



WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN

AUSTIN, TX

Part 1 web

WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN

AUSTIN, TX

SEPTEMBER 2019

DRAFT

**PART ONE
FOR WEB**



Project Contact

Gregory Montes

City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department

gregory.montes@austintexas.gov

512.974.9458

TABLE OF CONTENTS - PART ONE

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION & ANALYSIS

Introduction	1
Regional Context.....	2
History.....	4
Travis County Exposition Center	6
Emerging Area Development	7
Plan Development	8
Site Context.....	9
Circulation	10
Utility Infrastructure	11
Existing Facilities	12
Zoning.....	13
Vegetation.....	14
Hydrology.....	15
Soils.....	16
Topography.....	17
Overall Site Suitability.....	18

CHAPTER 2 - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Engagement Introduction	19
Online Outreach.....	20
Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Meetings.....	21
Initial Online Survey.....	22
Intercept Survey	25
Second Online Survey	26
Third Online Survey	27
Public Meeting Summary.....	28
Overall Engagement Summary	29

CHAPTER 3 - VISION, PROGRAMMING AND FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

Vision & Programming Introduction.....	30
Prototype Parks	31
Preliminary Program Development.....	32
Preliminary Framework Concept Development.....	33
Framework Concepts.....	34
Central Issues	35
Final Framework Concept 1	36
Final Framework Concept 2	37
Final Framework Concept 3a.....	38
Final Framework Concept 3b.....	39
Summary.....	40

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was developed by the City of Austin with the technical assistance and design help of Halff Associates, Inc. A special thanks goes to the many residents, stakeholders, and community leaders for their insight and support throughout the duration of this master planning process. The following individuals are recognized for their significant contributions to the preparation of this important Master Plan.

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Steve Adler, Mayor

Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem, District 2

Sabino "Pio" Renteria, District 3

Gregorio "Greg" Casar, District 4

Ann Kitchen, District 5

Jimmy Flannigan, District 6

Leslie Pool, District 7

Paige Ellis, District 8

Kathie Tovo, District 9

Alison Alter, District 10

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

Rene Barrera

Brent Bellinger

Christine Chute Canul

John Clement

Jimmy Cone

Darin Smith

Pamela England

Alex Gale

Kevin Gomillion

Heather Ashline

Reynaldo Hernandez

Javier Arguello

Liz Johnston

Katherine Kuzmickas

Marilyn Lamensdorf

Joe Limon

Lena Lund

Teresa Lutes

Christine Maguire

Mark Gilbert

Oystein Moen

Pat Sweeney

Gergo Perlaky

Amanda Ross

Marsha Schulz

Lara Schuman

Ricardo Soliz

Eric Stager

Cara Welch

Wendy Scaperotta

John Wester

Warren Whitehead

CITY STAFF

Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager

Greg Montes, Park Development Coordinator

Justin Schneider, Community Engagement Specialist

Amanda Ross, Division Manager

Gergo Perlaky, Event Coordinator

Lauren Garrott, Park Planner

HALFF TEAM MEMBERS

Tim Bargainer, PLA, ASLA

Jim Carrillo, FAICP, ASLA

Brandon Hay, PLA, ASLA

Nicholas Wester, PLA, ASLA

HALFF TEAM



John Gleason, LLC







CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & ANALYSIS

Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is regionally renowned for its beautiful lake with its surrounding natural resources, and also as an outstanding fishing location.



INTRODUCTION

The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan will help determine the long-range vision for the entirety of the park, including areas currently used by other organizations. Potential improvements in the park could include elements such as enhanced trails, additional water-related recreation, fitness opportunities, camping, special event venues, and educational and cultural exhibits.

OVERVIEW

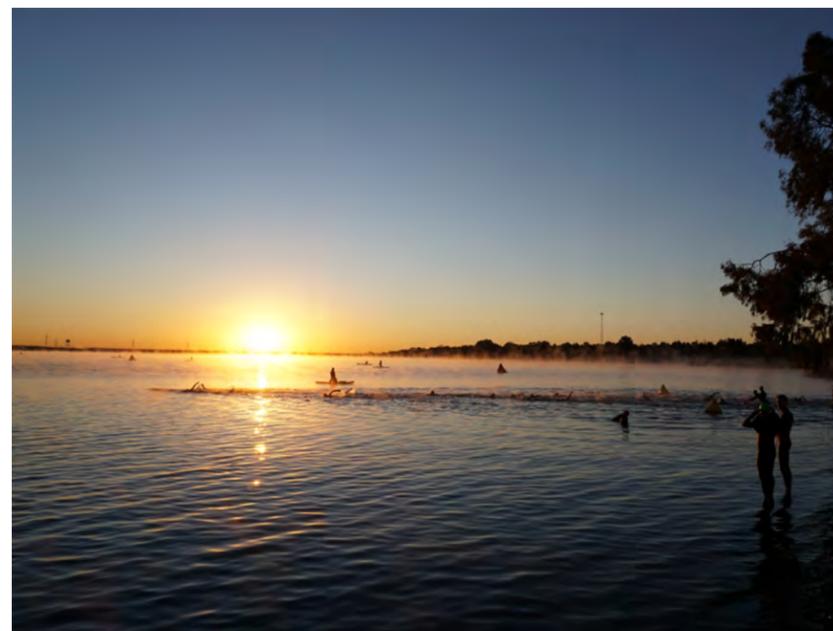
Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is Austin's largest park. It is located on the far eastern boundary of Austin, just west of State Highway 130, and is a comfortable drive from Downtown Austin. The park property includes 3,695 acres of parkland which includes Lake Walter E. Long, which is 1,165 acres in size and is teeming with countless preserved habitats. The Travis County Exposition Center is located within the site. There are several existing facilities in the park which include hike and bike trails, picnic areas, volleyball courts, boat ramps, and fishing piers. There is also a skeet shooting range and model airplane range within the park which are operated by separate organizations. There have been several previous plans to develop the park which date as far back as the mid-1960s.



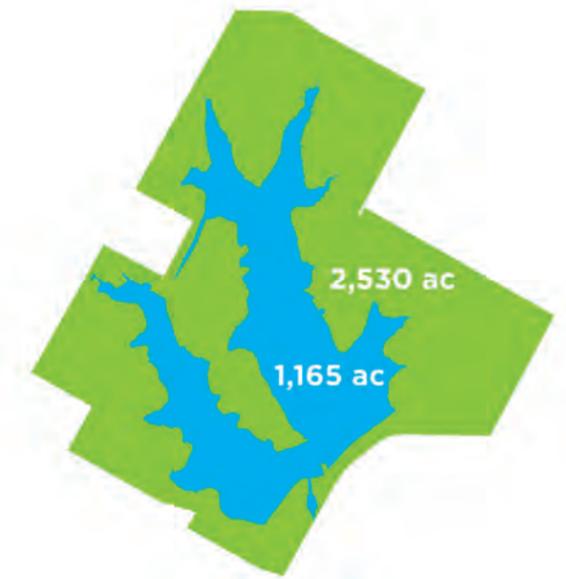
A typical view of thriving prairie grass and woody vegetation present in Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park.

OUR PURPOSE - WHY CREATE A PLAN FOR WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK?

The primary function of this master plan is to determine a vision for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park that takes into consideration significant growth throughout Austin, and in particular growth around Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. It looks at current and future trends in recreation, in park planning and design, in technology and funding in creative mechanisms for funding, so as to ensure that park development is guided in a feasible and responsible manner. The Plan's vision intends to create a path toward development of Austin's largest park resource. The plan will also look at how the park can be maintained over time. The master plan explores many possible park improvements, including trails, water-related recreation, special event venues, education opportunities, sports attractions, and the site's relationship to the existing Travis County Exposition Center.



Lake Walter E. Long allows for a variety of recreational opportunities which includes swimming and fishing.



WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK



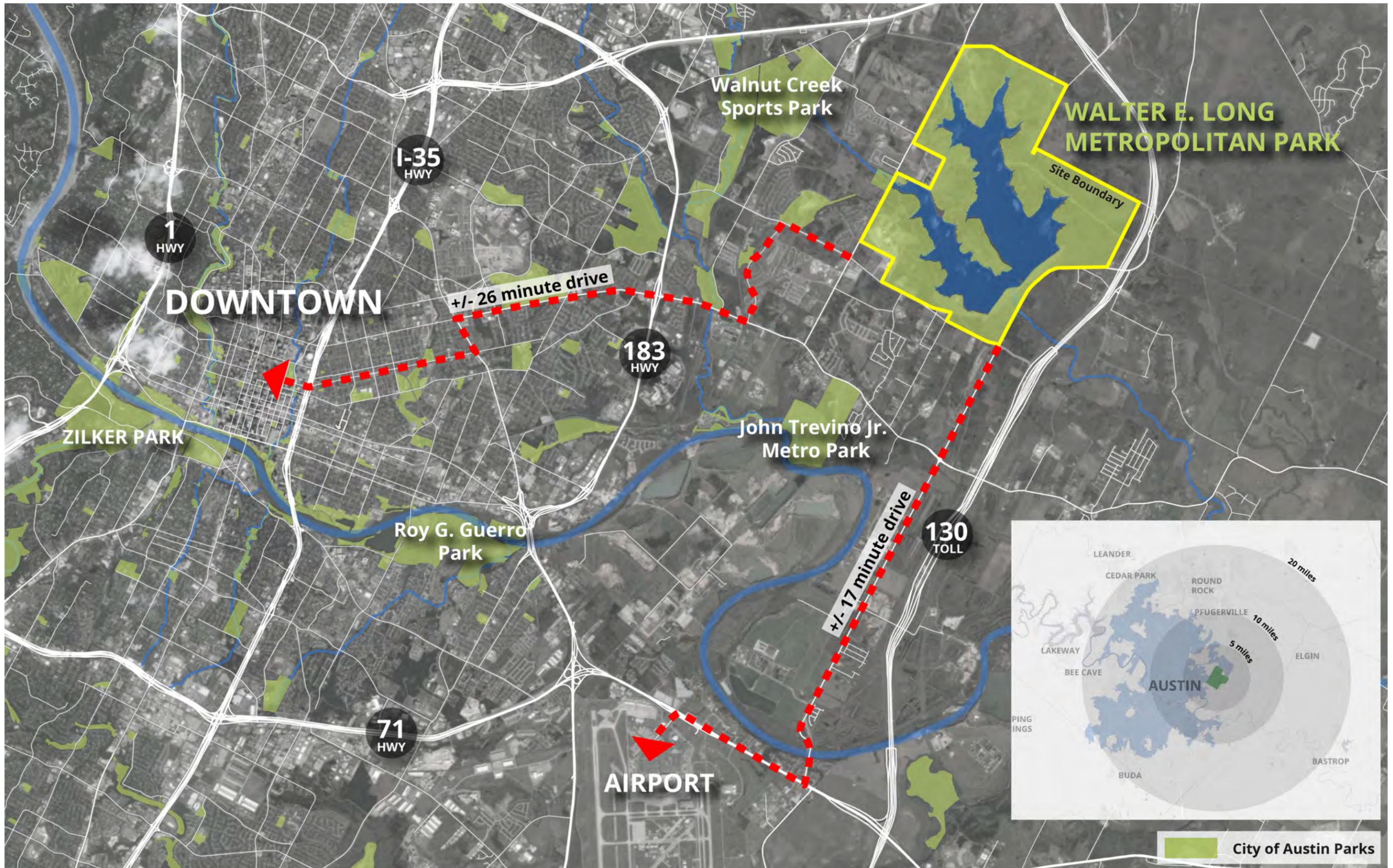
ZILKER PARK



ROY G. GUERRERO PARK

AUSTIN'S LARGEST PARK

Austin is a city known for its parks and natural greenbelts which make it a fantastic place to live. While many parks around the Austin area are known for their natural beauty and notable events, only one city park holds the distinction of being the biggest - Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Aside from its size, it contains a wide variety of natural resources, including a 1,165 acre lake which offers many recreational opportunities. This master plan will focus on how this park's development can be guided into the future.



Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is strategically located on the east side of Austin but is readily accessible from the entire metropolitan area.

“I enjoy taking my family to Walter E. Long park, and will continue for many years!”

- City of Austin Resident



HISTORY

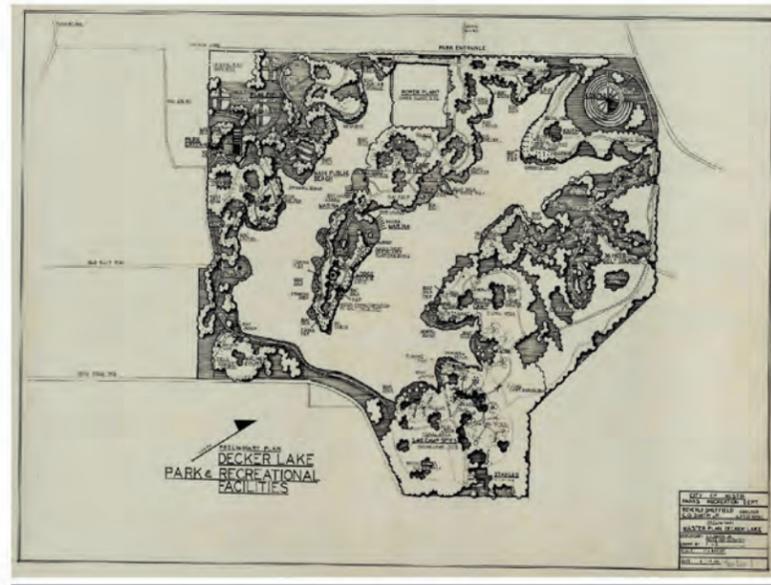
The expansion of the City of Austin's steam turbine plant along Decker Road in the mid 1960's required a constant source of water for cooling, and resulted in the need for a new lake in the area. Construction of the dam started in May 1966 and introduction of water began in early 1967.

There have been numerous planning and development efforts for the land surrounding the lake over the years; the ones shown here are the 1966 Preliminary Master Plan for Decker Lake, the 1968 Lake Walter E. Long Land Use Plan, the 1977 Walter E. Long Recreation Evaluation, the 1978 Walter E. Long Proposed Development Plan, the 1985 Golf Course Proposal, and the 2014 Golf Course Proposal. Since 1968, the following master plan items have been constructed: two boat docks; restrooms; a portion of a hike and bike trail; enhanced native grassland areas, main park road, picnic areas, and a swimming area. The restrooms are no longer in operation.

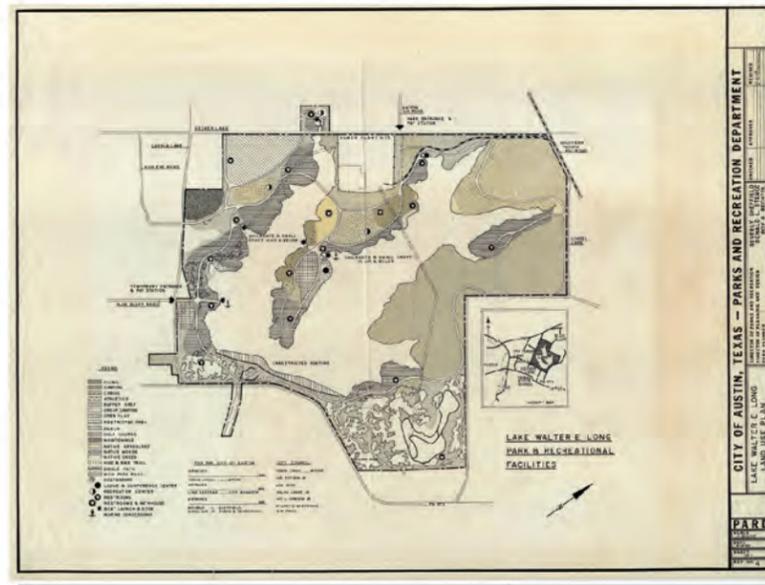
Several golf courses have been proposed since the creation of the park. The initial golf course, proposed with the 1966 master plan, included a 36-hole course, driving range, putting green, clubhouse, pitch and putt, and miniature golf. The idea of golf at Walter E. Long Park has been part of succeeding master beginning with the 1978 master plan. Most of these courses were proposed where the Indiangrass Sanctuary is now located, with others in the eastern sector of the site.



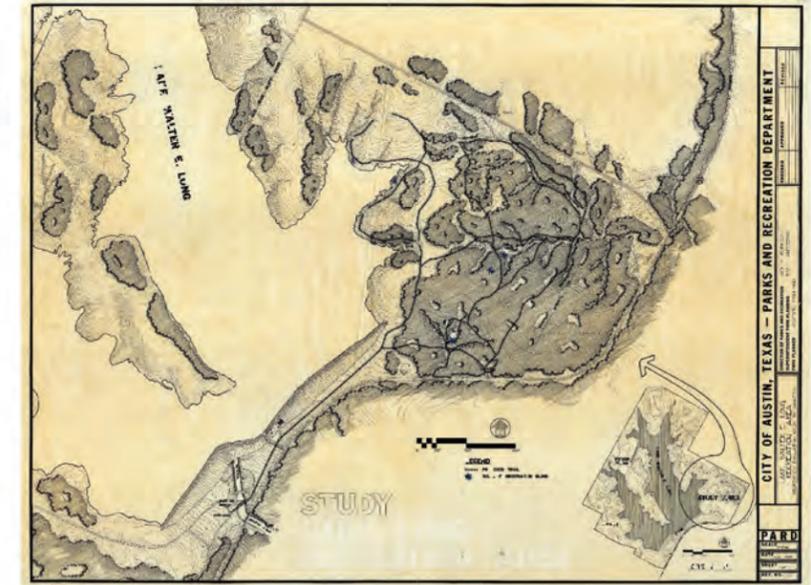
1968 Lake officially impounded/created



1966 Preliminary Master Plan for Decker Lake



1968 Lake Walter E. Long Land Use Plan



1977 Walter E. Long Recreation Evaluation

1966 1967 1968

1977

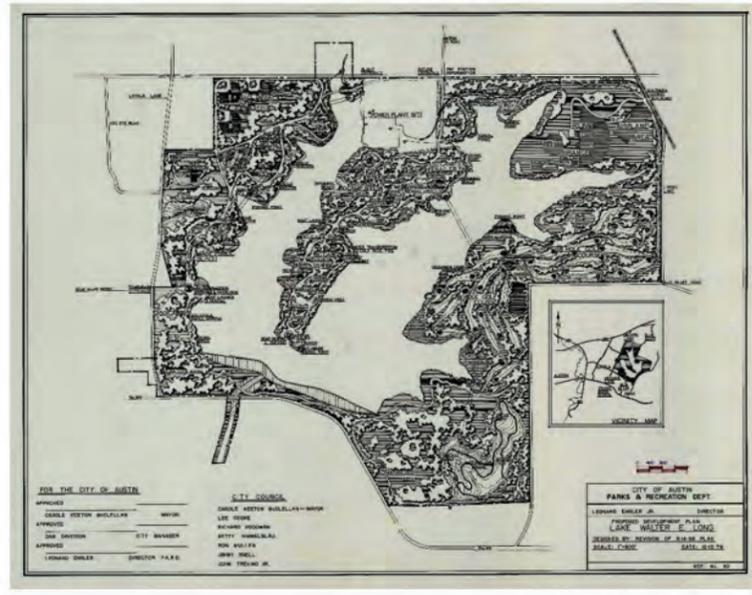


The Travis County Expo Center is located on the southwest corner of the park and hosts multiple events annually.

