



# OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE **LONG RANGE PLAN**

**PRESENTATION TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND CITY COUNCIL**

OUR PARKS  
OUR FUTURE



AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION  
**LONG RANGE PLAN**

2018 - 2028



**AUSTIN  
PARKS  
FOUNDATION**

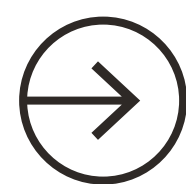




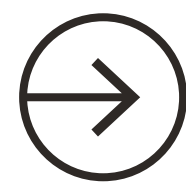


A REVIEW OF THE  
**LONG RANGE PLAN**

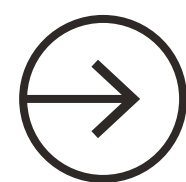
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**PROJECT BACKGROUND  
& SCHEDULE**



**MAJOR PHASES OF WORK**



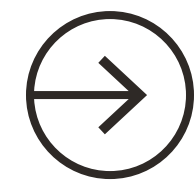
**DRAFT PLAN  
RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW**





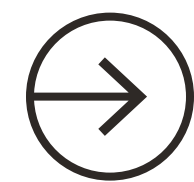
OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE  
LONG RANGE PLAN

## PURPOSE AND GOALS



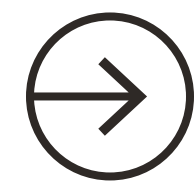
### ASSESS STATE OF CURRENT PARK SYSTEM

Conduct a thorough assessment of the condition and quality of the current park system to provide a strong data-driven baseline to inform prioritization and track implementation progress over time.



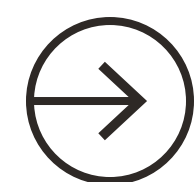
### VISION FOR AUSTIN'S PARK SYSTEM IN 2028

PARD will reach its centennial in 2028 and the planning process should focus on engaging the community and city staff to define a new vision that is both inspirational and achievable.



### GUIDE FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

As Austin continues to grow and change, the Long Range Plan provide a careful analysis and guidebook for how and where to invest to ensure a stronger park system.



### PARK SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS & PRIORITIZATION

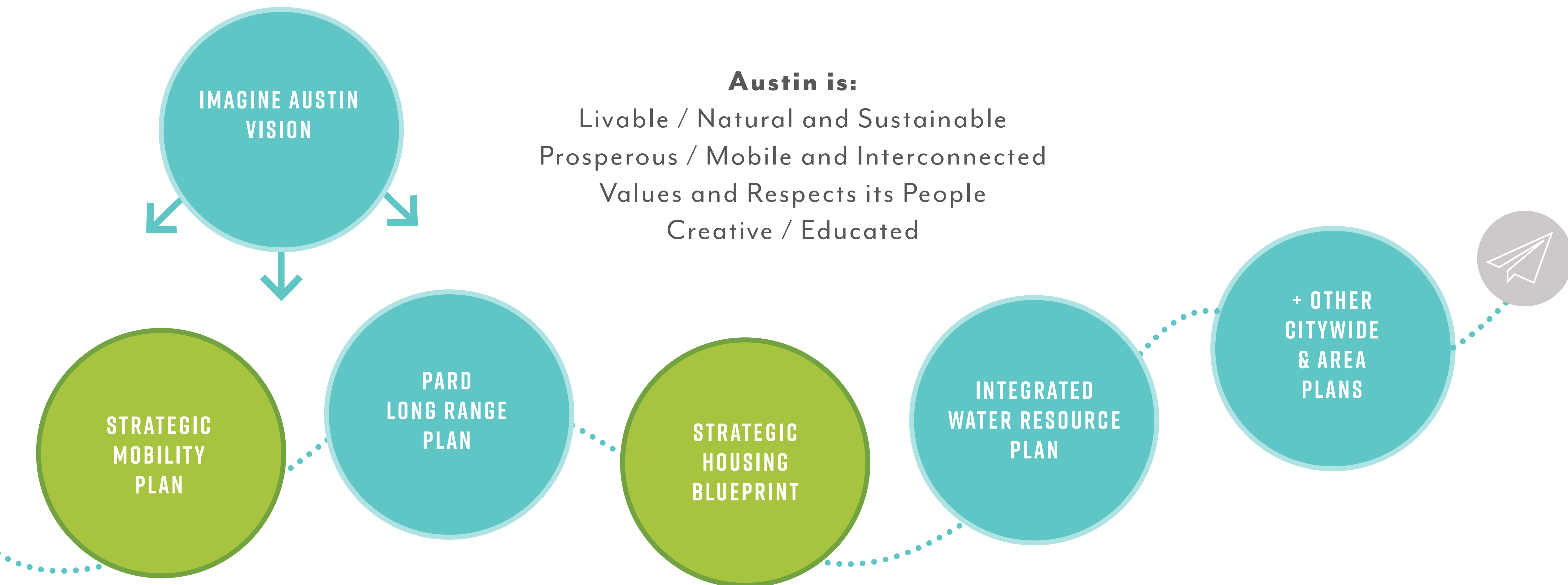
Include both citywide strategies and planning area priorities to inform the Capital Improvement Plan and development of Park Master Plans.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER  
**CITYWIDE PLANS**

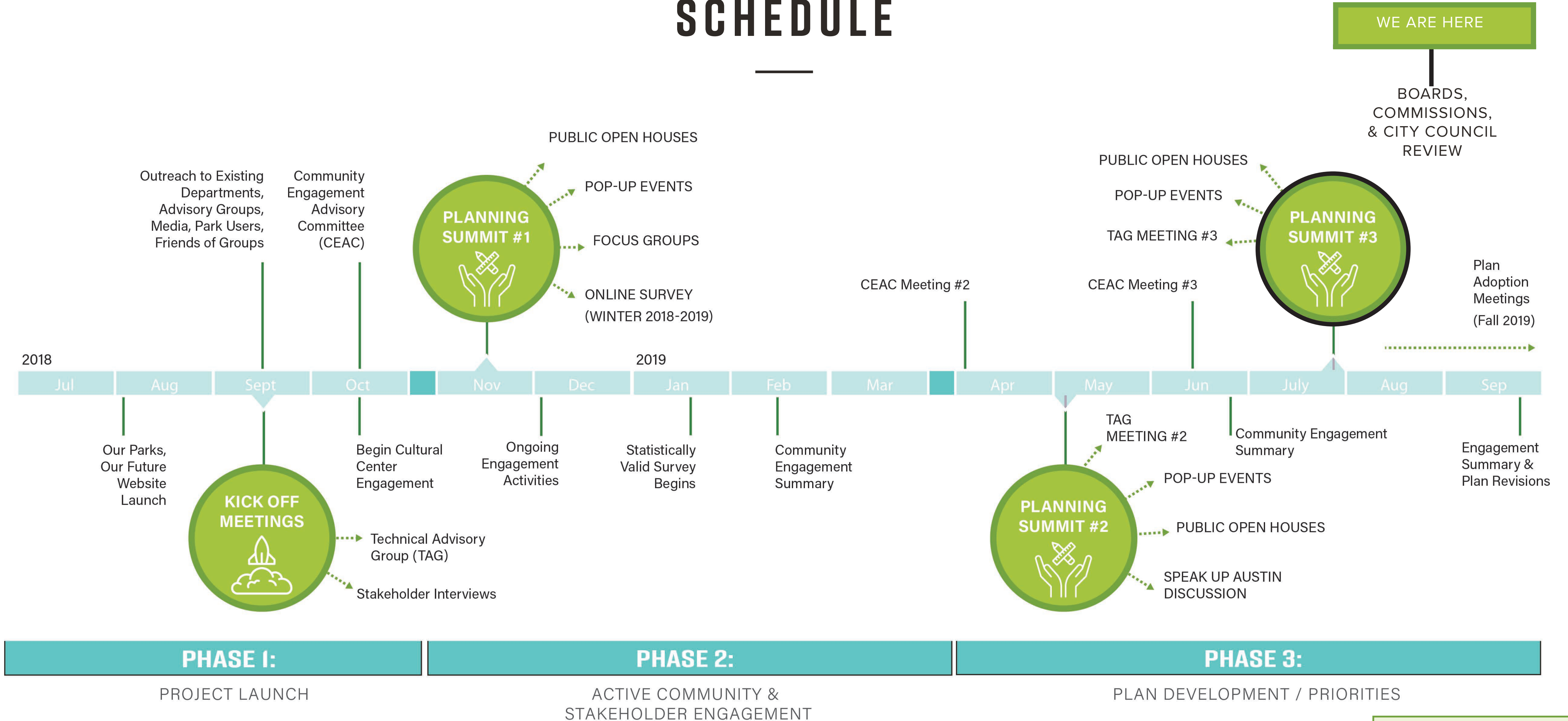
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**Austin is:**

Livable / Natural and Sustainable  
Prosperous / Mobile and Interconnected  
Values and Respects its People  
Creative / Educated



LONG RANGE PLAN  
**SCHEDULE**





## A LOOK AT THE PARK SYSTEM

## TODAY

## JUST SOME OF THE FACILITIES

291

PARKS

6

GOLF  
COURSES

15+

PUBLIC/PRIVATE  
PARTNERSHIPS

47

VOLLEYBALL  
COURTS

40

POOLS

26

RECREATION/SENIOR  
GARDENS

124

TENNIS  
COURTS

24

HISTORIC  
BUILDINGS

227

TRAIL MILES

147

PLAYGROUNDS

13

OFF-LEASH DOG  
AREAS

5

CEMETERIES

20

REC  
CENTERS

11

MUSEUMS, ARTS &  
CULTURAL CENTERS

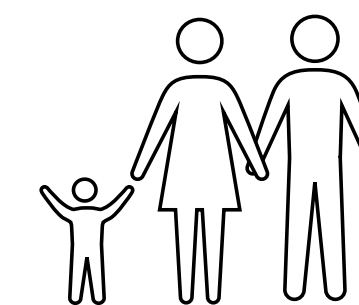
10

STAGES/  
AMPHITHEATERS

78

MIXED-USE  
FIELDS100-YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY  
OF PARD (2028)

