

Chapter 6: Action Plans

ROUND ROCK

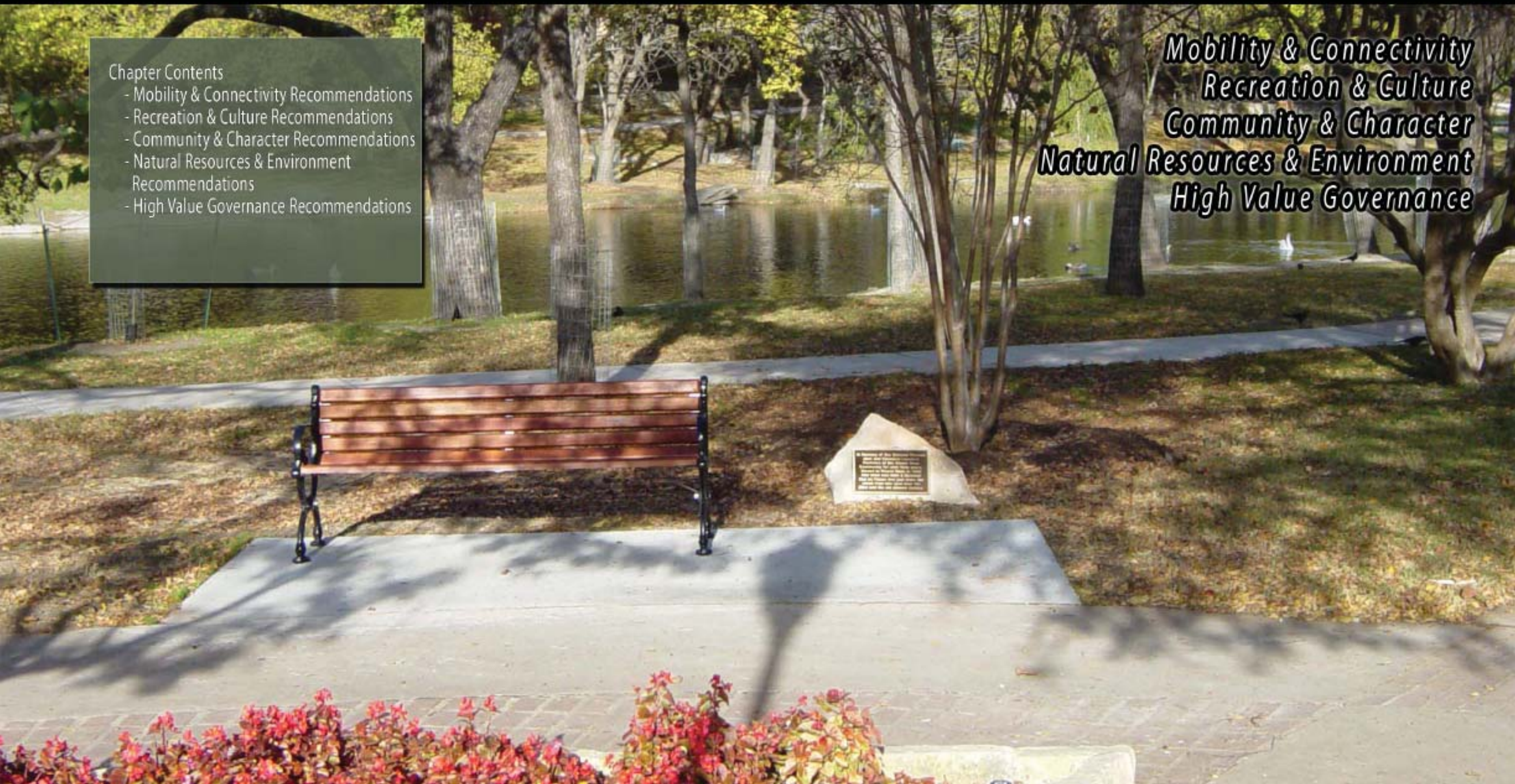
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Chapter Contents

- Mobility & Connectivity Recommendations
- Recreation & Culture Recommendations
- Community & Character Recommendations
- Natural Resources & Environment Recommendations
- High Value Governance Recommendations

Mobility & Connectivity
Recreation & Culture
Community & Character
Natural Resources & Environment
High Value Governance



Chapter 6

Park and Recreation Action Plans - Key Recommendations

Introduction

The Master Plan contained in this chapter summarizes the findings of the Needs Assessment and recommends a series of actions to improve and expand Round Rock's parks, recreation, trails and open space system. These recommendations co-address the issues of mobility and connectivity, recreation and culture, community and character, natural resources and environment, and high value governance.

The guiding principles discussed in Chapter 5 have been used as a basis for many of the recommendations in this section. Those principles are specifically adopted as part of this master plan, and form the foundation for future decisions.

High priority recommendations should be implemented over the next five years. Medium priority recommendations should be implemented over the next five to ten years. Other longer range recommendations are also included as part of the recommendations of this master plan and should be implemented beyond the ten year timeframe.

Costs that are shown are at an order of magnitude level of detail, and will vary as more detailed programming and design occurs. Escalation should be accounted for whenever those cost projections are refined or updated.

The recommended improvements fall into five general categories:

- Mobility and connectivity
- Recreation and culture
- Community and character
- Natural resources and environment
- High value governance



“A clear stream, a long horizon, a forest wilderness and open sky - these are man’s most ancient possessions. In modern society, they are his most priceless.”

Lyndon B. Johnson

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Philosophical Background for Recommendations

Key design points that should guide the design of every existing or new park in the city have been discussed throughout this master plan document. These points are as follows:

- Every park should be considered as a green oasis in Round Rock - Parks should be carefully sited so that they are prominent features in their respective neighborhoods, and should include extensive mature trees and landscaping.
- Parks should follow a consistent citywide design theme - As discussed in previous sections, fundamental items such as park signs, high quality pavilions with rock faced columns, and the preservation of existing vegetation and trees should be used in every new and existing park to create a consistent and recognizable park nomenclature.
- Where possible, each park should truly celebrate the history and culture of Round Rock - parks can incorporate historical plaques and features that allude to the area or neighborhood around the park or the circumstances that caused the park to be created.
- Every park should include features for a wide variety of park users - park facilities should be multi-faceted, and should follow the guidelines for each park type presented in Chapter 4.
- Parks should be designed so as to reduce maintenance - automatic irrigation systems should be a key component of every park, as should simple features that make every park easier to maintain.
- Shade should be incorporated into many features of every park - playgrounds and basketball courts should be covered where feasible, and several covered picnic tables should be included in every park, no matter how small the park.
- Bodies of water should be highly valued - existing areas of water, whether in the form of ponds, small lakes or creeks should be preserved and located in key parks where feasible, assuming a ready source of re-supply water is available.
- Community input should be welcomed - input from neighborhoods surrounding each new or renovated park should be included in the design of every park in the city.

The following items comprise the major priority recommendations of the Game Plan 2020. Illustrations included with each of these items are intended to convey the essence of each recommendation, but are not specific concepts or actual plans. Costs that are shown are also pre-design, and are based on staff and consultant experience with similar efforts. All costs include a cost escalation factor, assumed to be in the 4% per year range. Detailed concepts and fully

developed cost projections will be developed as each recommendation begins to be implemented.

Prioritization – Actions are divided into categories, based on the type of facility, and then further ranked in order of importance.

- Mobility and Connectivity Priority Items
- Recreation and Culture Priority Items
- Community and Character Priority Items
- Natural Resources and Environment Priority Items
- High Value Governance Priority Items

The timeframe of each recommended priority is based on either short term, within the next five years; medium term, within the next five to ten years; or long term, beyond ten years. Note that the prioritization shown in this plan is intended to guide staff and council actions, and any item may be initiated sooner than recommended if unique circumstances or opportunities arise.

Following is a summary of the priority items recommended in this master plan.

Mobility and Connectivity Recommendations

The development of a citywide hike and bike trail system will not only offer abundant recreational opportunities to the residents of Round Rock, it will also provide an alternative mode of transportation thus reducing traffic congestion along roadways, reducing the amount of pollution, and connecting all parts of the city.

Across the United States, trails are always one of the most popular recreation features provided by communities. In Texas, with favorable outdoor weather much of the year, trails are often the single most frequently requested community amenity. Trails offer many benefits:

- Trails are popular because they offer something for everyone, from the very young to the very active to the elderly simply seeking a tranquil place to walk and enjoy being outside. Trails provide an opportunity to see the beautiful natural parts of the city, and they provide opportunities to see other neighborhoods and newer parts of the city.
- Trails support economic development by creating attractive greenbelts that can revitalize areas and enhance neighborhoods. Trails provide access to local businesses, and provide tourism opportunities. A great system of places to walk and ride makes Round Rock an even more attractive place to live and invest in.
- Trails promote a healthy lifestyle by providing opportunities to engage in exercise in a fun setting, whether by simply walking or through more strenuous activities such as running, cycling or inline skating.
- Trails help to preserve and enhance greenbelt areas and can beautify streets. Imagine Round Rock twenty years from now, and imagine how attractive green corridors such as Brushy Creek will be. Imagine also beautiful streets with trees and shaded places to walk and ride.
- Trails teach us about the history and culture of Round Rock by preserving key historical features and areas, as well as the landscape context around those areas.
- Trails enhance the transportation system in Round Rock by providing alternative ways to get to key city destinations such as schools, libraries, parks, recreation and senior centers, pools, and city hall. They also provide ways to get to work and to retail areas.
- Finally and most importantly, the development of a citywide trail system clearly speaks to Round Rock's commitment to establishing a very high quality of life standard for its citizens. This commitment to quality tells everyone that Round Rock will always seek to be a premier place to live in and to do business.

Require preservation and free access to creek and major drainage corridors

Drainage corridors will continue to be the major trail corridors within the city, and should be developed with access along at least one side of the creek for small drainage tributaries and along both sides of the creek for major creeks such as Brushy Creek, Lake Creek, Onion Branch, McNeil Creek and Chandler's Creek. These corridors are largely undevelopable, and can preserve some of the remaining natural space in Round Rock. Steps should be taken to require that natural creek corridors are preserved and trail access is allowed. In most cases, streets paralleling the drainage or creek corridor are preferred, rather than lots that back up to the creek and that effectively seal off the creek from public view or access.



Preferred Treatment - A similar drainage condition in the Sonoma development turns a common place drainage channel into a mini-park and green space. Lots backing up to the creek use transparent fences, and are sold for a higher return as amenity lots, but still allow the drainage corridor to be used and enjoyed by all residents of the community.

Major Attractors and Potential Destinations for Trails in Round Rock

Key potential trail destinations throughout the city have been identified as part of the trail planning process. Trail connections to these destinations can promote increased usage of the corridors, and demonstrates a greater need for the trail corridor, especially when applying for competitive grant funding.

