

FEBRUARY 2022

# THE KILLEEN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

*CITY OF KILLEEN, TEXAS*

# WELCOME STATEMENT

On behalf of the City of Killeen and the Recreation Services Department, it's with great excitement that we bring you a parks and open space master plan which prioritizes smaller, incremental improvements which result in transformational change over time. As many of you know our parks system is well behind in park acreage and many of our parks are outdated and in need of re-activation through well planned, strategic efforts to replace, and in many parks, build new amenities that invite park users of all types. The core of this plan is to develop and activate a "Complete Parks" system—one which serves all users.

We are adhering to the principles set out in this plan as we implement improvements in our existing park system and plan and prepare for longer-term sustainable growth. We are constantly asking ourselves: are our parks adequately maintained, are they accessible (i.e., open and enticing to all), are they safe and comfortable, do they provide for social interaction, and lastly, are they activated?

Your Recreation Services staff will continue to work in step with City Council, area partners, and residents to implement the vision, goals, and actions set out in this plan so that our community truly achieves one "Complete Parks" system.

We look forward to creating and developing the very best parks system possible and hope that this summary plan accurately captures and reflects your aspirations for the future of the Killeen parks and open space system.

Respectfully,



Joe Brown, CPRP

Executive Director of Recreation Services

City of Killeen





The Parks and Open Space Master Plan embodies a new vision for Killeen’s future—one which aspires to maximize the number of people in the park system and on the wealth creation parks, trails, and open spaces bring to the community. It explores an innovative approach to parks system planning—one founded on Strong Towns and Complete Park principles—developed with the community during the planning process.

These principles were developed out of necessity, in that there is a lot of opportunity to improve upon the provision of parks-related services moving forward. This includes improving access to unserved and underserved parts of the community and providing for a more diversified set of facilities, amenities, and activation which serve a broader cross-section of the Killeen community. To accomplish this, this plan sets a vision for first improving on the quality of conditions and incremental improvement of existing parks. It then focuses on a smarter, more prudent approach to long-term park growth and development through parkland dedication, donations, further development of other existing City non-park property, and strategic partnerships with area partners.

This Summary Plan is organized as set out below.

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# HISTORY

In 1881, the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railway platted a 70-block town on its land near the adjacent community known as Palo Alto. The town was named after the assistant general manager of the railroad, Frank P. Killeen. At this time the population was approximately 40 people.

By 1884, the population had reached 350 people. As Killeen became an important shipping location for cotton, wool, and grain from the surrounding farms, the town continued to grow.

In 1942, the Camp Hood military training base was established to meet the demands of World War II. Thousands of people moved to the area including construction workers, soldiers, and their families. The opening of Camp Hood changed the local economy. In 1949, the adoption of the City Charter established the council-manager form of government for the City.

