' findings varied from meeting to meeting, however the common themes were:

- Develop parks (that are undeveloped or under developed)
- Continue trail development
- More off-leash areas
- Skate parks
- Pools
- Neighborhood tennis courts





Needs Assessment-Gap Analysis

Needs Assessment: Bonds Results

Needs Assessment was completed in 2004 & 2005:

- Compared departmental operating budget for Park Maintenance and Facilities Maintenance
- Rated age of the infrastructure
 - Determine if these components had reached an expected life expectancy
 - HVAC
 - Roofs systems
 - Health & safety needs

November 2006 Austin voters approved a city bond which included \$84 million dollars for PARD:

- complete renovations to existing facilities
- construct new facilities to meet expect growth



Needs Assessment

Trends

- Population Growth and Changing Demographics
- Commercialization of Parkland
- Saving / Creating Meaningful Open Space
- Nature and Resource-Related Activities
- Partners and Other Providers
- Favorite Activities
- Rise of Culture

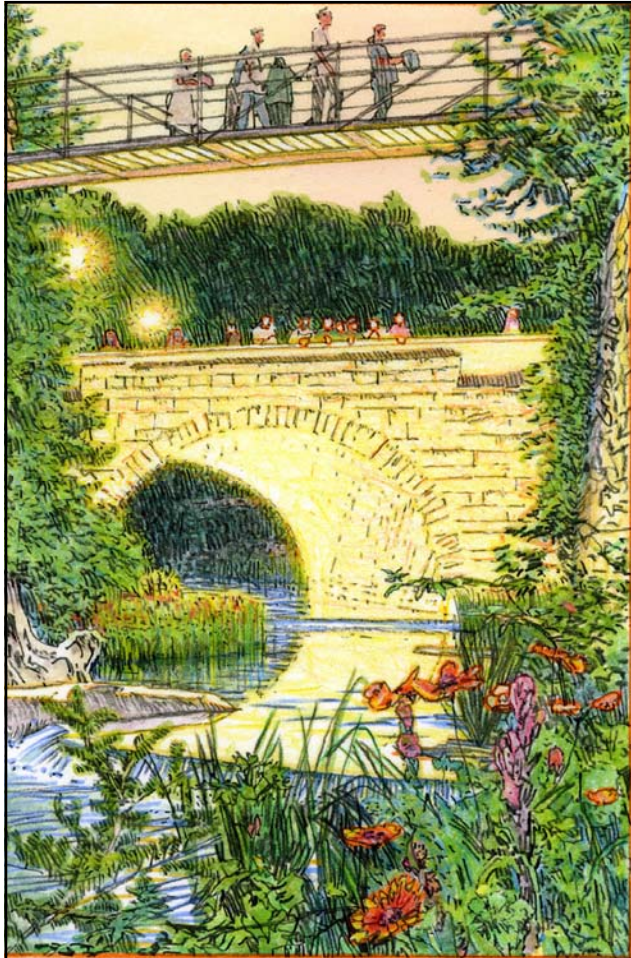


Needs Assessment

Trends *cont.*

- Non-Traditional Recreational Activities
 - Off-Leash Dog Areas (OLAs)
 - Community Gardens
 - X-Games
 - Community Wildlife Habitat
- Energy and Natural Resource Conservation Measures
- The New Downtown Austin and Urban Infill
- Challenges of Park Operations and Maintenance
- Rising Cost of Fuel
- The Economic Impact of Parks and Open Space





Relevant Plans

Relevant Plans

Summarization of the input from adopted neighborhood plans related to PARD:

- Protect and enhance all natural and environmentally-sensitive features
- Preserve and enhance neighborhood trees, green spaces, trails, gardens, existing parks and recreational facilities
- Preserve creek banks with low-impact, natural stabilization (no concrete or gravel gabions)
- Increase connectivity from neighborhoods to parks, greenways & trails
- Develop neighborhood pocket parks and greenways
- Install more park benches, picnic tables and checkerboard tables
- Increase amounts of mutt mitt / trash receptacles within parks, greenways & trails
- Promote existing and provide more recreational activities and programs for youth and seniors
- Provide opportunities for cultural arts, recreation and leisure activities/services for all ages