Destinations that were noted throughout the city include:

- Schools
- Existing parks and recreation destinations such as the Clay Madsen Center
- Key city facilities
- Major employers as identified by the Round Rock Chamber of Commerce
- Multi-family housing developments (high density housing)
- Major retail areas (both existing and future as identified by the city's land use plan)

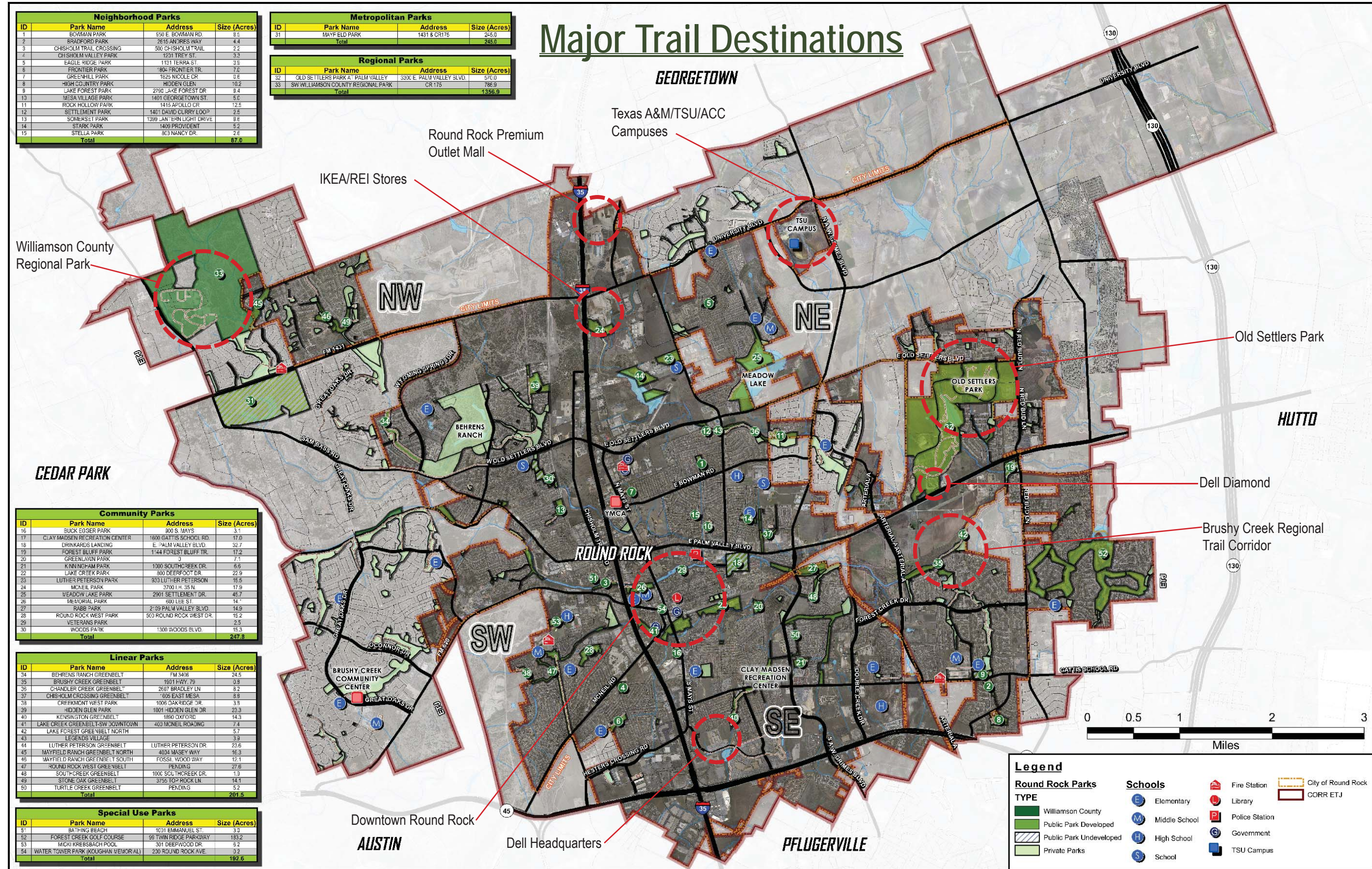


Incorrect Model - Unattractive drainage corridor in the city that could have served as a trail and park corridor. Lots backing up to the corridor create a "no-man's land" that serves only to carry stormwater.

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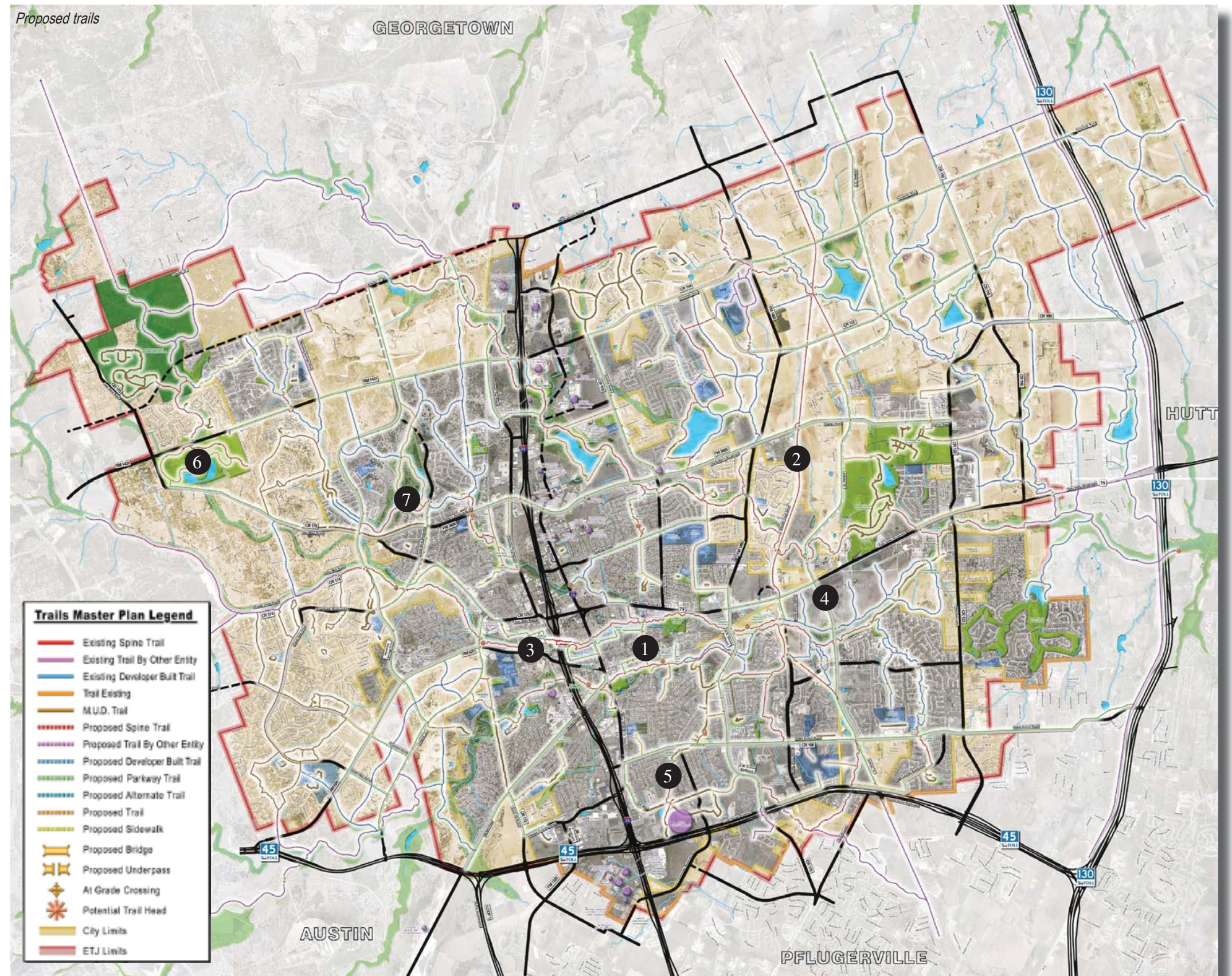


Mobility and Connectivity Recommendations

Proposed Mobility and Connectivity Recommendations

Not all trail recommendations can be done at one time. As with any other system in a community, a hike and bike trail system must be done in pieces. The map on this page shows the entire proposed network of hike and bike trails and the highest trail priorities are explained in more detail below. Individual trail plates and proposed corridors can be found in the appendix of this document.

- 1) Downtown Area Trails - these trails are proposed to be 8' wide concrete parkway trails. The estimated length is 1.5 miles and is estimated to cost between \$3 million to \$5 million.
- 2) Trails from Downtown Round Rock to the University Center - this trail is proposed to be a 10' to 12' wide concrete community trail. The estimated length is 5.8 miles and is estimated to cost between \$3.4 million to \$4.15 million.
- 3) Brushy Creek Trail from Hairy Man Rd. to Memorial Park - this trail is proposed to be a 10' to 12' wide concrete community trail. The estimated length is 2.4 miles and is estimated to cost between \$1.9 million to \$2.2 million.
- 4) Trail Connecting Old Settlers Park to the Brushy Creek Trail System - this trail is proposed to be a 8' wide concrete parkway trail. The estimated length is 1.7 miles and is estimated to cost between \$1.0 million to \$1.25 million.
- 5) Improvements to the trail connecting Clay Madsen Recreation Center to Dell, Inc. employment - this is renovation and widening of an existing trail. The estimated length is 0.5 miles and is estimated to cost between \$200,000 to \$250,000.
- 6) Mayfield Park Nature Trails - these trails are proposed to be 8' wide nature trails or decomposed granite trails. The estimated length is 2.8 miles throughout the park and is estimated to cost between \$1.05 million to \$2.05 million.
- 7) Behrens Ranch Nature Trails - these trails are proposed to be 8' wide nature trails or decomposed granite trails. The estimated length is 2.2 miles throughout the park and is estimated to cost between \$800,000 to \$1.65 million.