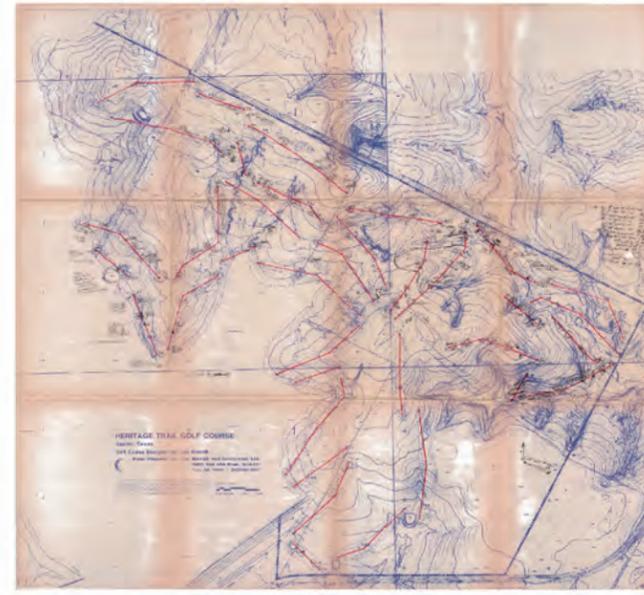
HISTORY

In more recent years, several plans have been proposed, which include the 1978 Walter E. Long Proposed Development Plan, the 1985 Golf Course Proposal and the 2014 Golf Course Proposal. In 1983, voters approved construction of the Travis County Exposition Center. In 1983, the Travis County Exposition Center was built on 128 acres leased from the City of Austin for 50 years. The Exposition Center was built to host livestock exhibitions, equestrian shows, rodeos and a variety of other events. Today, this large facility is host to multiple annual events such as Austin-Travis County Livestock Show, Rodeo Austin, and ROT Rally, as well as numerous other types of events (weddings, arts and crafts shows and trade shows).

2016 Travis County Expo Market Study



1978 Walter E. Long Proposed Development Plan



1985 Golf Course Proposal



Decker Lake Golf

2014 Golf Course Proposal

1978

1983 1985

2014 2016

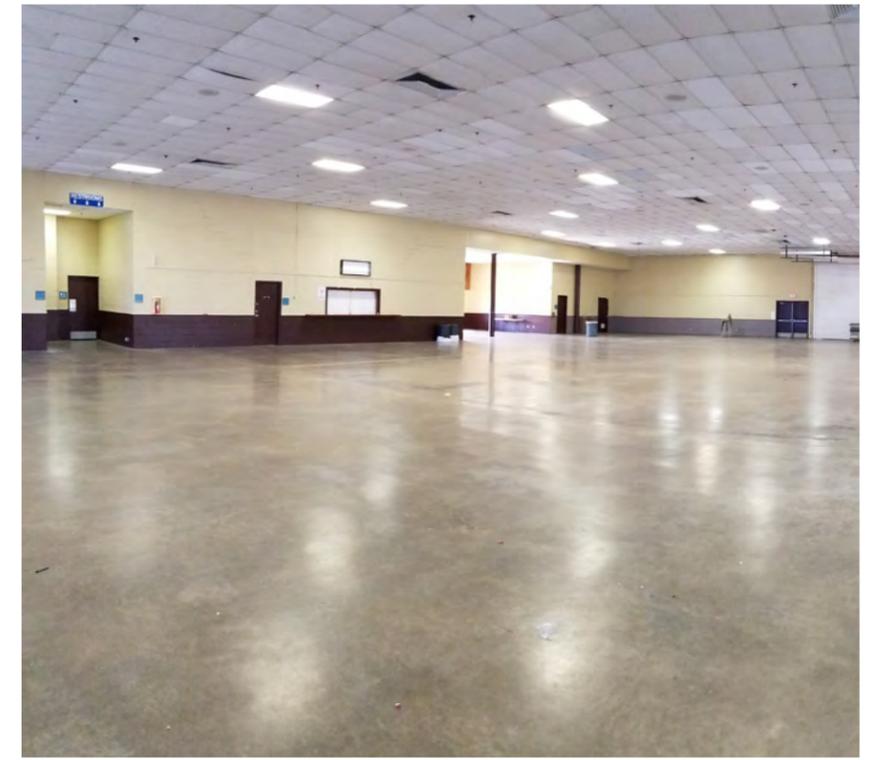
TRAVIS COUNTY EXPOSITION CENTER

The Travis County Exposition Center (Expo Center) is a unique partnership of the city, county and the private not-for-profit Rodeo Austin. The 128 acres used by the Expo Center facilities are on city-owned parkland; the buildings are owned, operated and managed by Travis County and their facilities Management Department. Despite the fact that the facilities are quite large, they only use less than four percent of Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park land. Given its current state, it is the general consensus that the Expo Center and the land around it are under-utilized, but have a lot of potential.

The Expo Center facility is located in the southwestern corner of the park and is adjacent to land owned by Rodeo Austin. The property has several large structures that are dated and in need of major rehabilitation or replacement. The major facilities are comprised of a 6,400-seat pre-engineered arena, club and exhibit space totaling about 36,000 square feet; a 210,000 square-foot partially enclosed, partially asphalt floored, un-air-conditioned show barn; and a 15,000 square-foot fully enclosed, fully conditioned meeting space with offices. There are approximately 4,000 parking spaces to support the facilities and events at the Expo Center.

With no major improvements over the last decade, the Expo Center is rapidly aging and in need of significant upgrades. In 2016, the City of Austin and Travis County completed an analysis of the Expo Center. That analysis indicated the need for over \$500 million in new building and site improvements.

In 2016, the City of Austin and Travis County conducted a Market Study for the Expo Center, which made a series of recommendations related to facility improvements and current uses. In 2033, the lease the City of Austin and Travis County for the Expo Center will expire.



Photos from within the Expo Center reveal the condition of the existing facilities and the large amount of space available.



A view of the exterior of the Expo Center and a historical aerial photograph showing the extent of the facilities.

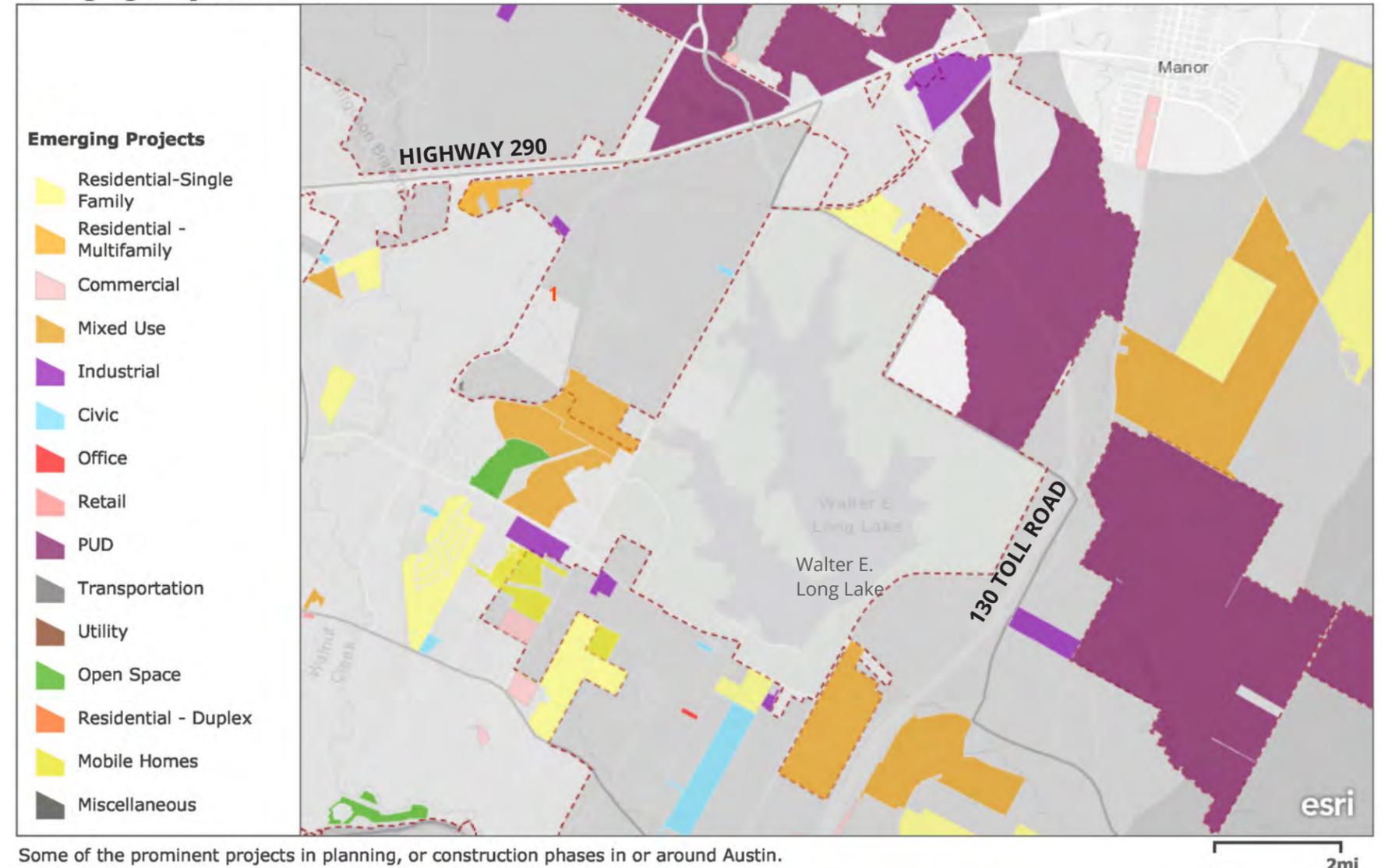
EMERGING AREA DEVELOPMENT

Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is located in east Austin in an area experiencing extensive growth. An economic analysis, commissioned by the City of Austin Economic Development Department and completed by Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) in 2018, indicates that approximately 19,000 residential units, and over 740,000 square feet of retail, two million square feet of office, and six million square feet of industrial/flex uses are planned and could be built within five miles of the park. If those development plans are realized, the number of households in the five-mile area are projected to grow by 152 percent, retail by 471 percent, and office/commercial by 254 percent. Much of this new development has been proposed along State Highway 130, east and north of the park.

The availability of extensive nearby lands with significant development potential of all types indicates that Walter E. Long parklands, even if undeveloped, are not critically needed to accommodate area growth.

However, the significant amount of projected growth in the area will greatly transform the park's surroundings. As development commences, the park will play an even greater role in providing recreational opportunities and environmental preservation for the area.

Emerging Projects Austin



Some of the prominent projects in planning, or construction phases in or around Austin.

Sources: EPS, City of Austin Development Services Department, City of Austin "Emerging Projects" website, <http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=a7677079f571441f98f9ed8df5ece62f&extent=-97.9753,30.2645,-97.3124,30.6263>, accessed 27 April 2018

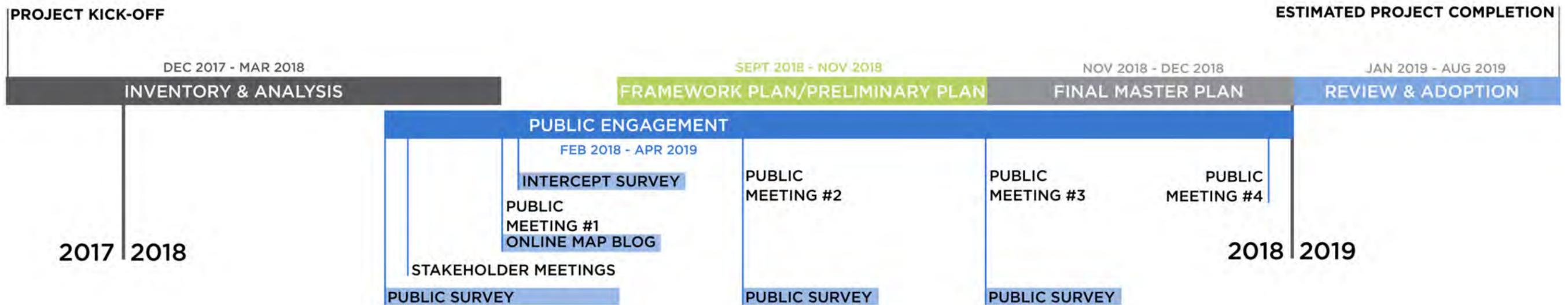


Development of Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was guided by input from the public at large, area residents and park users, and technical guidance from City of Austin staff.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was developed over an 18 month time period from November 2017 to May 2019. The development of this long-range vision for the park was led by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. A team led by Halff Associates facilitated the process and provided technical guidance throughout. Additional plan guidance was provided by a Technical Advisory Group made up of City and county staff as well as select key stakeholders (see Chapter 2, *Public Outreach*, for more information).

The community helped to identify issues and provide the vision for the future by participating in various forms of public engagement including stakeholder meetings, opinion surveys, and four public open house events (see Chapter 2, *Public Outreach*). The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was adopted by the Austin City Council in TBD, 2019.

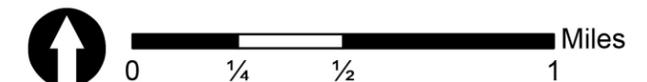


SITE CONTEXT

Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is located approximately eight miles east of Downtown Austin and contains approximately 3,695 acres of parkland. Within the park is a 1,165-acre reservoir, over 765 acres of preserved habitats and the Travis County Exposition Center located on 128 acres leased from the City of Austin. Some of the surrounding key locations include Bluebonnet Hill Golf Course, Decker Elementary School, Decker Middle School, and Colony Park. Austin Energy (AE) is located directly adjacent to Walter E. Long Park, and currently utilizes the lake water as part of its operations. The lake is used for a variety of recreational uses including swimming, fishing, boating and even as a training area for the University of Texas rowing team.



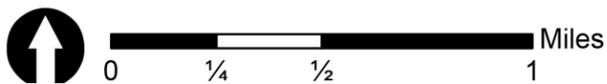
Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park and its area surroundings. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake (City of Austin), Map compiled by Halff Associates.



CIRCULATION

Since only portions of the park site are developed, circulation around and in the park is limited and fragmented. The primary park access point is off Blue Bluff Road at Decker Lake Road. Paved roads are located in that southern portion of the park near the entrance, as well as on the Travis County Expo site. Unpaved roads are located within the fenced parkland running parallel to FM 973. The unpaved road in the eastern portion of the park provides access to swimming and picnic areas, the Austin Energy dam and to the Indiangrass Preserve. Another unpaved road in the northwestern portion of the park provides access to the skeet and aeromodeler center. New dedicated bike lanes have been built on Loyola Lane, west of Decker Lane, and on FM 973 east of Decker Lake Road. However, none of the roads around the perimeter of the park have dedicated bike lanes, despite much bike ridership. The roads around the park are termed “Shared Lanes” by the Austin Transportation Department, with recommendations for future bike lanes to be added.

The City has constructed a portion of the Austin-to-Manor Urban Trail in the northwest portion of the park, providing nearly 7,000 LF of existing urban trail for the park’s western side paralleling Decker Lane. The potential future parkland/vehicular access points shown have not been officially approved and are subject to change. Their locations are approximations based on currently available data.



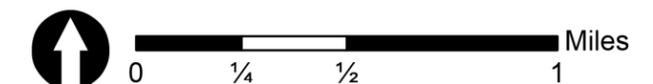
Vehicular and non-vehicular circulation around and in Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake/Site Roads/Trails (City of Austin), Map compiled by Halff Associates.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Overhead utility lines extend along the perimeter of the site, except along a portion of the east side. Wastewater lines are located on the southwest corner and along the peninsula adjacent to the lake. Over 34,000 linear feet of transmission lines span the site. These overhead electric lines are located within easements with a minimum 150-foot width. Existing infrastructure locations are a major consideration with regard to proposed design solutions. Utility easements bisect the landscape and have a strong visual impact. Several utility corridors are located throughout the park including natural gas lines, electric transmission lines, distribution lines, and miscellaneous access roads. Most of these utility corridors are periodically mowed and appear to be well-maintained.



Regional overhead power lines passing through Walter E. Long park.



Utility infrastructure in and adjacent to Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake (City of Austin), Utility Data (Provided by Crespo Consulting Services, Inc.), Map compiled by Halff Associates.

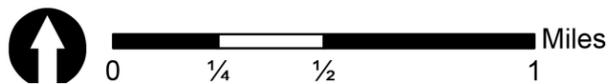
EXISTING FACILITIES/IMPROVEMENTS

There are a number of existing park elements mainly located on the south and west side of the park. Some of the prominent park features include a boat ramp, entrance station, boat dock, restrooms, picnic shelters and picnic grounds. Also located within the park are the Travis County Expo Center, Austin Energy Decker Creek Power Station, Austin Energy maintenance yard, Capital City Trap and Skeet Club and Austin Radio Control Association. Improvements associated with these uses are also located in the park, including parking and site utilities.

LEGEND

① Boat ramp	⑦ Picnic shelter
② Entrance station	⑧ Maintenance shelter
③ Parking lot	⑨ Picnic ground
④ Pier/dock	⑩ Capitol City Trap & Skeet Club
⑤ Restroom	⑪ Austin Radio Control Association
⑥ Residence	⑫ Austin Energy Storage Yard

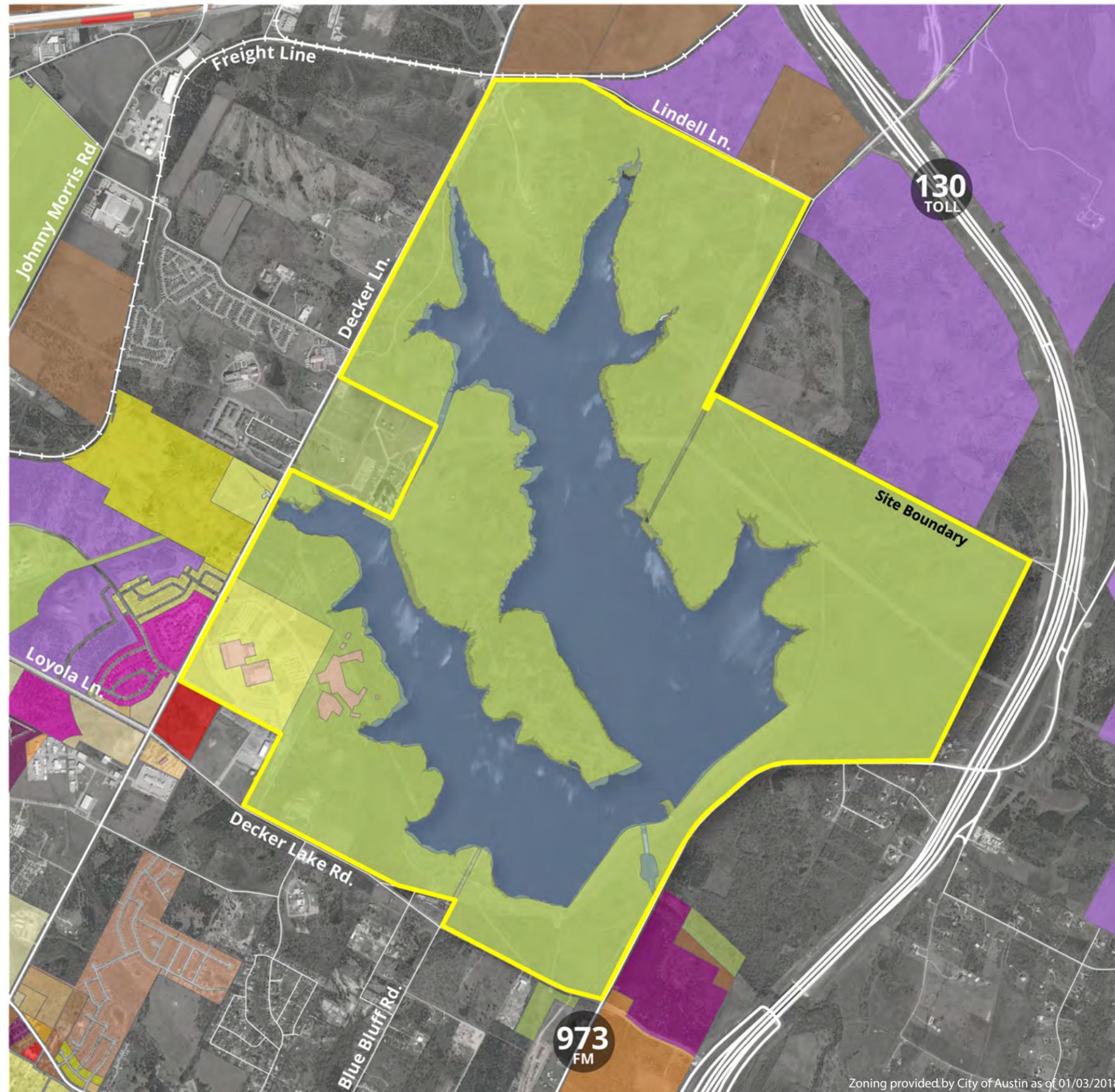
■ Swimming Zone
■ Fishing Zone



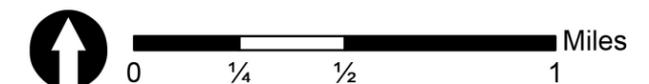
Existing park, event, or other improvements at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake/PARD Facility Points (City of Austin), Map compiled by Half Associates.