19,000+

ACRES OF MANAGED  
PARKLAND

967K → 1.143M

POPULATION  
IN 2018\*PROJECTED  
POPULATION  
IN 2030\*

700+

FT EMPLOYEES

1,000+  
PT & SEASONAL

## KEY METRICS

SOURCE: AUSTIN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FY18 ANNUAL REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021; \*FROM AUSTIN AREA POPULATION HISTORIES AND FORECASTS

OUR PARKS  
OUR FUTUREAUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION  
LONG RANGE PLAN

2018 - 2028





# REACHING OUT & ENGAGING THE PUBLIC



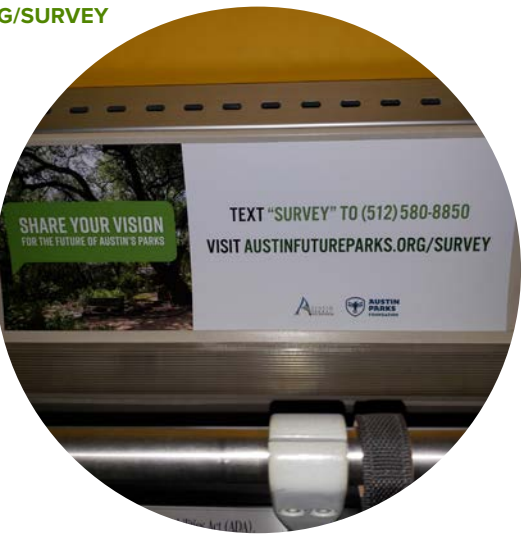
**OPEN HOUSES**  
400+ PARTICIPANTS



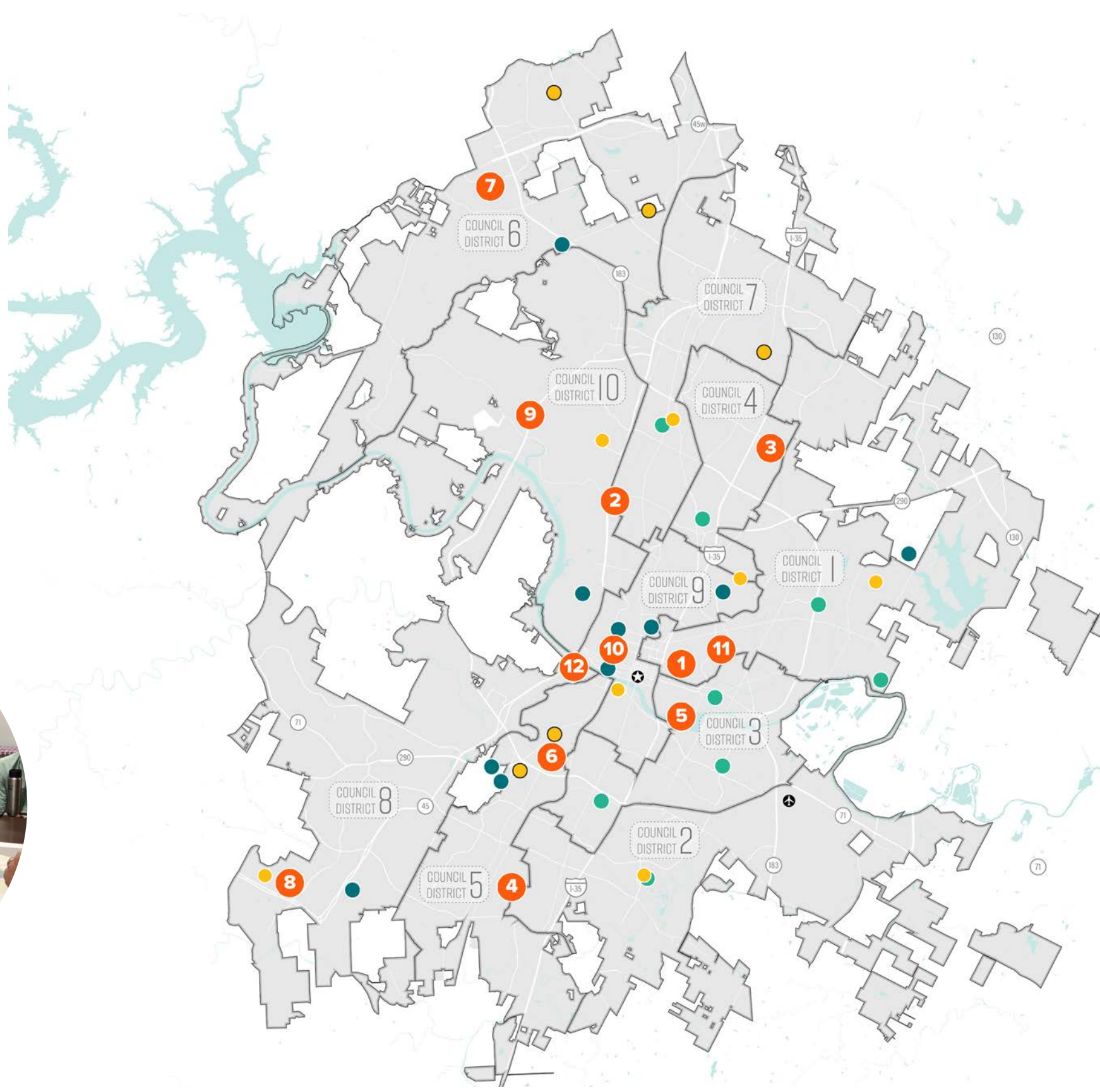
TEXT "SURVEY" TO (512) 580-8850  
VISIT [AUSTINFUTUREPARKS.ORG/SURVEY](https://austinfutureparks.org/survey)



**SURVEYS, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA**  
925 STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY RESPONSES  
4,400+ COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES  
9,000+ COMMUNITY SURVEY COMMENTS



**FOCUS  
GROUPS  
&  
INTERVIEWS**



Pop-Up Locations (Series 1 & 2)		
OPEN HOUSE SERIES #1	OPEN HOUSE SERIES #2	OPEN HOUSE SERIES #3
1 George Washington Carver Museum	6 South Austin Senior Activity Center	11 Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex
2 Northwest Recreation Center	7 Anderson Mill Limited District Community Center	12 Zilker Botanical Garden
3 Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia Recreation Center	8 Circle C Community Center	
4 Dittmar Recreation Center	9 IBPS Buddhist Temple/FGS Xiang Yun Temple	
5 Fiesta Gardens Building	10 Austin Recreation Center	



**POP-UP EVENTS**  
21 EVENTS ATTENDED  
297+ VISITORS ENGAGED

**ENGAGING KIDS  
THROUGH ART**



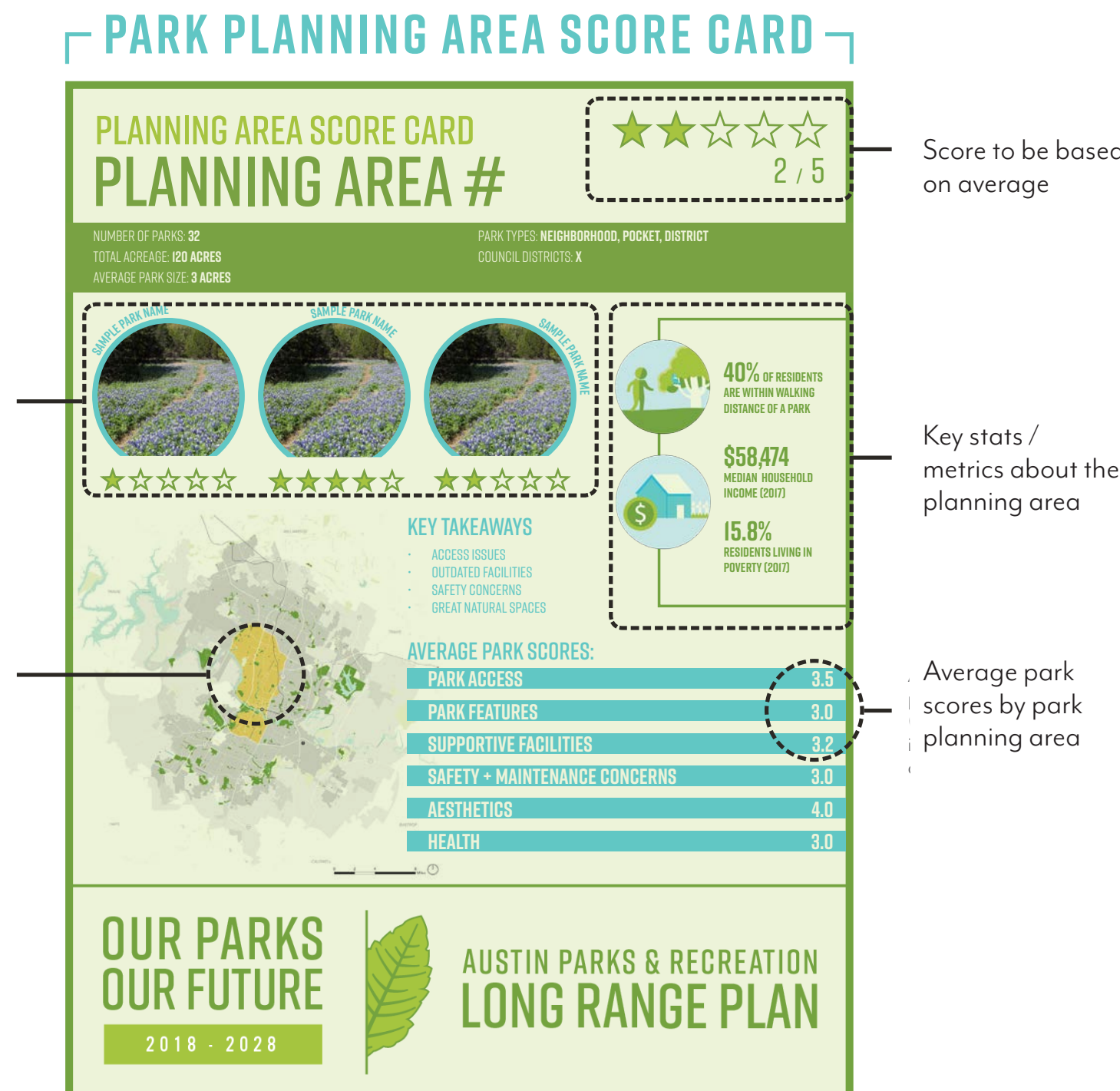


The park score cards are a pilot tool to assess the city's parks and determine areas where parks are performing well and areas where we need improvement. Criteria includes park access, key features, supportive facilities, safety & maintenance concerns, aesthetics, and health.

