



# WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK

Master Plan Review – Environmental Board

July 2019



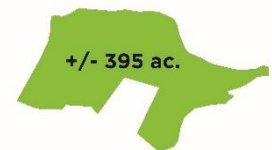
- Why a Master Plan for the Park
- Process
- Background and Analysis
- A Plan Built with the Public
- The Master Plan
- The Future of Walter E. Long Park

# WHY IS A “VISION” PLAN NEEDED?

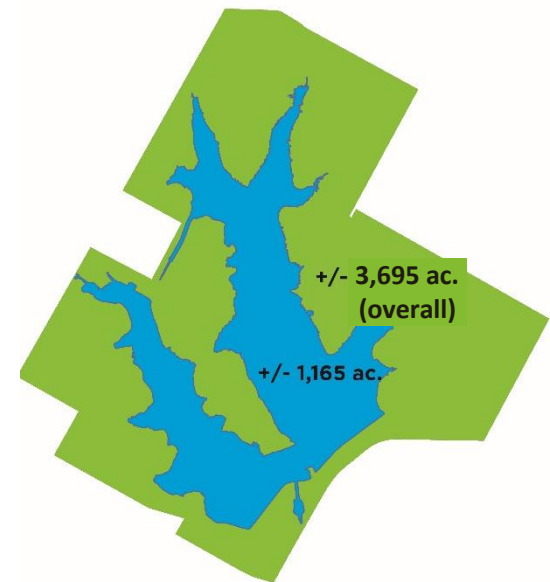
- Addresses types of recommended recreation uses (and considering golf)
- Develops an overall vision for the park for current and future guidance (based on community and user input)
- Respects the sheer magnitude and longevity of development of the park
- Ensures flexibility while still adhering to an overall framework
- Helps guide prioritization and ideas for initial phase(s)



Zilker



Roy Guerrero



Walter E. Long



# HISTORY OF THE PARK



- Initial Master Plan 1966
- Federally Funded
- Interesting Similarities
- Uses, Zones, Access