ZONING

Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is zoned as “public,” with parts of the Travis County Expo Center area zoned as “commercial – liquor sales.” Much of the land to the north is zoned as Planned Unit Development (PUD), while some land zoned as residential lies to the west. The variety of land uses around the site may influence the design and planning solutions in this Master Plan. As a critical step in the planning process, the ability to propose connections to surrounding land uses will be informed by current zoning conditions.



LEGEND			
CS-1	Commercial-liquor sales	LI-CO	Limited industrial services (conditional)
CS-1-CO	Commercial-liquor sales (conditional)	MF-2	Multifamily residence low density
CS-CO	General commercial (conditional)	MF-3	Multifamily residence medium density
DR	Development reserve	MH	Mobile home residence
GO-CO	General office (conditional)	P	Public
GR	Community commercial	PUD	Planned unit development
GR-CO	Community commercial (conditional)	SF-2	Single-family residence standard lot
GR-MU-CO	Community commercial -mixed use (conditional)	SF-3	Family residence
I-RR	Interim rural residential	SF-4A	Single-family residence small lot
I-SF-4A	Interim single-family residence small lot	SF-4A-CO	Single-family residence small lot (conditional)
IP-CO	Industrial park (conditional)		



Area zoning. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake/Zoning as of 01/03/2018 (City of Austin), Map compiled by Half Associates.

VEGETATION

The entire site is in the Blackland Prairie ecoregion, which is the highest conservation priority in the state of Texas. Plant species associated with human disturbance are common in the active, developed areas of the site. Approximately 70% of the total site contains canopy cover, while some areas have been clear cut and regularly maintained. There are two existing preserves: Decker Tallgrass Prairie Preserve and the Indiangrass Wildlife Sanctuary. The remnant Post Oaks in the Post Oak Woodland Area (2018 Projection) and the two existing Preserves contain rich wildlife habitats. Some of the more prominent existing woody species present are Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*), Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*), and Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*).

Many of the natural areas in the park are havens for wildlife. The historical notes mention plant and animal species encountered during the 1980's. These include Beaver and Nutria, as well as Least Bitterns, Pied-billed Grebes, and American Coot. Bird sightings at the shoreline include rare nesting Least Bitterns.

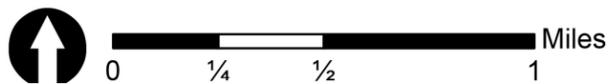
Large areas on the southern end of the site have been cleared and regularly maintained by PARD. The Tallgrass and Indiangrass Preserves are maintained via conservation management, including prescribed burns with assistance from the Austin Fire Department.



Existing vegetation cover and preserves. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake (City of Austin), Vegetation (Provided by Crespo Consulting Services, Inc.), Map compiled by Halff Associates.

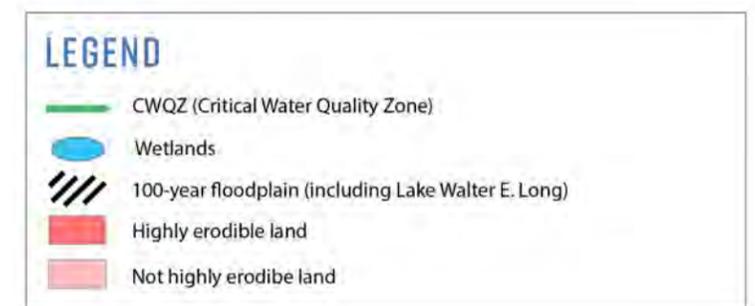
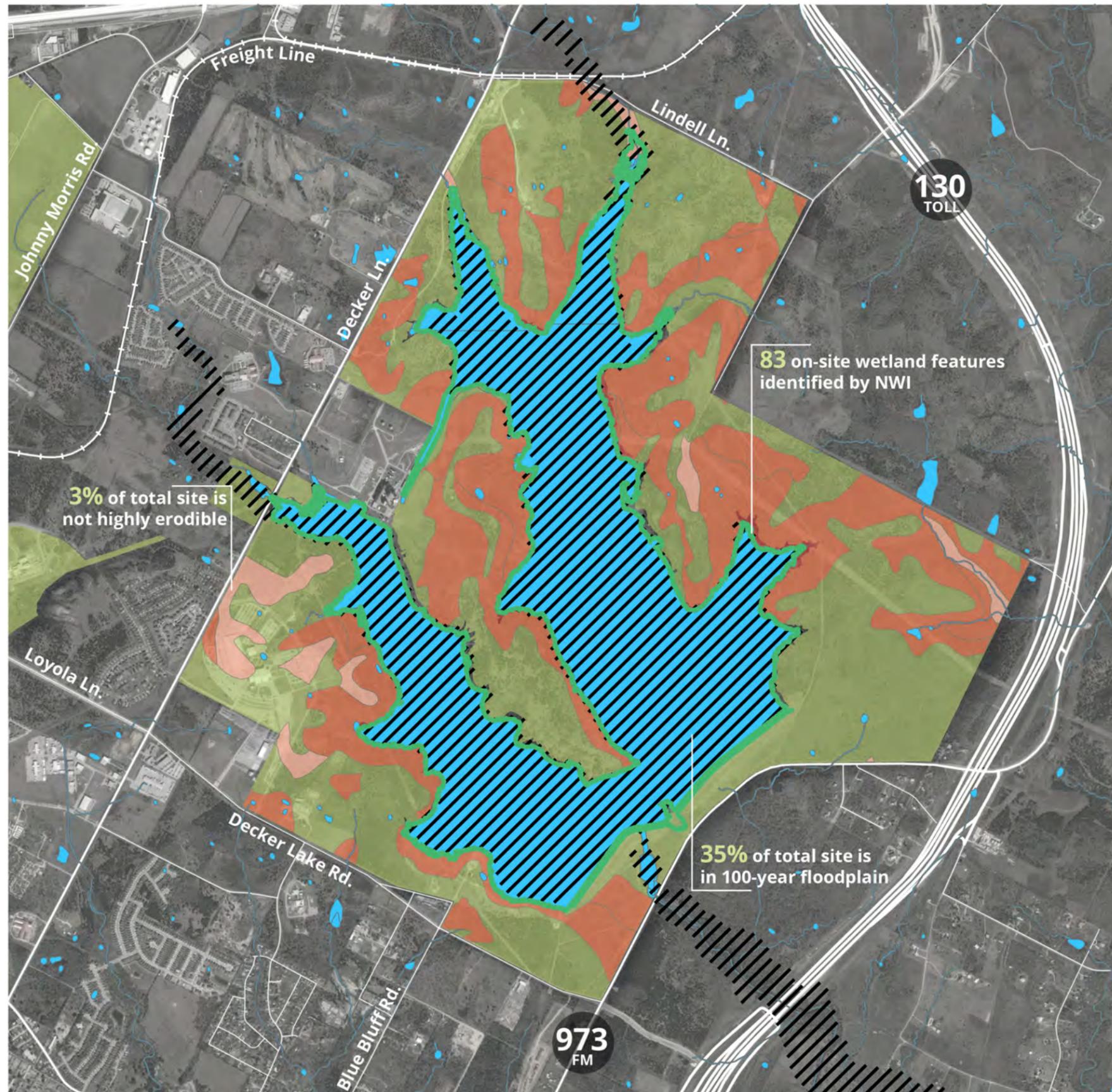
LEGEND

-  Existing Preserve
-  Regularly Maintained PARD Areas
-  Canopy Cover
-  Post Oak Woodland Area (2018 projection)



HYDROLOGY

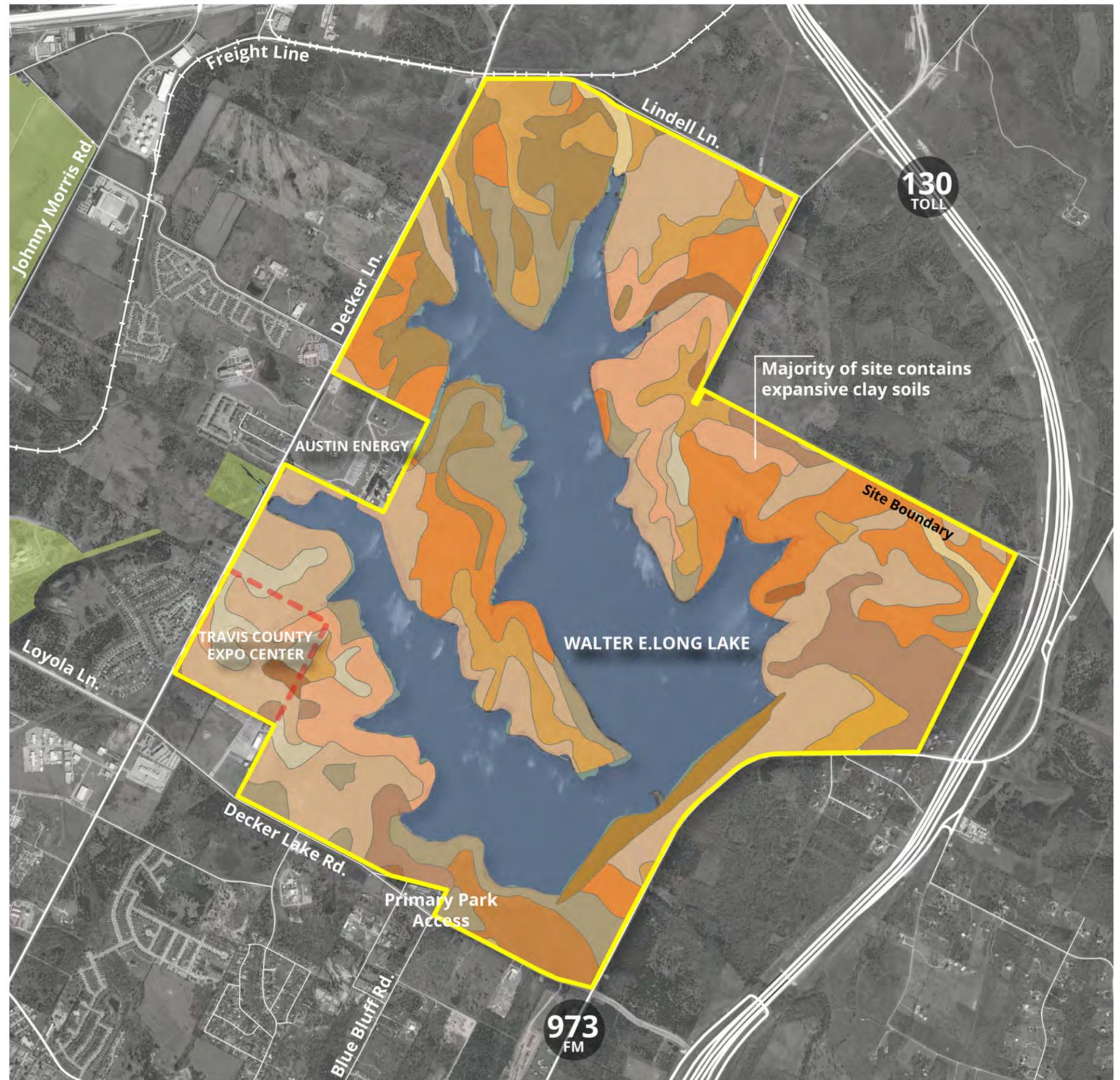
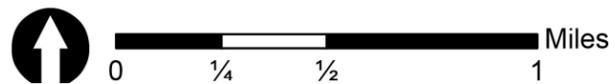
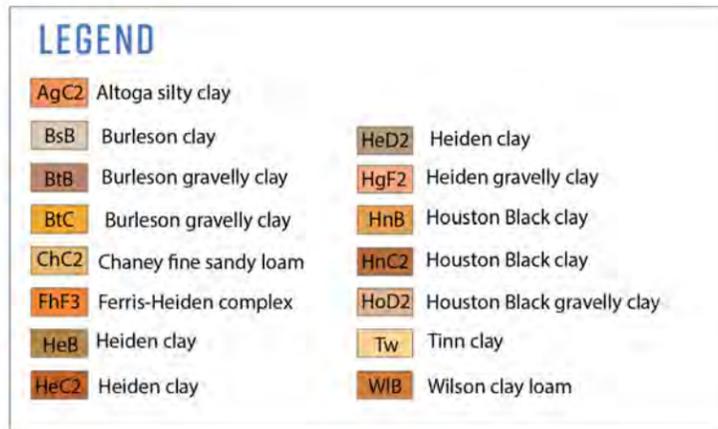
An outstanding natural feature of Walter E. Long Park is the extensive wetland system, one of the largest in central Texas. Individual wetlands (outside of the lake itself) comprise only a small portion of the total land mass and can be easily protected by appropriate buffers. According to National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), there are 83 on-site wetlands totaling over 1000 acres including Lake Walter E. Long. These wetlands provide invaluable wildlife, fishery, recreational and aesthetic benefits. Wetland plant species recently observed in the wetlands include Spikerush (*Eleocharis sp.*), Cattail (*Typha sp.*), and Willow (*Salix nigra*). Walter E. Long Park supports a variety of terrestrial and aquatic plants that are important to the ecology of the area. A critical water quality zone (CWQZ) is established around the lake at approximately the 554.5 foot contour, which precludes certain activities from taking place such as the development of amenities which contain a high amount of impervious cover.



Area hydrology in and around Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake (City of Austin), Floodplain (Provided By Crespo Consulting Services, Inc.), Wetland Data (Obtained from NWI), Hydrology Data (Provided by John Gleason, LLC), Map compiled by Half Associates.

SOILS

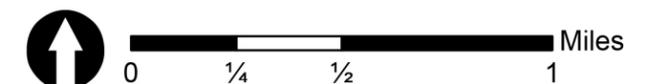
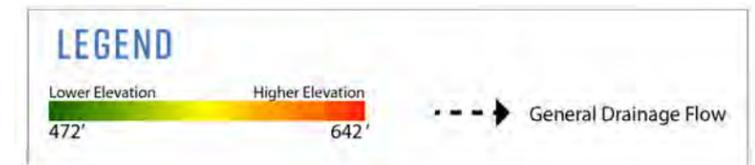
According to the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soils Survey, which includes Web Soil Survey (WSS) data, most of the soils on the site are clayey and prone to erosion, thus presenting limitations and challenges to natural area management and park development. Gravelly clay soils and those with high shrink-swell potential are present, and oftentimes exhibit cracks in response to drought. Soil erosion is a concern at the shoreline and where steep grades exist. The unique soil conditions present within Walter E. Long Park will impact design solutions in this master plan with regard to strategic placement of development, location of amenities, and arrangement of programs.



Area soils in and around Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Soils (Provided by Crespo Consulting Services, Inc.), Map compiled by Halff Associates.

TOPOGRAPHY

The park contains varying topography with approximately 170 feet of vertical elevation change. The high point of the site is located in the north section of the park, while the low point is located near the existing dam on the southeast side of the park. There are several quality scenic views, most of which are located on the northern side of the park. From a planning perspective, the grade change will allow for many creative opportunities, both from a visual and physical point of view. The grade of the land will inform and influence this master plan and the feasibility of design solutions.

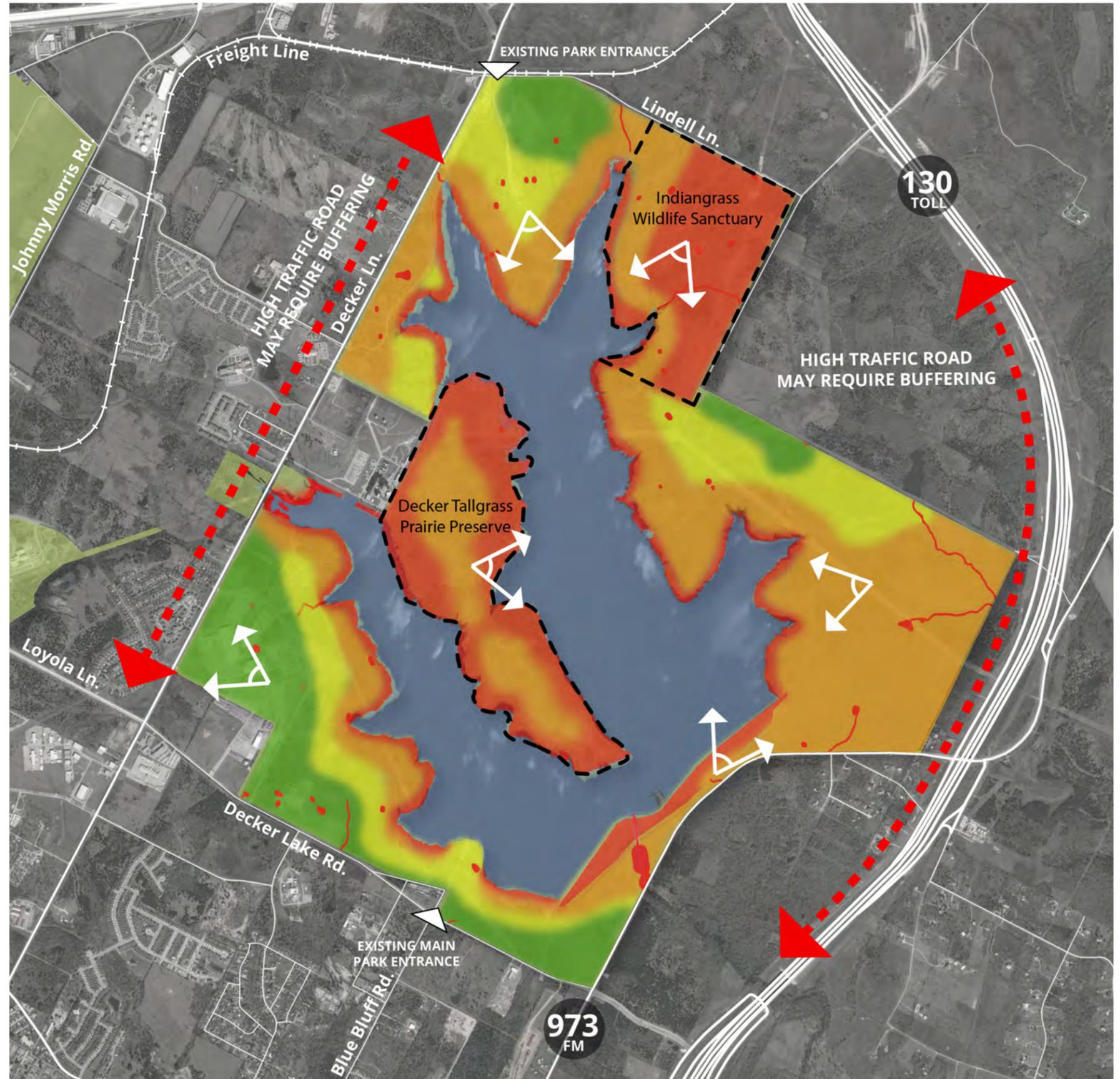
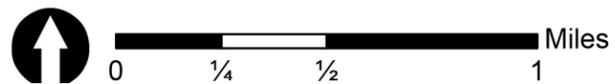
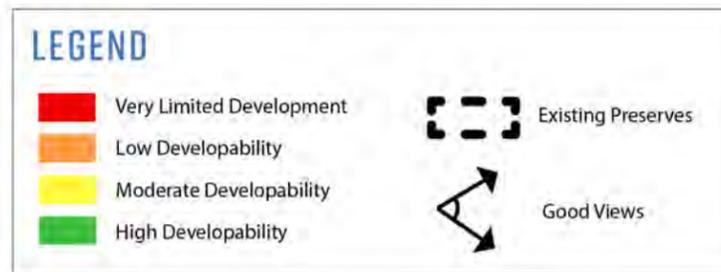


Topography and elevation change across the park site. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), Parks/Lake (City of Austin), Topography (Provided By Crespo Consulting Services, Inc.), Map compiled by Halff Associates.