These draft score cards will be both a snapshot and a living database PARD can utilize to make data-driven, priority-based decisions for investment. The score cards will be employed to increase accountability, transparency, and equity in park level of service across the city. The draft score cards will first focus on neighborhood/pocket parks and will be employed along with a pilot community assessment tool to increase accountability, transparency, and equity in park level of service across the city.

**Recreation Centers in this Planning Area**

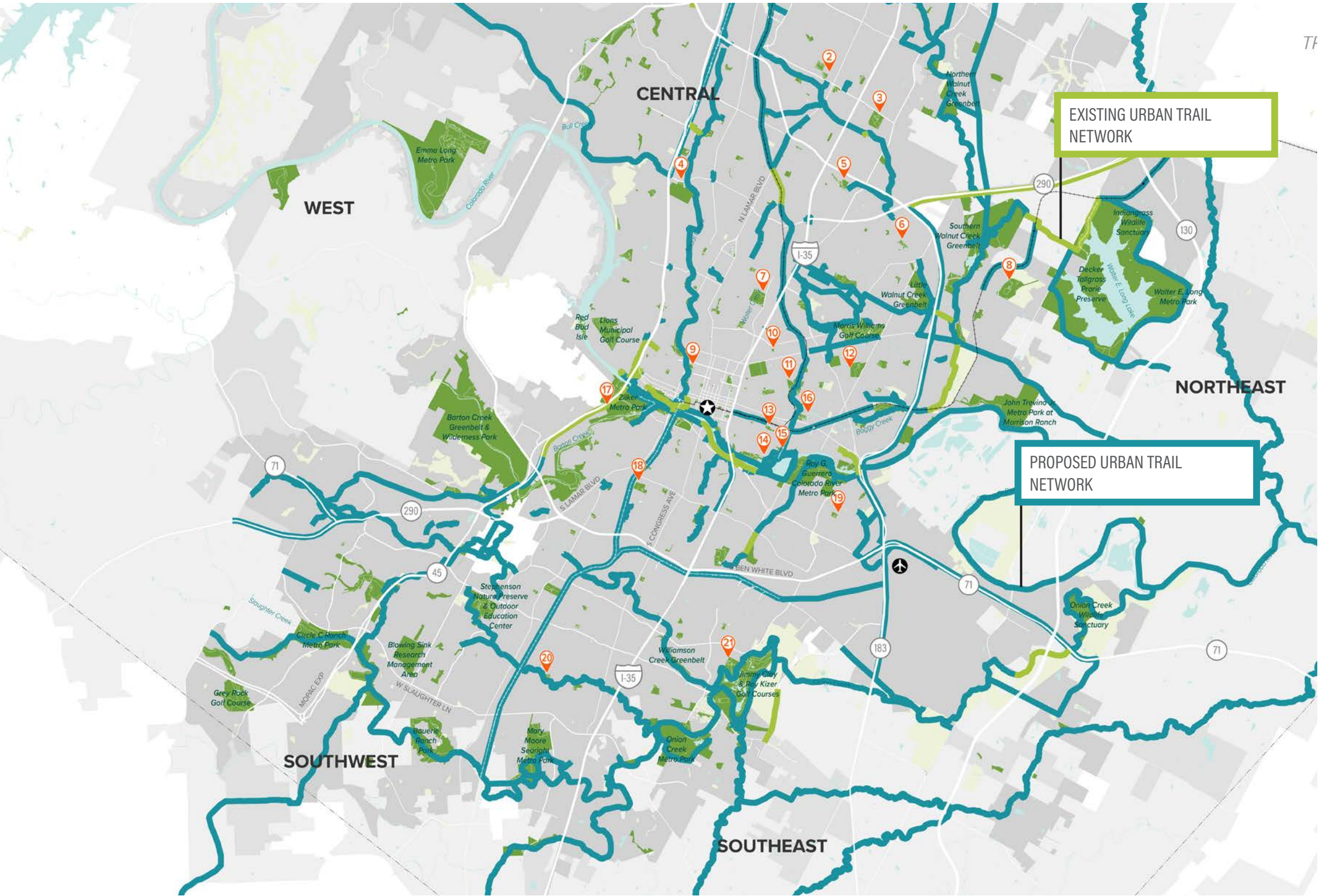
- 7 - Hancock Recreation Center
- 9 - Austin Recreation Center



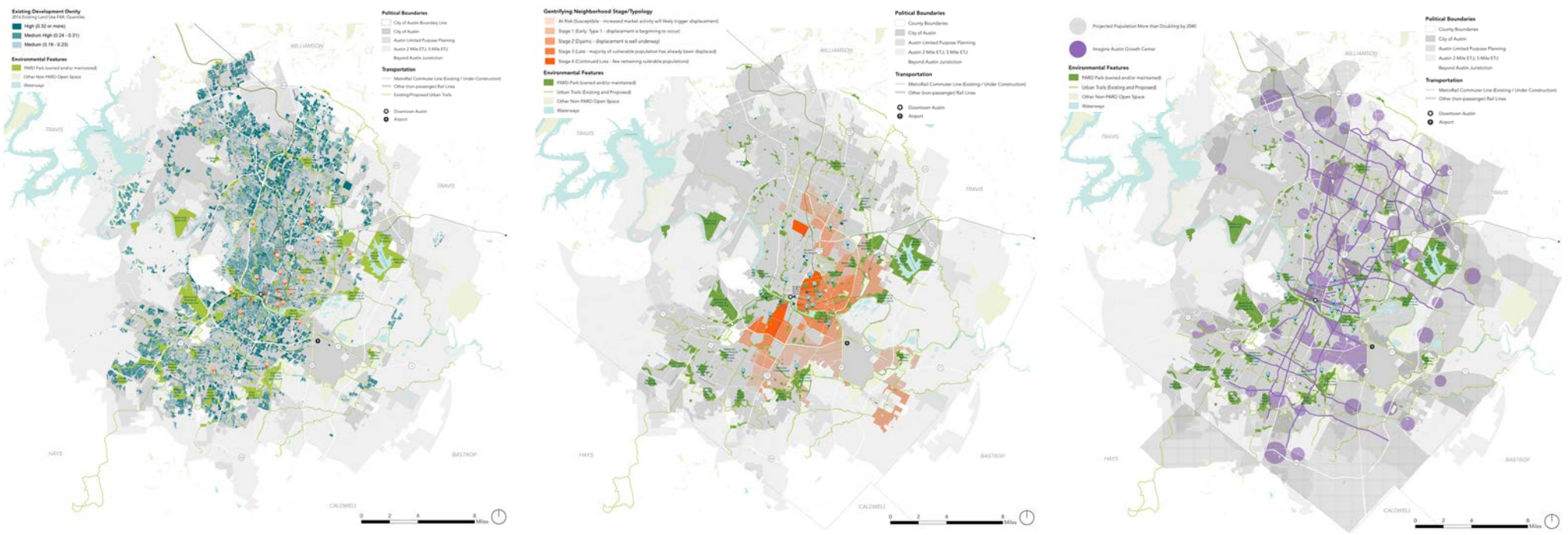


OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT



▲ **AUSTIN'S PROPOSED URBAN TRAIL NETWORK**  
BASED ON STRATEGIC MOBILITY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS



▲ **MAPPING OF EXISTING DENSITY, DISPLACEMENT RISK, FUTURE GROWTH**



▲ **MAPPING OF PARK ACCESS BY FOOT**



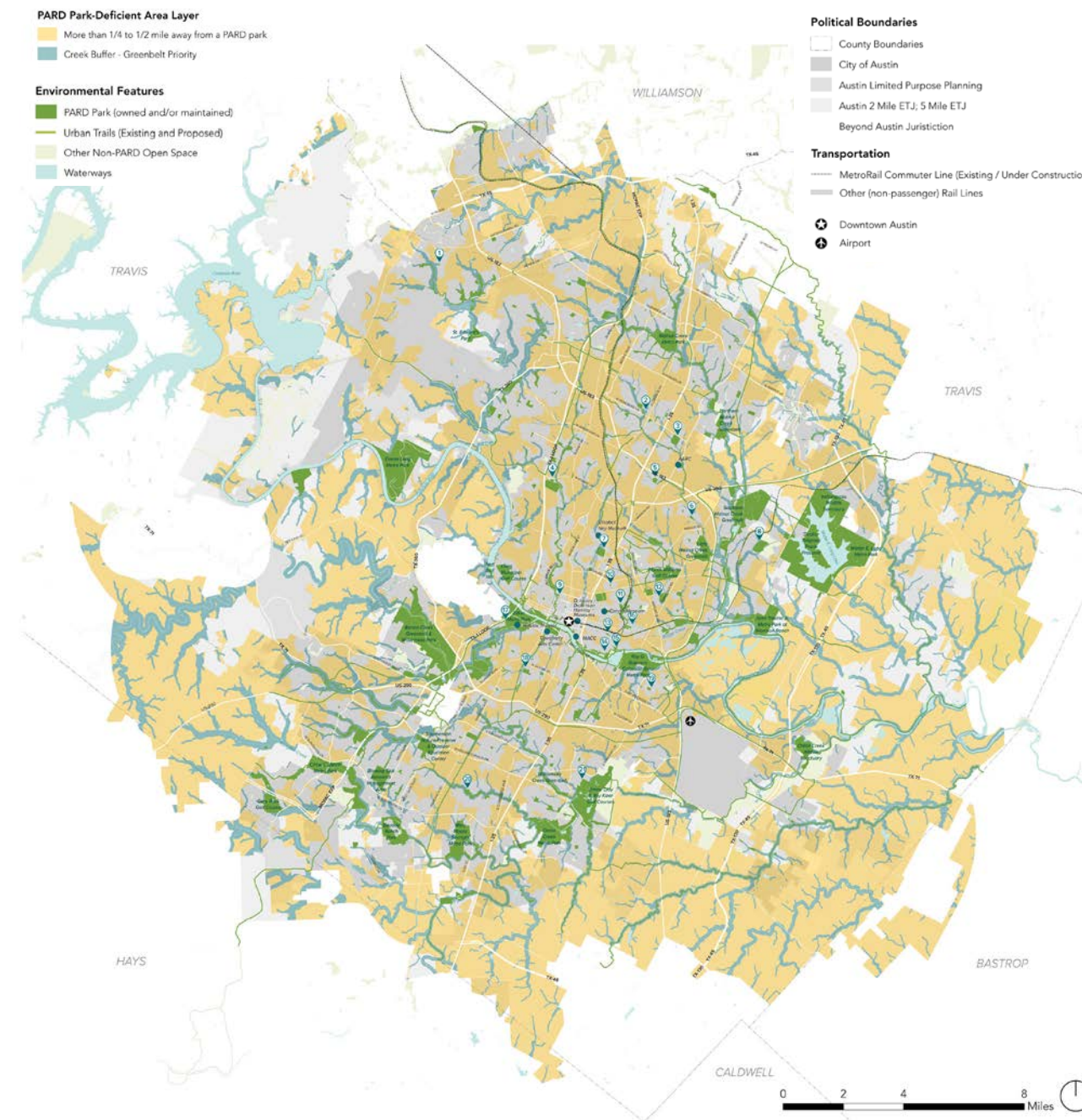
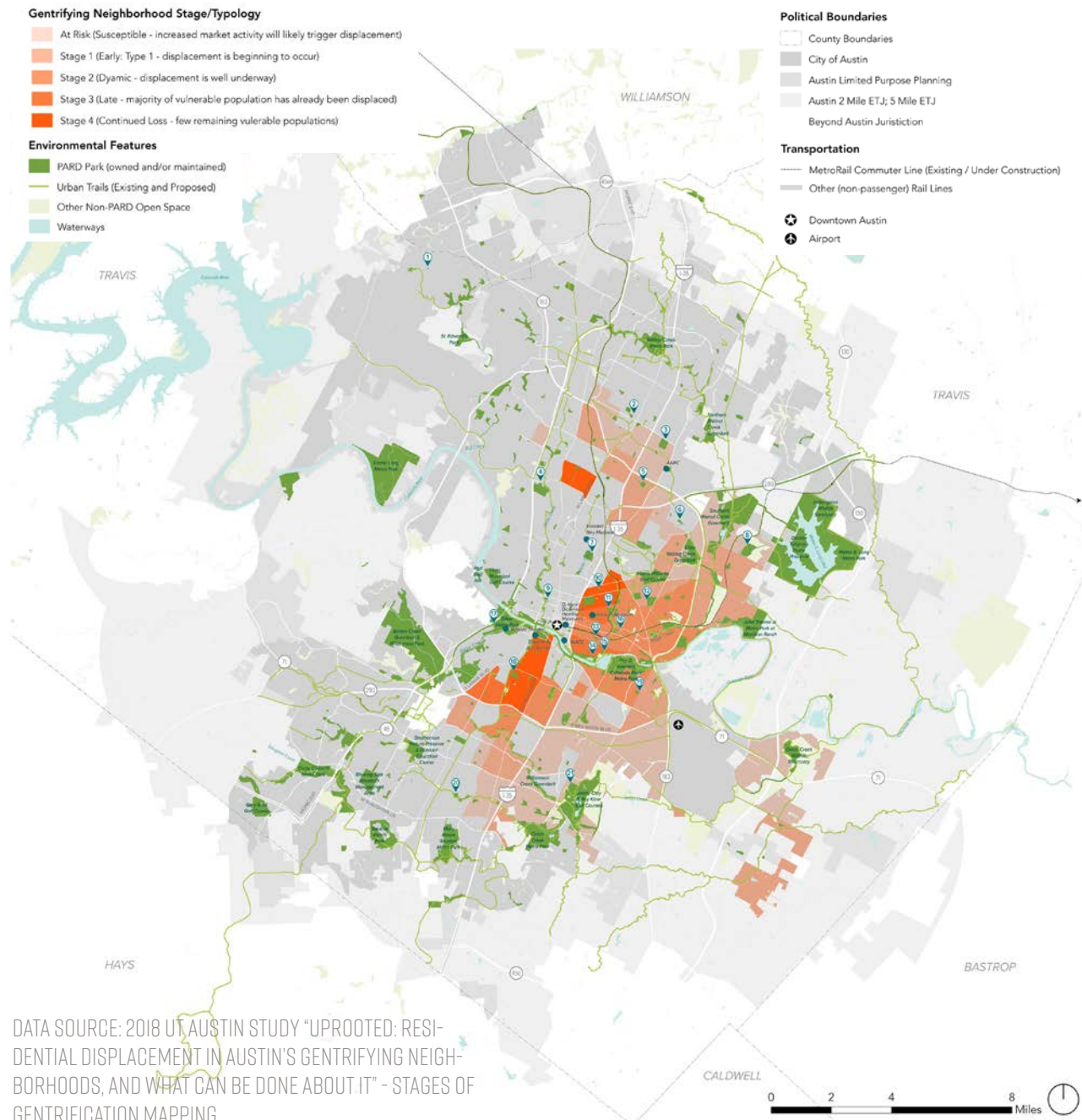
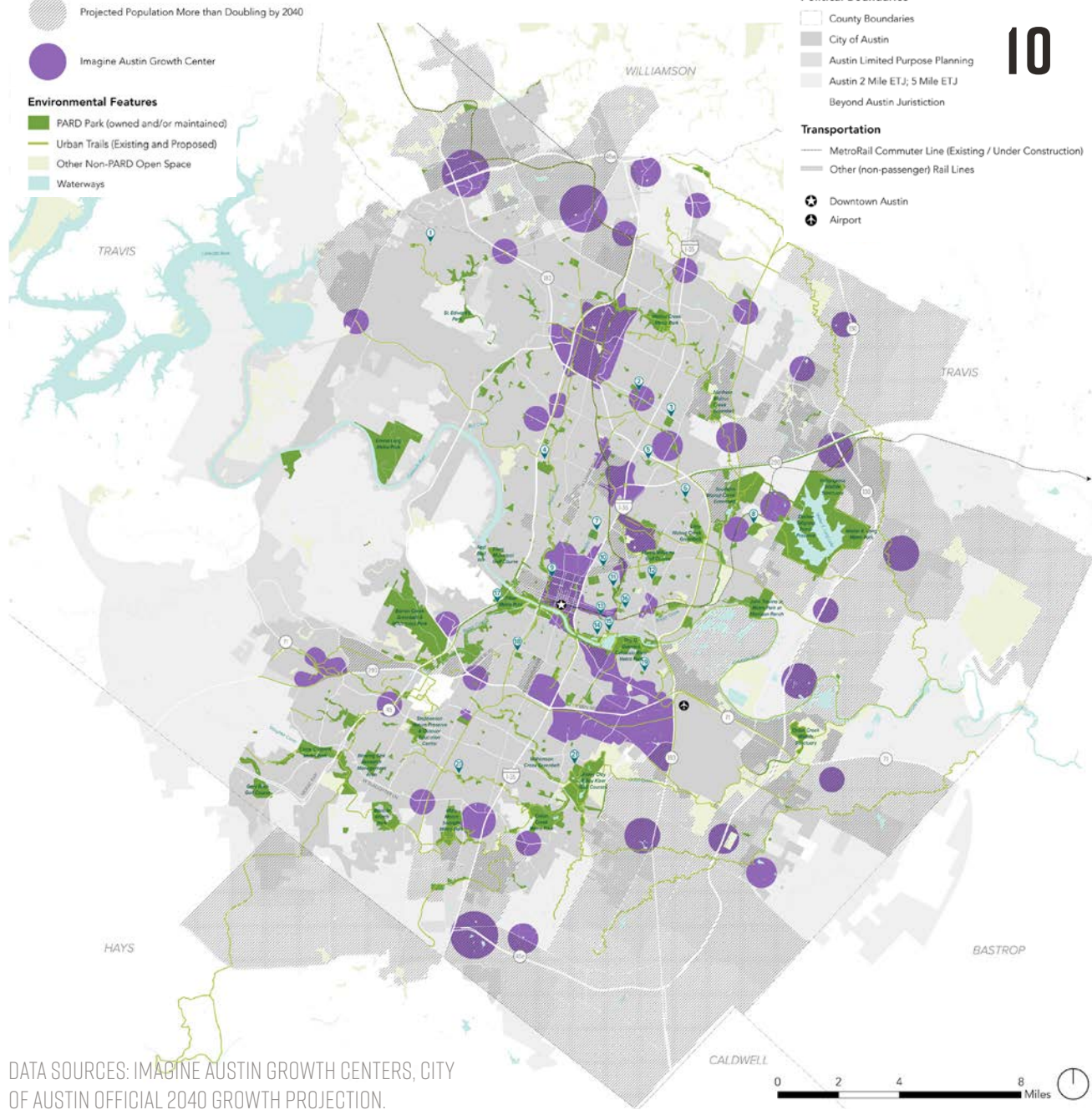
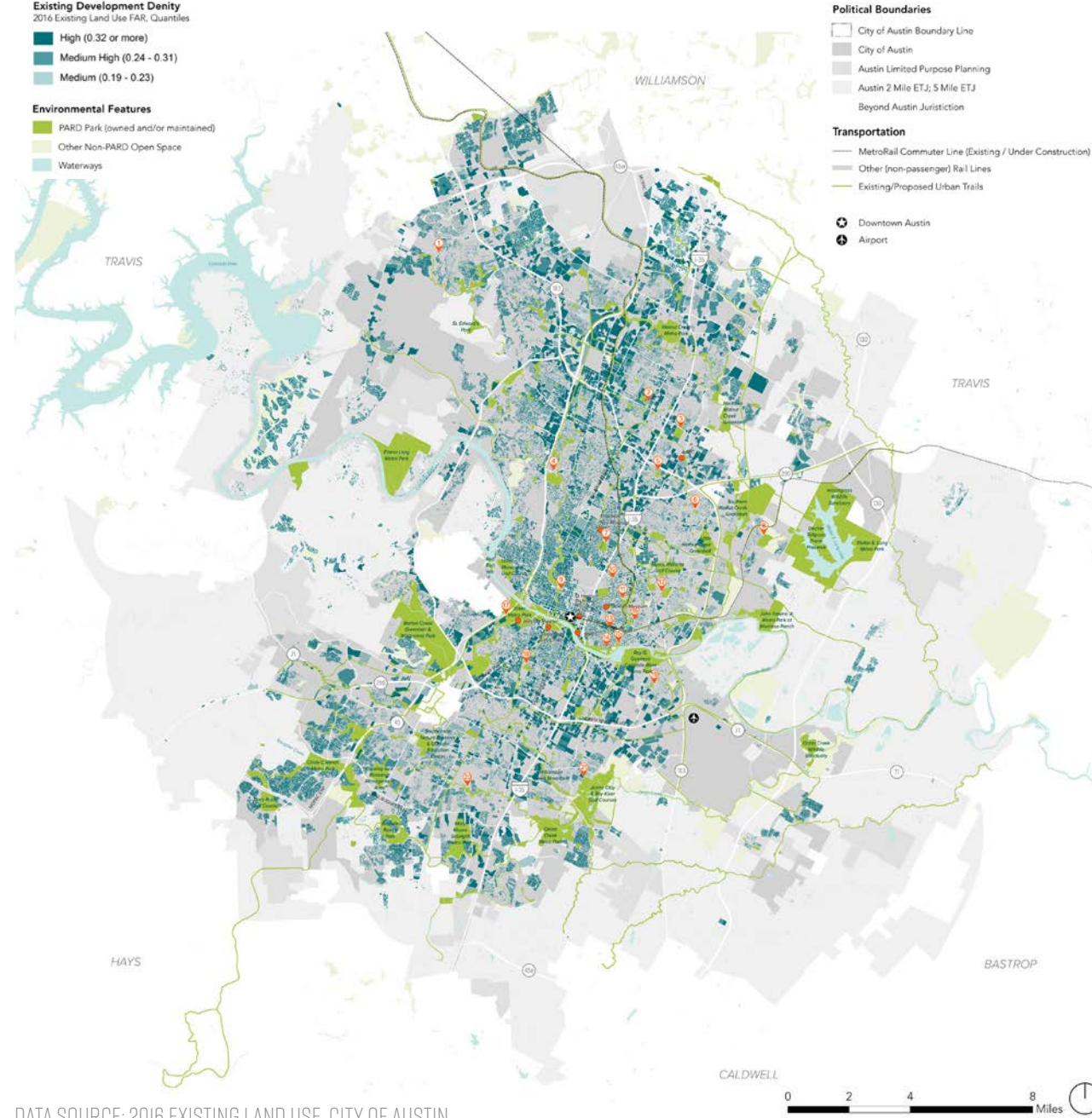
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# GROWTH & PARK NEED ANALYSIS