ROUND ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Action Plan 2008-2020

Mobility and Connectivity Recommendations

Trail Corridor Development

Priority	Action ID	Action	Need for this Action	City Sector	Estimated Cost Range		Type of Dev.	Potential Funding Mechanisms and Sources	Potential Time Frame
					Low Range	High Range			
High	1	Downtown area trails (1.5 miles)	Providing a strong pedestrian and bicycle transportation system is key to the success of any downtown revitalization.	Citywide	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	2	Trail from Downtown Round Rock to University Center (5.8 miles)	The development of this trail will provide a strong connection between downtown and the northeast portion of Round Rock. Students, workers and residents will be able to travel from the university area into Downtown.	NE	\$3,400,000	\$4,150,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	3	Brushy Creek Trail from Hairy Man Road to Memorial Park (2.4 miles)	Round Rock has a unique opportunity to develop an alternative transportation route that will completely bi-sect the entire city from east to west. The development of this trail extends and helps complete the Brushy Creek trail corridor.	SW	\$1,900,000	\$2,200,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	4	Trail connecting Old Settlers Park to the Brushy Creek Trail system (1.7 miles)	The Brushy Creek trail corridor and Old Settlers Park are two of the biggest assets in Round Rock. With this trail connection, residents can get from anywhere in the community along the Brushy Creek Trail to Old Settlers Park.	NE	\$1,000,000	\$1,250,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	5	Improvements to the trail connecting Clay Madsen Recreation Center to Dell, Inc. employment (.5 miles)	This trail is a highly utilization mode of transportation for people working at Dell and living in the surrounding neighborhoods. Renovation of this trail is needed.	SE	\$200,000	\$250,000	Renovation	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	6	Mayfield Park nature trails (2.8 miles)	This park is intended to be a passive park. Nature trails throughout the park will help meet this desired use.	NW/Citywide	\$1,050,000	\$2,050,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
High	7	Behrens Ranch nature trails (2.2 miles)	This park is also intended to be a passive park. Nature trails throughout the park will help meet this desired use.	NW/Citywide	\$800,000	\$1,650,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2009-2014
Estimated Total					\$11,350,000	\$16,550,000			
Total Potential Expenditure Range For 2008 to 2020 Planning Timeframe and Beyond - (note that grants and donations may fund portions of the amount shown)					\$ 11,350,000	\$ 16,550,000			

1. Note: Costs shown are order of magnitude estimates prior to any concept or design, and will vary as site selection and more detailed design occurs. List is for guidance in planning, and not all items may be implemented. Grants and donations may reduce the cost of each item.
 2. Land costs, if shown, are general estimates intended to establish allowances and will vary. Land costs are estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000 per acre.
 3. Cost include an annual 5% escalation factor. All costs shown are rounded to nearest \$50,000. Costs should be updated frequently as additional cost information becomes available.

Mobility and Connectivity Recommendations

Framework for Programs, Services, Facilities, and Areas: Round Rock Recreation and Culture

Park and recreation programs, services, facilities, and areas are not all created equal or utilized in the same manner. They serve different purposes, fulfill varying outcomes, and attract different uses and user groups. This makes parks and recreation not unlike other commodities or services. When people purchase a car they can do so for basic transportation, cost-saving features, a more pleasurable driving experience, and all the way up to a myriad of different amenities.

The following framework describes the varying levels of services encompassed within the diverse areas, facilities, and offerings of the Round Rock Park and Recreation Department. Some of the ways in which this framework can be useful for staff, decision-makers, and residents is the way in which such uses lend themselves to varying levels of services and fee structures. Another advantage of using such a framework is that not all programs, facilities, and services need to be incorporated under one fee structure. For example,

- If an adult strolled along a community walking trail or brought their children or grandchildren to a neighborhood playground, there would be no fee collected as it is considered part of the basic infrastructure of a community.
- If that same adult chose to become a member of a community center for older adults, that would be considered a type of service that contributes to community well-being and there would likely be a small fee assessed to track enrollment or participation, encourage usage, and in some cases recover a small portion of the costs involved.
- If that older adult chose to enroll in a more advanced oil painting class rather than a basic class at the senior center, then the fee assessed would be at a higher cost recovery level since it falls under the third level within the framework as a community amenity.
- That same adult might choose to travel with a senior center trip that involved an overnight visit to a nearby area and in that case, it would be a highly individualized and/or specialized experience with all costs born by the participant.

More detail is given on the following pages.

Basic Infrastructure

Those assets of a community often developed and maintained by local government that function as part of the standard level of requirements or offerings within a community.

Examples in a typical community: city square, parks, open space, playgrounds, open space preserved for water run-off, walking, hiking, and biking trails

Funding Sources: 100% funded by public funds

Criteria:

- considered an “open to the public” area
- no special costs (i.e, supervisory staff, instruction, etc.) incurred by person/persons using
- difficult to collect fee: cost of collecting fee would offset the fee itself



Playgrounds and trails are both considered basic infrastructure of a community.

Community Well-being

These are assets that contribute to the overall health and well-being of the community and its residents.

Examples: older adult center, youth recreation leagues, outdoor swimming pool, learn to swim program, physically active, general activities, i.e. drop-in basketball or playing fields, summer playgrounds

Funding Sources: Largely public funding with nominal fee being assessed to the participant

Criteria:

- focuses upon an outcome area that is important to a community, i.e. health, youth development, etc.
- provides a facility, program or service that assumes a basic, low cost approach for instructional or recreation pursuit



Community swimming pools and the Clay Madsen Recreation center contribute to the community well-being.

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Community Amenity

A facility, area, program or service would be considered a community amenity when it moves beyond the pure recreational or instructional level such as synchronized swimming and competitive leagues. After-school care or summer camps that serve as a form of day care would be included under this designation. These facilities, activities, programs, and services are valuable within themselves and positive assets for a community.

Funding Sources: Mostly funded by participants however a small portion is still subsidized by public funding

Criteria:

- addresses an interest of a smaller group of residents
- the nature of instruction and/or service is of a higher level than basic recreational outcomes
- program or service may incorporate a greater level of accountability or



After-school care and youth league programs such as swim teams are examples of community amenities.

responsibility on the part of the sponsors Individual/Specialized Usage

This last category within the framework, individualized and specialized usage, refers to those programs, areas, and facilities where the benefits of usage are primarily directed towards the participant and/or the usage requires levels of service or support that exceed a more generalized public usage.

Examples: facility or field rentals, water park

Funding: 100% of cost of operating and maintaining is covered by the individuals or groups making use of the program or facility

Criteria:

- usage of the facility or participation in the activity is restricted to those renting or participating
- proportion of involvement by non-residents as opposed to residents who are taxpayers
- highly specialized nature of the facility (i.e. water park) or levels of preparation required for usage (i.e. tournament play)

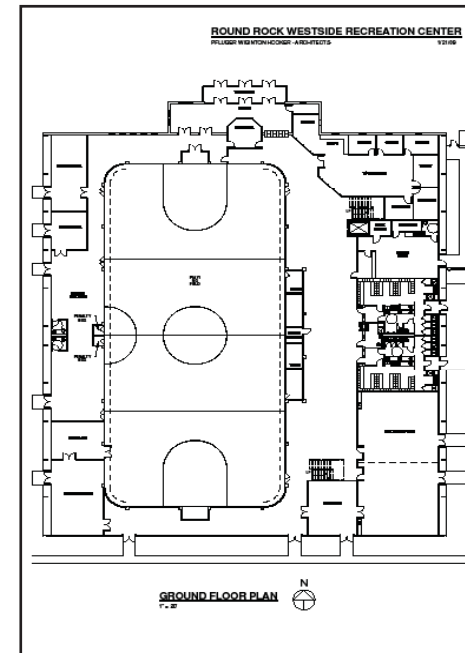


The Rock 'N River Family Aquatic Center and tournaments held at Old Settlers Park are part of the framework of individual/specialized usage.

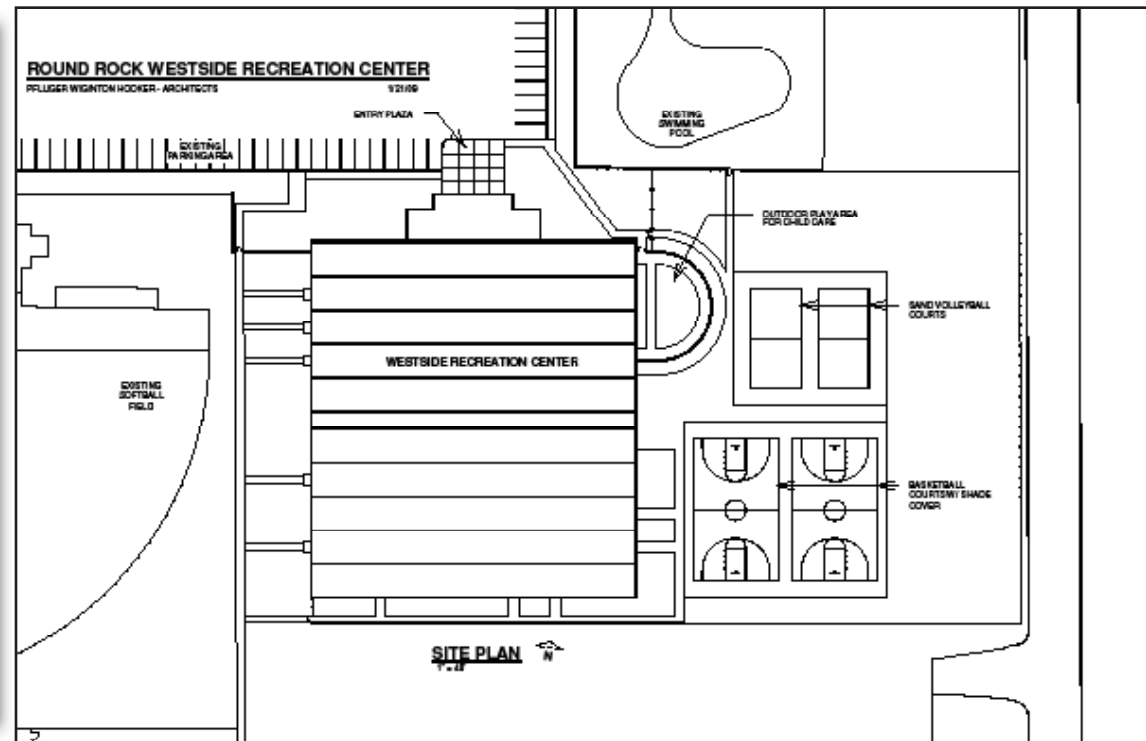


Recreation and Culture Recommendations

- 1) Play for All Abilities - this is an adaptive park planned to be installed at Rabb Park. This will be the first adaptive playscape park in Round Rock and will be totally accessible to children of all abilities.
- 2) Old Settlers Park Multi-Purpose Recreational Field Complex - this development will have a citywide impact and is planned for the timeframe of 2010 to 2014. The estimated cost of this high priority item is \$3,000,000 to \$7,000,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.
 - Justification for this action - continues to develop tournament quality athletic facilities for attracting teams to the Sports Capital of Texas.
- 3) Develop second phase of Rock 'N River Aquatic Center - The expansion will have a citywide impact and serve all residents of Round Rock. This very high priority item is estimated to cost \$5,000,000 to \$7,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.
 - Justification for this action - the center will become a stronger regional draw and can generate higher entry rates.
- 4) Develop the Westside Legacy Field House (recreation) center - This field house will be about 60,000 square feet in size. It will contain a fitness area, multi-purpose rooms, indoor turf field, and a reception area. This facility is planned to be constructed next to the Micki Krebsbach pool therefore an aquatic component will not be included in the recreation center. The estimated cost for this priority ranges from \$10,000,000 to \$18,000,000 and it will serve the southwest sector of the community. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: partnerships with the school district, the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.
 - Justification for this action - the current Clay Madsen Recreation Center is over utilized during peak hours. With the fast growing population of Round Rock, a second recreation center is a high priority.