OVERALL SITE SUITABILITY

Given the diversity found within Walter E. Long Park in terms of vegetation, slope, soils, and wildlife, determining areas of suitability for various potential park elements is a critical step in the master planning process. Areas where very little or restrained development can occur are the existing grass preserves, as well as existing wetlands which include a buffer around Lake Walter E. Long. Conservation will be the primary goal when dealing with these sensitive habitats. Areas with steep slopes and highly erodible soil have been classified as zones to avoid high intensity development. While many parts of the park may not be suitable for development, there are key locations which can contain both moderate and high levels of development.

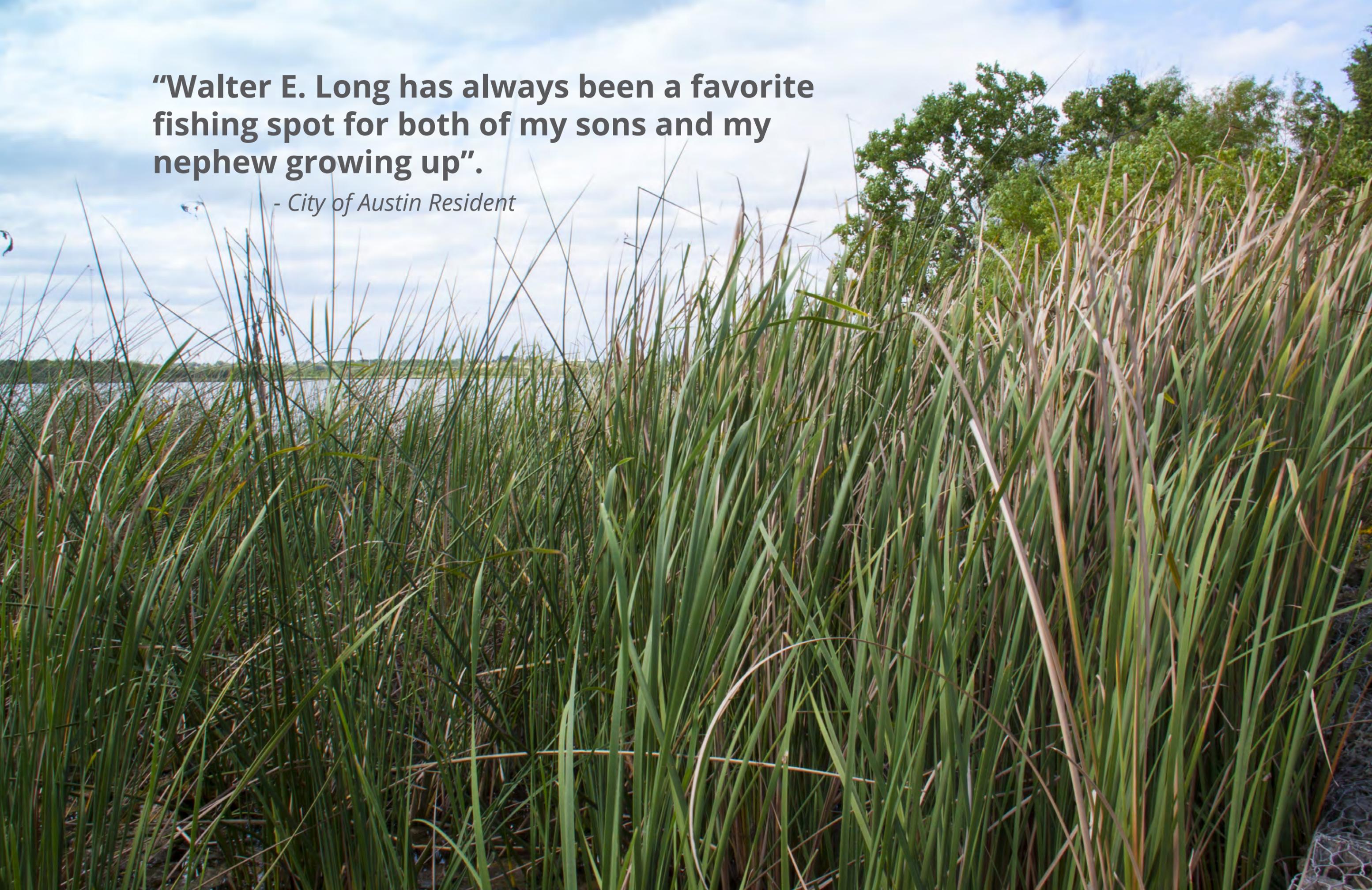
Very limited development is defined as development requiring very limited construction, if any (e.g., wetlands, trails, etc.). Areas with low developability hold the potential for passive amenities (e.g., trails, boardwalks, pavilions, etc.). Moderate developability may allow for condensed amenities (e.g., playgrounds, picnic areas, etc.). High developability areas are more conducive to more intensive amenities (e.g., buildings, surface parking, athletic fields, infrastructure, etc.).



Preliminary site analysis. Sources: Roadways (TxDOT 2018), site analysis compiled by Half Associates and sub-consultants.

“Walter E. Long has always been a favorite fishing spot for both of my sons and my nephew growing up”.

- City of Austin Resident







CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Multiple open house events were conducted at key stages during the master planning process. They provided opportunities for both residents of the area as well as regional park users to consider ideas and alternatives for the long range plan for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INTRODUCTION

Public engagement was a critical step in the planning process for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park which involved gathering information directly from the community to inform and guide the design. This community input strongly guided implementation and success. Support comes from a plan that reflects the wants and needs of both nearby residents and the greater city population.

To create a master plan for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park which reflects the preferences of all relevant stakeholders, the public was engaged frequently throughout the 16-month planning process. A variety of different engagement strategies were utilized to gain a well-rounded understanding of people's needs and desires. Through the use of a diverse public engagement strategy, different user groups were provided a chance to voice their thoughts. In conjunction with public engagement efforts, additional applicable findings and engagement summaries from other relevant planning processes were reviewed and incorporated.

Overall, the planning process included a project website, Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings, multiple opinion surveys, stakeholder interviews, review and input from PARD (Austin Parks and Recreation Department), in-park intercept surveys, an online map blog, meetings with elected and appointed officials, and a series public meetings and open houses.

Engagement efforts were designed to target three types of individuals: a) surrounding neighborhoods and stakeholders who may significantly benefit from the development of the park, b) citywide residents of Austin and regional users for the park, and c) key stakeholder individuals and groups who are interested in one or more key aspects of the master plan. Since public engagement was central to the success of the master plan, input strategies were utilized from project initiation through plan adoption and functioned as a barometer of public opinion about strategic decisions moving forward.



In open house meetings, an open format was utilized to provide more direct interaction with the community at large.



Community engagement during one of many public open houses held where feedback was gathered to better inform the planning process.



Area yard signs and online advertising helped inform the community and city residents when and where public open houses were happening.



A significant level of public interaction during open houses helped direct the planning process and guide master plan decisions.

ONLINE OUTREACH

A crucial step in the planning process was producing material for a website where relevant information was featured for public access. Components of the website included an outline of the planning process, a working schedule, summaries from key meetings, framework concept plans, preliminary master plans, and the final master plan. In addition to the website, an online map

blog was created to allow residents and stakeholders to place geographic specific comments on various areas of the park. Additionally, the website was used to engage the public through the use of multiple online surveys, which were conducted at key periods during the planning process.



Project Background

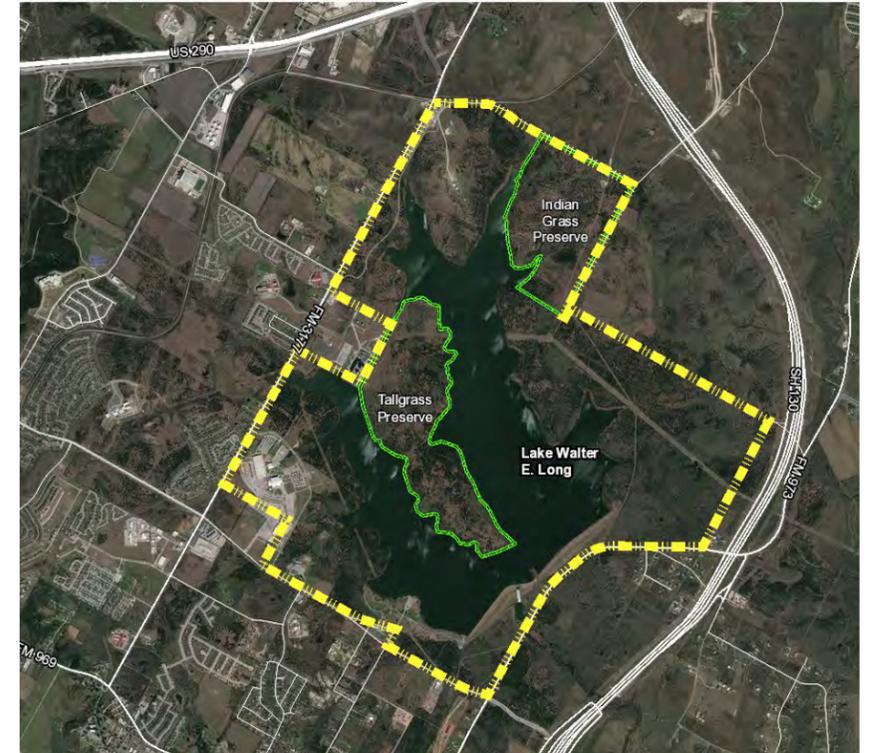
Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is a regional park located in east Austin, situated just west of State Highway 130. The park is accessed via Blue Bluff Road (see map below). The property includes 3,695 acres of parkland and the 1,165 acre Lake Walter E. Long. The park also includes approximately 765 acres of preserved habitats and the Travis County Expo Center grounds. Some of the existing facilities in the park include hike and bike trails, picnic areas, volleyball courts, boat ramps, and fishing piers. A skeet shooting range and model airplane area are also operated by organizations within the park.



The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan website on the official City of Austin webpage was used to post content to keep the public informed about the status of the project.



As part of the online blog tool, points were plotted where users had the opportunity to provide specific feedback on certain areas of the park. Comments were stored in a separate table online.



This screen shot of the online blog tool helped to inform the public by presenting a platform from which to solicit feedback about specific locations within the park.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG) MEETINGS

Four meetings with the Long Park Technical Advisory Committee were held to gather feedback at critical points during the planning process. The role of the TAG was to help identify community goals and objectives, review and comment on preliminary park programming and concepts, help solicit public participation, build general support and generate public consensus. Additionally, the TAG aided in providing technical guidance regarding design parameters and ensured that the process was efficient and properly addressed the needs of the community at-large. During TAG meetings, project updates were presented and hands-on exercises were conducted to solicit further feedback. After each meeting, summary findings were featured on the City's website to keep the public informed about key decisions related to the planning process.

TAG Meeting Overview



The interpersonal dialogue and information gained at TAG meetings were an invaluable asset to the planning process.



During the typical meeting, key technical issues were discussed which helped facilitate the planning process and move it forward.

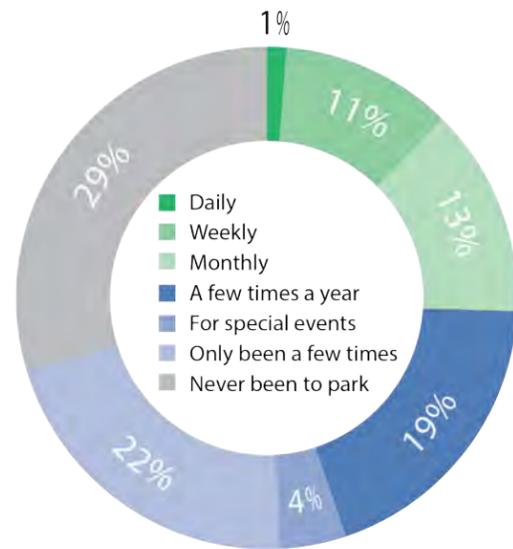


Interactive exercises were used during TAG Meetings to help prioritize programming elements.

INITIAL ONLINE SURVEY - EVALUATING USE & INTERESTS

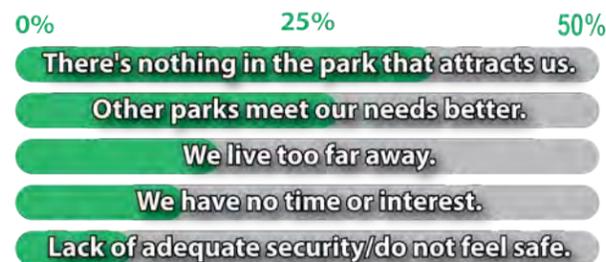
As part of the public engagement process, an initial citizen survey was administered to evaluate current use and perceptions regarding the park. The results of this survey significantly influenced the preliminary program of uses and created a foundation for subsequent design alternatives.

How often do you visit the park?



Approximately, 71% of respondents had visited Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park, while 29% of respondents have never visited the park. Daily and weekly visitors comprise a very small portion of respondents, with the combined amount at 12%.

Why don't you visit the park?



Although there could be a variety of reasons why people have not visited the park, over 30% of respondents indicated that there wasn't anything currently in the park of interest.

Which programs are important to the public?

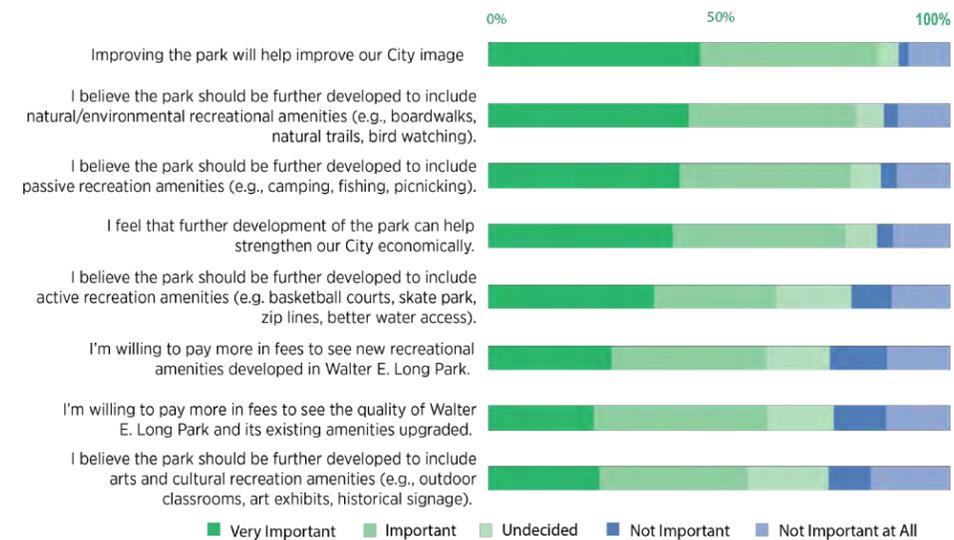


Based on the initial public survey, the majority of respondents indicated that multi-use trails were the most important to the public. Picnicking and nature discovery were also highly valued to those who took the survey.

INITIAL ONLINE SURVEY - EVALUATING USE & INTERESTS

A large component of the initial online survey was to gauge the public's opinions regarding active recreation, passive recreation, natural/environmental recreation and arts/cultural recreation. To do this, a series of questions were posed which gave participants the opportunity to share their opinion. Based on the participant's answers, a conceptual framework was developed which reflected the public's sentiments regarding Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. An important aspect of the survey which helped prioritize what the public wanted was posing questions which asked users to prioritize different types of recreation in terms of active, passive, natural/environmental and arts/cultural.

Public's degree of agree-ability/disagree-ability with the following statements about Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park.



The top three answers indicate strong public support for a proposed program which reflects improving the City image and the development of natural/environmental and passive aspects of the park.



After the initial survey was held, additional interactive exercises were held with staff and public open house attendees.

WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Based on public opinion, preliminary design of the park focused on the following:



Active Recreation

Includes outdoor recreational activities, such as organized sports, playground activities, and the use of motorized vehicles, that require extensive facilities or development or that have a considerable environmental impact on the recreational site.



Passive Recreation

Includes outdoor recreational activities, such as nature observation, hiking, and kayaking, that require a minimum of facilities or development and that have minimal environmental impact on the recreational site.



Environmental Recreation

Activities which provide a more hands-on and educational interaction with the natural environment. These program items also provide opportunities to restore and improve upon the existing natural systems.



Arts/Cultural Recreation

Program items within this category serve to provide an opportunity for the community to take an ownership in the park. Local art, food, history, and cultural opportunities are some of the features found within this category.

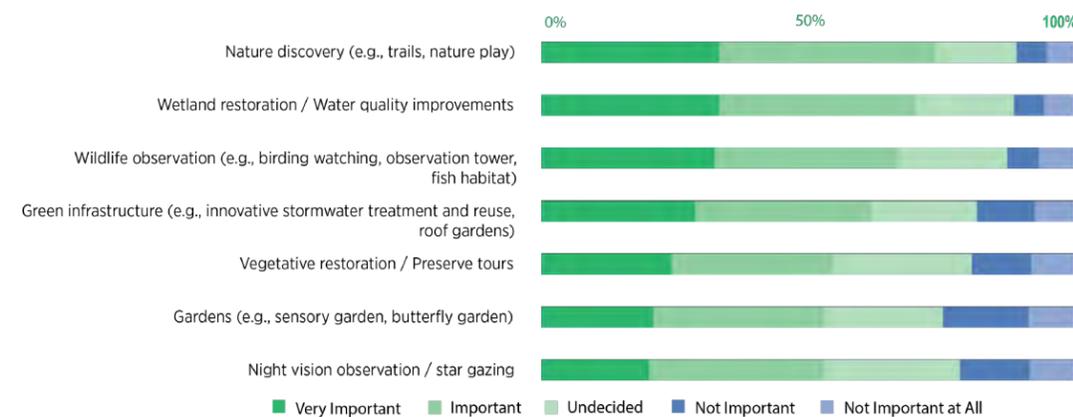
INITIAL ONLINE SURVEY - DEVELOPING THE PROGRAM

Included in the survey were questions related to different types of recreation and how the public prioritized them.

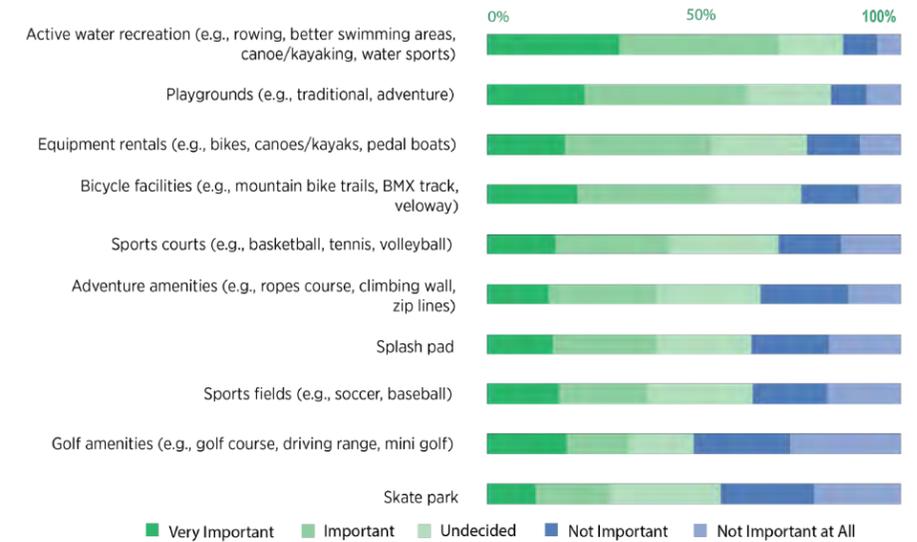


Summary chart of public feedback on the park vision for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park developed during online survey #1.