## EXISTING HIGH-DENSITY AREAS

## PROACTIVE PARK PLANNING IN HIGH GROWTH AREAS

## IDENTIFYING AREAS THAT LACK PARKLAND





# IDENTIFYING PRIORITIZATION

## COMPARE AREAS OF HIGH PARK NEED WITH PARK AMENITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

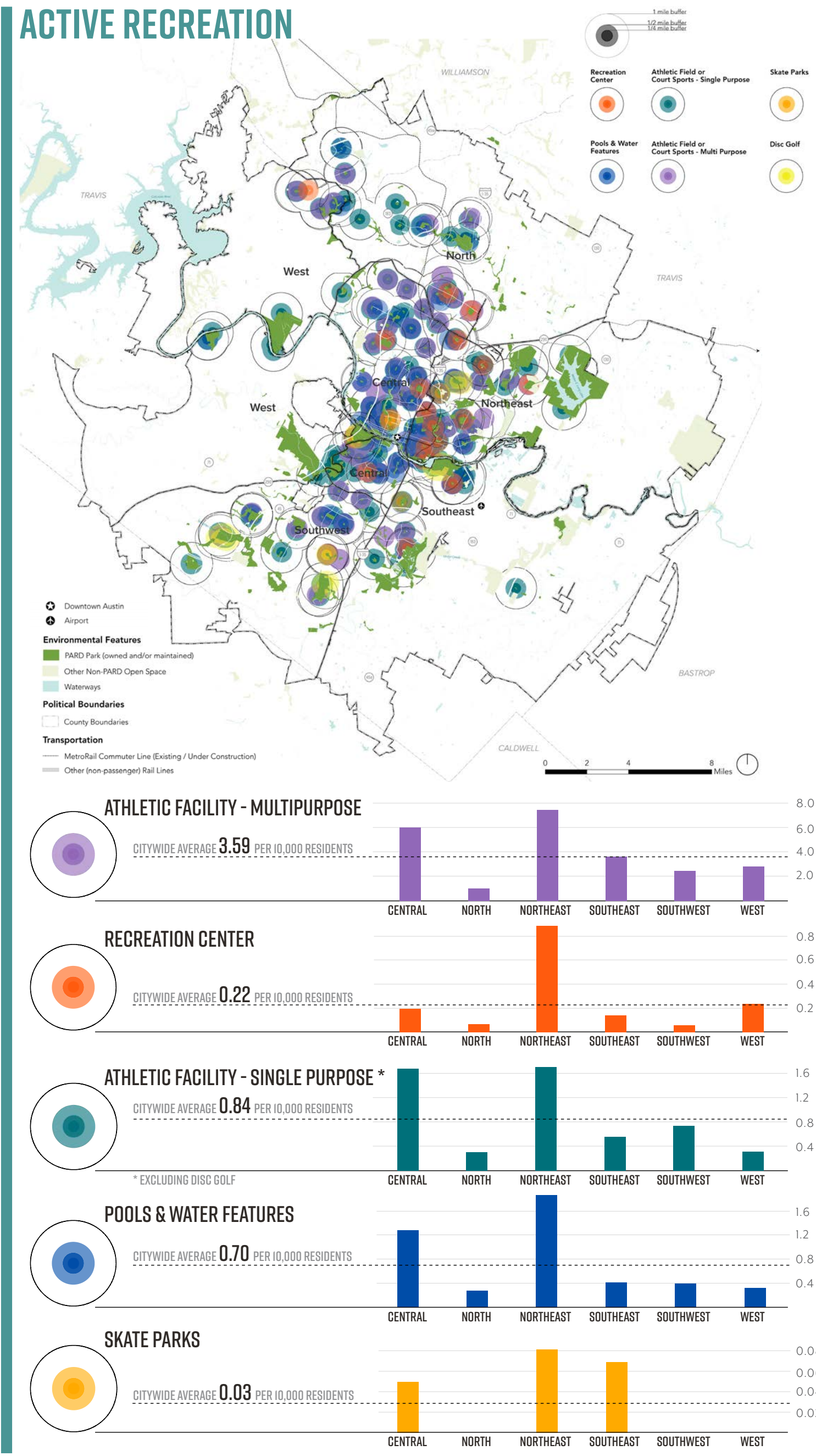
The LRP process includes detailed study of areas that are park deficient, as well as areas that have a high or low level of parks / programs compared to the city's average.

## PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY

Developed for prioritization of PARD LRP investments.

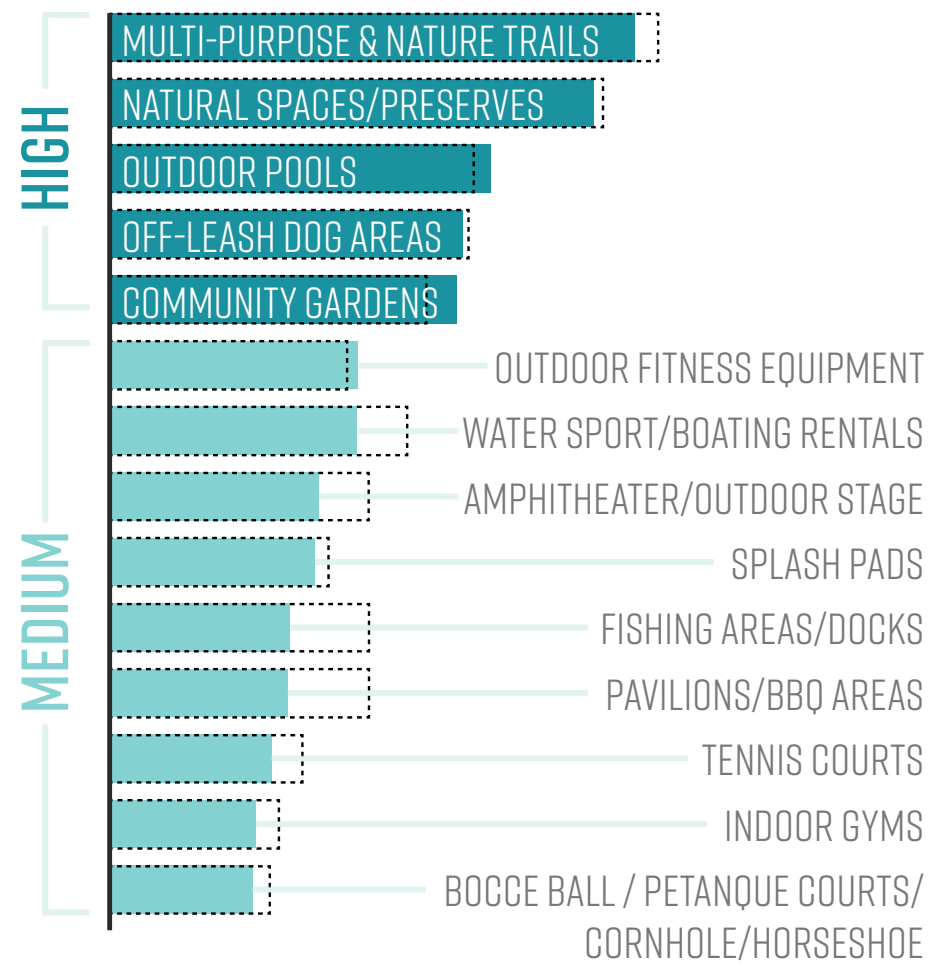
## PUBLIC FEEDBACK LOOP

Continual feedback through ongoing meetings and activities with staff, stakeholders and the public combined with these analytical tools lead to prioritization and refinement of goals and strategies.



