

# Givens District Park Master Plan - Public Meetings Summary

The City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department is working to develop a master plan to guide future enhancements to Givens District Park. In order to help identify improvements, the City held the first public meeting for this project in July 2018 to share background information and collect input on needs and priorities from the community and park users. Based on input received from the community, the City decided to host a second public meeting shortly afterwards in an effort to reach a broader range of stakeholders. The same information was provided at both meetings, and all meeting materials were posted online after the first meeting.

## Meetings One and Two

### Meeting Information

Meeting Dates: Saturday, July 14, 2018 & Saturday, July 28, 2018  
Meeting Time: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.  
Meeting Location: Givens District Park – Martin Banks Pavilion

In addition to the Givens District Park Master Plan, the City of Austin's Watershed Protection Department is working on a separate project to improve Givens District Park. The Watershed Protection Department is developing improvements to various sections of Tannehill Branch Creek to repair erosion, maintain the creek banks and construct a rain garden. In order to provide a convenient opportunity for the community to become involved in both projects, open houses were held as joint meetings and included materials from the Watershed Protection Department and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Several methods of engagement were employed to promote the meetings:

- Flyer
- Postcard
- Newspaper ad printed in El Mundo
- Media release
- Newsletter announcements
- On-site outreach
- Signs inside the park and in adjacent neighborhoods
- Partnerships with community leaders, including Council Member Ora Houston and team



The meetings were an informal open house format with guided tours led by City of Austin staff. These tours included locations in need of improvements as part of both the Watershed Protection Project and the Givens District Park Master Plan. Attendees were invited to view exhibit boards with information on the project background and existing conditions in the park. There were several opportunities to share input on the master plan, which are described in the Summary of Input Received.

In addition to formally sharing input, attendees were invited to participate in a storytelling activity to share their favorite memories of spending time at Givens District Park. Some of the most common topics of memories shared include being with and friends and family, swimming in the pool, community events

such as concerts, pageants and car shows, playing and watching sports, and enjoying long walks with nature.

## Summary of Input Collected

Meeting attendees were asked to share input on existing conditions at Givens District Park and priorities for improvements that could be included in the master plan. Opportunities to provide input at the meeting included completing a written or electronic survey, submitting a written comment card, and placing mapped comments on five exhibit boards that outlined specific park features in need of improvement. These boards included Existing Recreational Amenities, Existing Natural Amenities, Existing Infrastructure, Existing Park Utilities and Operations.



## Highlights of Participation

### July 14 Public Meeting:

- 51 people signed in
- 183 comments collected on boards
- 1 written comment card collected

### July 28 Public Meeting:

- 49 people signed in
- 205 comments collected on boards

## Survey Responses

The project team developed a survey to collect input on park usage and priorities for improvements. The survey was available online from July 14, 2018 to August 7, 2018 and was distributed at both public meetings and during onsite outreach. The survey was also promoted through meeting materials and the project webpage.

245 total responses were collected during this round of outreach, with 133 completed through the online survey link, 21 completed during onsite outreach and 91 completed at the public meetings. Respondents were asked to provide input about how they use the park, any deterrents from using the park, and desired amenities and improvements.

Highlights of survey responses are included below, and full results of the survey are provided in the appendix.

### Demographics and Typical Use

- **Almost half of respondents (47%)** indicated that they use Givens District Park one or more times per week.
- **68% of respondents** indicated they typically spend less than 4 hours at the park.
- **Most respondents (74%)** had family in the adult age range.

### Priorities and Activities

- When asked what they like to do at the park, the top three responses from survey participants were: swim in the pool (**61%**), visit with friends and family (**52%**), attend community events (**52%**)
- **Almost half of respondents (47%)** indicated that poor maintenance and littering prevents them from coming to the park.
- Other common deterrents from using the park were: not enough benches and tables (**42%**) and lack of shade (**40%**).
- The top five improvements respondents would like to see at Givens District Park were: improved restrooms (**50%**), upgraded trails in the park (**48%**), more shade (**44%**), more picnic benches and tables (**42%**), and more trash cans and frequent pick-ups (**42%**).



### Facilities and Programming

- **44% of respondents** do not use any sport courts/ball fields. The most frequently used sport amenities include the Tennis courts (**28%**), southeast basketball courts (**21%**), and the ball field south of the recreation center (**21%**).
- **Most participants (80%)** would like to see more community-based events and programs at Givens District Park.