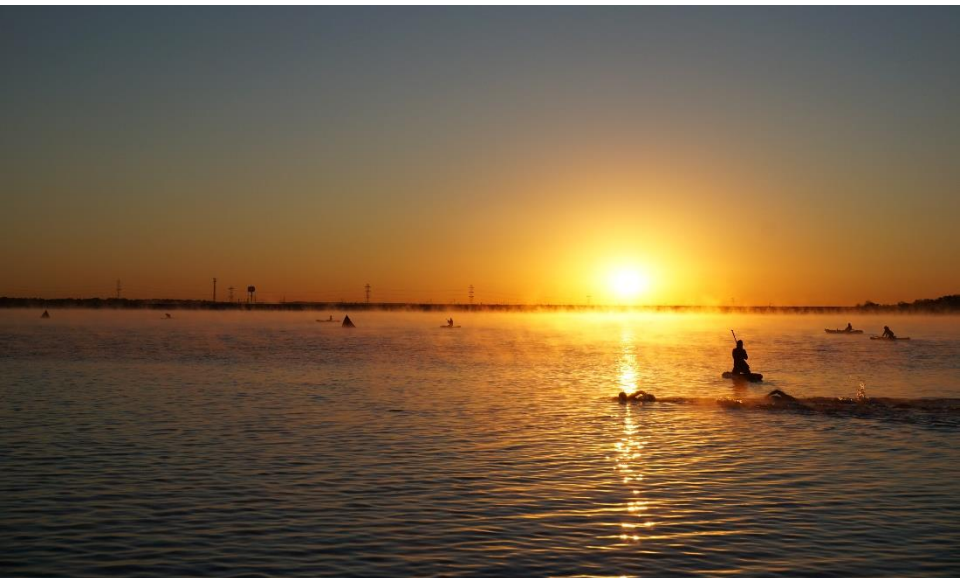


# AUSTIN ENERGY PLANT





# WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK TODAY





# WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK TODAY



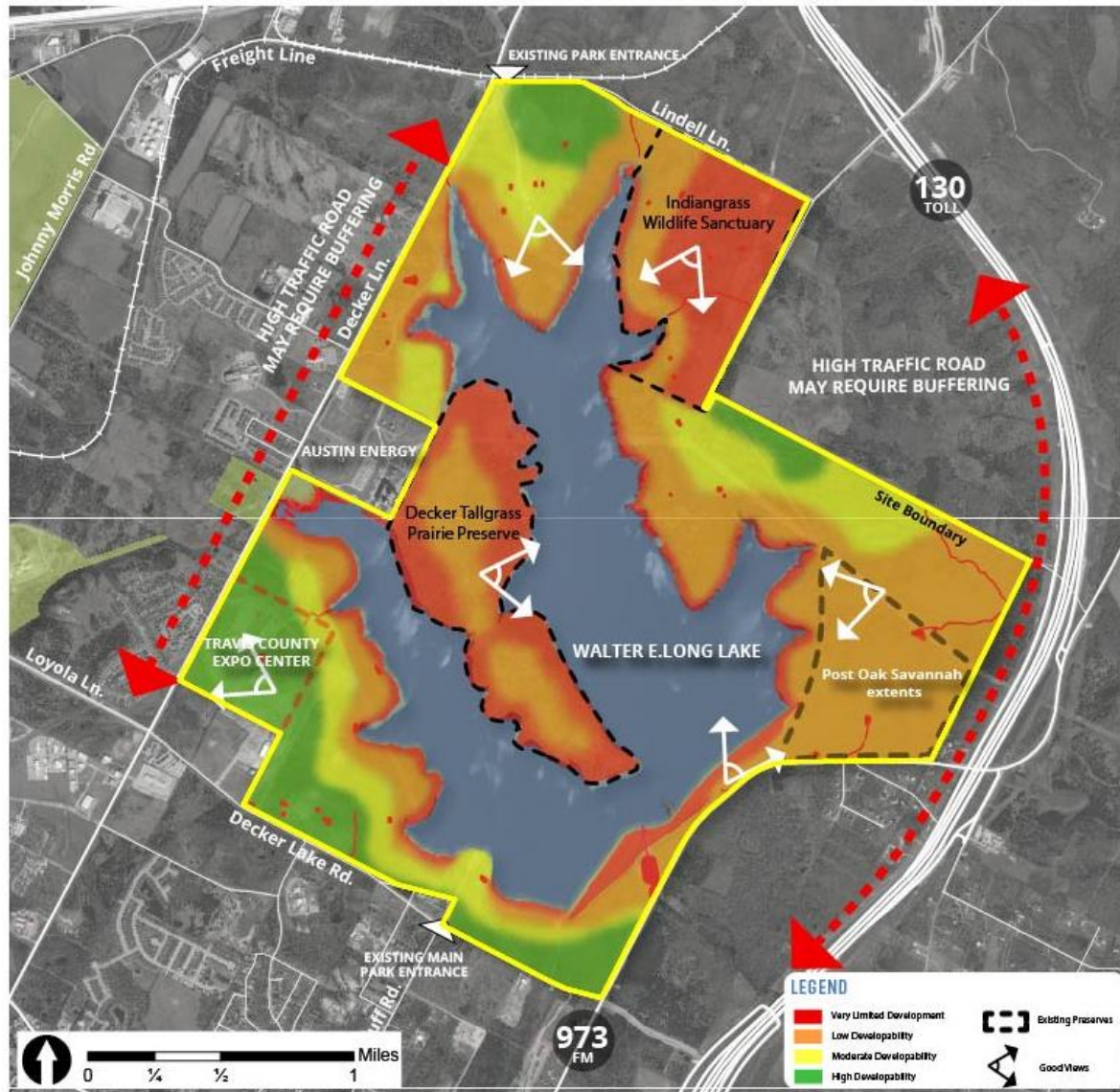


# SIGNIFICANT EVENT ACTIVITY AT THE TRAVIS COUNTY EXPO CENTER





# BACKGROUND – ANALYSIS



## Development Potential

- **High developability** – potential for extensive construction (e.g., buildings, surface parking, athletic fields, infrastructure, etc.)
- **Moderate developability** – potential for condensed construction (e.g., playgrounds, picnic areas, etc.)
- **Low developability** – potential for passive construction (e.g., trails, boardwalks, pavilions, etc.)