A typical athletic park will have facilities for a variety of sporting activities. Each athletic park should be uniquely designed based upon the site features that are present.



Proposed layout of the westside field house/recreation center.



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5) Develop third and fourth phase of Rock 'N River Aquatic Complex - This high priority item is in the cost range of \$4,000,000 to \$6,000,000. Implementation of this priority should begin 2010 to 2012. This citywide facility could potentially be funded by: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.



Conceptual Design for the future Rock 'N River Phases

Recreation and Culture Recommendations

6) Develop a north side recreation center - Consider partnership with either the Special Event Center or the higher education system while ensuring the recreation center is sized for both student and community use. This recreation center is a medium priority with implementation planned by 2018. Potential funding mechanisms and sources again could include: partnerships with the new universities in the area, the General Fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - as population in Round Rock continues to expand to the north, a recreation center will be needed in the north to serve those incoming residents.

7) University Area Commons Park - a partnership with the new universities that are developing in Round Rock. This could become a large community park that serves the entire city as well as the universities' students, faculty and staff. The estimated development costs for this medium priority item is \$2,500,000 to \$5,000,000. These costs only reflect the city portion of the development. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - this will become a signature park at the heart of the new university area.

8) West Side Athletic Park (once site is identified and acquired) - the development will serve the west side of Round Rock. This medium priority item is estimated to cost \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - the majority of sports fields are located on the east side of the city. As growth and population increase, travel time to the east side will also increase, creating a hassle for many league participants. This park addresses the need for an active park in this area of the city.





ROUND ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Action Plan 2008-2020

Recreation and Culture Recommendations

Regional and Athletic Parks

Priority	Action ID	Action	Need for this Action	City Sector	Acres		Estimated Cost Range		Type of Dev.	Potential Funding Mechanisms and Sources	Potential Time Frame
					Low	High	Low Range	High Range			
High	1	Play for All Abilities - adaptive playscape at Rabb House	This will be the first adaptive playscape in Round Rock	Citywide	0	0			Installation	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	2	Old Settlers Park - Soccer Complex	continues development of tournament quality athletic facilities	Citywide	0	0	\$5,000,000	\$7,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	3	Develop second phase Rock 'N River Aquatic Center	Center will become stronger regional draw and can generate higher entry rates	Citywide - Regional	0	0	\$5,000,000	\$7,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	4	Westside Recreation Center	Clay Madsen Center is over utilized during peak hours. Costs exclude aquatic component.	SW	0	0	\$10,000,000	\$18,000,000	Acquisition	Partnership with school district. General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
Medium	5	Develop third and fourth phases of Rock 'N River Aquatic Center	Continues to promote center as key regional aquatic facility	Citywide - Regional	0	0	\$4,000,000	\$6,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	6	North Recreation Center	Consider partnership with new area universities. Size for both student and community use.	NE, Citywide	0	0	\$0	\$0	Acquisition	Partnership with new universities in the area, general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	7	University Area Commons Park - signature park as heart of new university area	Partnership with new university development	Citywide	0	0	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	Development	Costs shown are city portion, General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Low	8	West Athletic Park (once site is identified and acquired)	Addresses need for active park in this area of the city	SW	0	0	\$5,000,000	\$10,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	Beyond 2020
Estimated Total					0	0	\$31,500,000	\$53,500,000			
Total Potential Expenditure Range For 2008 to 2020 Planning Timeframe and Beyond - (note that grants and donations may fund portions of the amount shown)					0	0	\$31,500,000	\$53,500,000			

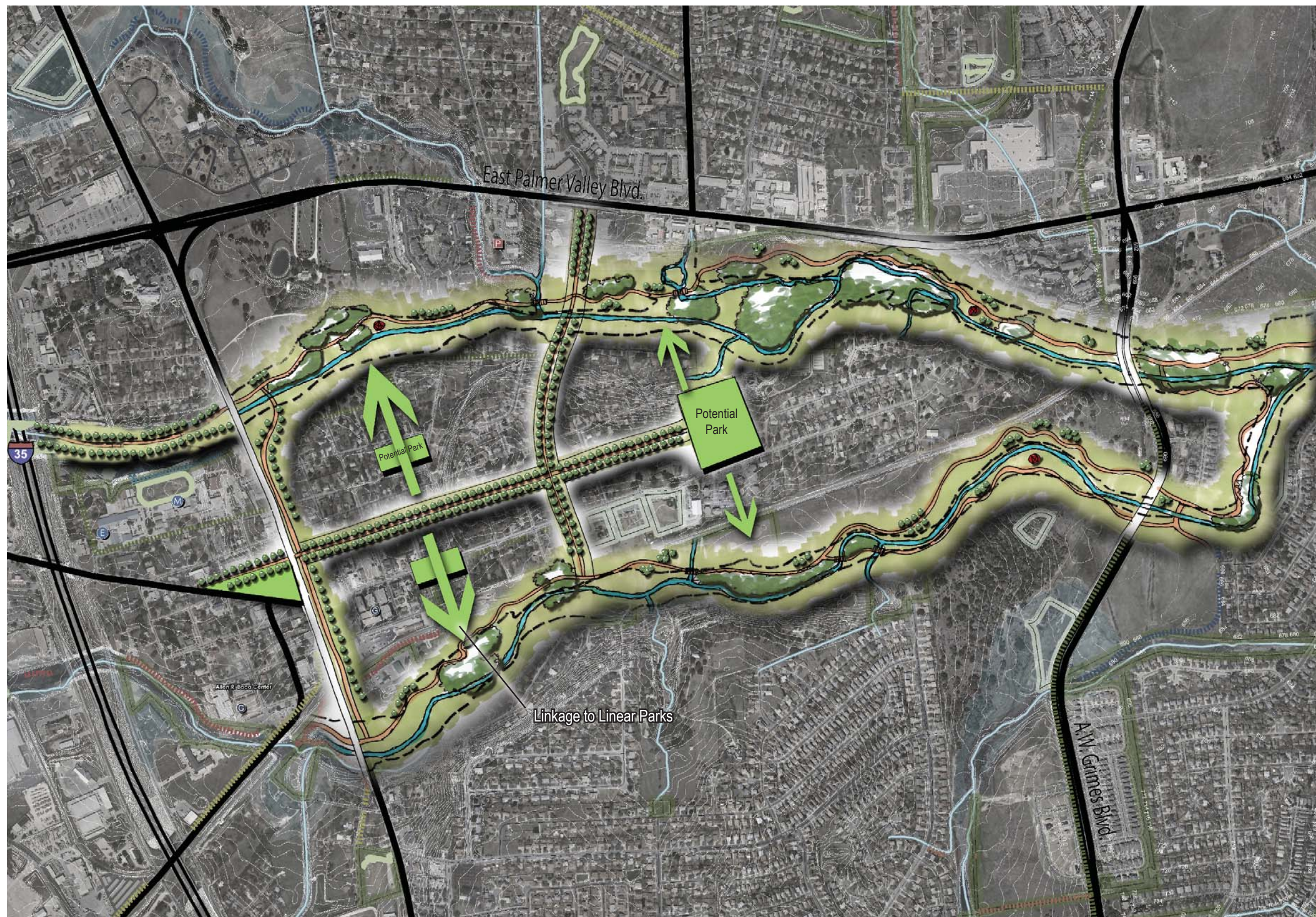
1. Note: Costs shown are order of magnitude estimates prior to any concept or design, and will vary as site selection and more detailed design occurs. List is for guidance in planning, and not all items may be implemented. Grants and donations may reduce the cost of each item.
 2. Land costs, if shown, are general estimates intended to establish allowances and will vary. Land costs are estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000 per acre.
 3. Cost include an annual 5% escalation factor. All costs shown are rounded to nearest \$50,000. Costs should be updated frequently as additional cost information becomes available.

Recreation and Culture Recommendations

Community and Character Recommendations

1) Heritage Trail Linear Park - enhancements to Brushy Creek and Lake Creek Corridors should be done as signature features of the downtown area. These linear parks should also be integrated as key components of the revitalized downtown. Round Rock has the unique opportunity to create a significant linear park that is cultural and integrates Round Rock's history. A linear park corridor along Brushy Creek called the Heritage Trail will connect Bathing Beach, Memorial Park, Veterans Park, and Downtown. This linear park will have a citywide impact and is a high priority item. Estimated development costs are \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - the development of the Heritage Trail Linear Park will provide alternative transportation for a significant portion of Round Rock citizens when wanting to access the downtown area. People will be able to reach downtown by walking or cycling because of this linear park.
- Provides a cultural and historic educational opportunity



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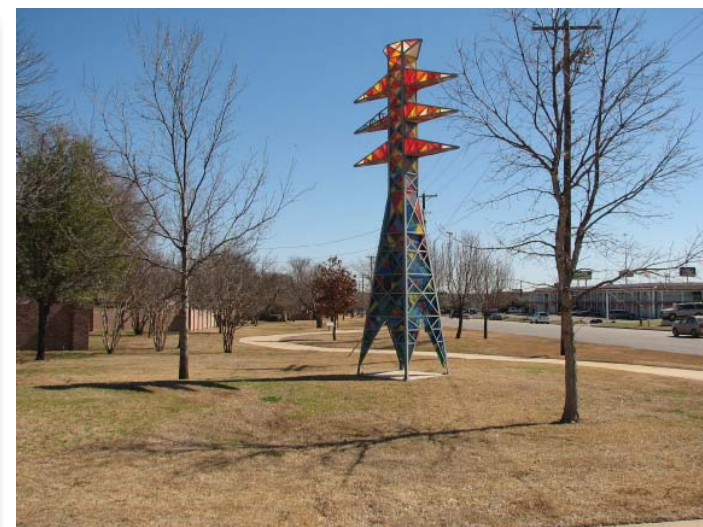
2) Downtown Plaza Park - this park needs to be integrated as a key component of the revitalized downtown. This high priority item will have a citywide impact, serving all residents of Round Rock. The estimated cost for this downtown plaza park is \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - this park will be a core centerpiece for the downtown redevelopment. It will also serve as a signature park for events and festivals.



Examples of downtown parks and linear parks.

Community and Character Recommendations



3) Art in Public Places, in Parks, and Along Trails - Public art is one of the easiest tools a community has to share its identity, character, culture, and history. Public art can be something as simple as a checker board table top or mosaic to a large, permanently installed sculpture. Public art has the ability to make people ponder, transform an area, or enhance a neighborhood's image. Beyond that, public art would show residents and visitors that Round Rock is the type of community that cares about a culture, and is a sophisticated and unique place to live.

The City of Round Rock should promote the installation of works of public art in prominent park locations and along trails. City staff and city council should develop guidelines and a review process regarding which works of public art will be selected for installation. Funding at least one major installation per year over the next five years is a high priority. The potential cost of public art will vary based on the work that is chosen and installation.