### Parking, Access, and Connectivity

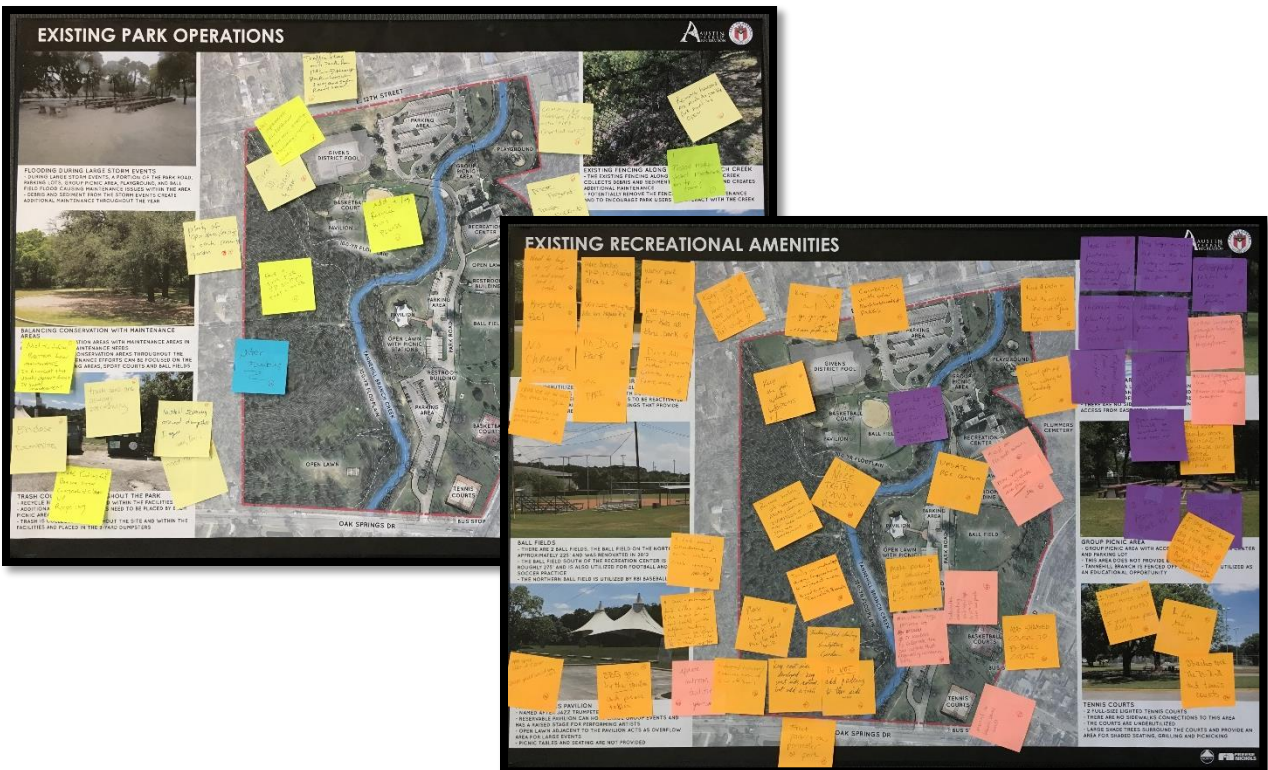
- **Over half of respondents (61%)** travel to Givens District Park by driving. Walking was cited as the second most frequent travel mode for respondents (**40%**).
- **55% of respondents** think there is adequate parking at Givens District Park.
- **30% of participants** use the north parking lot near the swimming pool and **29%** use the lot south of the recreation center. **33% of respondents** indicated that they don't normally drive to Givens District Park.
- When asked which connectivity improvements would make it more convenient to use the park, many respondents indicated they would like to see a pedestrian bridge that connects the west and east sides of the park (**71%**), trails within the park to connect facilities in different areas (**70%**), and trails to and from neighboring areas with (**66%**).



## Written Comments

The community had the opportunity to provide written comments on issues that were not addressed through the survey by providing a mapped comment at the meeting, a written comment card, and by providing additional comments through the open-ended survey questions. All comments received during this round of outreach are included in the appendix, and common themes from comments are listed below:

- Desire for a multi-use sport court that can be used for bike polo, futsal, street hockey, etc.
- Suggestions for improvements to the pool, including adding shade in the pool area, bringing back the second diving board, extending the swimming season, offering swimming lessons, and installing vending machines
- Support for adding more family and child-friendly activities including installing splash pads for children, building a skate park, and hosting more events and exercise classes
- Desire to add historical and educational signage within the park
- Desire for new rules and procedures to make the park safer and help with littering problems, including adding “No littering” signs with fine warnings, cigarette disposal receptacles, and more frequent trash pick ups
- Desire to save existing trees and add more shaded areas (including shaded sport courts)
- Need for more picnic tables and benches and additional BBQ grills
- Desire to make the creek more inviting by removing the concrete chain link fence
- Support and opposition for adding a dog park
- Need for updates to restroom facilities, lighting features, trails around park, recreation center, and drinking fountains
- Desire to improve entrances and allow two-way access into the park from Oak Springs Drive
- Need for handicap accessible facilities
- Desire to reduce parking and add more green space



## Meeting Three

The first two meetings shared background information and collected input on needs and priorities from the community and park users. The City hosted another public meeting in October 2018 to share preliminary visual concepts that were developed through technical studies, the online survey, and public input received at the first meetings. The third meeting was an open house format with a brief presentation.