- **Very limited development** – very limited construction, if any (e.g., wetlands, trails, etc.)



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

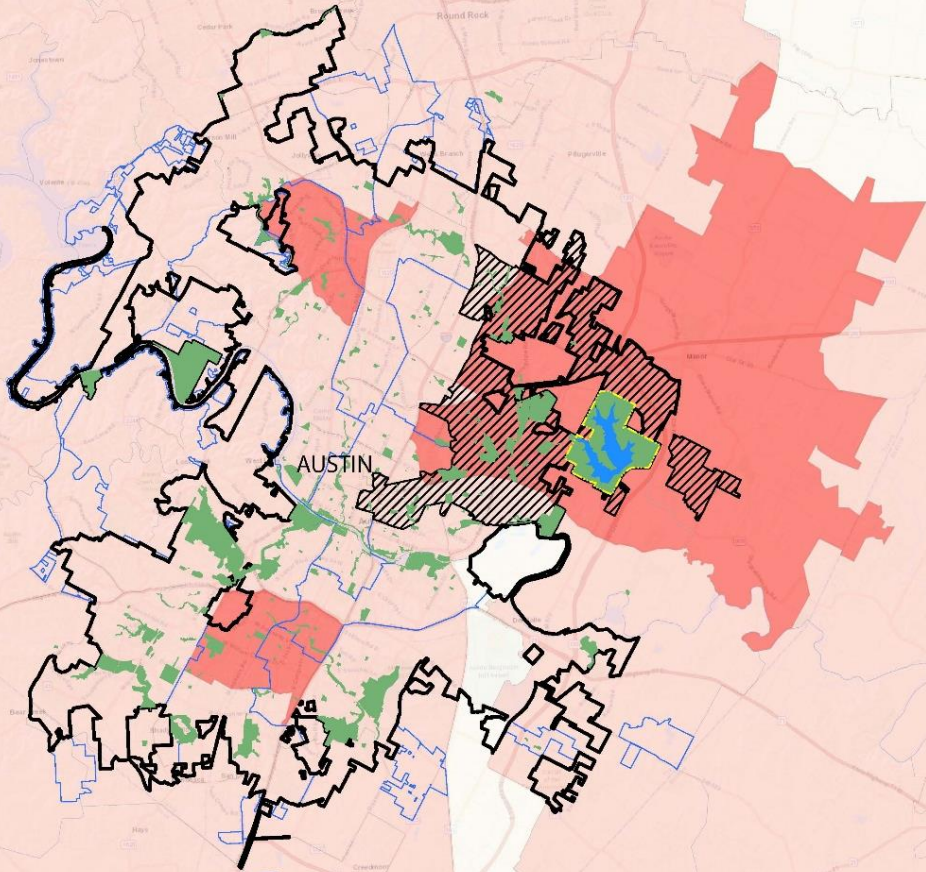
- **Technical Advisory Group** (four meetings)
- **Community Stakeholder Focus Groups**
  - ✓ Local/citywide individuals/entities (35)
  - ✓ Meetings with area community
- **Public Events and Public Interaction**
  - ✓ In-person intercept survey (Easter Weekend 2018)
  - ✓ Four public meetings at Decker Middle School (March to December 2018)
- **Online Engagement**
  - ✓ Three opinion surveys
  - ✓ Map blog
- **Workshops with PARD Staff**
- **Elected/Appointed Officials and Boards**
  - ✓ Austin Parks and Recreation Board
  - ✓ Environmental Commission
  - City Council