## ANALYSIS OF ACCESS TO AMENITIES AND PRIORITY NEEDS BY COMBINED PLANNING AREA

### FACILITY & AMENITY PRIORITIES



## SURVEY PRIORITIES FOR THE CENTRAL PLANNING AREA



## OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE

# COMMUNITY THEMES

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Ten themes emerged from the numerous community engagement events and surveys completed as part of this planning process. Those themes along with the priority needs and citywide analysis form the basis of the system-wide recommendations to follow.

### NATURAL EXPERIENCES

People express a desire for parks that feel more natural. This includes undeveloped, wild natural spaces, rustic finishes instead of paved areas and more native plants.

### UNSTRUCTURED SPACES

In general, people care less about spaces for specific programming, opting for more multi-use spaces and preserving green, natural and open spaces.

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Proactively use green infrastructure in parks to build a more resilient city. This includes stormwater management, flood protection, heat island effect mitigation, drought tolerance, and native planting/habitat areas.

### LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS

People are more interested in parks that allow them to move (walk/run/bike) as opposed to staying in one place. There is an interest in nature and multipurpose trails within PARD parks as well as connectivity between parks along urban trails.

### PROXIMITY & ACCESS

People are concerned about both the lack of parks near them and/or their ability to get to parks. This includes walkability issues, lack of adequate parking and the lack of public transit access.

### URBAN SPACES

People express a concern that existing parkland in high-density urban areas exists already at critical locations, but are underutilized. The desire is for a renewed commitment to well-maintained green spaces and enhanced programming in urban parks in high-density areas.

### PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE

People express a desire for increased arts/culture programming in parks. This includes increased community-focused programming and more cultural centers that could host these kinds of programs.

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

People are interested in more hands-on educational opportunities. This includes youth education, art-based education and summer camps.

### INCLUSIVITY

People express a desire for parks and programming to be more inclusive. This includes more publicity about activities, providing free parking, reducing fees that prevent low-income residents from participating, and increasing multi-generational programs and spaces.

### CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

People are concerned that parks are not being adequately taken care of. This includes issues around lighting, shade, maintenance, recycling, bathrooms, off-leash dog areas and dog waste disposal. People also expressed concern about the issue of homelessness on many dimensions – safety, park cleanliness, humanitarian - and saw an opportunity to work with homeless population to improve park cleanliness & safety.



OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE

## CITYWIDE STRATEGIES

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**A.** ENSURE PARKS ACT AS A **RELIEF FROM URBAN LIFE**



**B.** EXPAND AND IMPROVE **PARK ACCESS** FOR ALL



**C.** ACTIVATE AND ENHANCE **URBAN PUBLIC SPACES**



**D.** **ALIGN PROGRAMS** WITH COMMUNITY INTEREST



**E.** OPTIMIZE AND IMPROVE **EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS**



A

# ENSURE PARKLAND OFFERS RELIEF FROM URBAN LIFE

## ASEGURAR QUE LOS PARQUES SEAN ALIVIO EN EL AMBIENTE URBANO



The impact of Austin's rapid growth is becoming apparent as Austinites increasingly confront the loss of natural areas and increased development. PARD has to guard the park system's role as a relief from and counterpoint to Austin's increasingly urban context. Likewise, the parks must become more flexible and multi-purpose to support a higher intensity and wider variety of park users.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- ☒ NATURAL EXPERIENCES
- ☒ UNSTRUCTURED SPACES
- ☒ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- ☐ LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS
- ☐ PROXIMITY & ACCESS
- ☐ URBAN SPACES
- ☐ PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE
- ☒ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- ☐ INCLUSIVITY
- ☐ CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

1.

Add between **4,000 and 8,000 acres of new parkland over the next 10 years**, maintaining the current park acres standard of 20 acres/1,000 residents while striving to achieve 24 acres/1,000 residents.

2.

Protect and increase natural areas that support **immersive nature experiences** and provide space for **environmental stormwater benefits**.

3.

Make it easier for Austinites to spend time **interacting with water** (e.g. recreational facilities like outdoor pools and access to natural water bodies like lakes and creeks).

4.

Increase the number of PARD **community gardens**.

5.

Invest in **multi-purpose, unstructured spaces** capable of supporting **flexible uses**. Park elements like small plazas or pavilions with electrical/water hookups, moveable furniture, and multi-purpose athletic fields allow for informal use of space while maintaining a natural, open feel.

6.

Provide **dedicated off-leash dog areas** in appropriate locations to ensure both dog-owners and non-dog-owners can enjoy parks.

7.

Protect and manage natural areas to intentionally **balance recreational use with environmental protection**.



## B

## EXPAND &amp; IMPROVE PARK ACCESS FOR ALL

## EXPANDIR Y MEJORAR ACCESO A LOS PARQUES PARA TODOS



Providing equitable access for all residents is a priority for PARD, and accessibility has been identified as an issue during the LRP Process. PARD can increase accessibility for all by improving trails, signage, communications, and wayfinding, among other things. Any future investment in parks, trails, and associated facilities should be ADA compliant.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- ☒ NATURAL EXPERIENCES
- ☐ UNSTRUCTURED SPACES
- ☐ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- ☒ LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS
- ☒ PROXIMITY & ACCESS
- ☒ URBAN SPACES
- ☐ PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE
- ☒ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- ☒ INCLUSIVITY
- ☐ CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

1.

Prior to any significant master plan or development, work with partner organizations and current and long-time residents to ensure **community involvement** in the process.

2.

Invest in the acquisition of new parkland that can **make parks a part of everyday life** in existing and future **underserved areas**.

3.

Increase the number of entrances and access points to existing parks in order to expand the number of residents within **walking distance of a park**.

4.

Increase **multi-use and nature trails** within the existing PARD park system and continue to acquire land for linear parks and greenbelts that can accommodate larger **trail systems**.

5.

Support the efforts of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, city departments, and partners in advancing the **mobility network** beyond the PARD park system.

6.

Achieve a more **even geographic distribution of facilities** that have a strong citywide interest.

7.

Aspire to provide **universal access** (e.g. all ages, all abilities). Park spaces should be accessible, to the greatest extent feasible, by everyone regardless of age, ability, or language. Strive to create **equal access** for all Austinites by reducing barriers to use.

8.

Improve **signage** and **wayfinding** markers at entrances and along trails to help park users navigate with confidence.

9.

Improve the **web-based information** describing the park system to help people quickly find the amenities and experiences they are seeking.

10.

Work with Austin Transportation Department to evaluate the need and appropriate fee structure for **private car parking areas**.



# ACTIVATE & ENHANCE URBAN PUBLIC SPACES

## AVIVAR Y REALZAR LOS ESPACIOS PÚBLICOS URBANOS



The strength of Austin's park system has historically revolved around the iconic natural features and large parks; however, its downtown squares and urban parks have been overlooked and underestimated. These spaces can be activated to extend the benefits of parks to more people through a flexible, partnership-centric approach that expands and enhances use of our public spaces.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- ☐ NATURAL EXPERIENCES
- ☐ UNSTRUCTURED SPACES
- ☐ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- ☐ LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS
- ☒ PROXIMITY & ACCESS
- ☒ URBAN SPACES
- ☒ PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE
- ☒ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- ☒ INCLUSIVITY
- ☒ CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

**1.** Build on the Downtown Austin Alliance's Downtown Parks Vision to holistically elevate the quality of the **urban public realm**.

**2.** Invest in more lighting and increased staff and volunteer presence, especially along trails and pathways to ensure parks feel **safe** after dark.

**3.** Support more **dense, flexible, and diverse programming and amenities** (e.g. temporary seating or play equipment) in urban public spaces within and beyond PARD parkland.

**4.** Continuously monitor and provide a clear picture of **cost and revenue information** to the community, including community and economic impacts associated with large events.

**5.** Increase the number of **Farmers Markets** associated with parks and open spaces.

**6.** Expand PARD's **Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism Program** to protect, restore, and promote the cultural and historic resources of the park system.



D

# ALIGN PROGRAMS WITH COMMUNITY INTEREST

## ALINEAR LOS PROGRAMAS CON LOS INTERESES DE LA COMUNIDAD



While there is a high demand for more programs at parks, there is also a strong interest in Austin for natural experience and unprogrammed spaces and activities. As the needs and interests of residents change, program offerings should be evaluated and adjusted to reflect the most relevant programs as needed.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- ☒ NATURAL EXPERIENCES
- ☐ UNSTRUCTURED SPACES
- ☐ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- ☐ LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS
- ☒ PROXIMITY & ACCESS
- ☒ URBAN SPACES
- ☒ PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE
- ☒ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- ☒ INCLUSIVITY
- ☐ CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

1. Provide more **nature-based programs**.

2. Increase **Adult and Senior programming** across multiple categories – active recreation, nature-based and arts & culture.

3. Increase the number, diversity, and equitable distribution of **arts and culture programs** being offered through PARD.

4. Explore partnership strategies to **increase low-income access** to PARD programming.

5. Leverage “**pop-up programming and temporary uses** (e.g. beer gardens, seasonal markets, parklets, exercise classes, etc.) to activate public spaces and expand access to programs typically held in recreation and cultural centers.

6. Continually assess **community needs** and proactively plan for recreation programming that aligns to these needs and trends.



E

# OPTIMIZE & IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS

APROVECHAR LO MEJOR POSIBLE Y MEJORAR LA EFICIENCIA DE LAS OPERACIONES



Leverage partnerships and revenue opportunities to elevate the quality of PARD operations and maintenance while upholding equitable park access and ensuring a sustainable and well-balanced PARD budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- ☐ NATURAL EXPERIENCES
- ☒ UNSTRUCTURED SPACES
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- ☐ PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE
- ☐ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- ☒ INCLUSIVITY
- ☒ CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

1.