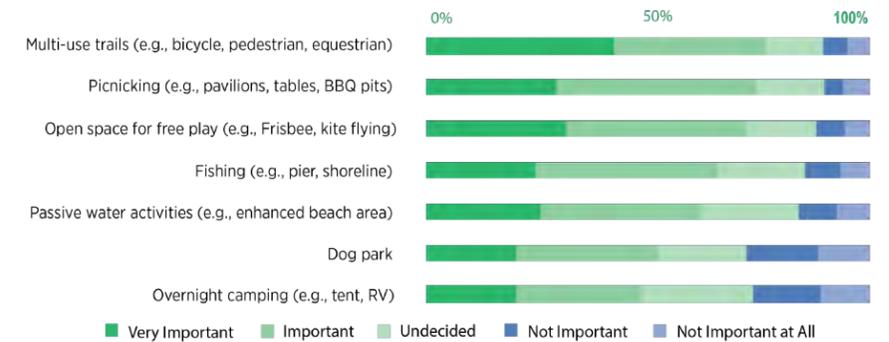
Degree of importance regarding ENVIRONMENTAL/NATURAL recreation items



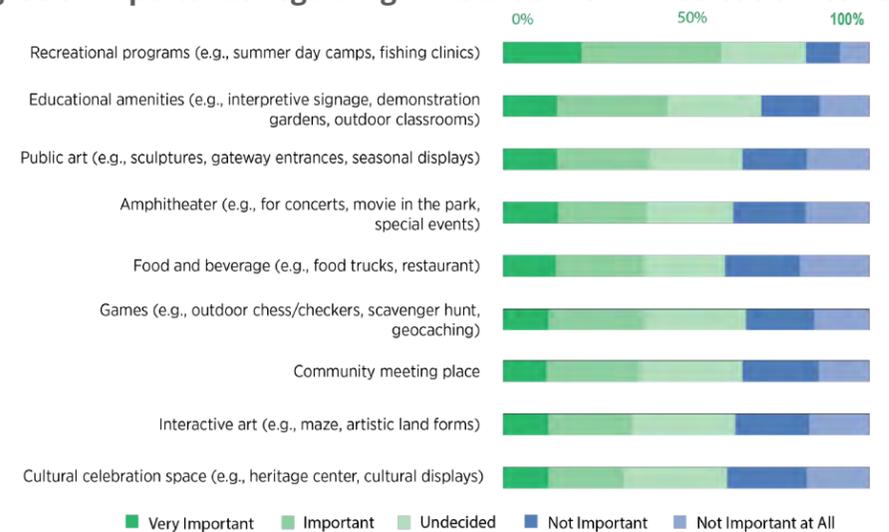
Degree of importance regarding ACTIVE recreation items



Degree of importance regarding PASSIVE recreation items



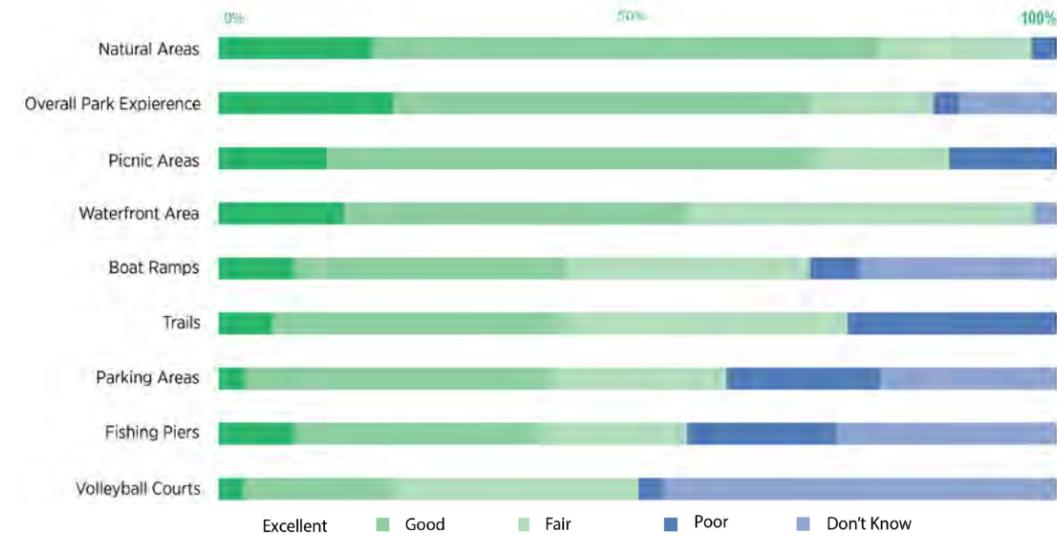
Degree of importance regarding ARTS & CULTURAL recreation items



INTERCEPT SURVEY

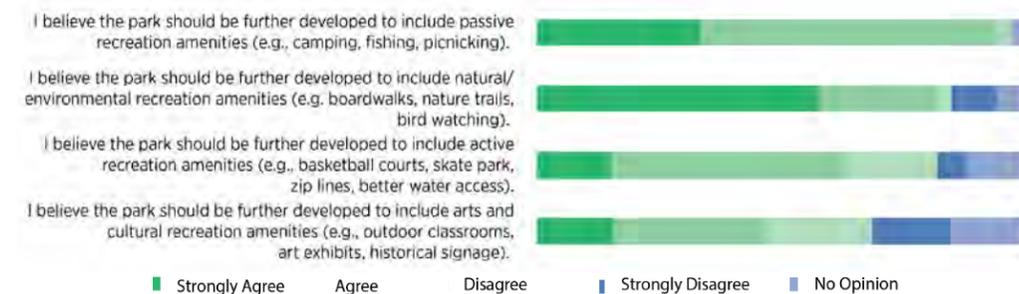
In addition to the online survey, an in-park intercept survey was administered over the Easter Weekend to collect targeted feedback from park users. Over 35 respondents took the survey.

How would you rate the quality, appearance, and maintenance of Walter E. Long Park?



According to the intercept survey results, a majority of respondents found the natural areas and overall park to be an excellent or good experience.

Check the box that best describes how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about Walter E. Long Park



The top three answers indicated majority public support for a proposed program which reflects improving the City image and the development of natural/environmental and passive aspects of the park.

WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN PARK USER SURVEY

Introduction

The City of Austin needs your help and input! The City is developing an updated master plan for improvements to Walter E. Long Park. As a concerned citizen, the City of Austin takes your views about the park very seriously. Please take some time to answer this survey about the park.

All individual survey answers will remain confidential and your information will not be sold or used for solicitation.

- Are you male or female? Male Female
- In which zip code do you live? _____
- Do you have any children under the age of 19 living in your home? Check all that apply.
 - No children
 - Children under age 4
 - Children ages 5-8
 - Children ages 9-12
 - Children ages 13-19
- How often do you typically visit Walter E. Long Park?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - A few times a year
 - For special events (please specify below)
 - I've only been there a few times

Please specify which special events: _____
- How would you rate the quality, appearance, and maintenance of Walter E. Long Park?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Overall park experience					
Trails					
Natural areas					
Picnic areas					
Boat ramps					
Fishing pier					
Waterfront area					
Volleyball courts					
Parking areas					
Wayfinding signage					

- What new or improved amenities or activities would you like developed in the park?

Thank you for participating in the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan public survey.

If you would like to receive updates on the master planning process for Walter E. Long Park, please provide your email address below.



For more information call (512) 974-6700
Email: WalterLongMasterPlan@makingthingsclear.com

200 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78704

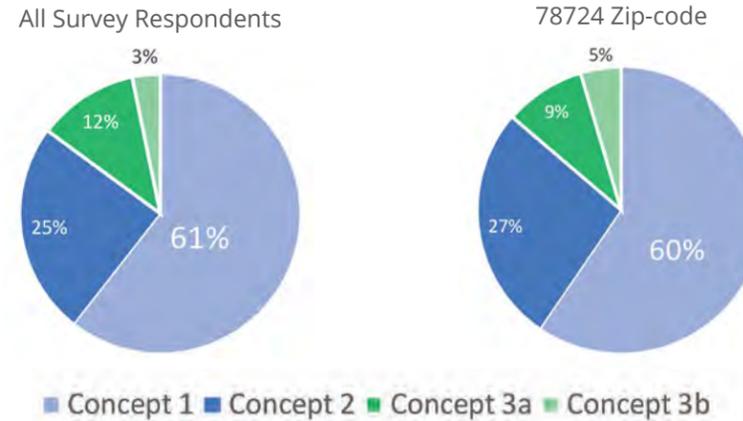
A sample copy of the intercept survey distributed to the public on Easter weekend.

SECOND ONLINE SURVEY - FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS

As a follow up to the second public meeting, an online survey was created which was intended to solicit additional feedback on the four framework concepts presented at the second public meeting. The first section of the survey posed general questions to the respondent. Then, a series of questions were asked in reference to the four concept plans (see Chapter 3 for an enlargement of these concepts.)

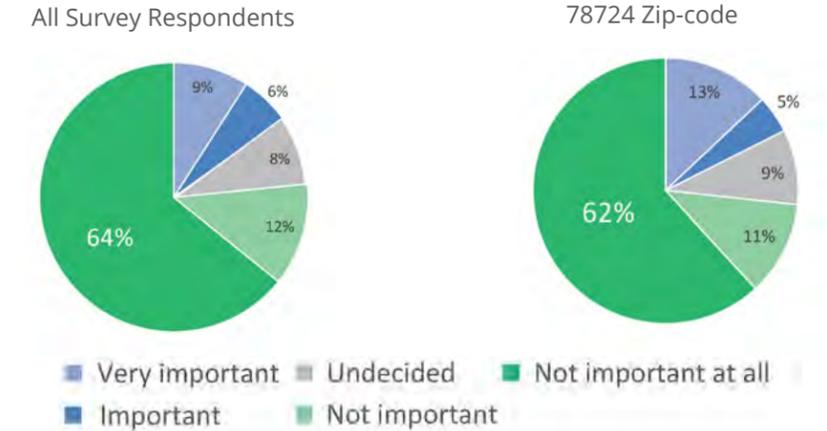
Based on the results, the vast majority of survey respondents supported Concept 1. Additionally, a large portion of respondents did not support a golf course at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park; of these a majority did support maintaining the lake at its present water level. The survey was analyzed two ways, which involved separating survey responses between all survey respondents as well as just respondents within the 78724 area zip code which is where Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is located.

Which is your preferred park uses arrangement plan?



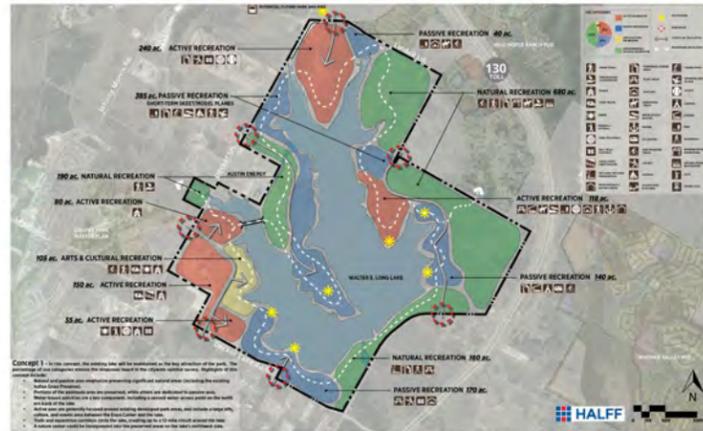
Based on the survey results, the vast majority of respondents, both within the 78724 zip-code and all respondents, favor Concept 1.

Public opinion on importance of golf course development

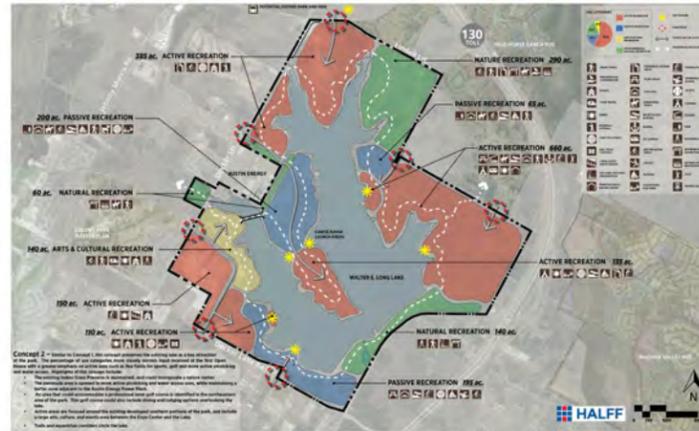


As to whether the public supported a golf course at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park, the majority of respondents considered it "not important at all."

FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 1



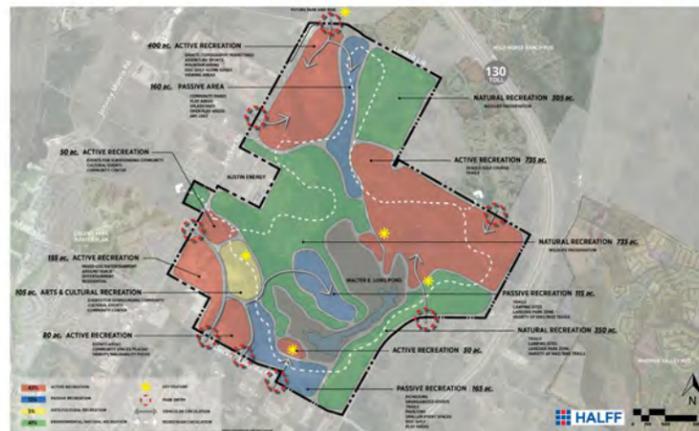
FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 2



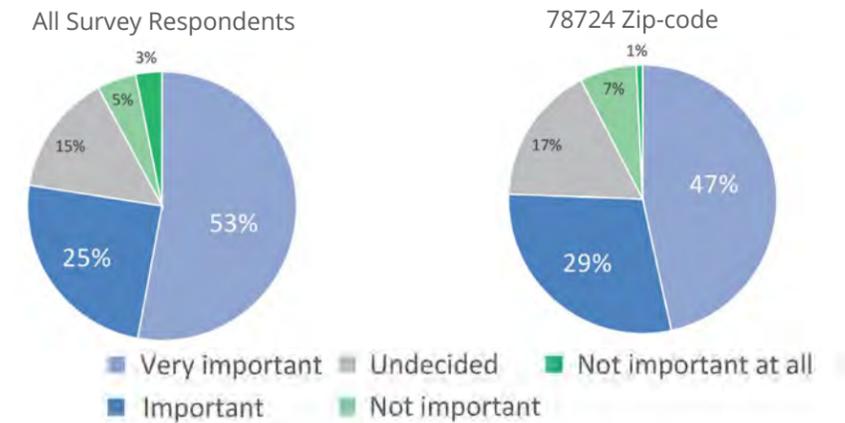
FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3A



FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3B



Public opinion on importance of maintaining current lake levels



As to whether the public supported maintaining current lake water levels, the majority of survey respondents c

THIRD ONLINE SURVEY

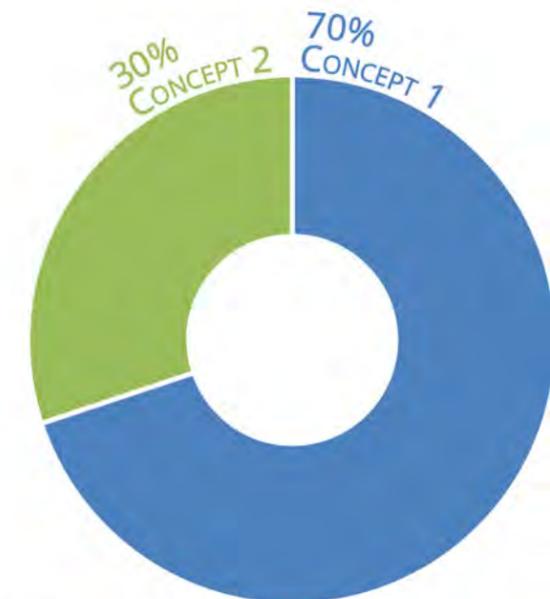
The purpose of the third survey was to present two preliminary master plan alternatives and to solicit feedback as to which one was the preferred option. Concept 1 featured a range of passive and active park uses, as well as extensive nature-based features. Concept 2 replaced much of the nature-

based features with an extensive multi-course golf zone. Four ultimate master plan configurations were presented during public meeting #3 and a follow-up opinion survey was conducted to determine which alternative was preferred. Responses to the third opinion survey indicated a strong preference for

the concept that did not include a golf course zone. These responses are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.



Which is your preferred Master Plan Concept?



1,482 RESPONDENTS

According to the results in this survey, 70% of respondents preferred Concept 1 while only 30% preferred Concept 2.

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

During the course of the planning process, four public meetings were conducted. The kickoff meeting was a “town hall” style meeting where general issues were introduced and discussed. The second public meeting was conducted to discuss alternative frameworks for the site. The purpose of the third meeting was to review the preliminary master plan and background recommendations,

while the fourth presented the final master plan. The purpose of the final two meetings was to confirm the recommendations contained in the Final Master Plan. Summaries of the respective public meetings were developed and made available on the project website.

KEY AGENDA ITEMS

Public Meeting #1 - Introduction to the public and overview of the opportunities and constraints of the site. Several exercises were organized where the public had the opportunity to provide feedback on the process.

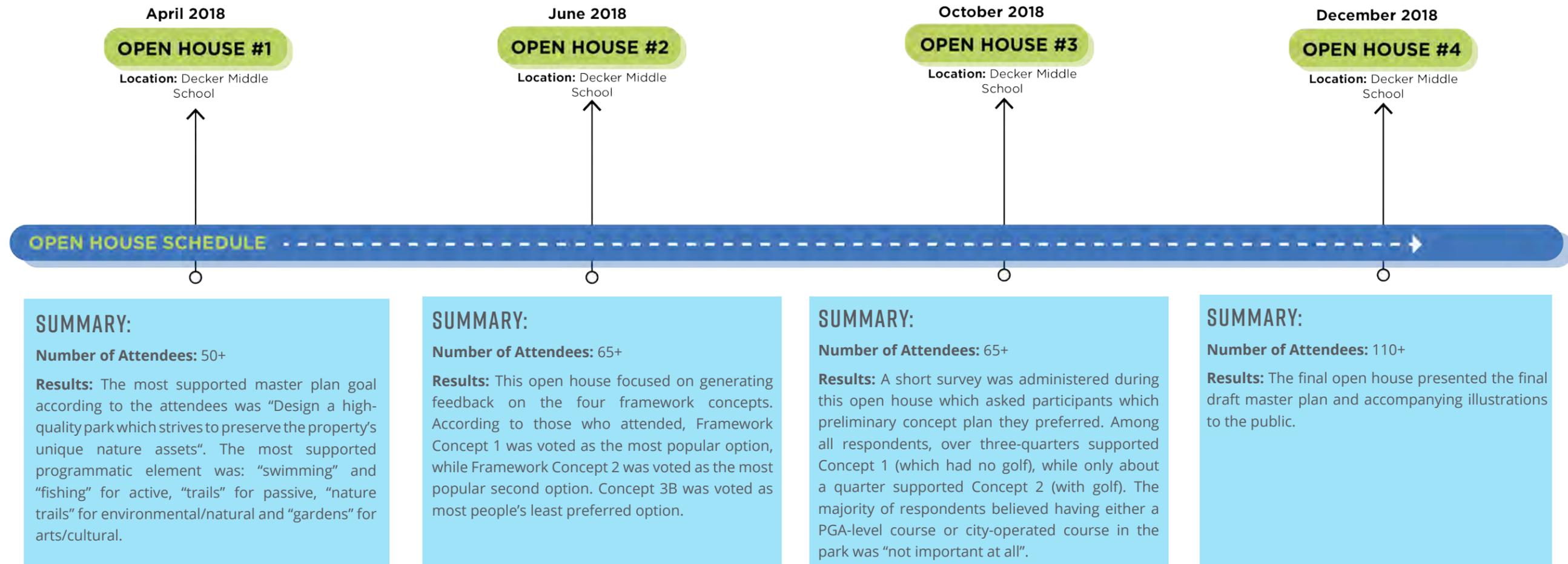
Public Meeting #2 - The framework concepts were presented and attendees were asked to provide feedback about their preferences.