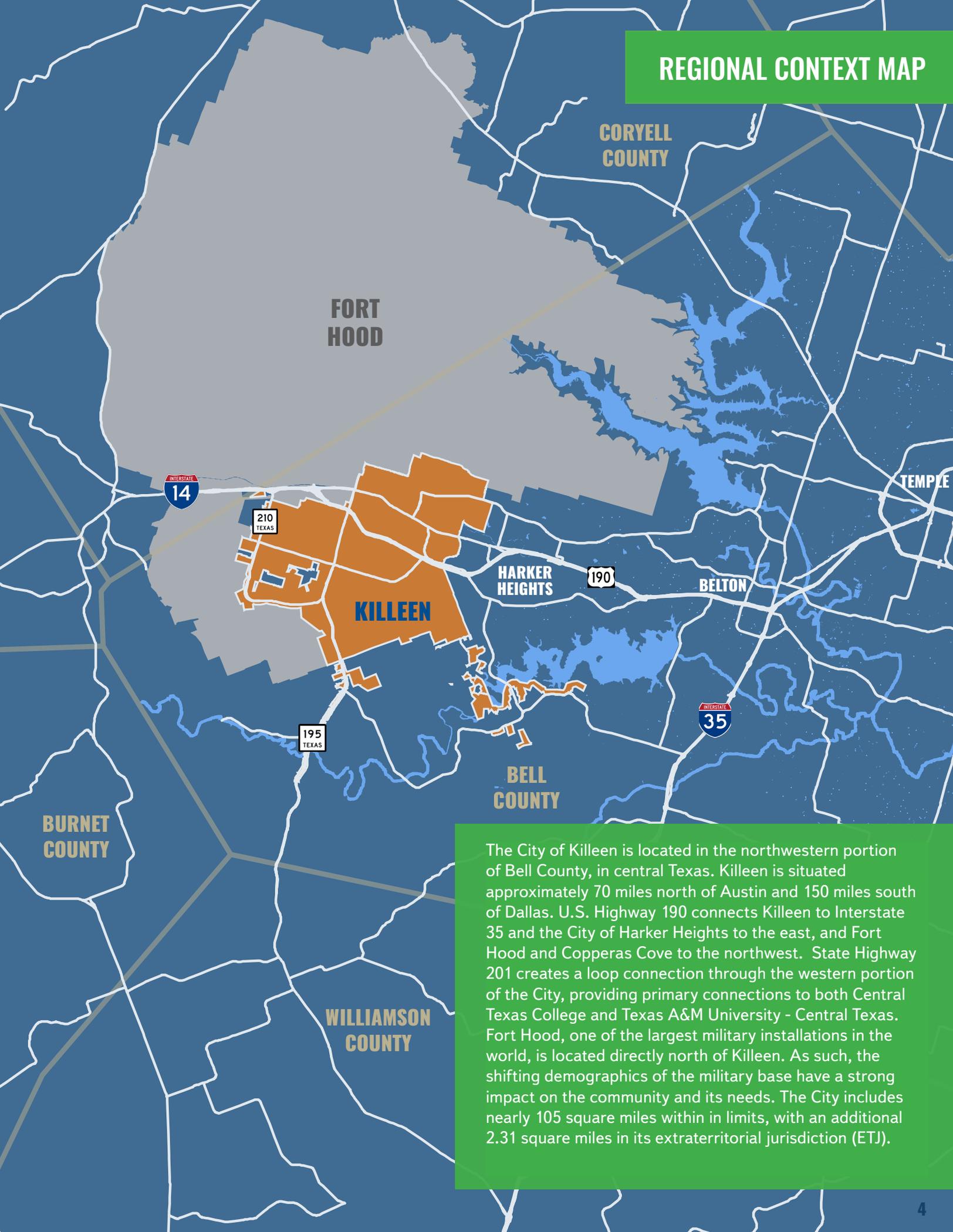
In 1970, the City developed one of its first larger community parks—Long Branch Park. Over the next 20-30 years, Killeen experienced some of its greatest growth in the park system. Many of the City’s original neighborhood parks (e.g., Fowler, Stewart, etc.) and some of the community parks (e.g., Conder) were developed concurrent with growth with good proximity to area residents.

Since 2000, however, public policy disfavored growing the park system concurrent with overall city growth. As such, many of the newer parts of the city are devoid of public park properties. During this same time, limited available resources were focused more on bigger and newer capital investments (e.g., Lions Club Park) and less on keeping up with accessible park growth and deferred maintenance. This resulted in a fragile park system.

Today, Killeen is thriving city of over 150,000 people and this plan identifies a new shift in public policy—one which refocuses efforts on maximizing community benefit and wealth creation of the parks system as an essential part of the City’s overall “civic” infrastructure.



## REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP

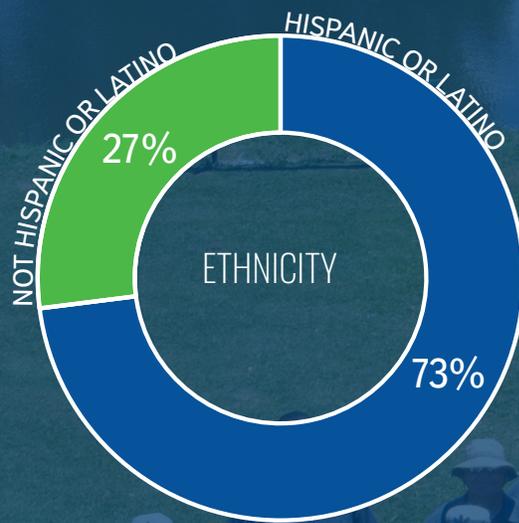
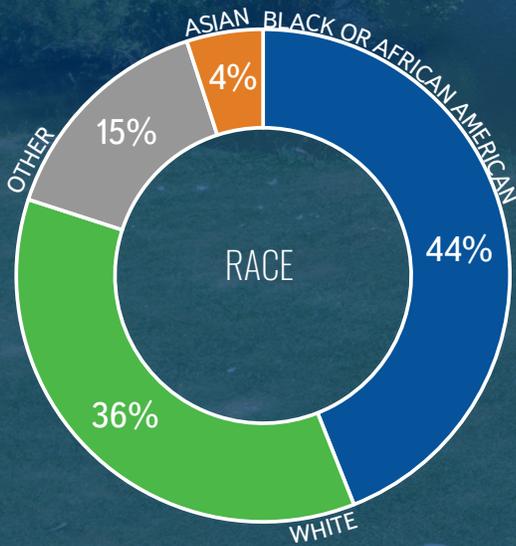


The City of Killeen is located in the northwestern portion of Bell County, in central Texas. Killeen is situated approximately 70 miles north of Austin and 150 miles south of Dallas. U.S. Highway 190 connects Killeen to Interstate 35 and the City of Harker Heights to the east, and Fort Hood and Copperas Cove to the northwest. State Highway 201 creates a loop connection through the western portion of the City, providing primary connections to both Central Texas College and Texas A&M University - Central Texas. Fort Hood, one of the largest military installations in the world, is located directly north of Killeen. As such, the shifting demographics of the military base have a strong impact on the community and its needs. The City includes nearly 105 square miles within its limits, with an additional 2.31 square miles in its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

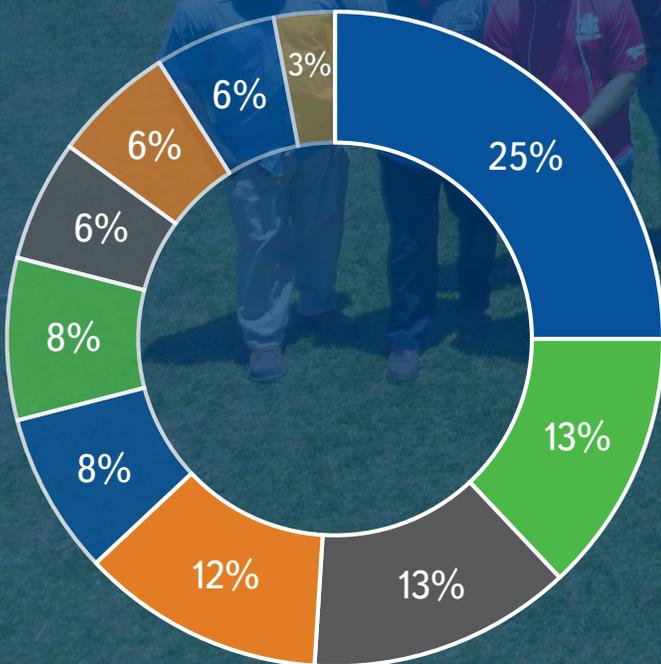
# KILLEEN DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

This planning process analyzed the latest demographic trends of the City of Killeen. These demographics were used to set a baseline for the existing conditions, as well as inform the various parks assessments that are outlined on page 17. Population projections were extrapolated directly from the City’s concurrently-developed comprehensive plan.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY PROFILE