The City of Round Rock should consider the Percent for Art Program that dedicates a specified amount each year to purchase art for public places.



ROUND ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Action Plan 2008-2020

Community and Character Recommendations

Regional and Athletic Parks

Priority	Action ID	Action	Need for this Action	City Sector	Acres		Estimated Cost Range		Type of Dev.	Potential Funding Mechanisms and Sources	Potential Time Frame
					Low	High	Low Range	High Range			
High	1	Heritage Trail Linear Park - enhancements to Brushy Creek and Lake Creek Corridors as signature features of the downtown area	Should be integrated as key component of revitalized downtown.	Citywide	0	0	\$15,000,000	\$20,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	2	Downtown Plaza Park - Core centerpiece for downtown redevelopment, signature park for events	Should be integrated as key component of revitalized downtown.	Citywide	0	0	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	3	Art in the Parks - establish an art in the park program	Add culture and character to Round Rock, can improve the City's image.	Citywide	0	0	\$100,000	\$250,000	Installation	Donation, general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Estimated Total					0	0	\$18,100,000	\$25,250,000			
Total Potential Expenditure Range For 2008 to 2020 Planning Timeframe and Beyond - (note that grants and donations may fund portions of the amount shown)					0	0	\$18,100,000	\$25,250,000			

1. Note: Costs shown are order of magnitude estimates prior to any concept or design, and will vary as site selection and more detailed design occurs. List is for guidance in planning, and not all items may be implemented. Grants and donations may reduce the cost of each item.
 2. Land costs, if shown, are general estimates intended to establish allowances and will vary. Land costs are estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000 per acre.
 3. Cost include an annual 5% escalation factor. All costs shown are rounded to nearest \$50,000. Costs should be updated frequently as additional cost information becomes available.

Natural Resources and Environment Recommendations

1) Freeman Tract Open Space - this will be a passive recreation development in the southeast sector of the city. It could range in size from 40 acres to 50 acres. The estimated cost for this very high priority item development is \$1,000,000 to \$2,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - the southeast sector is significantly lacking in community parkland. Also, limited development of this park as a passive park will help protect the frontage along Brushy Creek.

2) Northeast Metropolitan Park and Lake - development of this large regional park could include: trails, athletic facilities, pavilions, parking, restrooms, and other infrastructure. This park could range in size from 150 acres to 300 acres. The estimated cost is \$7,500,000 to \$15,000,000; and potential funding mechanisms and sources could include the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships. Implementation of this low priority item should begin by 2020.

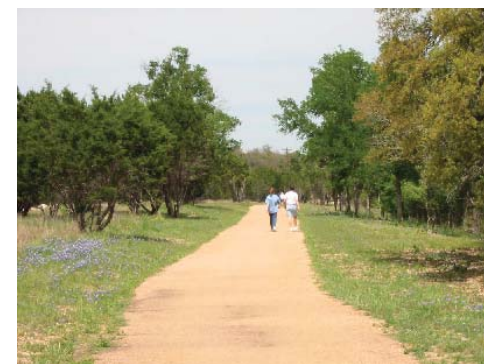
- Justification for this action - as development in this sector of the city starts to occur, the residents will need a regional park. It will also address the goal of providing a regional park in each sector of Round Rock.

3) Hairy Man Rd. / South Property - the acquisition of these 50 acres to 100 acres will result in a community park and open space preserve in the southwest sector. The estimated cost of this high priority item acquisition is \$2,500,000 to \$5,000,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources include: purchase, dedication, donation, and naming rights.

- Justification for this action - this will serve as a major community park for the southeast sector. Beyond that it has the potential of being a heritage and cultural park for a unique area of the city.

4) Hairy Man Rd. / Brushy Creek Property - this will be approximately 30 acres of acquisition along a unique city feature. This acquisition could range in cost from \$0 to \$900,000 through dedication, donation, or acquisition purchase.

- Justification for this action - this is a key piece of open space and linear park. It is a floodplain buffer along Brushy Creek which is a significantly unique feature in the city. This very high priority item is a critical acquisition.



Typical amenities found in a passive park

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Conceptual Idea for Mayfield Park

1 inch equals 500 feet 0 350 700 1,400 2,100 2,800 Feet

5) Mayfield Park (initial phase development) - the park should include amenities such as parking and entry features, trails, pavilions, picnic facilities, active gathering areas, and interpretive features. This park is expected to remain mostly passive and is a high priority item. This will become a citywide or regional park and development is estimated to cost \$2,500,000 to \$4,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - begins the development of unique piece of open space and becomes a passive park for the northwest sector of the city.

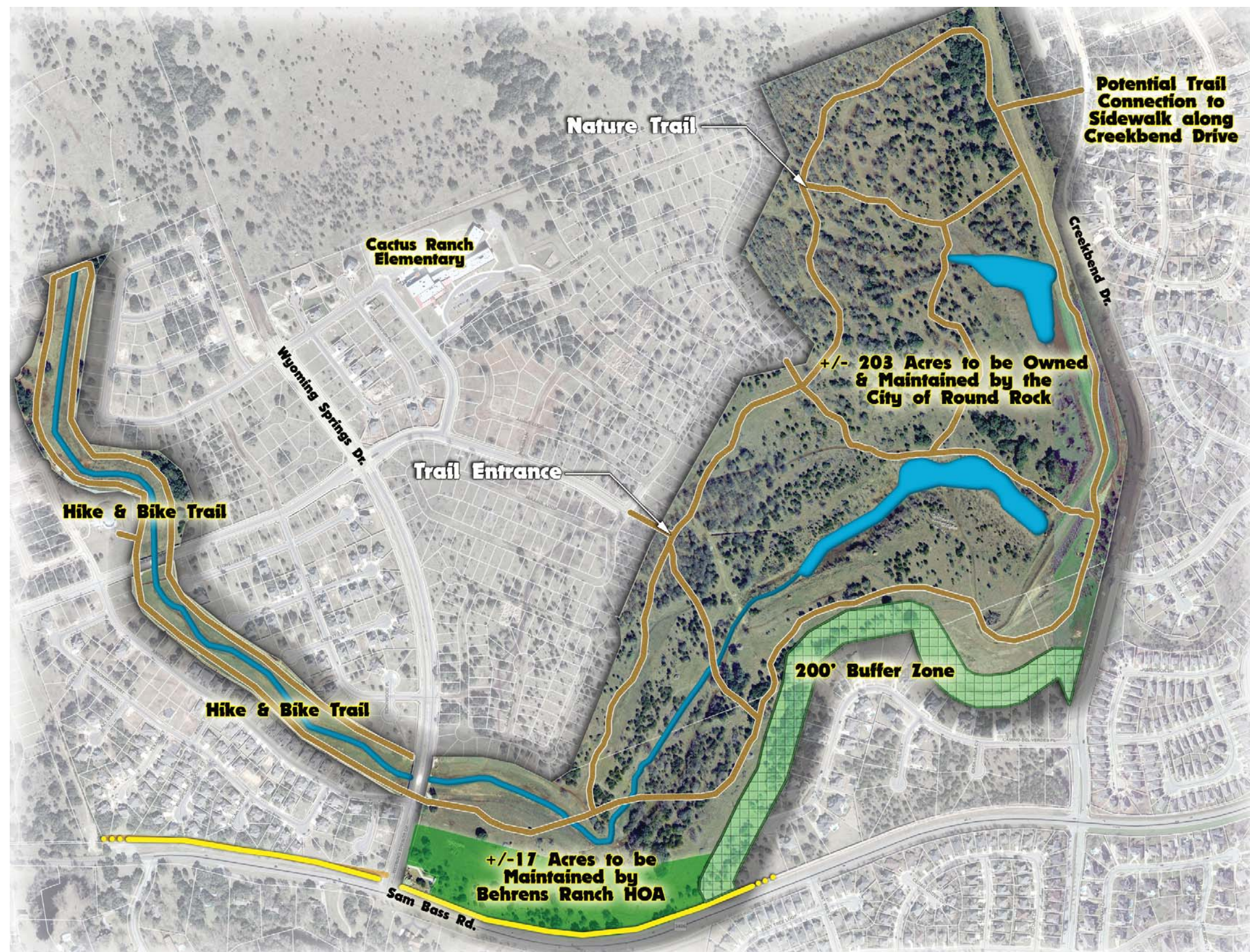
Natural Resources and Envir. Recommendations

6) Brushy Creek / 620 West Corridor - this is the area on the south side of Brushy Creek that will connect to Hairy Man Rd. Acquisition of this land can then be used for trails, open space and a linear park. The approximate size of the acquisition is 25 acres to 40 acres and will have a citywide benefit. The estimated cost of this medium priority item is \$1,250,000 to \$2,000,000.

- Justification for this action - this is a key cross town connection between downtown and the west sector of the city. Acquisition could be as an easement or as floodplain right of way.

7) Behrens Ranch Tract (initial phase development) - this development will include access, trails, pavilions, parking, restrooms and other infrastructure. It will serve the northeast sector and be approximately 50 acres in size. This high priority item is estimated to cost \$1,500,000 to \$2,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - this park will provide a great deal of open space and passive recreation for the community. The importance of the initial phase is providing access to the site for the citizens.



Conceptual idea for Behrens Ranch

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8) Old Settlers Parklands - the acquisition will add 50 acres to 75 acres to Old Settlers Park. This medium priority item will be a citywide benefit. The estimated cost of this acquisition is \$2,500,000 to \$5,625,000 through purchase, dedication, donation, and naming rights.

- Justification for this action - this will complete the northwest corner of Old Settlers Park. Also it will buffer the aquatic complex and athletic facilities from adjacent growth.

9) Meadow Lake Parkland - need to complete the acquisition of lands around Meadow Lake to preserve as a park feature. This northeast acquisition will add 20 acres to 50 acres of parkland. The estimated cost of the acquisition is \$0 to \$2,000,000 because there is a potential for donation as the area is developed.

- Justification for this action - this is ranked as a medium priority item because it serves as a major amenity park in the north central portion of the city. It also has the potential to become a signature park because of the unique water feature.

10) Meadow Lake Park - the completion of the park around the site is needed. Trails, pavilions, parking, restrooms, and other infrastructure should be added. This northeast park will add approximately 20 acres to 50 acres of parkland to Round Rock. The development cost is estimated at \$2,000,000 to \$3,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

- Justification for this action - this is a central city park feature that serves a significant population of the city in the northeast.

11) East Brushy Creek Linear Park Corridor - a continuous trail is proposed to follow along Brushy Creek through the entire length of Round Rock. The City owns the creek corridor to the ETJ limits. Development of nature trails along this portion of the corridor will connect downtown to the ETJ and into the City of Hutto. Developer trails in the area north of the creek could potentially connect downtown to Old Settlers Park and Dell Diamond.