Public Meeting #3 - The preliminary master plan was presented to the public.

Public Meeting #4 - The final master plan was presented to the public.



In all four public meetings, sufficient staffing was available to engage the public in dialogue and interaction.



OVERALL ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Public engagement was a critical step in this planning process, and contributed significantly to the quality and success of the master plan. The project website was the first step in ensuring that project information and data was easily accessible to the public. The TAG meetings ensured that the planning process was moving in a positive direction. The online surveys were meant to include and involve the public throughout the planning process. The public open

houses and meetings with elected officials also helped guide the process. Thanks to the diverse public engagement strategy utilized throughout the planning process, the Final Master Plan closely reflects public sentiment and interests. The eight meetings, over 300 attendees and over 5000 survey responses generated input which helped guide, inform and ultimately shape the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan.



Throughout the planning process, a diverse public engagement strategy was employed which aided in the creation of a plan that coincided with the public's stated interests. This helped to strengthen the City's long-term support for plan implementation.



One-on-one staff interaction was a hallmark of the public open houses and helped facilitate community feedback.



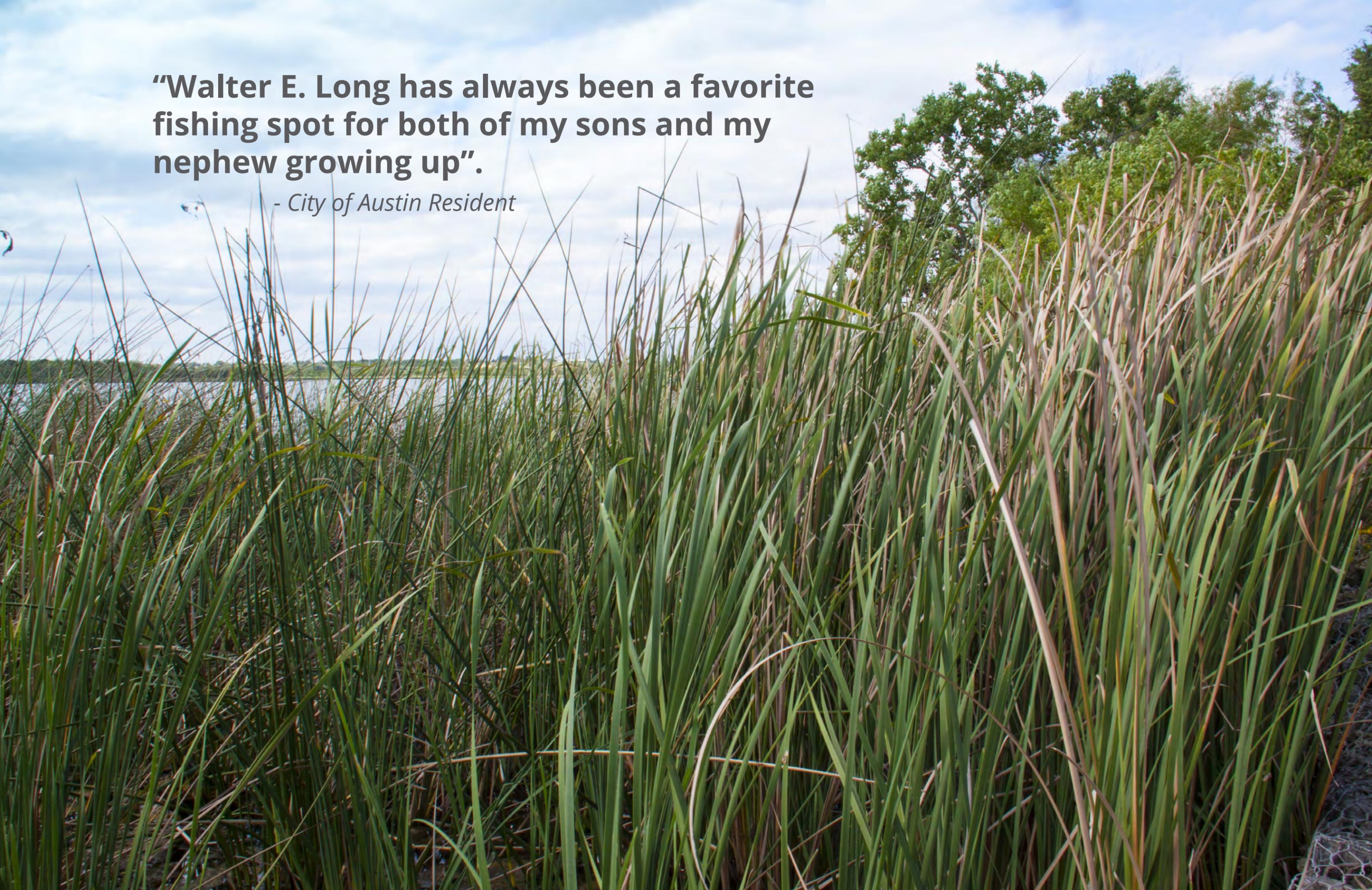
The first few open houses utilized a formal presentation format followed by more personal, one-on-one interaction with staff.



Interactive exercises with the TAG helped to ensure that the process was headed in a productive direction.

“Walter E. Long has always been a favorite fishing spot for both of my sons and my nephew growing up”.

- City of Austin Resident





CHAPTER 3: VISION, PROGRAMMING AND FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

The rich natural resources found within Walter E. Long Park present countless opportunities and challenges to this master plan process.

RODEO AUSTIN



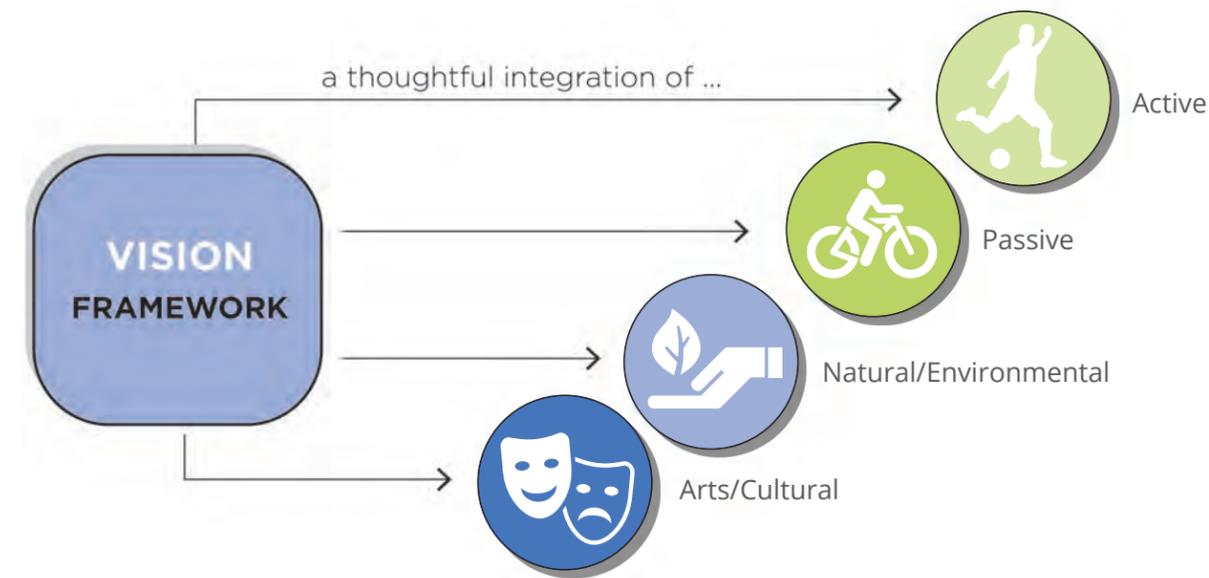
THANK YOU
\$1.5 MILLION
AWARDED TO
TEXAS YOUTH



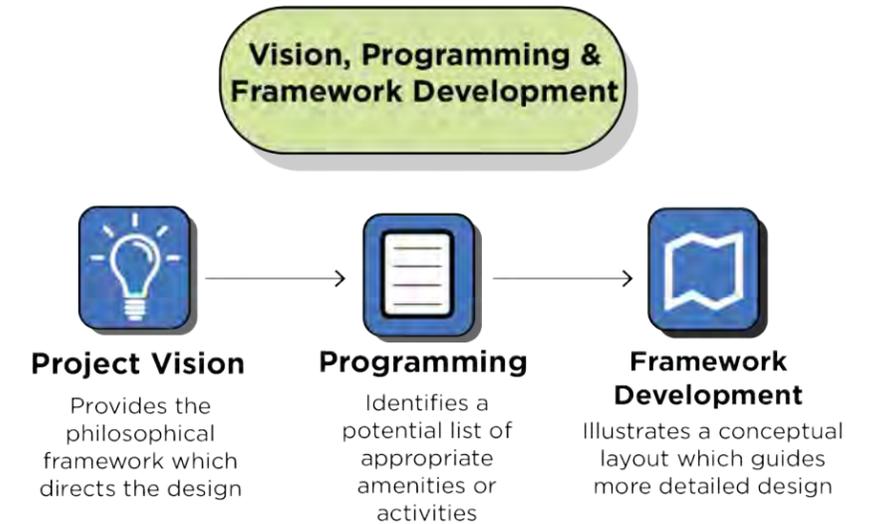
VISION & PROGRAMMING INTRODUCTION AND IDENTIFYING RECREATIONAL NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

The vision and programming phases were critical to the success of the overall planning process. In this phase, the project began to take form through the establishment of a planning vision, frameworks concepts, and the development of a program matrix. Input received from the public engagement phase directly informed this phase by providing design direction and identifying recreation needs and opportunities.

The vision for the project was also informed by the analysis of the overall park site and by exploring how different user groups would or could utilize the park. Using this vision, a subsequent program matrix, guided by the overall vision, was developed to explore the range of recreation opportunities throughout the park and to generate additional public input on specific recreation preferences.



Walter E. Long Lake presents countless fishing, recreational and leisure opportunities for park visitors.



The first step in developing an overall vision framework involved categorizing potential park elements into active, passive, natural and cultural components. Active recreation typically includes outdoor activities (e.g., organized sports, playground activities, the use of motorized vehicles) that require extensive facilities or that have a considerable environmental impact on the recreational site. Passive recreation involves outdoor recreational activities (e.g., nature observation, hiking, and kayaking) that require a minimum level of facilities or development and that have minimal environmental impact on the recreational site.

Natural/environmental recreation usually provide a more hands-on and educational interaction with the natural environment and also provide opportunities to restore and improve upon existing natural systems. Arts and cultural elements serve to create opportunities for the community to take an ownership in the park. Local art, food, history, and cultural opportunities are some of the potential features found within this category. Developing a vision which captured the proper balance of these programmatic elements, while at the same time effectively responding to the wants and needs of the community and city at large, was critical for the success of the master plan.

PLANNING VISION

“WALTER E. LONG PARK STRIVES TO BE ONE OF THE AUSTIN’S PREMIERE METROPOLITAN PARKS SERVING BOTH LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE GREATER REGION. THE PARK EMBODIES ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND AND SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES AND INCLUDES AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM OF ACTIVE, PASSIVE, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RECREATIONAL USES.”

PROTOTYPE PARKS

Walter E. Long Park
Park Prototype Long List
2/22/18

Note: See Metric Definitions table for explanations of each category

Precedent	Location	Key Components	Land Acreage	Distance from CBD	Programming	Density	Demographics	Typology	Metro / Context
Walter E. Long Park	Austin, TX	Lake, nature preserve, expo center, and picnic area	1,200	9 miles					
Shelby Farms	Memphis, TN	Trails, lakes, amphitheatre, destination playground, events center, dog park, laser tag center, stables, adventure sports area, disc golf course	4,500	11 miles	X	X	X	X	X
Deer Lake Park	Burnaby, Canada	Lake, scenic walking trails, art gallery, arts center, museum, restaurant, "festival lawn", boat dock, playground	500	7 miles from Vancouver		X	X	X	X
White Rock Lake	Dallas, TX	White Rock Lake, hiking and biking trails, blackland prairie, picnic areas, event spaces, adjacent to the Dallas arboretum	2,200	5 miles		X	X	X	X
Eagle Creek Park	Indianapolis, IN	Reservoir, marina, beach, hiking & biking trails, wildlife-discovery centers, zip lines, golf club	5,300	5 miles	X	X		X	
Fairmount Park	Philadelphia, PA	River, athletic fields, gardens, premier performance venue, playgrounds, arts centers, museums, equestrian center	2,100	3 miles	X	X		X	
Memorial Park	Houston, TX	Arboretum, nature center, running trails, golf course, athletic facilities, picnic area, Buffalo Bayou	1,500	4 miles	X	X			X
Belle Isle	Detroit, MI	Aquarium, Conservatory, Zoo, the Detroit Boat Club, Fountain, Great Lakes Museum, a municipal golf course, small swimming beach, monuments, casino, athletic fields, trails	1,000	3 miles	X		X	X	
Van Cortland Park	Bronx, NY	Lake, golf course, nature center, museums, stadium, athletics fields, running trails, stadium, pool, stables	1,100	2 miles from Manhattan / 8 miles from Midtown	X		X	X	
Brackenridge Park	San Antonio, TX	Historic sites, hiking trails, golf course, zoo, botanical garden, theater, museum, athletic fields, donkey barn	300	2 miles	X		X		X
Anderson Lake County Park	Morgan Hill, CA	Multiple use trails, Jackson Ranch historic park site, additional park areas, reservoir	3,000	17.5 miles (San Jose) / 3 miles (Morgan Hill)		X	X	X	
Papago Park	Phoenix, AZ	Desert trails, zoo, botanical garden, sports facilities, two golf courses, museum, heritage center	1,200	6 miles from Phoenix / 1 mile from Tempe / 2.5 miles from Scottsdale		X	X	X	
Cherry Creek State Park	Denver, CO	Campgrounds, amphitheater, picnic area, marina, shooting ranges, stables, beach, trails, reservoir, dog off leash area; adjacent golf course	5,100	9 miles from Denver / 1 mile from Centennial course		X		X	X
Assiniboine Park	Winnipeg, Canada	Zoo, conservatory, outdoor theatre, play equipment, river, trails, adjacent golf course	1,100	3.25 miles	X	X			
Great Park	Orange County, CA	Hot air balloon ride, sports complex, arts complex, ice facility	1,300	N/A	X	X			

Metric Definition

Programming	Denotes parks with a similar mix of highly-programmed components (e.g., the Travis County Exposition Center) and lower-intensity space (e.g., the Decker Tallgrass Prairie Preserve).
Typology	Denotes parks with similar natural features to Long Park such as major bodies of water and grassland areas.
Density	Denotes parks with surrounding neighborhoods that are similarly composed of lower-density single family homes.
Demographics	Denotes parks with surrounding communities that are similarly middle-income and/or working class.
Metro Area	Denotes parks in or near comparable cities in terms of region, size, culture, or a combination of the three.

Summary

Key metrics and park programming uses were compiled from a series of generally similar parks from around the United States and Canada. An extensive list of prototype parks were looked at in terms of their overall size, metro area context, types of programming. Typology similarities, such as

The presence of major bodies of water, natural grassland areas, and the overall configuration of each park were also considered.

Three parks in particular were identified as prototypes that could inform the overall development and/or management of Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. They include:

Shelby Farms, Memphis, Tennessee: located near the greater Memphis metro area, Shelby Farms is one of the largest urban parks in the United States. The park site is built on a converted prison farm facility, and is similar in overall size to the greater Walter E. Long park site. It was master planned in 2008, and an initial phase has been developed that includes boating and rowing, hiking and nature trails, nature play features, horseback riding, picnic pavilions, a great lawn for events, a radio-controlled model aircraft field, and disc golf. An architecturally compelling visitors center includes meeting rooms, a gift shop, and food vending opportunities. A boat house provides rental and boat storage opportunities. The park is operated by a conservancy.

Deer Lake Park, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada: Deer Lake Park is the cultural center for the City of Burnaby, a community of almost 250,000 located just east of Vancouver. The park is operated by the City of Burnaby, and includes as its prime focus a large festival and concert zone, multiple museums and cultural centers, and an almost 800 acre lake with a beach. A boat house provides rentals and boat storage. The park also includes extensive trails and preserved natural areas.