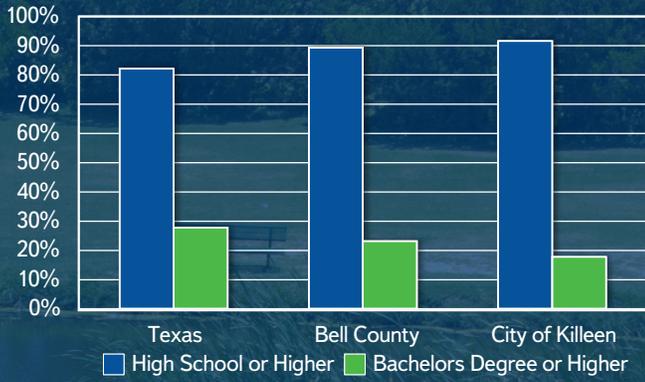


## OCCUPATION

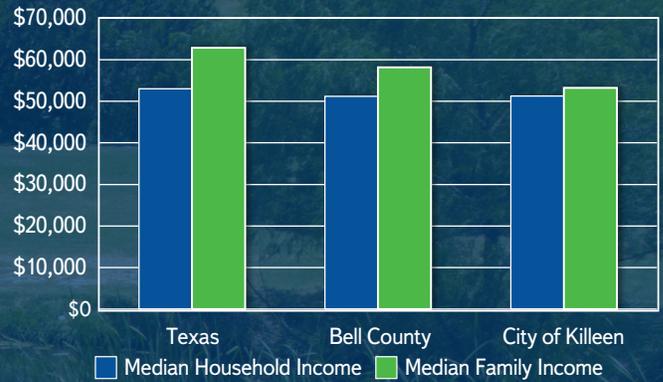


- Educational, health care, social services
- Construction
- Public administration
- Professional, scientific, management services
- Retail trade
- Other services, except public administration
- Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
- Finance and insurance, real estate
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, food services
- Manufacturing

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



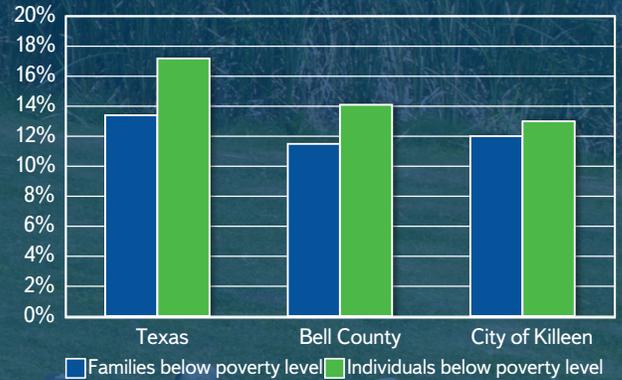
## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



## POVERTY LEVEL



## HISTORICAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION



	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Historical Population	35,500	42,296	63,525	86,911	127,921				
Projected Population					127,921	149,998	173,431	198,776	225,094