# CITYWIDE SURVEYS - RESPONDENTS

Responses received from  
over 150 Zip Codes



## Survey #1 (Current Usage/General Recreation Types)

Overall Responses: 1208

From Zip Code 78724: 11%

From Surrounding Zip Codes: 27%

City of Austin: 66%

Outside of Austin: 34%

## Survey #2 (Framework Plan Preferences)

Overall Responses: 1895

From Zip Code 78724: 7%

From Surrounding Zip Codes: 25%

City of Austin: 71%

Outside of Austin: 29%

## Survey #3 (Master Plan/Golf Course Preferences)

Overall Responses: 1886

From Zip Code 78724: 6%

From Surrounding Zip Codes: 20%

City of Austin: 67%

Outside of Austin: 33%

# TYPES OF RECREATION

## ■ Active

- Active sports and amenities, organized events, more significant infrastructure, often greater cost

## ■ Passive

- Less development/infrastructure, casual activities & hobbies, often less cost

## ■ Environmental/Natural

- Preservation of vegetation/wildlife, nature-based activities, less development/infrastructure, often less cost

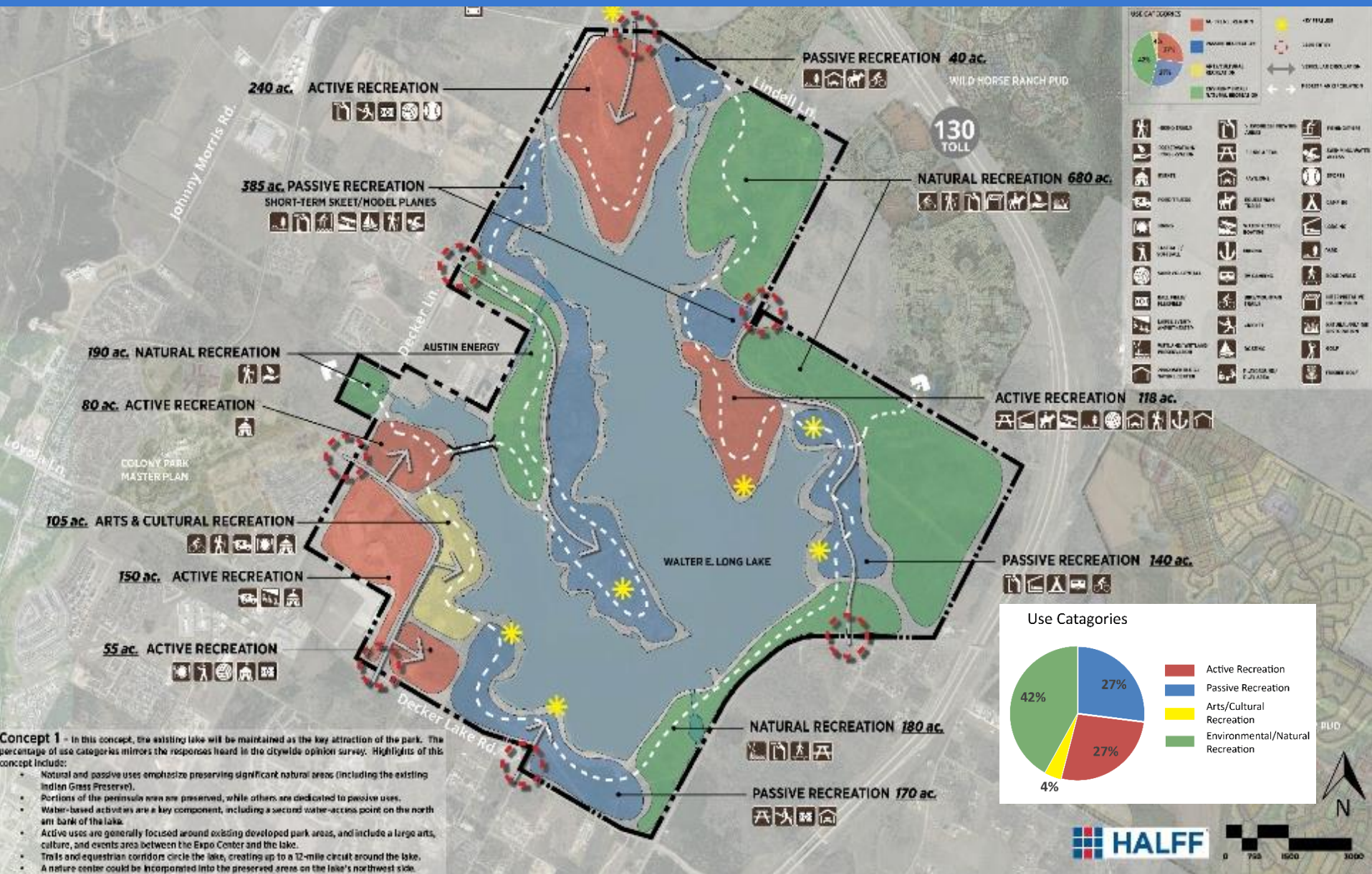
## ■ Arts and Cultural

- Community enrichment amenities, activities, and programs, infrastructure and costs range from very little to extensive





# PREFERRED FRAMEWORK PLAN





# OVERALL MASTER PLAN





# GOLF CONSIDERATIONS AT WALTER E. LONG PARK

## Advantages:

- Possible long-term revenue source, could stimulate the local economy
- Could become regional draw for golfers and elevate popularity of WEL Park beyond the local level
- Potential job creation for community and region
- Public funding not needed for golf course; would be funded by private investors

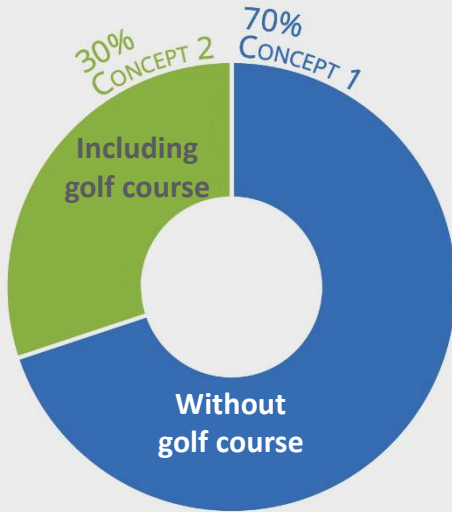
## Disadvantages:

- Possible loss of natural resources in environmentally sensitive area
- Potential failure to meet projected economic expectations
- Proposed use lacks potential popularity among local community





# PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING GOLF

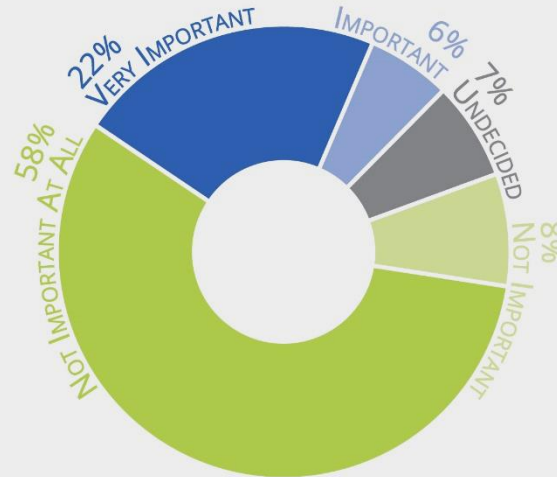


1,482 RESPONDENTS  
PERCENTAGE PREFERENCE OF CONCEPTS

Q9

## 70%

without golf course

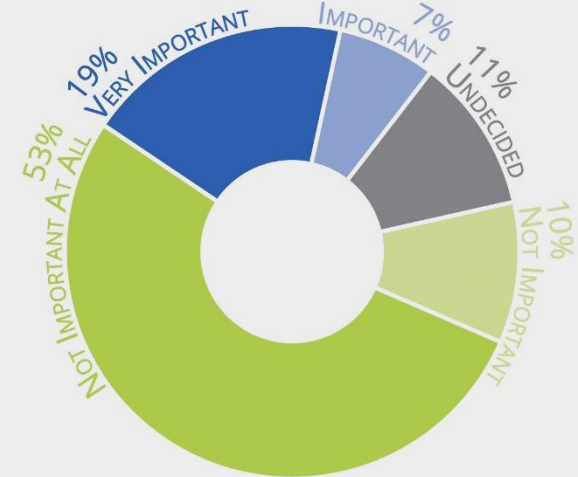


1,478 RESPONDENTS  
PGA TOUR LEVEL GOLF COURSE

Q14

## 66%

Not important at all  
or not important



1,482 RESPONDENTS  
CITY-OPERATED GOLF COURSE

Q15

## 63%

Not important at all  
or not important



# CIRCULATION AROUND THE PARK



## Vehicular Circulation

9.5 miles

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Vehicular connection across Decker Lane

Pedestrian crossing for connection to peninsula area

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection towards Colony Park

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection to Wildhorse Ranch

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection regionally across Toll 130



## Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails

18 miles

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection to Wildhorse Ranch

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection regionally across Toll 130 and Whisper Valley