Relevant Plans

In addition to neighborhood plans, there are other planning growth initiatives that shape urban development, such as:

- North Burnet / Gateway (NBG)
- Transit Oriented Developments (TODs)
- The Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan (ATCP) Interim Update
- Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
- Downtown Austin Parks and Open Space Master Plan
- Waller Creek District Master Plan
- Watershed Protection Master Plan



Relevant Plans

- The Austin – Bastrop River Corridor Partnership
- Greenprinting
- Envision Central Texas
- Other Recreation Providers
 - Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)
 - Travis, Williamson and Hays Counties
 - Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs)
 - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
 - Y (formerly known as YMCA)
 - Public School Partnerships
 - Public/private parks





Blueways, Greenways, and Park Trails

Blueways, Greenways, & Park Trails

- **Blueways** - a river or creek that may serve as a wildlife corridor, a means of preserving water quality, & as a paddle trail.
 - Blueways, or Paddle Trails provide kayakers, canoeists and outdoor enthusiasts with many reasons to enjoy the outdoors including excellent fishing and bird watching opportunities.
 - In May 2009, TPWD designated Lady Bird Lake as the 18th Texas Paddling Trail
- **Greenways** — *(often called greenbelts)* a natural corridor that often follows a river, creek, ridge line, valley or other linear open space. Can serve multiple functions:
 - hike and bike trails
 - a linear park system
 - a wildlife corridor
 - an area for flood control
 - a means of preserving water quality
 - link bicycle and pedestrian throughout a community



Blueways, Greenways, & Park Trails

•Park Trails - provides a wide variety of trail types located within parks, greenways, and natural resource areas. Located within a mostly natural setting, park trails provide recreational opportunities and may also provide connectivity to other green spaces, neighborhoods, urban development, and alternative transportation modes outside of the park.

- Park Trail Corridor

- Improved Surface Trail
- Natural Surface Trail

- Other Modes

- Connector Trail
- Shared Use Path
- Bike Lane
- Bike Route
- Bikeway

- Special Use Park Trails

- Equestrian Trail
- Motorcycle Trail
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Nature Trail



Blueways, Greenways, & Park Trails

Greenways and Park Trails Public Input Findings – many citizens expressed a desire for better connectivity to parks from neighborhoods. Additional comments were for:

- Partnerships with the Austin Water Utility Watershed Protection & Development Review Department to maximize usage of their land for recreational purposes while preserving the land from development.
- Existing public drainage and utility easements are currently under review for potential connectivity to parks and neighborhoods. Responsible development of these and all lands must be carefully considered for sustainable trail development.



Blueways, Greenways, & Park Trails

Austin Trails Master Plan - April 2008, the Austin City Council passed a resolution mandating the creation of a comprehensive and coordinated trails map that shows the connection of the City of Austin's existing bicycle and pedestrian trails networks.

(<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/publicworks/bicycle-plan.htm>)

Regional Park Trails Master Plan - As Austin grows, its trail systems will extend and connect to surrounding counties and adjacent cities. There is a compelling need to coordinate with other governmental entities concerning their parks trails and bicycle plans.