12) Acquire site for Southeast Community Park - this site should be anywhere from 20 acres to 50 acres in size. The estimated cost of the acquisition is \$1,000,000 to \$3,750,000. There is a potential for use of a portion of the high school property as this community park. Also, the use of regional detention sites in the area should be considered.

- Justification for this action - a significant portion of the city has no large park access in the southeast. The area residents must now use Old Settlers Park which is more than 4 miles distance. Significant ongoing infill will complete development of this area within 5 years so this is a medium priority item.

13) Southeast Community Park (once location is determined) - this medium priority item will include many of typical amenities found in a community park such as picnic facilities, playgrounds, multi-purpose athletic fields, restrooms and parking, etc. The park site should be 20 acres to 50 acres in size. It will serve the southeast sector of the city and the development is estimated to cost \$1,500,000 to \$2,500,000. Potential funding mechanisms and sources could include: the general fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, and sponsorships.

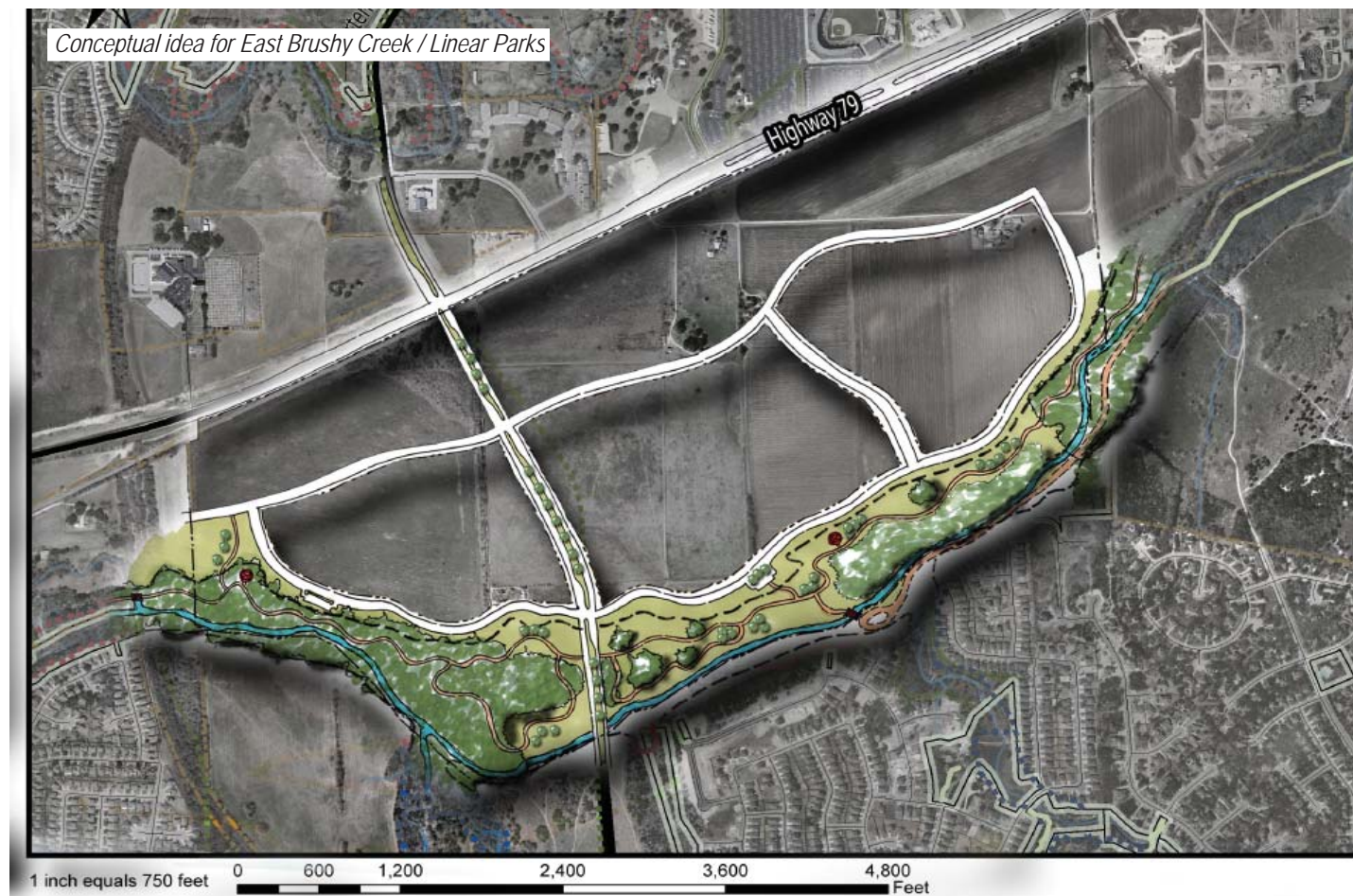
- Justification for this action - the area currently has no community parkland and the need is critical as the area becomes fully built out.

14) Southwest Community Park / Athletic Complex - a park site that is 50 acres to 100 acres in size will address a severe deficit of parkland in the southwest sector. The acquisition of this low priority item is estimated to cost \$2,500,000 to \$5,000,000. The city should explore the potential for acquisition through transfer of development rights or donation. Because of the active mining in the area, there may be a delay in acquisition.

- Justification for this action - there is no major park in the southwest area, and the distance to Old Settlers Park limits participation. This priority item may require longer term acquisition of lands from active quarries in the area, but the need is more immediate.

15) Brushy Creek Corridor East and West of Arterial A - the acquisition of this corridor will have a citywide benefit and will add 50 acres to 150 acres of open space to Round Rock. The estimated cost for this low priority item is \$0 to \$750,000. A major portion of the property could be donated as floodplain. The remainder could potentially be acquired through fee simple or transfer of development rights.

- Justification for this action - this is the last remaining one mile corridor along Brushy Creek. It is also a floodplain that needs to be preserved as open space and a linear park. Preservation should be a buffer parkway road instead of development. Also, the acquisition of fringe lands if tree cover warrants should be considered.



ROUND ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Action Plan 2008-2020

Natural Resources and Environment Recommendations

Priority	Action ID	Action	Need for this Action	City Sector	Acres Low	Acres High	Estimated Cost Range Low Range	Estimated Cost Range High Range	Type of Dev.	Potential Funding Mechanisms and Sources	Potential Time Frame
POTENTIAL PRIORITIES - REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PARKLAND											
High	1	Freeman Tract Open Space	Passive recreation development	SE	40	50	\$1,000,000	\$2,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	2	NE Metropolitan Park and Lake - access, infrastructure, parking and restrooms, trails, athletic facilities, pavilions	Develop as area begins to build out	NE, citywide	150	300	\$7,500,000	\$15,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
High	3	Hairy Man Rd / South Property - Community Park / Open Space Preserve. 50 to 100 acres	Can serve as major community park/heritage and cultural park for unique area of the city.	SW	50	100	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	Acquisition	Purchase, dedication, donation, naming rights	2008-2014
High	4	Hairy Man Rd / Brushy Creek Property, 30+/- acres - Key open space/linear park/flood plain buffer along Brushy Creek	Key open space and linear park tract along unique city feature. Critical acquisition	NW/SW	30	30	\$0	\$900,000	Acquisition	Dedication, donation, acquisition	2008-2014
High	5	Mayfield Park - Initial phase development - parking and entry features, trails, pavilions, picnic facilities, active gathering areas, interpretive features.	Begins development of unique open space and passive park for NW sector of the city	Citywide - Regional	0	0	\$2,500,000	\$4,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2008-2014
Medium	6	Brushy Creek / 620 West Corridor - trail and open space corridor on south side of Brushy Creek to connect to Hairy Man Road	Key crosstown connection between downtown and west segment of regional trail. Acquire as easement or floodplain right of way	Citywide	25	40	\$1,250,000	\$2,000,000	Acquisition	Floodplain acquisition, may require reconfiguration of existing properties in the area.	Beyond 2020
High	7	Behrens Ranch Tract - Initial phase development - access, trails, pavilions, parking and restroom infrastructure	Open space and passive recreation park, initial phase to begin providing citizen access	NE	50	50	\$1,500,000	\$2,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	8	Old Settlers Parklands	Completes northwest corner of Old Settlers Park. Buffers Aquatic and athletic facilities from adjacent growth.	NE, Citywide	50	75	\$2,500,000	\$5,625,000	Acquisition	Purchase, dedication, donation, naming rights	2014-2020
Medium	9	Meadow Lake Park Land - complete acquisition of lands around Meadow Lake to preserve as park feature	Serves as major amenity park in north central portion of the city. May become signature park.	NE	20	50	\$0	\$2,000,000	Acquisition	Potential donation as area is developed.	2014-2020
Medium	10	Meadow Lake Park - completion of park around site - trails, pavilions, parking and restroom infrastructure	Central city park feature, serves significant population in Northeast sector of the city	NE	30	50	\$2,000,000	\$3,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	11	East Brushy Creek Linear Park Corridor -continuous trail along Brushy Creek	Development along the City-owned creek corridor will connect Downtown to the ETJ	NE	0	0	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	12	Acquire Southeast Community Park (once location is determined)	Area has no parkland, critical need as area becomes fully built out.	SE	20	50	\$1,500,000	\$2,500,000	Development	General fund, certificates of obligation, revenue bonds, naming rights, sponsorships	2014-2020
Medium	13	Develop Southeast Community Park	Significant portion of the city with no large park access. Area now must use Old Settlers Park which is more than 4 miles distant. Significant ongoing infill will complete development in this area within 5 years.	SE	20	50	\$1,000,000	\$3,750,000	Acquisition	Potential for use of a portion of high school property. Consider use of regional detention sites in the area.	2014-2020
Low	14	Southwest Community Park/Athletic Complex - 50 to 100 acre active park	There is no major park in this area and distance to Old Settlers Park limits participation. May require longer term acquisition of lands from active quarries in the area, but need is more immediate.	SW	50	100	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	Acquisition	Explore potential for acquisition through transfer of development rights or donation. Active mining in area may delay acquisition.	Beyond 2020
Low	15	Brushy Creek Corridor East and West of Arterial A	Last remaining 1 mile corridor along Brushy Creek - floodplain area to be preserved as open space and linear park, but preserve with buffer parkway road instead of development. Consider acquisition of fringe lands if tree cover warrants.	Citywide	50	150	\$0	\$750,000	Acquisition	Major donation as floodplain property. Remainder acquired through fee simple or transfer of development rights.	Beyond 2020
Estimated Total					585	1095	\$26,750,000	\$57,525,000			
Total Potential Expenditure Range For 2008 to 2020 Planning Timeframe and Beyond - (note that grants and donations may fund portions of the amount shown)					585	1095	\$26,750,000	\$57,525,000			

1. Note: Costs shown are order of magnitude estimates prior to any concept or design, and will vary as site selection and more detailed design occurs. List is for guidance in planning, and not all items may be implemented. Grants and donations may reduce the cost of each item.
 2. Land costs, if shown, are general estimates intended to establish allowances and will vary. Land costs are estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000 per acre.
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This section discusses methods that should be used to preserve open space and a timetable for initiating preservation actions. The critical ongoing loss of the remaining open space lands in Round Rock point to the need for immediate action to preserve key open space lands.