## Lake Perimeter Loop Trail

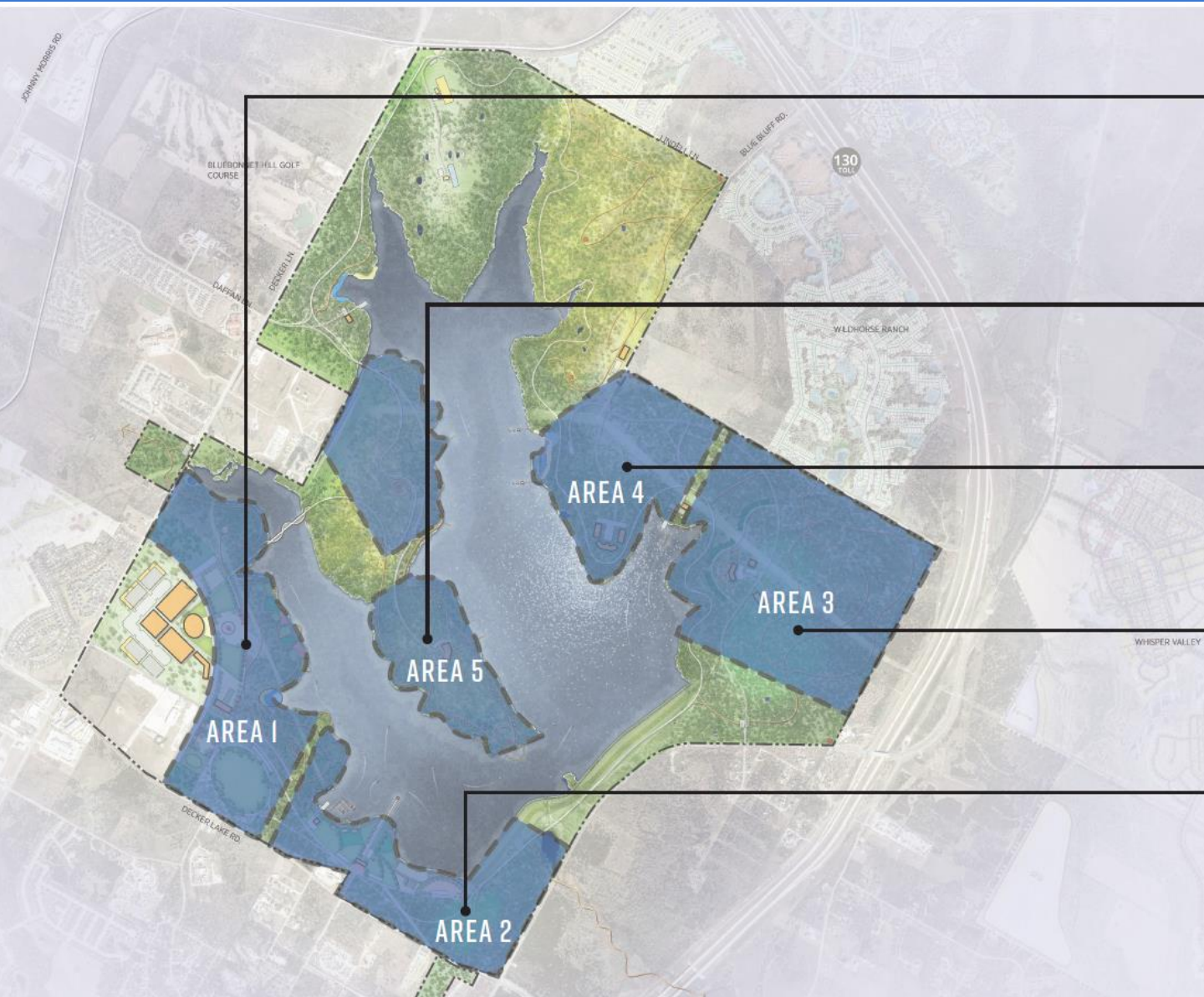
13 miles

Pedestrian/Bicycle connection regionally across Toll 130 and Whisper Valley

- VEHICULAR CONNECTION
- REGIONAL CONNECTION
- PROPOSED ROAD
- LOOP TRAIL
- PEDESTRIAN TRAILS
- PEDESTRIAN/EQUESTRIAN TRAILS



# MASTER PLAN – AREA DETAILS



## Expo Center Area



The Expo Center Area generally contains the most intense development from an impact perspective, and features multiple event amenities and revenue generation opportunities.

## The Peninsula



This zone contains an existing prairie preserve and mostly passive uses which have the potential to generate revenue.

## North-side Park



This area integrates with a new northern park entry point and contains multiple lake-side facilities geared towards park visitors.

## Post-Oak Savannah



This passive area of the park capitalizes on existing ecological resources by offering environmentally-related activities for park users.

## Lakeside Park



This existing park entrance features major improvements and additional park features and programs which enhance the user experience.