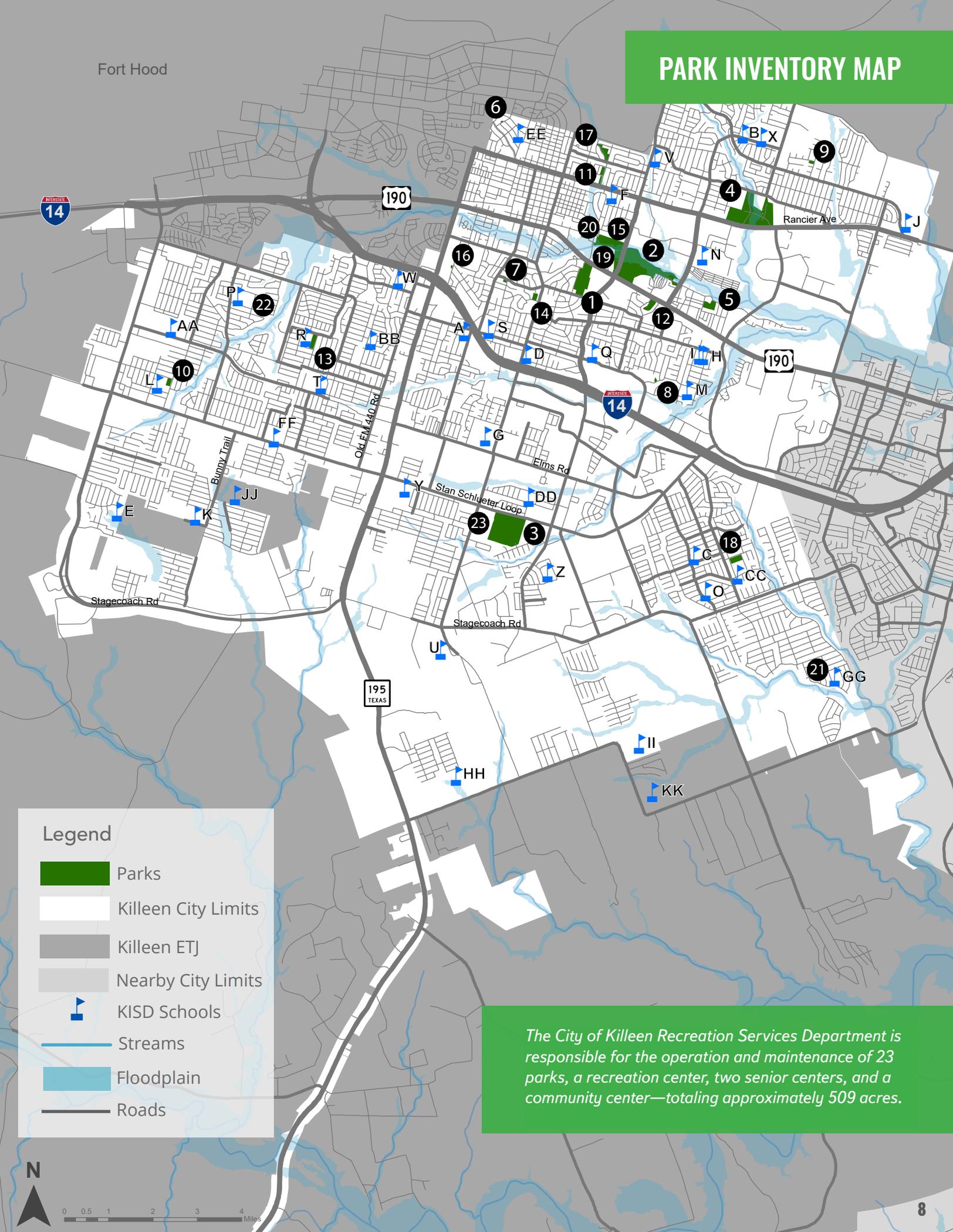
# CITY OF KILLEEN EXISTING PARKS SYSTEM

Killeen Parks and Amenities Inventory Table

Park #	Park Name	Athletic Fields <sup>1</sup>	Playscapes	Sport Courts <sup>2</sup>	Aquatics <sup>3</sup>	Walking Paths (Miles)	Open Play Areas	# of Parking Spots	Pavilions	BBQ Grills	Picnic Units	Benches	Drinking Fountains	Dog Park	Disc Golf Course	Gazebo	ADA Parking	Skatepark	Address	Acreage
<b>Community Parks</b>																				
1	Conder Park	1	1	2	0	1.5	1	120	2	4	11	13	2	0	1	0	18	1	810 Conder Street	31.4
2	Killeen Community Center	9	0	1	0	1.1	1	492	0	0	5	2	2	0	0	1	25	0	2201 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd.	29.1
3	Lions Club Park	14	2	2	1	1.3	1	166	3	0	0	24	5	0	0	0	39	0	1600 E. Stan Schlueter Lp.	67.8
4	Long Branch Park	0	3	6	2	.25	6	229	2	5	0	22	0	0	0	0	16	1	1101 Branch Dr.	78.7
	<b>Total Community Parks</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>207.0</b>
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>																				
5	AA Lane Park	1	1	2	0	0	1	50	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	400 48th Street	7.0
6	Camacho Park	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1706 Walton Walker Dr.	0.2
7	Fowler Park	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100 W. Fowler Street	0.9
8	Fox Creek Park	0	1	.5	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1909 Grey Fox Trail	0.9
9	Hunt Park	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2301 Hunt Drive	1.1
10	Iduma Park	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4400 Foster Lane	2.4
11	Lions Neighborhood Park	0	1	2	0	.25	1	11	1	0	8	7	0	0	0	0	4	0	1307 Culp Ave.	4.3
12	Marlboro Park	0	2	1	0	0	2	7	1	0	8	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	2902 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd.	6.5
13	Maxdale Park	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2500 Westwood Dr.	4.6
14	Phyllis Park	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	405 Phyllis Dr.	2.4
15	Rotary Club Children's Park	0	2	0	0	0	2	54	3	0	9	5	1	0	0	0	8	0	2201 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd.	5.6
16	Santa Rosa Park	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	901 Eva St.	0.4
17	Stewart Park	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1702 24th St.	6.4
18	Timber Ridge Park	0	1	3	0	0	1	58	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5402 White Rock Dr.	4.6
	<b>Total Neighborhood Parks</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>47.3</b>
<b>Special Use Parks</b>																				
19	Mickey's Dog Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	0	4	0	4	2	1	0	0	2	0	2201 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd.	4.7
<b>Linear Parks</b>																				
20	Andy K. Wells Trail	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	456	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	2201 E Veterans Memorial Blvd.	28.3
21	Heritage Oaks Trail	0	0	0	0	3.8	0	50	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	8001 Pyrite	123.0
22	Fort Hood Regional Trail	0	0	0	0	1.2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3450 Robinett Road	88.8
23	Lions Club Park Hike and Bike Trail	0	0	0	0	1.4	0	166	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	39	0	1600 E. Stan Schlueter Loop	9.5
	<b>Total Linear Parks</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>249.6</b>
	<b>Total Park System</b>																			<b>508.5</b>