White Rock Lake Park, Dallas, Texas: Known as Dallas' urban oasis, White Rock Lake Park encompasses more than 2,200 acres, including the 1,015 acre lake. The park includes extensive trails, picnicking facilities, a marina, boating access, multiple public art displays, and a cultural center. Dallas' renowned arboretum also is located on the edge of lake within the park. The park is owned by the City of Dallas Parks and Recreation Department, but development of the master plan is supported by White Rock Lake Park Conservancy, which hosts annual races and other events as fundraisers in support of continued improvement to the park. A separate Friends organization focuses on nature preservation and conservation programming and fundraising.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT



ARTS & CULTURAL RECREATION



Children's Garden



Cultural Center



Garden



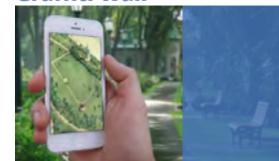
Graffiti Wall



Iconic Art Piece



Interpretive Signage



Phone Application



Sculpture Garden



Summer Camp

ENVIRONMENTAL/ NATURAL RECREATION



Nature Trails



Tower



Green Roofs



Nature Play



Sensory Garden



Star Gazing



Park Greenhouse



Nature Center



Bridge

ACTIVE RECREATION



Adventure Playground



Basketball



Mountain Bike



Rowing



Splash Pad



Swimming



Volleyball



Disc Golf



Rock Wall

PASSIVE RECREATION



Boardwalk



Dog Park



Fishing Pier



Open Lawn



Picnic Pavilion



RV Camping



Tent Camping



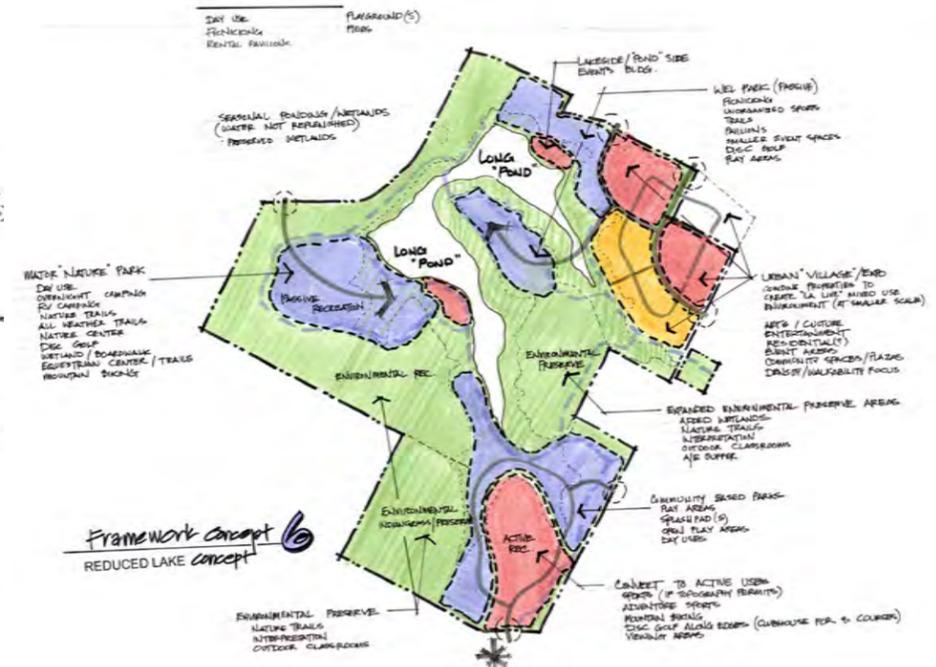
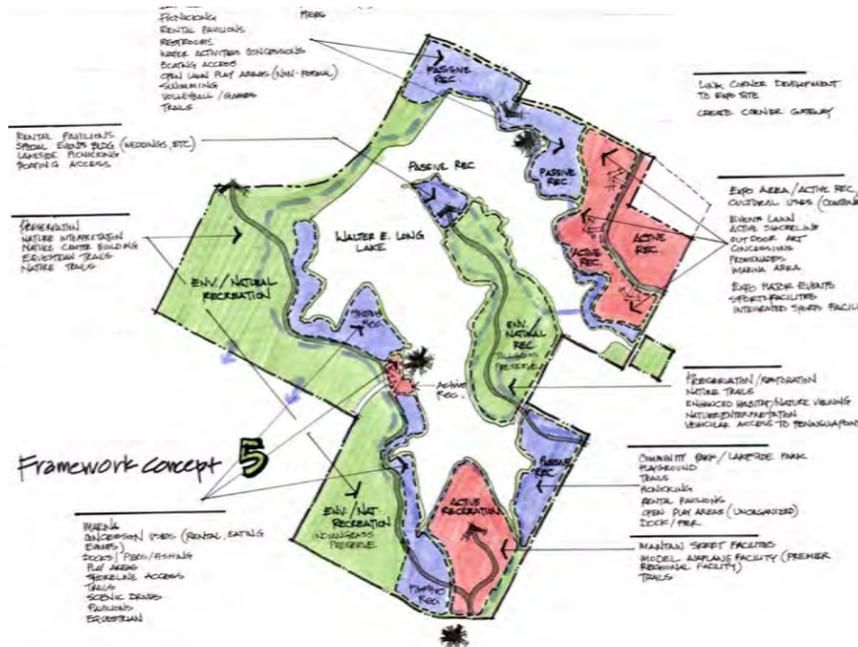
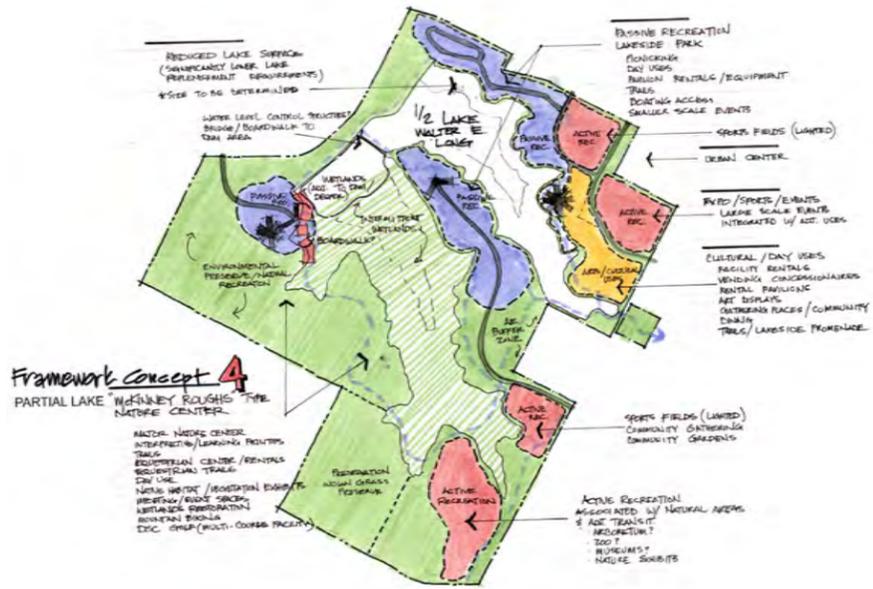
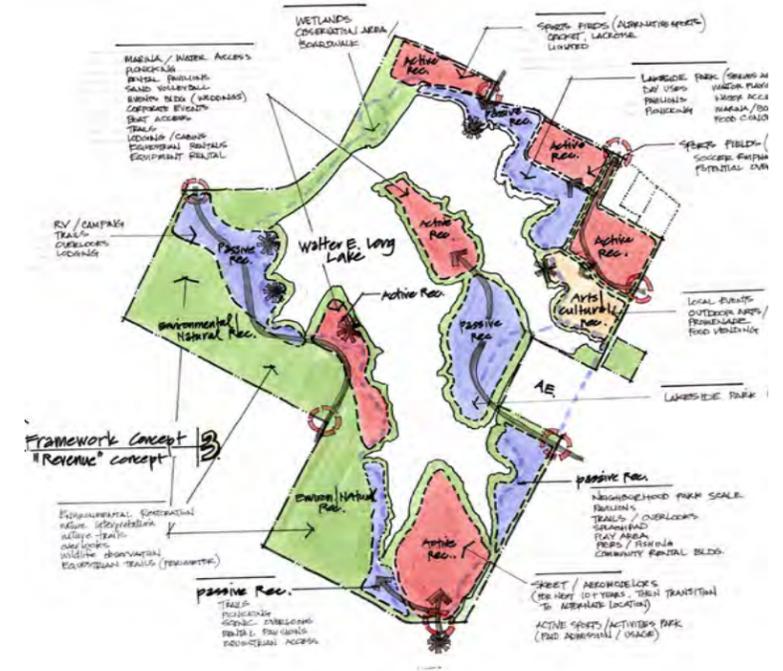
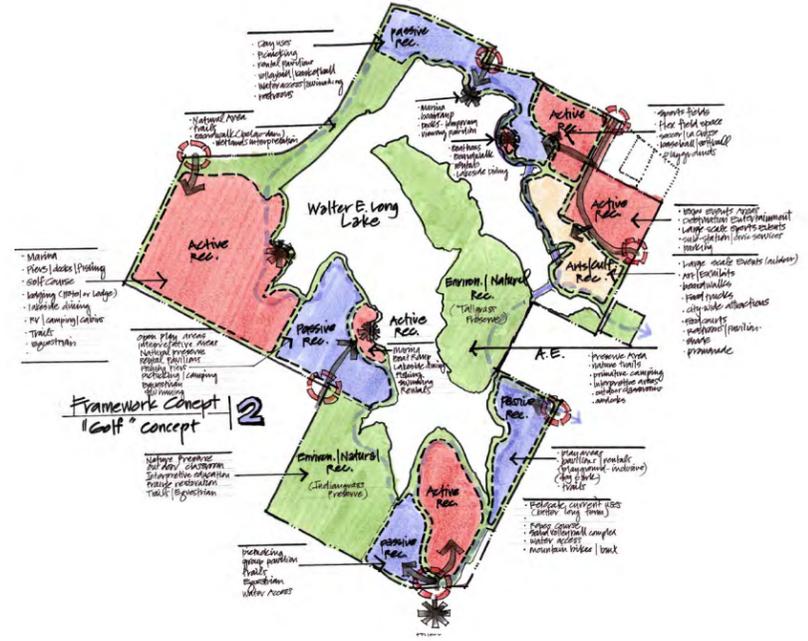
Overnight Cabin



Equestrian Trail

PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

An exploration of potential site configurations and overall design feasibility led to a series of six preliminary Framework Concepts. These preliminary site arrangements were vetted by City staff and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), and served to guide subsequent framework layouts.

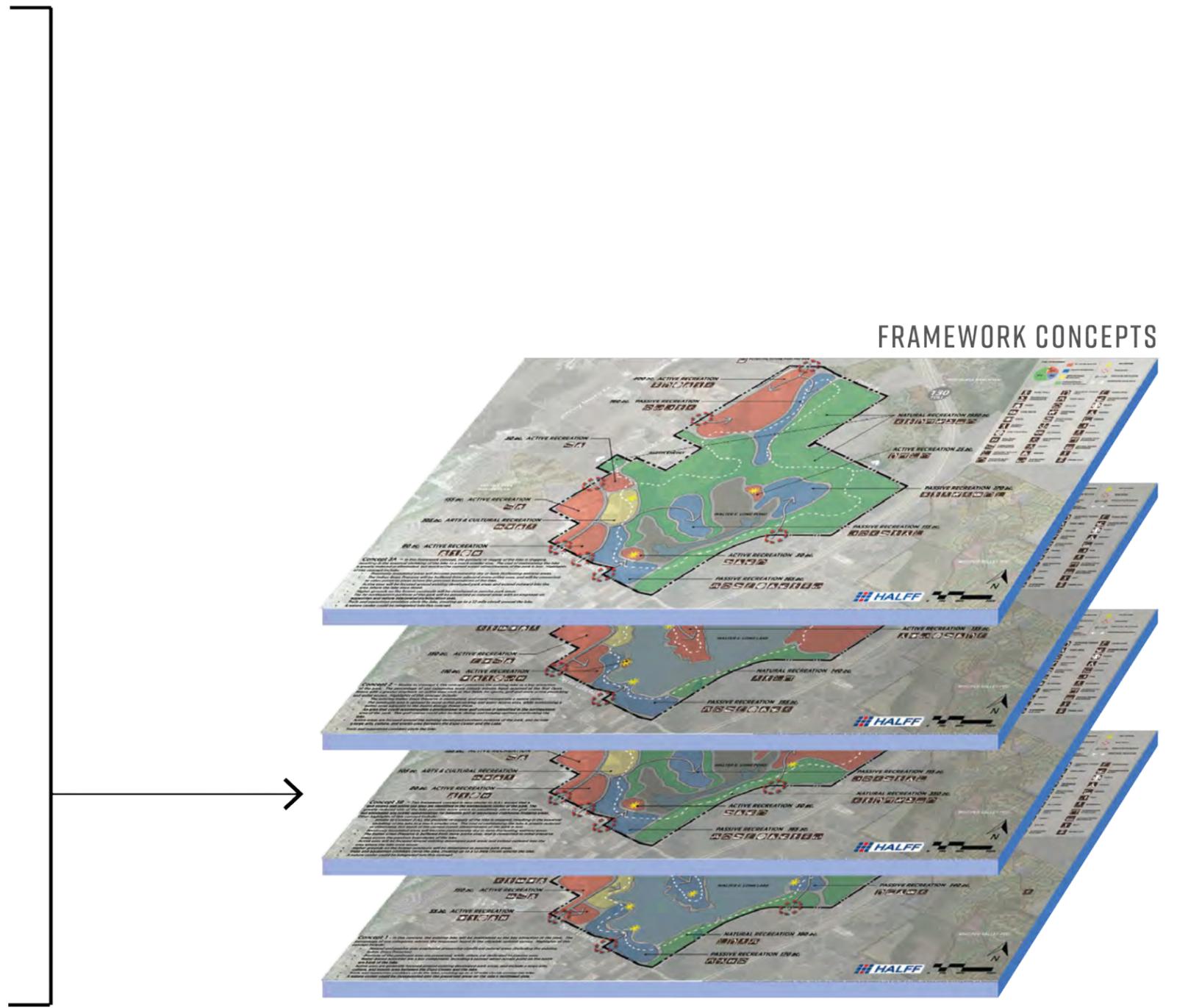
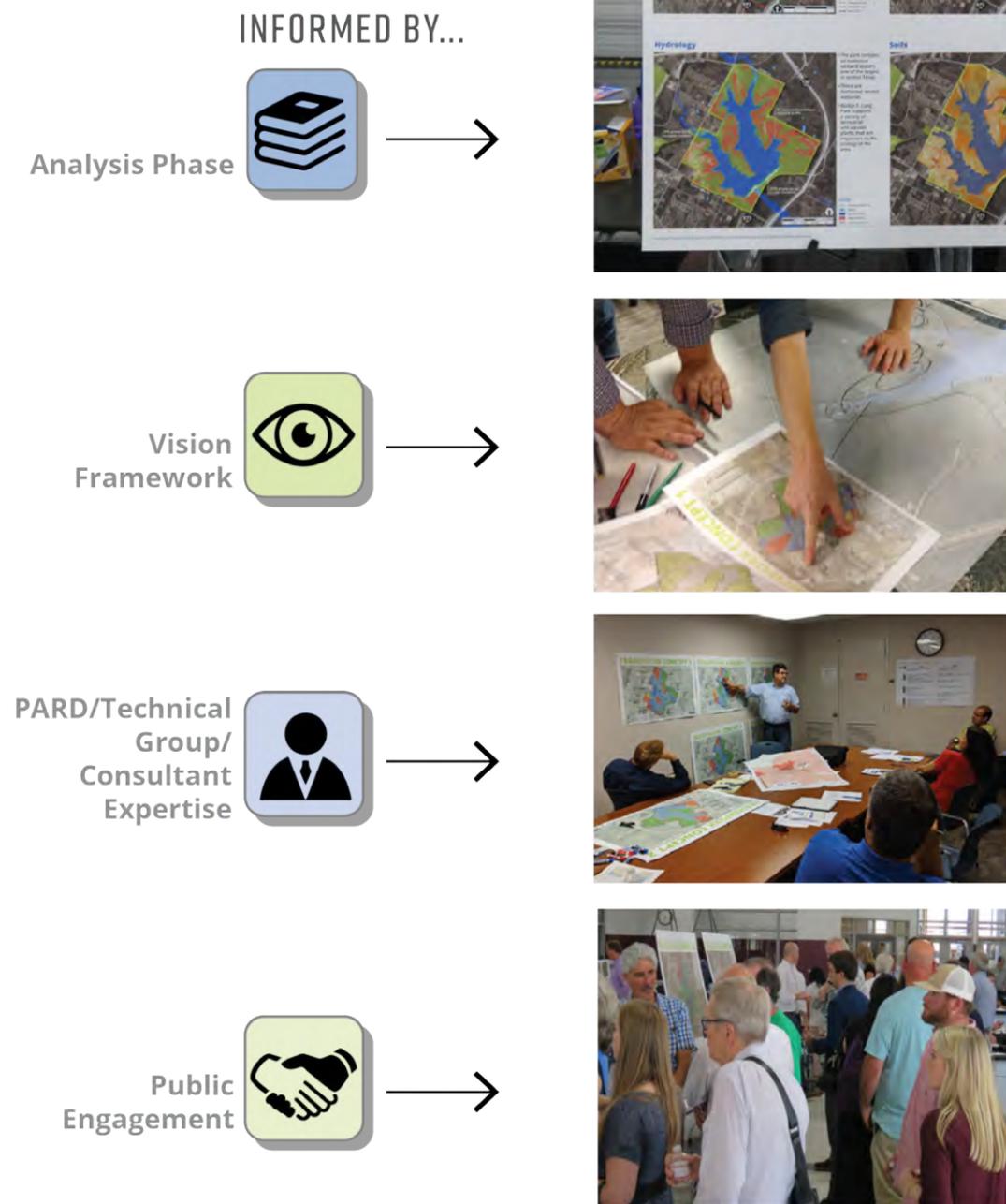


FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS

From the six preliminary concepts, a series of four final framework concepts were created and presented to the public for further feedback. The four final framework concepts represent the culmination of substantial amounts of

research, analysis, early public input and technical programmatic evaluations. Each give direction and form to the four unique future scenarios for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Their purpose is to clearly communicate to the public

various potential options for moving forward. These final framework concepts are further explored on the next four pages.



CENTRAL ISSUES

Key issues that were considered as the framework alternatives and subsequent preliminary master plan concepts were developed included:

- 1. Whether to incorporate golf as a component of the overall long-range master plan for the park** – Several golf course proposals in a variety of locations around the park have been put forth over the last few decades. Ultimately, none of those came to fruition for a variety of reasons. A recent proposal received by the City of Austin suggested incorporating a Professional Golf Association (PGA) multi-course golf complex on 700+ acres in the northeast corner of the Walter E. Long Park site. That suggested course and facility layout was included as an option in both the framework and preliminary master planning alternatives, so as to provide an opportunity for citizen input and feedback.
- 2. Future lake water levels at Walter E. Long Lake** – Early in the master planning process, uncertainty existed as to whether water levels in the lake would be maintained in the future. Given the relatively small rainfall

watershed that supplies the lake, supplemental water is periodically supplied from the Colorado River by Austin Energy (AE). Lake water has been used as part of the energy generation systems operated by AE at their plant adjacent to the lake. As AE's energy generation systems at the lake transition to other methods that do not need the same amount of water, consideration was given to a possible future where the lake levels might be lower than current levels. Early framework concepts showed a reduced lake condition as a potential alternative to consider how to configure the park if it were to occur. Near the end of the framework concept step, AE confirmed that future energy generation would still need lake water, and as a result lake levels would remain consistent.

- 3. Size of the overall park area** – As noted earlier, the overall size of Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park makes it by far the largest park in Austin's parks system. At over 3,600 acres (including the lake), the park could accommodate more than 12 Zilker Parks. This sheer size, as well as the separation of the park into different zones by the lake, is a key design consideration, both in terms of access, but also in terms of connecting areas together and in phasing improvements.
- 4. Extensive programming opportunities** – The sheer size of the park also allows it to accommodate a much larger variety of uses than the traditional district or metropolitan park. This opportunity for a programming-rich park was considered from early framework concepts all the way through to the final recommended master plan.