# EXISTING PARK

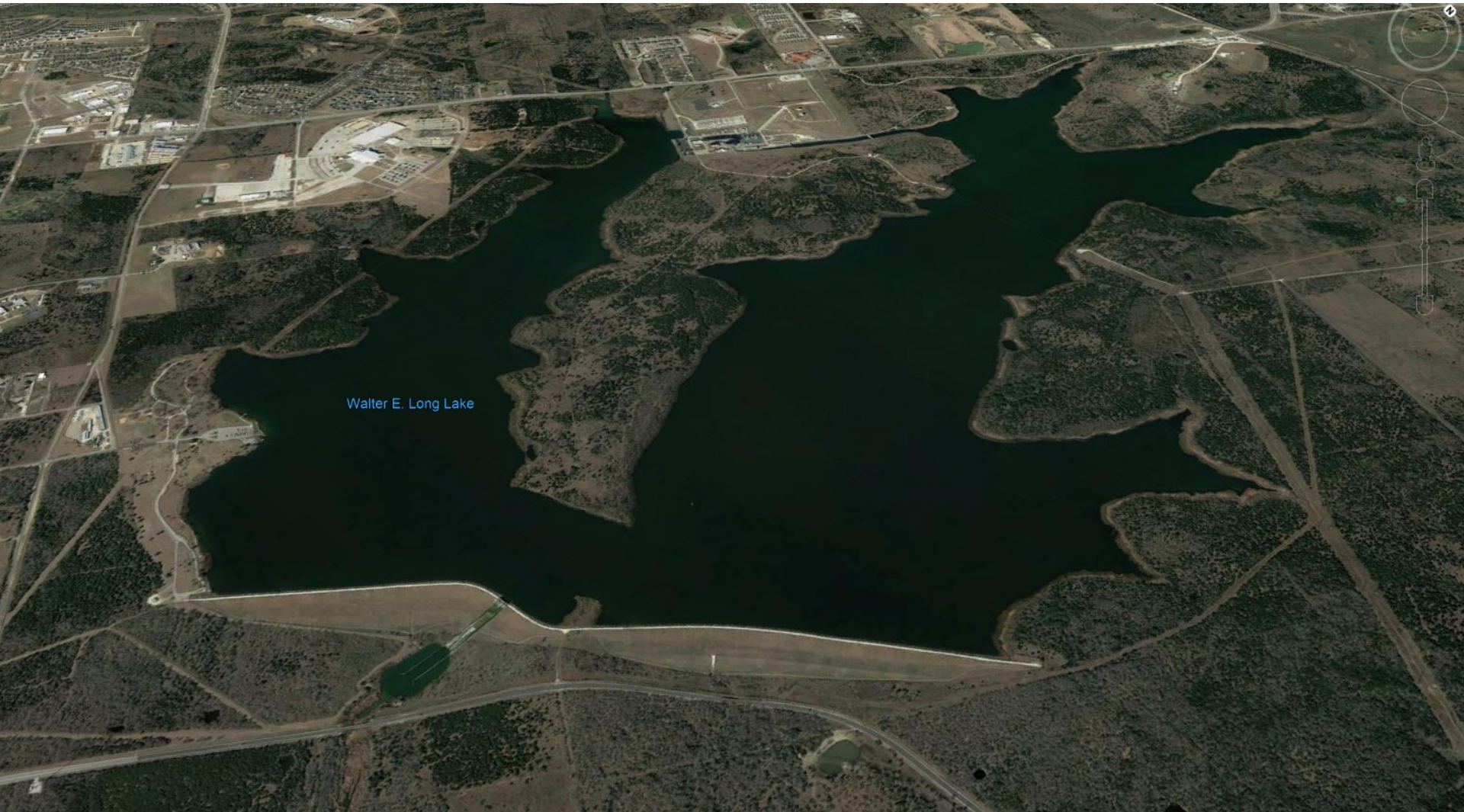
## VISITOR CENTER & PARK SPACE



Diagram illustrates vision for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Features and locations shown may vary as more site specific park designs are developed. Any proposed park development will comply with applicable City codes and standards at the time of permitting for site development, or will seek necessary variances when more detailed park development plans have been created.



# EXISTING LAKESIDE PARK AREA





# DAY USE / EXISTING LAKESIDE PARK AREA



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# THE EXPO CENTER

## EVENT SPACE & PARK LAND



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# EXPO CENTER AREA



*Diagram illustrates vision for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Features and locations shown may vary as more site specific park designs are developed. Any proposed park development will comply with applicable City codes and standards at the time of permitting for site development, or will seek necessary variances when more detailed park development plans have been created.*



# THE PENINSULA

## EVENT VENUE & PRESERVE



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# POST OAK SAVANNAH NATURE CENTER

## LEGEND

- A. NATURE CENTER COMPLEX
- B. PLANETARIUM
- C. SCULPTURE GARDEN/SPECIAL NEEDS PLAY AREA
- D. EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES
- E. RV CAMPING
- F. PARKING W/ LID FEATURES
- G. CAR & TRADITIONAL CAMPING
- H. PRIMITIVE CAMPING/MOUNTAIN BIKING ZONE
- I. REST STOPS W/ SHADE PAVILIONS
- J. PEDESTRIAN TRAILS
- K. BOARDWALK FEATURES
- L. EQUESTRIAN TRAILS
- M. SENSORY GARDEN
- N. TREE HOUSE AREA
- O. ROAD ACCESS TO CAMPING

0 150 300 600



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# WELCOME CENTER FACILITY & BOAT LAUNCH

## LEGEND

- A. WELCOME CENTER
- B. VISITOR CENTER
- C. RENT-ABLE CABIN FACILITIES
- D. BOARDWALK FEATURE
- E. PARK ROAD
- F. PARKING W/ LID FEATURES
- G. BEACH AREA
- H. ICONIC PIER FEATURE
- I. BOAT/KAYAK RENTAL FACILITIES
- J. BOAT HOUSE
- K. LOOP TRAIL
- L. RESTAURANT FACILITY