Recreational, Environmental, and Cultural Programs Plan

Recreational, Environmental & Cultural (REC) Programs Plan

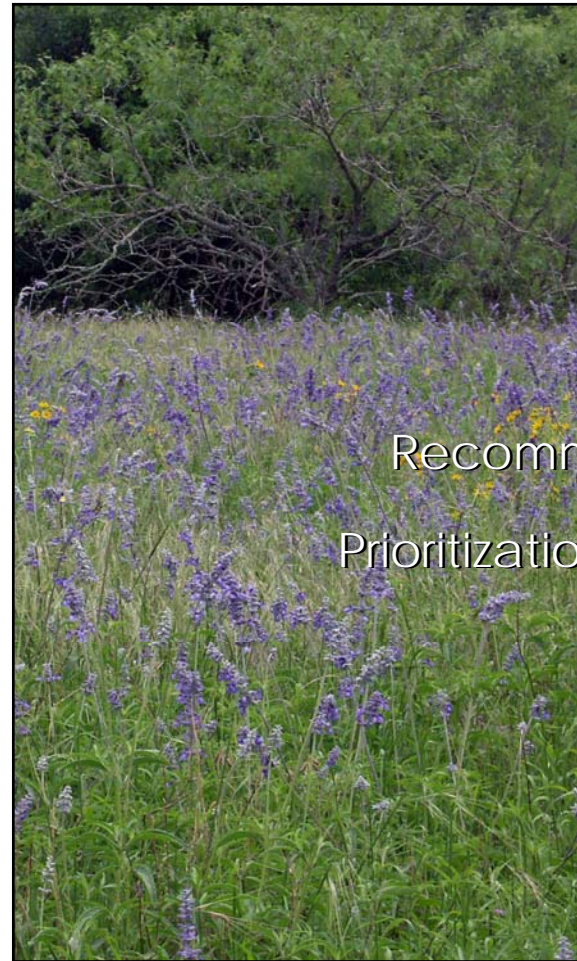
The REC was developed to address future trends as defined by the citizens' needs and meet the requirements of the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) for a Recreational, Environmental and Cultural Programs Plan.

This Recreational, Environmental and Cultural Programs Plan will:

- Define each Division's purpose statement
- Identify existing facilities and programs within the Recreational, Environmental and Cultural Programs System
- Establish goals
- Determine the programming needs of the citizens
- Establish recommendations



Recommendations
and
Prioritization of Needs



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

The plan is based on extensive analysis of the results of citizen surveys, feedback from public input meetings, demographics, void spaces within the Gap Analysis map, and other methodologies. The following recommendations represent the priorities for the Parks and Recreation Department's long range planning.

- Goals and Recommendations for Parkland Dedication - *address growing inner-city needs*
- Park Renovations - *growing need to repair, restore or replace older park facilities*
- Master Planning - *for future recreational development*
- The Downtown Area - *defined as MLK Blvd to the north, I-35 to the east, Lady Bird Lake to the south and Lamar Blvd to the west*



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

- City-Wide Recommendations *Cont.*
 - Park Trails and Greenways – *coordinate planning efforts & increase trail connectivity*
 - New Facility Distribution – *increase OLAs, skate parks, BMX parks & recreation complexes*
 - Facility Improvements – *ensure all existing & new facilities are safe, secure, barrier free & comfortable for all users*
 - Partnerships – *partner with school districts, other city dept & advocacy groups*
 - Asset Management – *consistently inventory, track & update all PARD assets*
 - FEMA Buyout – *acquisition of 410 properties at risk of severe creek flooding to be dedicated as parkland*
 - Energy, Natural Resource, and Water Quality Conservation Measures
 - Operational Issues – *increase operations & maintenance budget to meet national average*



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

- City-Wide Recommendations *Cont.*
 - Aquatics: *improve existing facilities & provide new types*
 - Tennis: *improve existing facilities & provide more*
 - Athletics: *renovate existing fields & provide more multi-purpose fields*
 - Golf: *increase the opportunity to play golf in all areas*
 - Playgrounds: *increase diversified play opportunities*
 - Recreation & Cultural Programs: *expand & promote outdoor & indoor programs*
 - Natural Resources: *restore degraded parkland*
 - Preserves: *improve security and trails, increase interpretive signage & operational support*
 - Community Gardens: *provide additional land for use*



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Planning Areas - For park planning purposes, the recommendations are broken down into 27 planning areas that encompass the entire city. The planning areas within the central core are then broken down further by the respective neighborhood planning areas. The following is the priority scoring breakdown followed by a synopsis of these recommendations.