Preservation Methods

The Open Space Plan for Round Rock should include consideration and possible acquisition of all of the opportunity areas shown on the map to the left. However, the cost to preserve all of those areas will be significant, and will be more than the city can bear at one time. Therefore a combination of different methods should be used to draw more attention to the need for open space and to bring consideration of open space into the development process. These methods can be grouped into four general categories described below.

A. Regulation Methods

A-1. Create an Open Space Zoning Category: In some communities, an “open space” zoning category has been created for newly annexed lands. Examples of cities with an open space zoning category include Denver, Co., Boston, MA., and Pasadena, CA. The designation has specific zoning requirements attached to it, such as very low development densities. The benefit of designating some lands with this zoning category is that performance standards to develop in areas with such a zoning designation are quite stringent and focus on maintaining the quality of the spaces.

Required Action – policy change to Zoning Code
Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

A-2. Making Drainage and Detention Facilities an Integral Part of the Open Space Plan: Through changes to both zoning and subdivision regulations, require that drainage and pond features be designed to have a much more natural appearance. These features are required in many developments. Why then not make them an integral part of the development, rather than an afterthought or features to be hidden away as unusable space while the remainder of the development has no other open areas? While this may require some additional land, the resultant benefits to the appearance of the city as a whole are far greater.

Required Action – change to subdivision code as necessary
Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

A-3. Require the Preservation of at least 75% of the land area of existing creeks in Undeveloped Areas: Through subdivision regulations, require that a minimum of 75% of the floodplain area of existing creeks or drainage areas in undeveloped lands be preserved. These areas should be permanently preserved as open space parks, but can also be used for drainage if left in a mostly natural condition. In areas designated as parks, creeks should remain in their existing natural state.

Required Action – policy change to Subdivision Ordinance, approval by the City Council.

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

A-4. Incorporate Open Space Donations as a Part of the Parkland Dedication Ordinance: On specific properties where unique natural features cross a tract of land that is slated for development, the parkland donation can encompass some of that unique area. Given the small amount of land for parks that is required, the required donation would probably not encompass an entire drainage way, but might help to defray the cost of purchasing some of the natural feature.

Required Action – policy change to Parkland Dedication Ordinance, approval by the City Council.

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

A Scenario to Illustrate this Methodology - A typical scenario might be a 100 acre tract of land slated to be developed at a ratio of 3.5 units to the acre. The 350 units would require 8 acres of parkland donation. If the land has a natural creek crossing it with a rim to rim area of 20 acres, a portion could be reserved as natural drainage, encompassing for example 7 or 8 acres, another 3.5 acres of the creek could replace the required parkland donation. In addition, the developer would be required to contribute approximately \$1,000 per lot towards the development of the park site. This \$35,000 could instead be used to acquire another 1 to 2 acres of the creek, further reducing the amount that would have to be acquired through other methods or partially developed.

It is important to note that when trading for open space instead of parkland, an “active” park that might have served that neighborhood will not be built. But the city might accrue additional savings from the reduced maintenance of open space instead of a major park.

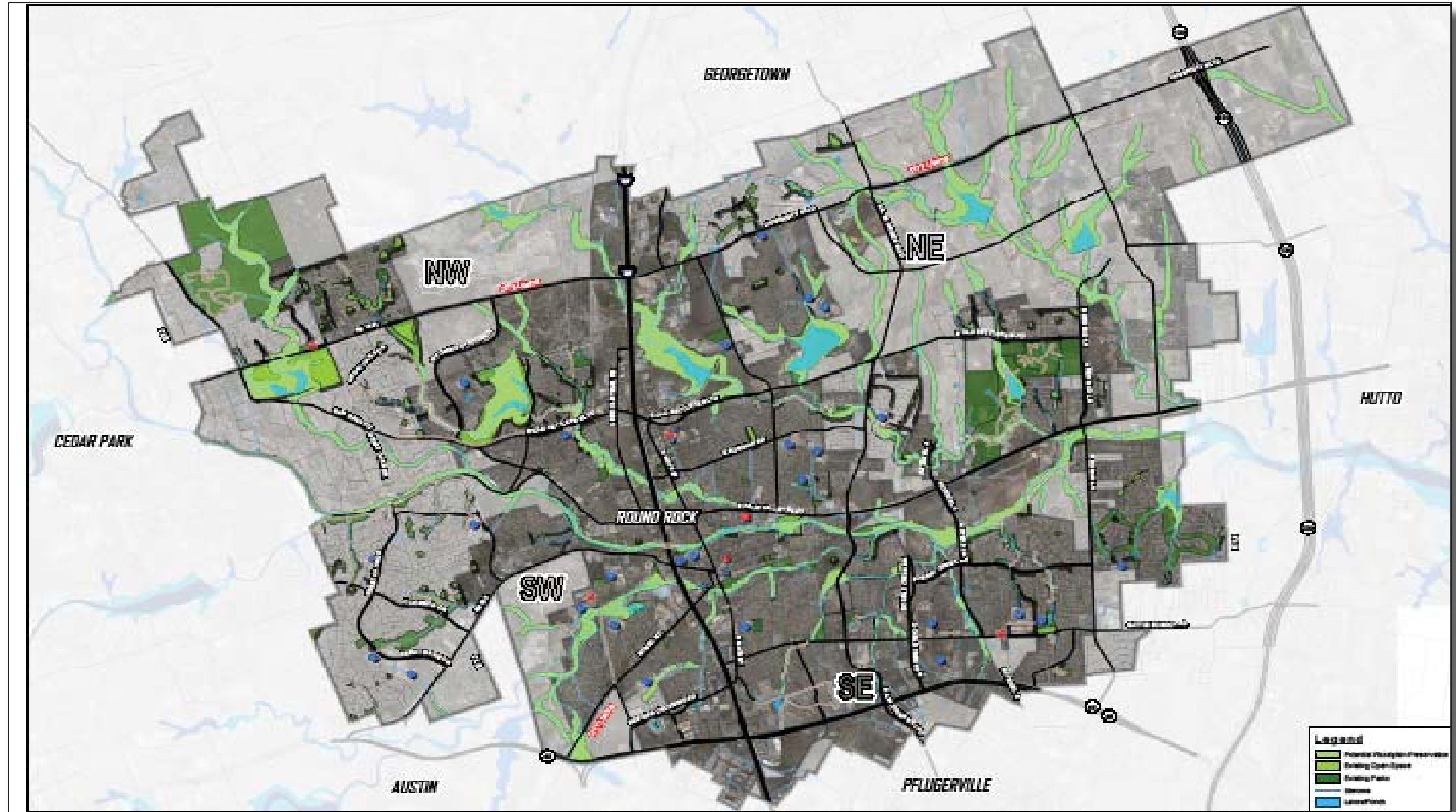
Required Actions – the parkland dedication ordinance must be changed to incorporate the following:

- Permit open space as an acceptable donation option to meet dedication requirements, but only at the discretion of the city parks and planning directors. The choice of parkland or open space should be driven by the City, not by the developer.
- Specifically mandate that the drainage area channels not be allowed to count as parkland dedication. However, allow creeks left in a natural state but used for drainage purposed to count as parkland (if deemed acceptable by the City Parks Director and Planning Director). Only excess fringe areas should be allowed to serve as parkland.
- Add language that allows fees collected as part of the parkland dedication process to be used to acquire either parkland or open space.
- Require that existing natural drainage be maintained wherever possible, rather than allowing significant channelization of drainage features. The engineering department, rather than the developer, shall direct the city’s preference. Changes to the city’s standards for channel design should focus on natural solutions as a way of both drainage, beautification and open space enhancements for the residents of the city.

A-5. Modify subdivision regulations to require preservation of views and access to open spaces when adjacent areas are developed: In areas where creeks or very unique natural area occur, the subdivision regulations should be required to provide better access and views to the open space. For example, at least 75% of the perimeter of creeks and other unique areas should be bounded by streets or accessible space rather than the backyards of homes. Open spaces, if acquired as part of the public domain, should not be reserved for just a few, but should be accessible to the general public.

Required Action – policy change to Subdivision Regulations
Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

The amount of open space available if 14% of the land area was preserved in Round Rock's city limits and ETJ limits.



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B. Acquisition and Preservation Strategies

B-1. Through council action, permanent preservation of critical open space assets that are already city-owned: Some open space opportunity lands now owned by the City could be permanently preserved by action of the Round Rock City Council.

Required Action – designate specific properties that should be preserved, approval by the City Council.

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months

B-2. Acquisition via Purchase by City of Round Rock: Where funding is available, land can be purchased by the City of Round Rock. The high cost of land and the scarcity of available funding make this option feasible only in rare instances.

Required Action – consider future bond proposition to acquire non-floodplain open space lands.

Recommended Timeframe – within 1-2 years.

B-3. Acquisition via Purchase by area school districts: As districts acquire land for new schools, the locations can be planned to be adjacent to valuable open areas. Districts typically acquire land well in advance of development when land values are low. The open space areas over and above the pure needs of the new school can be retained by the district and traded to the City of Round Rock in exchange for complimentary services.

Required Action – joint planning with school districts to identify potential acquisitions, negotiations to develop memorandum of understanding for acquisition, purchase by districts.

Recommended Timeframe – within six months to two years.

B-4. Acquisition via Donation as part of the development process: Lands may be acquired by outright donation during the development process. In other cases, density bonuses may be traded for the preservation of some open space.



Required Action – planning during the development process to ensure that proposed donations are appropriate; acceptance as part of the zoning and platting process.

Recommended Timeframe – ongoing as development occurs. Ensure that city staff are trained to recognize potential open space opportunities.

B-5. Acquisition via Trade for other City Owned Lands: In some cases, lands that are considered extremely valuable open space assets could be acquired by trading them for other city owned lands. This may be a last resort methodology, but could help to preserve truly valuable areas of land. Trade suggestions should be initiated by staff or Council only, and not by the property owner.

Required Action – policy change to Subdivision Regulations; designate staff to respond to potential trade opportunities.

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

B-6. Acquisition through purchase by other entities: Local, state and national land trusts can raise funds to acquire open space, and then manage the lands or pass them on to the City of Round Rock.

Required Action – policy to establish conditions under which the City would accept lands acquired in such a fashion.

Recommended Timeframe – within six months.

B-7. Acquisition by private homeowner associations: In this case, the area homeowners pay an additional amount over their normal tax responsibilities to pay for the land acquisition. Deed restrictions that permanently designate the acquisition as open space should be established. Where the city is involved, public access to the land via trails should be considered.