# POTENTIAL PHASE I (SOUTH SHORE) DEVELOPMENT

**Total Area: +/-270 acres (7% of total park land area)**

**Potential Cost Ranges:<sup>(1)</sup>**

**Initial Phase 1(A) \$10 to \$20 million**

**Could include:** Gate, Parking, Restrooms, Picnicking Facilities, Initial Infrastructure for Rowing Events

**Phase 1(B) \$15 to \$25 million**

**Could include:** Play area, boathouse, day use facilities, Additional Event/Water Activities Infrastructure

**Phase(s) 1(C) and beyond Cost to TBD**

**Could include:** Central recreation area, pier, Lakeside Boardwalks, Events Lawn, Infrastructure

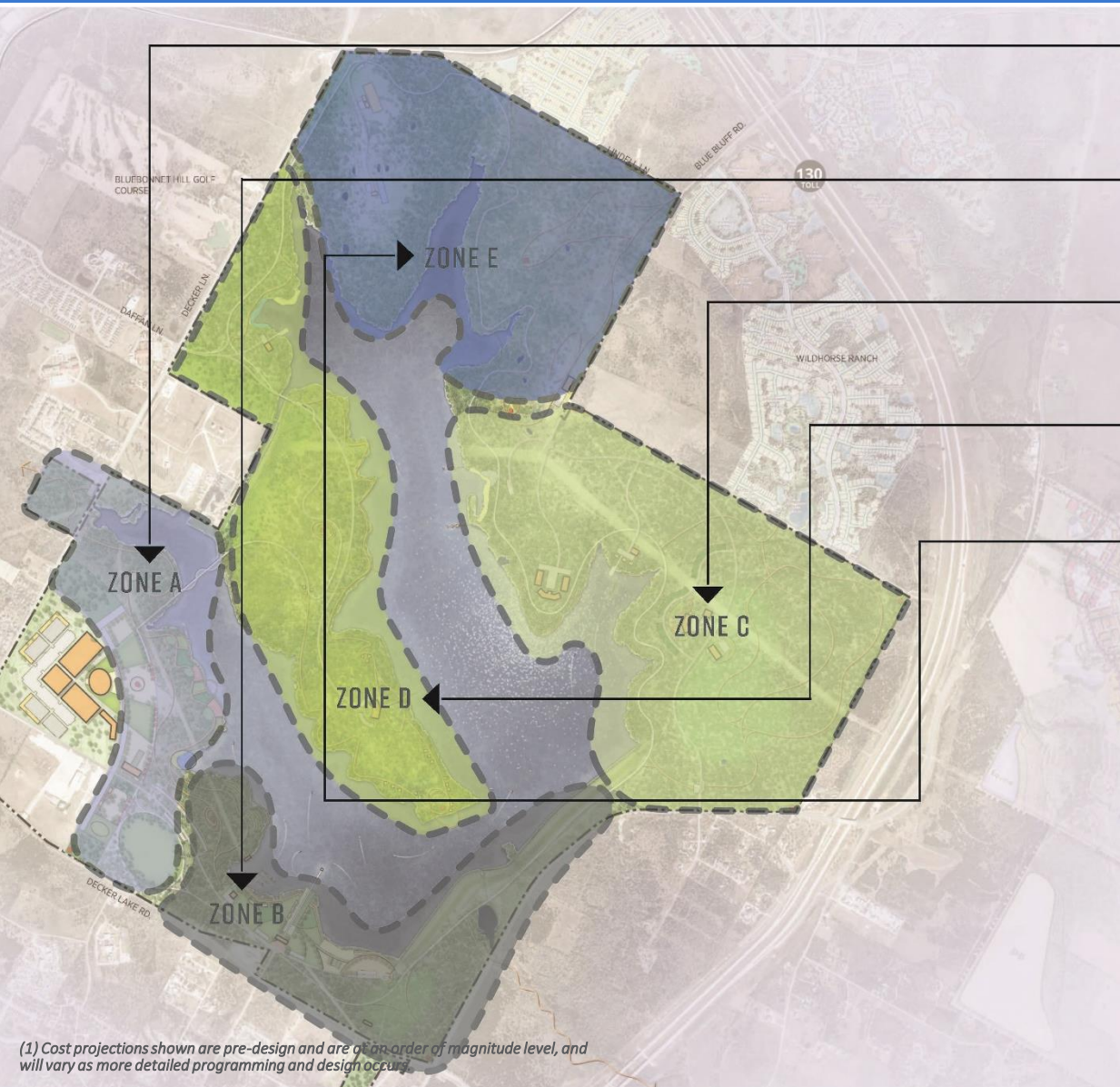
**Overall Potential Cost Range (South Shore Parks):**

**\$90 to \$120 million (significant portions may be funded privately)**

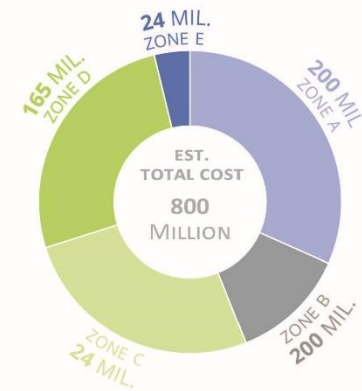
*(1) Potential costs are at a pre-design level, should be considered as order-of-magnitude projections, and will vary as more detailed design occurs.*