## Meeting Information

Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 9, 2018  
Meeting Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a brief presentation at 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting Location: Givens District Park – Recreation Center

Several methods of engagement were employed to promote the third meeting:

- Flyer
- Newspaper ad printed in *El Mundo* and *The Villager* Community Newspapers
- Media release
- Newsletter announcements
- On-site outreach
- Signs inside the park and in adjacent neighborhoods
- Partnerships with community leaders, including Council Member Ora Houston and team

The meeting was an informal open house format with a short presentation that introduced preliminary visual concepts for changes to the existing park conditions. Attendees were invited to view exhibit boards that included preliminary options for improvements and to share their preferences for additional park amenities. There were several opportunities to share input on the master plan, which are described in the Summary of Input Collected.





# Summary of Input Collected

Meeting attendees were asked to share input on the preliminary visual concepts and priorities for park improvements. Opportunities to provide input at the meeting included submitting a written comment card, making a verbal comment and/or placing comments on exhibit boards.

In addition to formally writing comments on comment cards, attendees had the option to place dots on Feedback Boards for Master Plan options 1 and 2. Each board provided possibilities for improvements in five different categories. The top choice in each category is listed below:

## Master Plan Option 1:

- ❖ **Hike and Bike trails** in the Active Category
- ❖ **Interpretive/hiking trails** in the Passive Category
- ❖ **Natural play area** in the Natural Category
- ❖ **Event lawn for special/community-based events** in the Cultural Category
- ❖ **Primary stage area adjacent to event lawn** in the Infrastructure Category

## Master Plan Option 2:

- ❖ **Hike and Bike trails** in the Active Category
- ❖ **Group pavilion/restroom building** in the Passive Category
- ❖ **Prairie restoration/butterfly meadow** in the Natural Category
- ❖ **Martin Banks Pavilion** in the Cultural Category
- ❖ **Primary stage area adjacent to event lawn** in the Infrastructure Category



## Highlights of Participation

- 57 people signed in
- 14 written comment cards
- 156 dots placed on Preliminary Master Plan Option 1
- 128 dots placed on Preliminary Master Plan Option 2

## Written Comments

The community had the opportunity to provide written comments on issues that were not addressed during the presentation by providing a written comment card, and providing additional comments on the feedback boards. All comments received during this round of outreach are included in the appendix, and common themes from comments are listed below:

- Desire for additional kids' activities added to the plan
- Improvements to current park amenities instead of additional amenities
- Concerns about maintenance of added on enhancements
- Desire for the City to reconsider additional road on west side

## Meeting Four

The first two meetings shared background information and collected input on needs and priorities from the community and park users. The City hosted another public meeting in October 2018 to share preliminary visual concepts that were developed through technical studies, the online survey, and public input received at the first meetings. The third meeting was an open house format with a brief presentation. The fourth meeting was to share the draft final concept, which had been distilled from further technical studies, public input received from the third meeting, the online survey, and comment cards.

## Meeting Information

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 4, 2018  
Meeting Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Meeting Location: Givens District Park – Recreation Center

Several methods of engagement were employed to promote the fourth meeting:

- Flyer
- Newspaper ad printed in *El Mundo* and *The Villager* Community Newspapers
- Media release
- Newsletter announcements
- On-site outreach

- Signs inside the park and in adjacent neighborhoods
- Partnerships with community leaders, including Council Member Ora Houston and team

The meeting was an informal open house format. Attendees were invited to view exhibit boards that gave an overview of the previous meeting dates, the various methods of outreach employed, themes from the previous three meetings, the numbers of online surveys and comments received, and the numbers of attendees at each of the previous three meetings.

## Summary of Input Collected

Meeting attendees were informed about the topography of the park, and the opportunities to enhance the current resources within those constraints. A board displaying the current layout of the park was displayed next to the draft final concept, for easy reference. Information was shared about how the draft final concept addressed the major themes from the surveys and comments received previously, while melding with the topography of the park. Opportunities to provide input at the meeting included submitting a written comment card, making a verbal comment and/or submitting comments via the project website.

### Highlights of Participation

- 47 people signed in
- 9 written
  - comment cards



## Written Comments

The community had the opportunity to provide written comments providing a written comment card, and providing additional comments on the project website. All comments received during this are included in the appendix, and common themes from comments are listed below:

- Really excited! It looks great
- Love it! You listened well
- Concerns about texture of walkways for the visually impaired
- Like the walking trails that connect to the neighborhoods
- Would be interested in helping with landscaping
- Thank you for your work
- Glad to see the park getting more attention