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Scoring Methodology - To meet the maximum amount of the TPWD grant application requirements, each recommendation must have a priority ranking. In order to determine the ranking, each recommendation was scored based on the following scoring methods:

- Projects with some existing funding
- Consistent with Council Priorities
- Recommendations are consistent with PARD goals
- Consistent with the Gap Analysis Map
- Consistent with the Greenways Priority Acquisition
- Priorities listed in other adopted plans
- Public input meetings
- Surveys



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Urban Redevelopment - In response to the densification adjacent to the downtown area, the need for additional parkland and facilities is essential. In order to respond to this additional growth, the following priority projects are recommended:

- Implement Lady Bird Lake corridor improvements and enhancements
- Construct of the "Boardwalk" trail on Lady Bird Lake
- Develop Phases III and IV of Auditorium Shores
- Master Plan Zilker Metropolitan Park and implement improvements
- Implement Barton Springs Pool master plan and improvements
- Decommission Holly Street Power Plant and dedicate land as parkland
- Acquire and develop urban infill parks
- Continue development of Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metropolitan Park
- Daugherty Arts Center redevelopment and play area



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Park trail - related activities such as walking, running and biking continue to be the most popular recreational activities in the region. In response to this need, these trail projects are recommended:

- Develop Phase I & II of Walnut Creek Trails (*funded projects*)
- Implement Circle C trail extension (*funded project*)
- Connect Blunn Creek & West Bouldin Creek to Lady Bird Lake
- Slaughter Creek Greenbelt between Searight Park & IH-35
- Williamson Creek / Onion Creek system east of IH-35



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Park trail - *cont*

- Park trail connection from Dick Nichols District Park to Hampton Library
- Complete the Shoal Creek Trail gap at 5th Street
- Walk for a Day Phase I
- Oak Hill area
- Country Club Creek
- Bull Creek



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Parkland Acquisition

Public input and natural resource analysis has indicated a great need to capture the riparian zones of the Colorado River and its tributaries in rapidly developing areas in the eastern part of Austin and Travis County. Priority greenway acquisition is recommended for the following:

- Colorado River below Longhorn Dam
- Gilleland Creek
- Onion Creek
- Dry Creek system
- Marble Creek
- South Boggy Creek



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

The following greenway areas are recommended for continuing acquisition and to close the gaps within the existing greenways:

- Bull Creek
- Walnut Creek
- Slaughter Creek
- Williamson Creek



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

In addition to infill park acquisition in the urban core, there is a need to continue the acquisition of neighborhood and regional parks in developing suburban fringe areas. Parkland acquisition is recommended for the following areas:

- West of Oak Hill
- North / Northwest Austin
- Northeast Austin
- Areas with significant environmental features
- Transit Oriented, Vertical Mixed-Use, and other High-Density Developments
- North Burnet / Gateway area



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Park Development - Continued development of existing and new parks is necessary to provide needed recreation in under-served and growing areas. The following projects are recommended:

- Gustavo "Gus" L Garcia Neighborhood Park
- Onion Creek Metropolitan Park
- Yarabee Bend at Onion Creek
- Copperfield Neighborhood Park
- Armadillo Neighborhood Park
- Del Curto Neighborhood Park
- Walnut Creek Greenway near Pioneer Farms



Recommendations & Prioritization of Needs

Park Development - *cont*

- Walnut Creek Sports Park on Johnny Morris Road
- Colorado River Preserve
- Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park, phase II
- Bauerle Ranch Park (special)
- Lakeline Neighborhood Park
- Harris Branch Neighborhood Park
- Southland Oaks Neighborhood Park
- New park and recreation center in Southwest Austin
- Austin's Colony Neighborhood Park



Thank You

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/longrangeplan.htm>

Comments may be submitted to:
longrangeplan@ci.austin.tx.us