# PROJECTED OVERALL DEVELOPMENT COST RANGES<sup>(1)</sup>



- 250-300 million total cost**  
 Amphitheater, interpretative garden & event space, Arts & Cultural Center, vending/entertainment facilities.
- 90-120 million total cost**  
 Floating Water Sports Zone, park visitor center/gateway feature, main pier.
- 200-245 million total cost**  
 Welcome Center & Lakeside Restaurant and Lodge, Hillside Nature Center, Equestrian Facility.
- 130-175 million total cost**  
 Event Venue and Interpretative Center, marina, canoe and kayak rental facility.
- 20-45 million total cost**  
 Enhanced Aeromodelers Facility, Prairie Research Building, boardwalk



  
**394 MIL.**  
**PRIVATELY-FUNDED**  
 (48% OF TOTAL)

  
**422 MIL.**  
**CITY-FUNDED**  
 (52% OF TOTAL)

(1) Cost projections shown are pre-design and are of an order of magnitude level, and will vary as more detailed programming and design occurs.



# INPUT FROM WATERSHED PROTECTION

- **Need for detailed environmental resource assessments as phases move forward**
- **Language added to the master plan as follows (as requested by Watershed Protection staff) to note future compliance with City codes and regulations:**

**“The images in the document with regard to compliance with City code are for illustrative purposes only.”** *(Master Plan is conceptual and covers a very large area. Individual components with greater detail will be developed over a significant period of time)*

**“The proposed development will comply with water quality code requirements at the time of site development permit application or otherwise seek necessary variances, when more detailed development plans have been created.”** *(Same comment as above applies)*



# SHORELINE MODIFICATIONS

## Potential Shoreline Impacts

(Potential Impact to 10 to 15% of Overall Shoreline)

**10-15%**  
Potential impact  
to shoreline

This projected buffer represents the estimated 150' buffer zone around Lake Walter E. Long



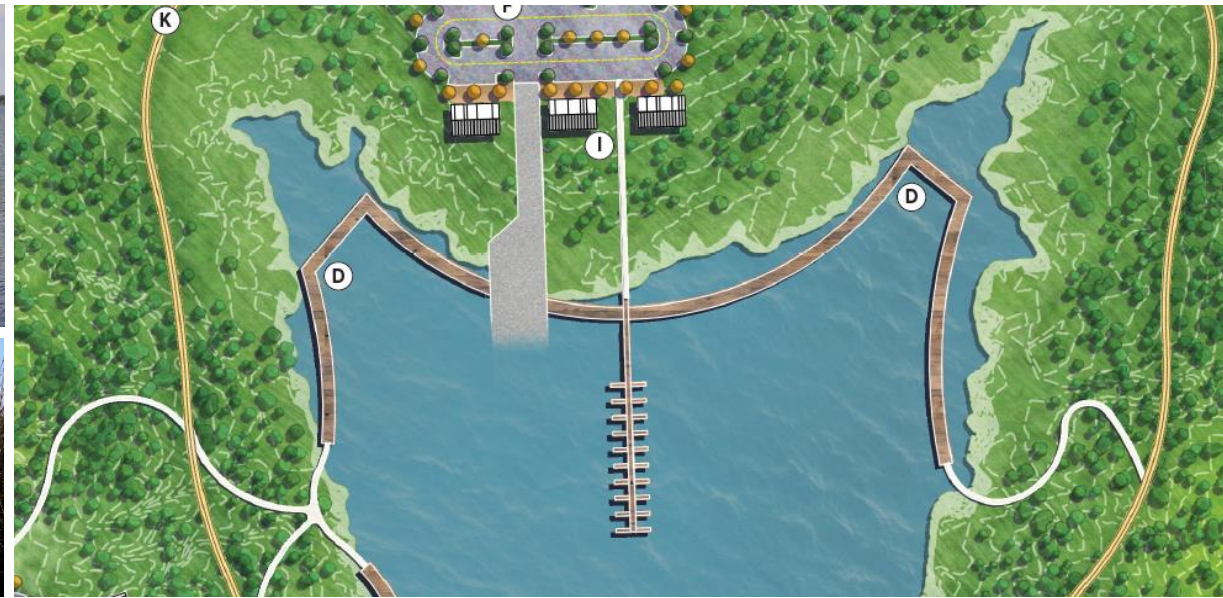
 NO ANTICIPATED IMPACT ON 150' BUFFER ZONE  
 ANTICIPATED PARK DEVELOPMENT ZONES WITH POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON 150' BUFFER ZONE

Diagram illustrates general areas where potential water quality zones may be impacted by planned park features. These locations may vary as more site specific master plans and park designs are developed. Any proposed park development will comply with water quality code requirements at the time of permitting for site development or seek necessary variances when more detailed park development plans have been created.



# SHORELINE MODIFICATIONS



Plan recommends use of boardwalks and piers, where appropriate, to provide and guide access to the lake and reduce shoreline impacts.



*Images shown with regard to compliance with City code are for illustrative purposes only.*



# NEXT STEPS

- **Approval of master plan as overall guiding plan**
  - **PARB-June 25**
  - **Environmental Board – July 17**
  - **City Council – Planned for August**
- **Identify development funding and timing for initial phase**
- **Confirm initial phase partners and solidify partnership details**
- **Determine management structure** (City managed, partial or complete conservancy, etc.)
- **Prepare detailed master plan/design** for initial phase(s)