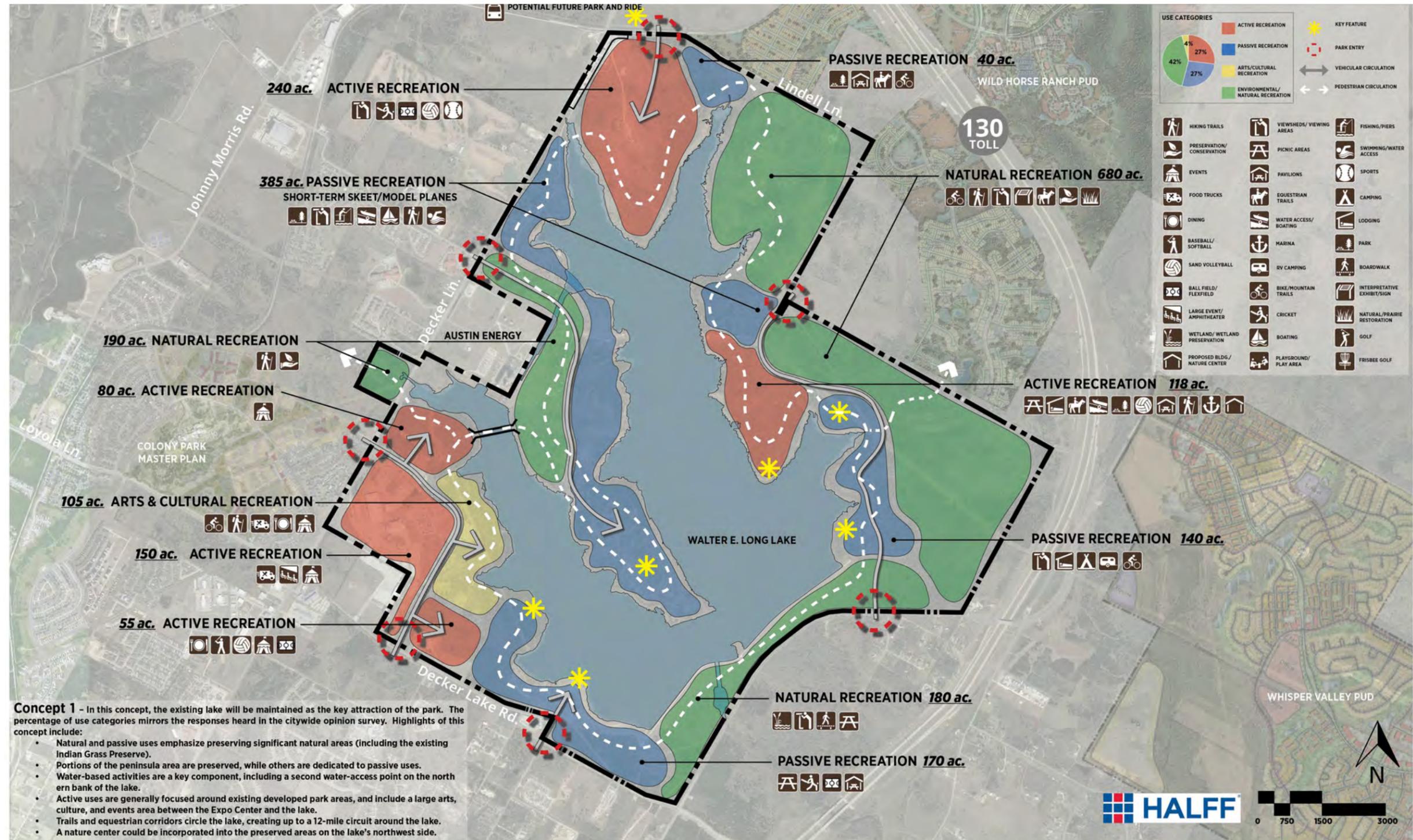


FRAMEWORK CONCEPT I - BALANCE OF USES AND RECREATION TYPES

Framework Concept 1 was developed utilizing a balanced approach in direct response to some of the overall trends observed in the public survey. In terms of land use, a significant portion of the park was designated “natural

recreation,” while “passive recreation” and “active recreation” zones composed the rest of the site. A small portion of the site near the Expo Center was designated as “arts and cultural recreation.” This approach

most closely resembled the public’s early input and was ultimately selected as the preferred option moving forward into the preliminary and final master plan phases.



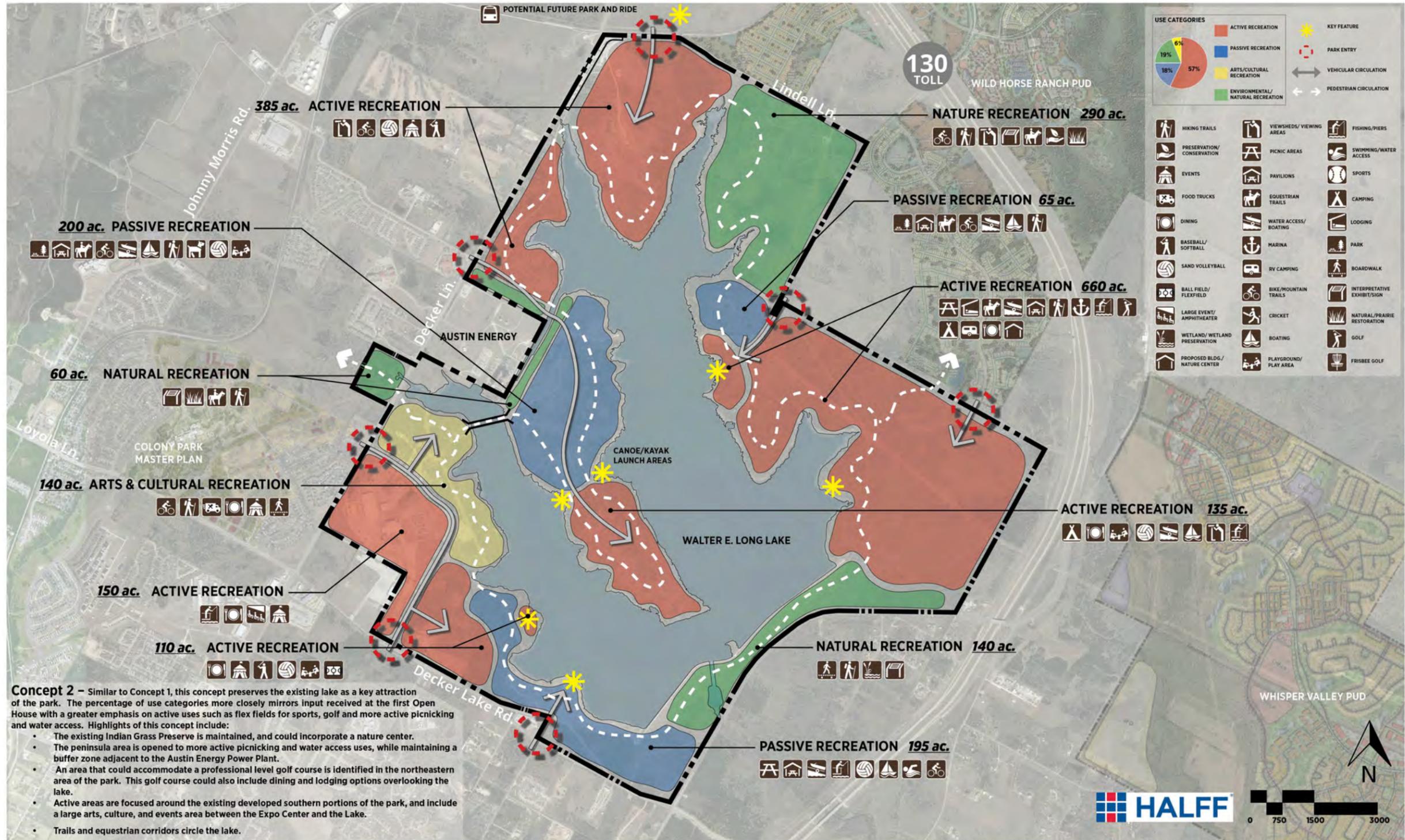
ADJACENT MASTER PLANS REPRESENTED ARE CONCEPTUAL IN NATURE, AND WILL VARY BASED ON EVOLVING APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLANS BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN AND TRAVIS COUNTY. DRAFT FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 2 - EMPHASIS ON ACTIVE RECREATION

Framework Concept 2 was developed with a much greater focus on active recreation. In this regard, program items like athletic fields, golf, equestrian activities and formal event space were given precedent over less intensive

types of development. A smaller portion of the site was dedicated to natural recreation, passive recreation and arts & cultural recreation than in Framework Concept #1. Vehicular circulation along with proposed park

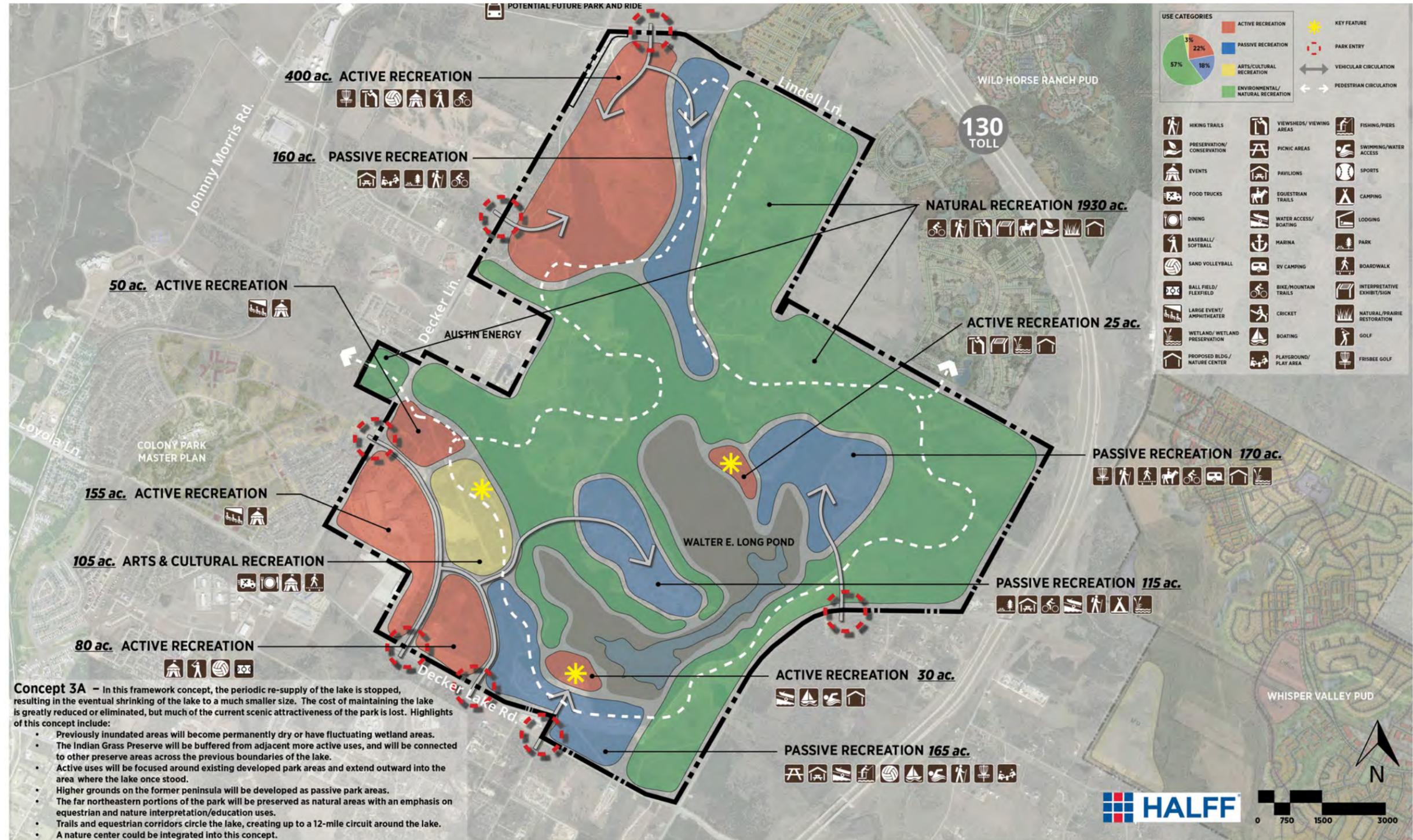
entry locations were similar to Concept 1.



ADJACENT MASTER PLANS REPRESENTED ARE CONCEPTUAL IN NATURE, AND WILL VARY BASED ON EVOLVING APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLANS BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN AND TRAVIS COUNTY

FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3A - REDUCED LAKE SIZE WITH NATURAL RECREATION EMPHASIS

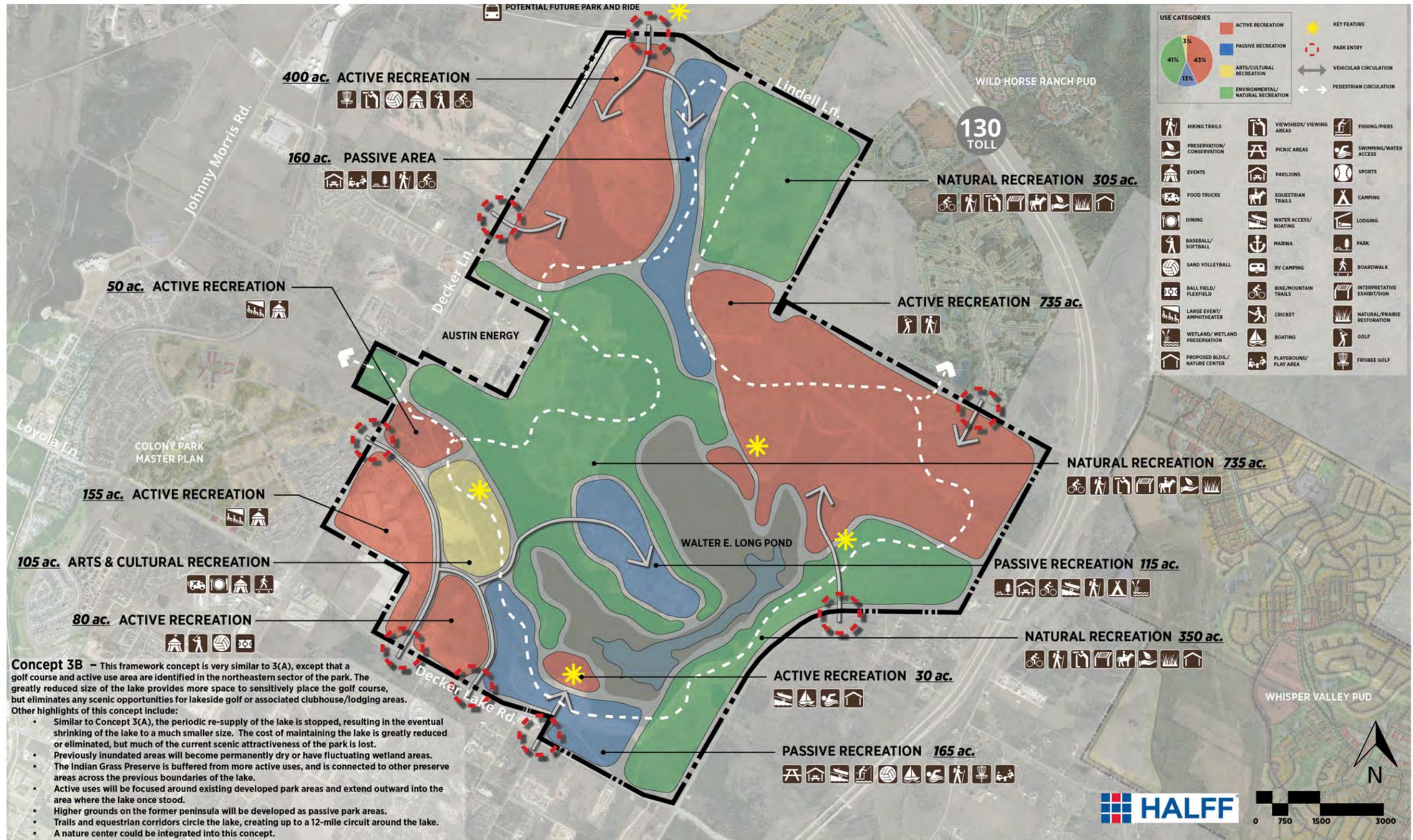
Framework Concept 3A was developed to identify a potential future where the level of Walter E. Long Lake might not be as high as it is today. In this concept, a much larger percentage of the park would be dedicated to natural uses and preservation. The area around the Expo Center would remain as an active hub, while the northern and eastern portions of the site would be dedicated primarily to natural and passive uses.



ADJACENT MASTER PLANS REPRESENTED ARE CONCEPTUAL IN NATURE, AND WILL VARY BASED ON EVOLVING APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLANS BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN AND TRAVIS COUNTY

FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3B - REDUCED LAKE SIZE WITH ACTIVE RECREATION EMPHASIS

Framework Concept 3B, similar to the previous concept, was developed acknowledging a decreased lake level moving forward. While concepts 3A and 3B are remarkably similar, this concept has a golf course in the northeast portion of the site. Additionally, the existing preserves would remain as natural open space, while the area around the Expo Center, northeastern corner and northwestern corner of the site would be designated as active areas.



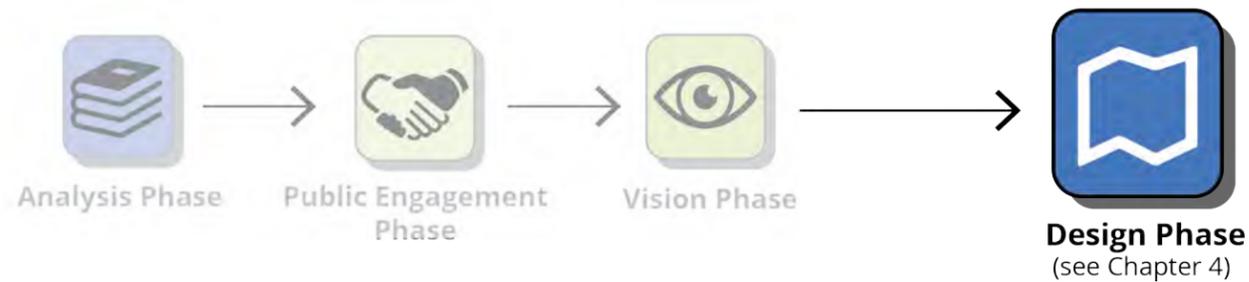
Concept 3B – This framework concept is very similar to 3(A), except that a golf course and active use area are identified in the northeastern sector of the park. The greatly reduced size of the lake provides more space to sensitively place the golf course, but eliminates any scenic opportunities for lakeside golf or associated clubhouse/lodging areas. Other highlights of this concept include:

- Similar to Concept 3(A), the periodic re-supply of the lake is stopped, resulting in the eventual shrinking of the lake to a much smaller size. The cost of maintaining the lake is greatly reduced or eliminated, but much of the current scenic attractiveness of the park is lost.
- Previously inundated areas will become permanently dry or have fluctuating wetland areas.
- The Indian Grass Preserve is buffered from more active uses, and is connected to other preserve areas across the previous boundaries of the lake.
- Active uses will be focused around existing developed park areas and extend outward into the area where the lake once stood.
- Higher grounds on the former peninsula will be developed as passive park areas.
- Trails and equestrian corridors circle the lake, creating up to a 12-mile circuit around the lake.
- A nature center could be integrated into this concept.

ADJACENT MASTER PLANS REPRESENTED ARE CONCEPTUAL IN NATURE, AND WILL VARY BASED ON EVOLVING APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLANS BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN AND TRAVIS COUNTY

PLANNING VISION

“WALTER E. LONG PARK STRIVES TO BE ONE OF AUSTIN’S PREMIERE METROPOLITAN PARKS SERVING BOTH LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE GREATER REGION. THE PARK EMBODIES ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND AND SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES AND INCLUDES AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM OF ACTIVE, PASSIVE, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RECREATIONAL USES.”



TAG REVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS

A meeting was held with the TAG to review the framework concepts for technical and operational feasibility prior to being presented to the public. The primary purpose of this key meeting was to discuss public engagement results, present the programming process and framework plans, and receive feedback from the TAG moving forward.



TAG members discuss the preliminary framework concepts and review the site analysis phase.

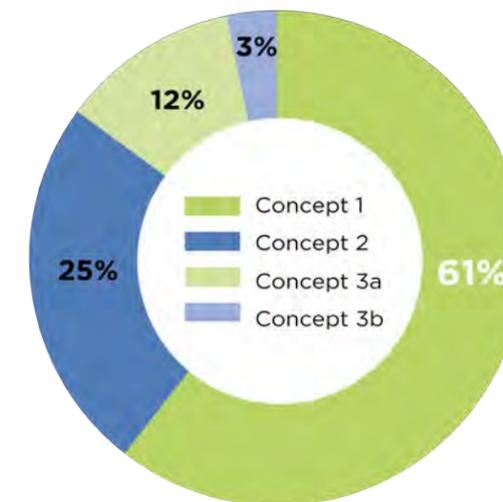


The TAG meetings were highly collaborative and interactive with the goal being to draw productive feedback from the group of technical experts.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

During the public open house, various exercises were conducted which sought additional public feedback. Additionally, an on-line survey was conducted which asked respondents key questions such as “Which is your preferred park uses arrangement plan?”. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Public Outreach*, the vast majority of respondents supported Framework Concept 1. In this concept, a large portion of the site contains natural recreation, while passive and active recreation each comprised roughly a quarter of the site respectively. Concept 1 did not include golf as a programmed element.

Which is your preferred park uses arrangement plan?



This key question provided direct feedback from the public regarding the four concepts. The public’s overwhelming support of Concept #1 is shown above. Concept 1 can be seen on page 35.

“Walter E. Long has always been a favorite fishing spot for both of my sons and my nephew growing up”.

- City of Austin Resident