Consolidate and improve **efficiency** of maintenance operations, administrative and program management functions to a central location with appropriate level of office space and facilities.

4.

Develop a clear **organizational framework** for PARD partnerships that is equitable, supportive of PARD’s mission and goals, and is regularly evaluated to track and monitor impacts and outcomes.

2.

Engage with and provide **work opportunities** in parks to help people experiencing **homelessness** (e.g. the Workforce First program that pays individuals experiencing homelessness to help remove trash in public parks).

5.

Work with partners to improve existing parks, trails, and facilities by creating and implementing **master plans**.

3.

Improve the **value and awareness** of the parks and recreation system offerings to the community.

6.

Pursue **sustainability and resiliency goals** in all PARD facilities.



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# DISTRICT-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

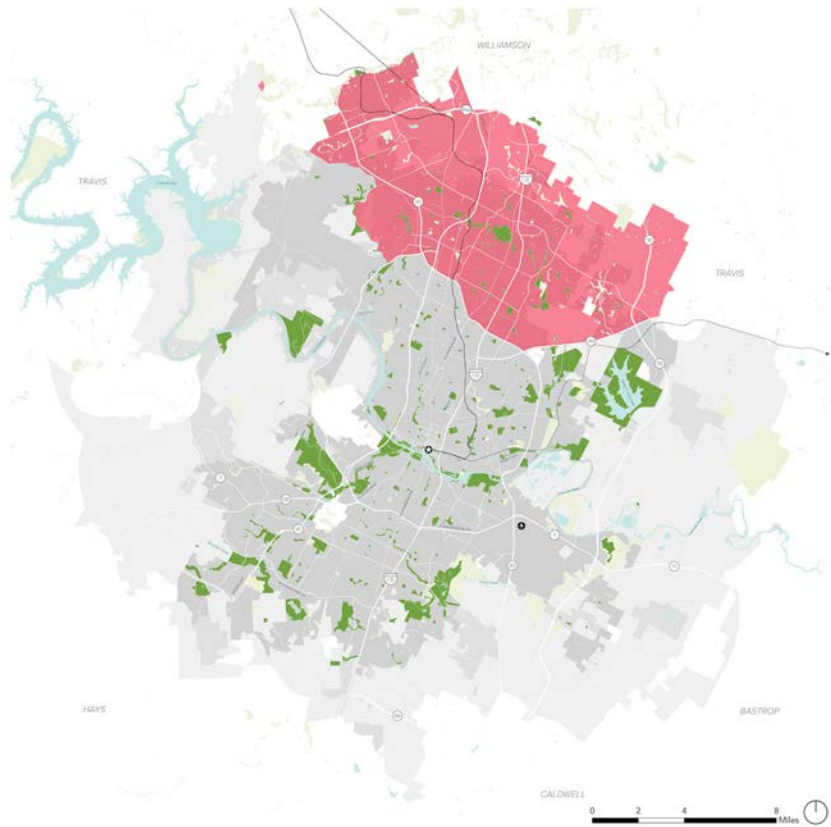
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Planning area specific recommendations are included based on the five city-wide strategies and the specific needs and priorities of each combined planning area.

