

# Emma Long Vision Plan

## Focus Group Meeting Summary

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January 12, 2016

**Project Team Attendees:** Kevin Johnson and Brian Block with Parks and Recreation, Bill Stout with Austin Parks Foundation, Rebecca Pittman and Henry Hartshorn with Freese and Nichols, and Arin Gray and Jacqi Wilson with CD&P

**Focus Group Attendees:** Cindy and Scott Smiley, Deanne Breedlove, Jimmy Hill, Kent Browning, Lisette Schmidli, Stephanie and Michael Blew, Thomas Cook, Tomas Pantin

The Parks and Recreation Department held a focus group meeting at Shepherd of the Hills Church to review public input and facilitate an in depth discussion of park issues and possible solutions. The meeting started with all team members and focus group members introducing themselves with a brief explanation of their interests in the park and why they are participating. Kevin Johnson, Project Manager, gave an overview of the project, the philosophy driving the project, and critical areas to discuss. Arin Gray gave a review of public involvement activities and the input received to date.

Then, Rebecca Pittman began a detailed discussion of 4 different considerations for the park and possible improvements. The four areas of focus for the park were: circulation, infrastructure, comfort, and user experience. Comments and ideas discussed are included below:

### Circulation:

- More signage needed to direct visitors to the park
  - 2222 – Some sort of notification signage needed to announce if park is full
  - Oak Shores – signage needed to direct to park
  - N Pearce – signage needed to direct to park
  - S Pearce – signage needed to direct to park
  - Directional and wayfinding signage needs to be written in both English and Spanish
- More signage needed to highlight park rules
  - No parking signs
  - No littering signs
  - Signage at the boat ramps
- A turnaround is needed near 2222
  - Needs to be large enough for trailers
  - Consider Boy Scout Area with sign
- Turnaround not being utilized at Pearce Road (south) and CPR
  - Park staff could direct visitors to that area for smoother turnarounds
- Bike lanes are needed on City Park Road

### Infrastructure

- Illegal parking occurring along City Park Road
  - Difficult to manage due to lack of No Parking signage and different jurisdictions

- Consider adding a queue line or area where people can wait outside of the park entry
- Need distributed parking in park to maximize space and park usage
- Need marked spaces and wayfinding maps
  - Consider angled parking
  - Consider using wheel stops to delineate parking spaces
  - Consider grasspave for parking
- Parking enforcement needed
  - Need coordination between City and County
- Consider charging per car and per person to discourage illegal parking along City Park Road and in neighborhoods
- Pot holes need attention throughout the park
- Consider a split at entrance for boat trailer parking with a separate pay station for the boat ramp
  - Currently cars are parking where boat trailers should park
  - Consider expanding the boat trailer parking to the north
- Discussion of water/wastewater improvements
  - Noted current facilities are adequate and the closest connection is across lake
- Electrical improvements are a high priority that needs upgrades
- Lighting improvements
  - Preferred to be minimal for user experience
  - Consider solar LED lights on buoys for safety
- Increase use of central lawn
  - Improve conditions
  - Consider occasional food trucks (electrical and water would be needed)
  - Playscape
  - Pond
- More utility camping is needed
- Shoreline protection is needed
  - Need to work with Austin Watershed Protection Department and use only native plants
- Discussed the need for hydrants but noted could not include these on current water system as there is not enough water/pressure from onsite treated source

## Comfort

- Consider using the area east of boat ramp as a quiet fishing area
- Trash cans needed
  - Rock structures are nice but cans need replacing
  - Consider drive up trash cans as people exit the park
  - Consider moving the dumpster from the overflow boat trailer area
  - Trash needs to be picked up more often
  - Trash needs to be more organized
  - Recycling bins would be a welcome addition
- Noted trash along City Park Road is a huge issue, residents are picking up trash
- Need a plan to replace trees nearing end of life cycle

- Consider working with the Urban Forestry Department
- Playscape / nature play and group pavilion would be a welcome addition
- Consider concession area by the Central Lawn or north of the boat ramp
- Restroom by the RV campsite needs to be upgraded

## User Experience

- Neighbors of the park would like to consider forming a Friends of Emma Long Park group
  - Can consider setting up group under Austin Parks Foundation for non-profit status and fundraising
  - Want to consider some sort of yearly fee for park access
  - Consider purchasing entries in bulk or a punch card entry system
- Adopt a Park Program and Adopt a Creek Program are available as a volunteer resource (Partnership with PARD and Austin Parks Foundation)
  - Contact Ladye Anne Wofford for grant programs
  - Contact Bill Stout for volunteering efforts
- Consider creating a firebreak along the edge of the park to help slow or stop the progress of a fire since there are no fire hydrants located within the park