B-8. Acquisition by Private Sources for Private Use: Private groups may also acquire open space with their own funding. Deed restrictions that permanently designate the acquisition as open space should be established. Where acquisition is funded in this manner, the land may be maintained by the private source and access restrictions may be imposed. However, the open space should remain visible from publicly accessed roads, and in some cases where key linkages must go through the property, trails should be considered.

Required Action – no immediate action, establish policy and criteria for consideration if necessary (but recent action already sets precedent).

Recommended Timeframe – no immediate action.

B-9. Acquisition by Williamson County: Some open space lands should be acquired by Williamson County. Once acquired, these lands can be maintained by the County or turned over to the City of Round Rock to maintain as open space preserves. Lands acquired in this fashion could also be used as habitat conservation land banking areas.

Required Action – agreement with Williamson County, requires County to designate funding.

Recommended Timeframe – as opportunities arise.

C. Incentives to Preserve Open Space

C-1. Allow trading of density for preservation of open space: Higher densities may be allowed through special ordinances in exchange for the preservation of open spaces over and above what is already required. A key opportunity exists along Brushy Creek east and west of Arterial “A”.

Required Action – policy change to Zoning Ordinance, approval by City Council

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

C-2. Allow cluster development to preserve open space. Allow development to be clustered at higher densities so as to preserve open space in other parts of the development.

Required Action – policy change to Zoning Ordinance, approval by City Council

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

C-3. Allow private open space in selected cases where development bonuses are granted: In selected cases, the preserved open space may be designated as private open space only for the use of area residents. In such cases, the open space must be permanently preserved as part of the platting process. However, it must be visible from nearby public streets, and where the open space provides a critical linkage opportunity, accessible trails should be provided for the public.

Required Action – policy change to Subdivision Regulations

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

C-4. Allow the waiving of development fees: In exchange for open space, development fees may be waived on a case-by-case basis. While the value of this incentive is relatively small, it may still allow additional smaller pieces of open space to be preserved.

Required Action – policy change to Subdivision Regulations

Recommended Timeframe – within 6-18 months.

C-5. Deferral of property taxes: In exchange for permanently preserved and very unique open space, and only in very specific cases, property taxes may be deferred or frozen for a contiguous property.

Required Action – establish conditions and city policy for deferral.

Recommended Timeframe – establish policy within 12 months



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D. Conservation Easements

The use of conservation easements exploded in the 1990s, and it is estimated that more than 9 million acres of privately owned lands have been preserved nationwide. Conservation easements may well be replacing outright acquisition as the primary tool for preservation.

The major selling point of conservation easements is their price. The cost of easements varies, but can generally cost about half as much as simple acquisition. The reduction in the cost of long-term management is a further benefit. Parks require annual funding for a long period of time, whereas easements are maintained by the owner (or owners) who remains in place. A park is a public expense for generations to come; on an easement property, the owner bears the bulk of the maintenance costs. In particular, conservation easements have proved to be an exceptional tool in the protection of agricultural landscapes.

D-1. Acquire development rights to key properties: Prevent key properties from being developed by acquiring the development rights to each property. Conservation easements may also be used to preserve property. This technique is recommended for the preservation of farmland, ranch land, or prairies in key areas. Funding to acquire development rights must be identified.

Required Action – identify funding source for conservation easements, and identify possible properties for acquisition via conservation easement.

Recommended Timeframe – ongoing, no immediate timeframe.



Natural Resources and Envir. Recommendations

High Value Governance

The park and recreation needs of Round Rock are described in the previous sections of this report. The conclusion of this chapter recommends a series of actions to begin to address those needs. These actions are to guide the staff and city council over the next five to ten years, and should be revisited and updated on a regular basis.

Highest Priority Needs - The prioritization is based on information received from public input as well as from the needs assessment formed from facility and acreage standards shown at the beginning of this chapter. The criteria used to prioritize the park facilities needs in Round Rock are as follows:

- Level of need based on citizen input from a citywide basis – needs were in top five requested by citizens, or needs were in top ten listed as important by citizens;
- Level of need based on direct citizen input from public comments;
- Level of need based on standards based needs assessments;
- Opportunities for recreation facilities based on existing physical conditions in or near Round Rock; and
- Condition of existing park facilities in the city.

Needs meeting all of most of the criteria shown above were ranked as very high priority elements to receive the highest level of attention over the next five years.

Implementation Strategy

The following implementation strategy is recommended to address the city's key recreation highest priority over the next five years. These actions include many of the high priority facility needs listed in the four action plans throughout this chapter. Recommendations are ranked in one of the three categories listed below.

- Short term implementation - List of top priority items to be completed or initiated over the next one to five years.
- Medium term implementation - List of recommendations to be initiated or completed in five to ten years.
- Longer-range implementation - List of recommendations to be initiated in ten years or longer. While these actions may take longer to initiate, planning for these items should continue.

Funding Strategies for Recommendations

Different parks and pathways will require different funding strategies. While improvements to existing parks and most sidewalks can be built with local funds, other park, open space and trail projects may be able to contend for federal and state funds. This section provides brief descriptions of these funding implementation assistance opportunities.

Key City-Generated Funding Sources

General Fund Expenditures are primarily used for improvements to existing parks and facilities. Some funding should be set aside annually to cover upgrades to at least one park. An amount of \$250,000 to \$750,000 should be budgeted for annually.

Capital Funds - Annual funding for general improvements should be continued. This funding allows for the continual upgrading of facilities in the city.

Bond Funds - It is recommended that the city consider a bond program to support park improvements within the next two to three years.

Sales Tax Revenue - Sales tax revenue from the city's 4B fund can be used for community facilities such as parks, trails and recreation buildings, subject to approval by voting by the citizens of Round Rock. While each project or group of projects would have to be approved by citizen vote, this option should be considered for projects with significant community-wide benefit. Recreational features with significant impact on quality of life will make Round Rock a much more attractive and economically viable location.

Park Facility Funding through a Parkland Dedication Ordinance – This land dedication ordinance provides some lands and funding for the development of neighborhood parks throughout the city.

Partnering with Developers and Private Land Owners is frequently possible as land is developed in Round Rock through a Park Land Dedication ordinance. This ordinance provides a vehicle for development of parks, open space and trails.

Key Grant Funding Sources

Grants can provide a significant source of additional funding for parks, but should not be considered as the primary source for park construction.

TPWD - Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) is the primary source for park grants in Texas and in addition provides funding for recreational trails. Up to a 50 percent match can be obtained, up to \$500,000, for new park and trail facilities, as well as for indoor facilities. Grant applications that stress joint funding and support from two or more local entities may have a greater chance in contending for the TRPA grants. The city should take a leadership role in pursuing public cooperation.

National Park Service (NPS) Programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR), which provide funds for parks and recreation. Congress appropriates both funds. Funding has not been available in recent years but if brought back Round Rock may qualify for these funds. Typically, the funding sources have supported traditional parks rather than linear systems.

Indoor Recreation Grants are available to local governments for the construction or renovation of indoor recreation facilities. This assistance is in the form of 50% matching grant funds up to \$750,000. Local governments must apply, permanently dedicate the building for public recreational use and assume responsibility for operation and maintenance. Application deadlines are July 31 each year. Awards are distributed in January each year. Recent developments have reduced the amount of available funds from the state, and the city should consider other available funding sources whenever possible.

Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program provides money support for transportation activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the transportation system. Funding is on a cost reimbursement basis and projects selected are eligible for reimbursement of up to 80% of allowable cost. This funding program is not available on a yearly basis, but intermittently only, often in 5 year periods. The next opportunity for funding under this program is unknown at this time, but should be evaluated periodically.

Environmental Protection Agency can provide funding for projects with money collected in pollution settlements.

Foundation and Company Grants exist which assist in direct funding for projects, while others exist to help citizen efforts gets established with small seed funds or technical and publicity assistance. Local foundations in particular may focus on key projects that more closely meet their goals.

Grants for Greenways is a national listing that provides descriptions of a broad spectrum of both general and specific groups who provide technical and financial support for greenway interests.

The Round Rock Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Mobility & Connectivity • Recreation & Culture • Community & Character • Natural Resources & Environment • High Value Governance

Draft for Review and Discussion



Establish “Adopt-a-Park Program” could be developed to provide a consistent process for private and commercial donors to contribute to the development of specific parks in Round Rock. The donations would be recognized at the applicable park by methods of signage, plaques or naming rights to a particular donated feature.

Sponsorship through Businesses is a means to secure funding through businesses operating in the City of Round Rock. Entities can directly support park department construction or programming efforts.

Sidewalk Funding Sources in Round Rock currently construct sidewalks in existing areas through citywide bond programs and with new developments through the subdivision regulations.

Partnering with Volunteer Groups can be helpful when constructing nature, bike and equestrian trails. Their efforts can be used as part of the required match for the Recreational Trails Program. There are a variety of sources for volunteers including user groups, local residents, corporate community service initiatives, and business and civic support groups.

Policies and Ordinances

Round Rock City Council - City Staff should provide presentation of significant changes in the master plan and provide brief summary of bi-annual updates to the documentation. This will provide the City Council with comprehensive information to assist with development decisions.

Joint Planning with RRISD - Establish joint planning review sessions with the Round Rock Independent School District to allow for coordination of facilities and possible pooling of resources for a partnership in acquiring land for schools and parks.

Operation & Maintenance

With the recommendations of additional parks, open space and trails, it should be recognized that additional manpower is needed for the required maintenance of these various projects. The number of additional staff needed to attend to these proposed facilities will vary depending on the use of these facilities. The provision of adequate staffing must be included as each facility is developed or the facility should not be built.

Plan Updates

Game Plan 2020: Building an Active Community is a guide to be used by the Round Rock Parks and Recreation Department to develop the existing system for future needs over the next 5 to 10 years. However, there may be changes that occur during the time frame of this plan. Population may increase more rapidly than projected; the community may indicate a special need for a facility not listed in the recommendations; development of some of the recommendations listed in this master plan will occur.

A review and update of this master plan by city staff should be conducted every two years or when a significant change does occur. These updates can be published in short report format and attached to this master plan for easy use. Four key areas for focus of these periodic reviews are as follows:

Facility Inventory - An inventory of new facilities should be recorded as well as any significant improvements to RRISD, County Parks, State Parks, HOA Parks and major private facilities that could influence recreation in Round Rock.

Public Involvement - As mentioned previously, this master plan reflects current population and attitudes as expressed by the citizens of Round Rock. However, over time those attitudes and interests may change as the city changes. Periodic surveys are recommended to provide a current account of the attitudes of the citizens and to provide additional direction from the public on issues that may arise. In order to make an accurate comparison of the changes in attitudes and interests, it is recommended that future surveys follow the general format of the citizen survey conducted in this master plan.

Facility Use - Facility use is a key factor in determining the need for renovation of additional facilities. League participation of sports facilities should be updated each season with data from each association. Changes in participation of those outside the city limits as well as the citizens of Round Rock should also be recorded.

Action Plan - As items from the action plans in this document are implemented updates should be made to this prioritized list to provide a current schedule for city staff.