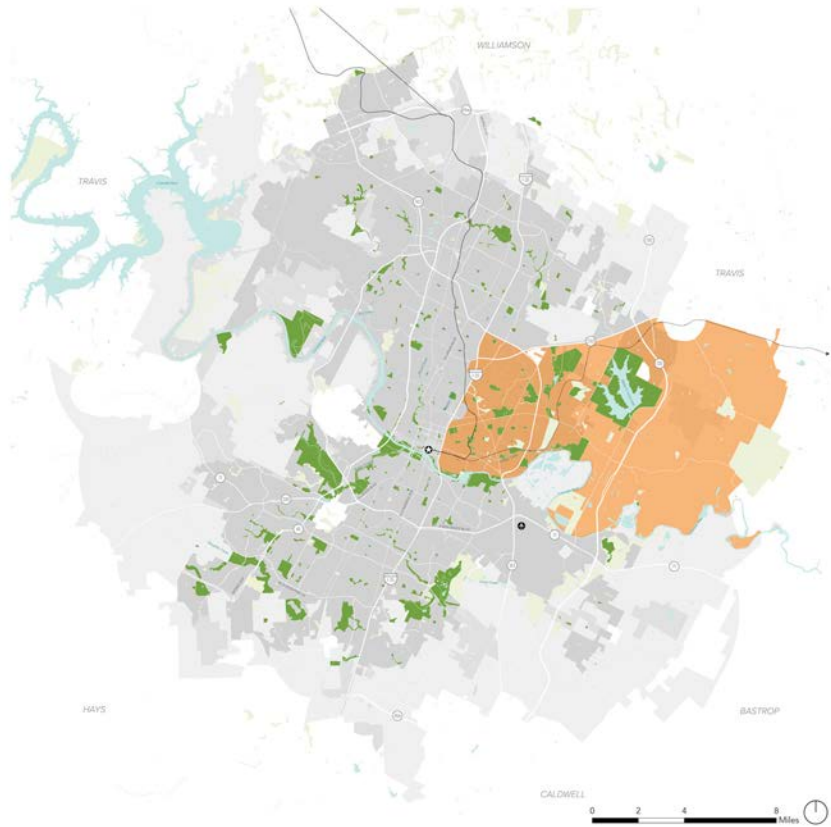
CENTRAL



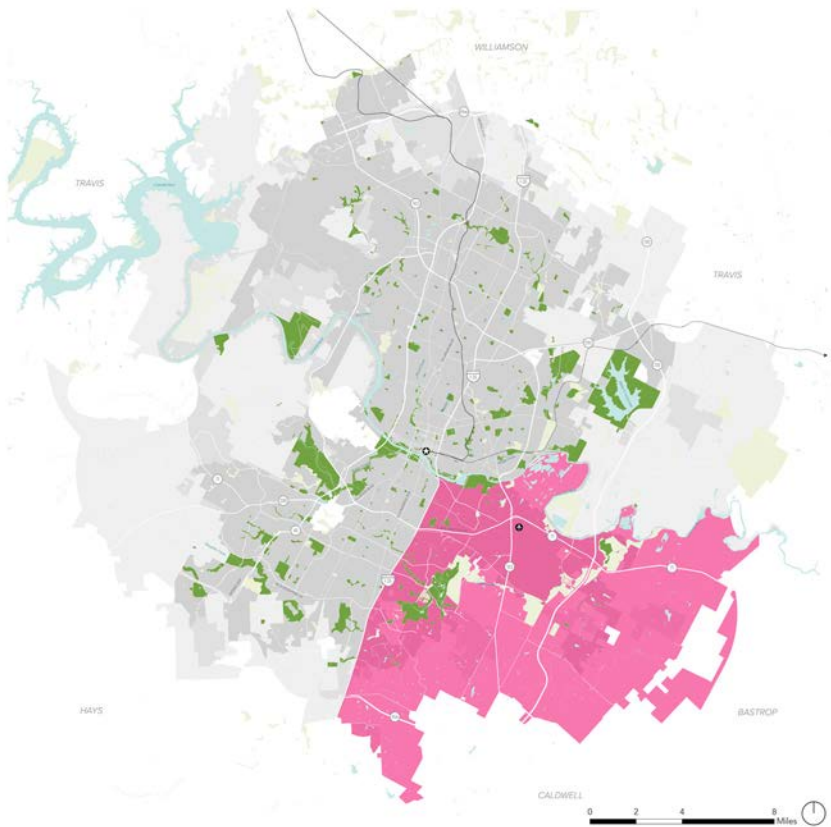
NORTH



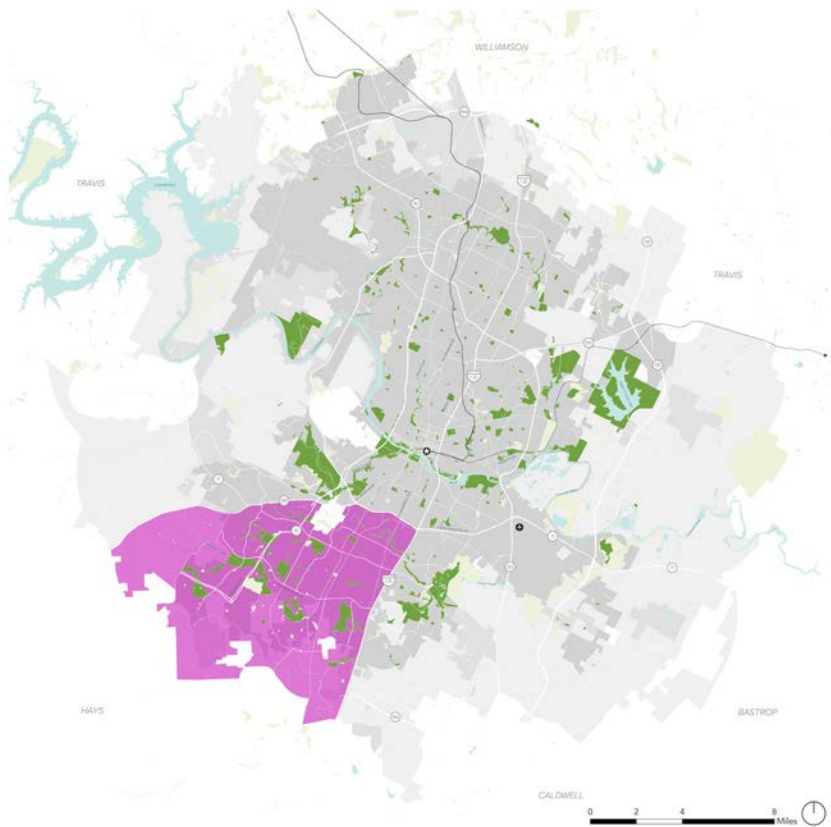
EAST



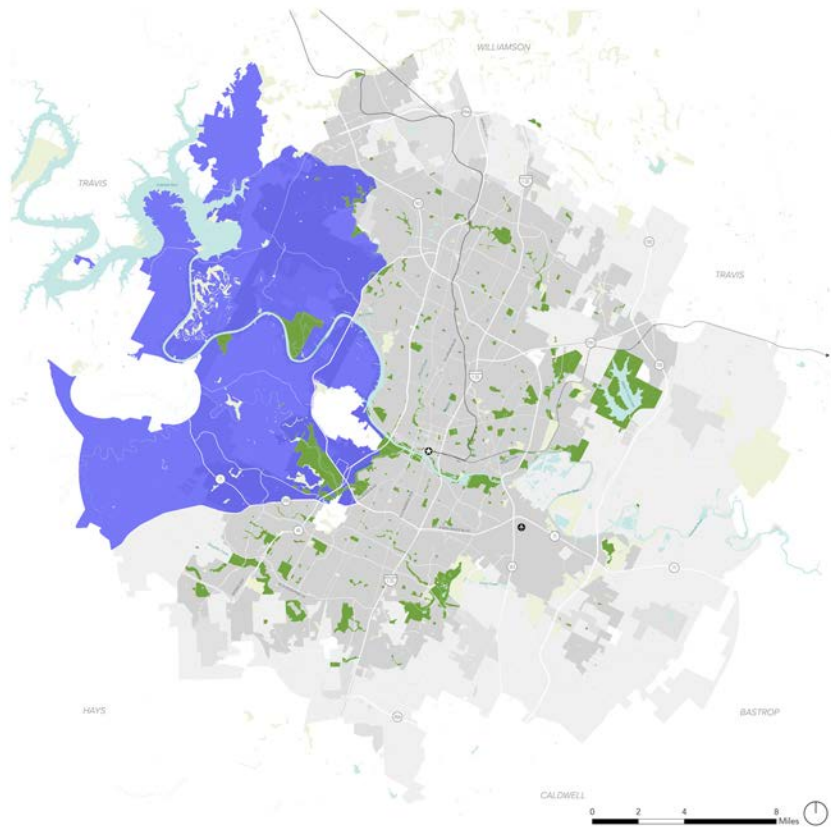
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SOUTHWEST



WEST





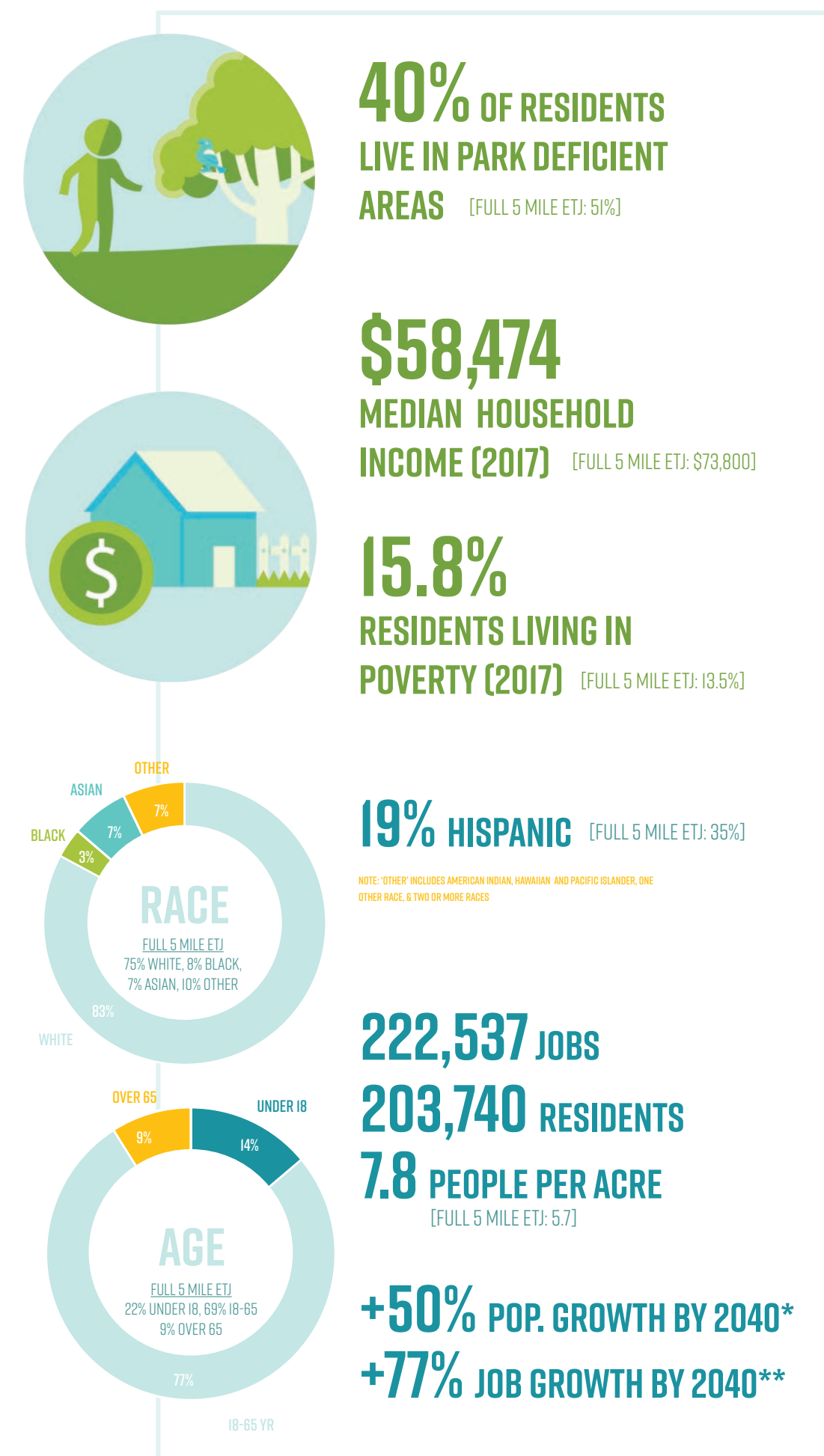


# CENTRAL COMBINED PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

## ÁREA DE PLANIFICACIÓN COMBINADA AL CENTRAL

### AT A GLANCE

UN VISTAZO



### DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMENDACIONES PRELIMINARES

#### PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

- + **ADAMS-HEMPHILL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - develop and implement vision plan, improve accessibility and key amenities
- + **BARTON CREEK GREENBELT** - improve access points, signage and wayfinding
- + **BLUNN CREEK PRESERVES** - improve access, trailhead, and nature play
- + **BRUSH SQUARE** - master plan implementation
- + **COVERT PARK AT MT. BONNELL** - design and construction
- + **DOUGHERTY ART CENTER AT BUTLER SHORES** - complete design and implementation
- + **ELISABET NEY MUSEUM** - development of visitors center on north side of Waller Creek
- + **GROVE AT SHOAL CREEK** - park system master plan implementation, includes dog park
- + **LAMAR BEACH** - master plan implementation
- + **MAYFIELD PARK** - rehabilitate buildings, grounds, and ponds
- + **OLD BAKERY EMPORIUM & VISITORS CENTER** - rehab and plaza renovation
- + **PERRY NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - work with AISD to improve neighborhood access
- + **SEAHOLM WATERFRONT** - master plan implementation
- + **SOUTH AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - master plan implementation, includes trail & multiuse field improvements
- + **STECK VALLEY GREENBELT** - improvements and pocket park development
- + **REED NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - continue renovations
- + **WALSH BOAT LANDING** - implement improvements
- + **WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - master plan implementation, includes addressing failing retaining walls
- + **WALLER CREEK** - continue to collaborate with Waller Creek Conservancy improvements
- + **WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE** - master plan implementation
- + **ZILKER METROPOLITAN PARK** - construct loop trail extension and bridge; master plan implementation including: Eliza Springs Historic Amphitheater Rehab, Sunken Gardens Rehab, Zilker Gardens Rehab, Zilker Clubhouse Rehab
- + Work with AISD to implement parks at:  
Pre-K Schools: Uphaus Early Childhood Center, Read Pre-K Demonstration  
Elementary Schools: Webb Primary, Gullet, Reilly, Wooten, Pillow, Brentwood, Brown, Lee, Pease, Ridgetop, Dawson, Travis Heights, Zilker, Galindo, Barton Hills, Becker, Doss, Hill, Bryker Woods, Casis, Mathews, Highland Park, Austin St Hospital

Middle Schools: Lamar, Burnet, Webb, Murchinson, O. Henry  
Middle & High Schools: Richards School For Young Women Leaders  
High Schools: Mccallum, Travis, Premier at Travis, Anderson, Austin, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, Phoenix Academy, Leadership Academy  
Special Needs: Rosedale

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

- + **SHOAL CREEK** - reestablish the trail connection in landslide area

#### PARTNERSHIPS

- + **BRACKENRIDGE TRACT** - work with UT to retain golf and/or recreational opportunities
- + **NORWOOD HOUSE** - continue to collaborate with the Norwood Foundation to rehab the house and implement the master plan
- + **PEASE DISTRICT PARK** - continue to collaborate with Pease Park Conservancy on improvements
- + **SHOAL CREEK CORRIDOR** - continue to collaborate with Shoal Creek Conservancy on improvements
- + **TOWN LAKE HIKE AND BIKE TRAIL** - work with UT to promote park trail connectivity to Red Bud Isle

#### ACQUISITIONS

- + **BLUNN CREEK TRAIL** extension to **LADY BIRD LAKE BOARDWALK TRAIL**
- + **WEST AND EAST BOULDIN CREEK GREENBELT** - acquisition and trail development
- + New parkland within park deficient areas

#### MASTER PLANNING

- + **BEVERLY S SHEFFIELD NORTHWEST DISTRICT PARK** - including Level 2-3 development
- + **BUTLER SHORES**
- + **GILLIS NEIGHBORHOOD PARK** - including reinvestment in key amenities
- + **ZILKER METROPOLITAN PARK** - including Umlauf, Zilker Botanical Garden, and Austin Nature & Science Center

#### FEASIBILITY STUDIES

- + **HANCOCK GOLF COURSE** - study feasibility of golf and other recreational opportunities that can enhance sustainability of course

### WHAT DID WE MISS?





# DRAFT PLAN REVIEW

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**View the Draft Plan**

[www.austinfutureparks.org](http://www.austinfutureparks.org)



## **STAY CONNECTED**

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