1. Baseball, softball, football, and soccer, 2. Basketball, tennis, volleyball, and pickleball, 3. Swimming pools or splash pads.  
Source: National Recreation and Parks Association

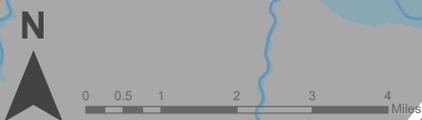
# PARK INVENTORY MAP



## Legend

- Parks
- Killeen City Limits
- Killeen ETJ
- Nearby City Limits
- KISD Schools
- Streams
- Floodplain
- Roads

*The City of Killeen Recreation Services Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of 23 parks, a recreation center, two senior centers, and a community center—totaling approximately 509 acres.*





# PLAN METHODOLOGY

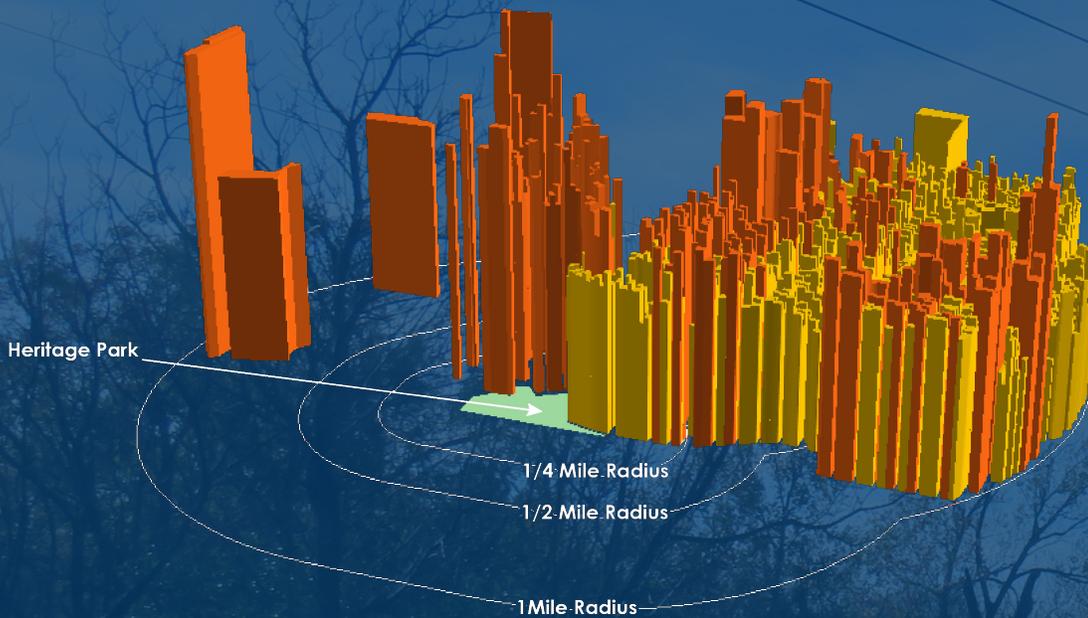
This section summarizes the process used to develop the plan including guiding principles, assessment methods, community engagement and aspirations, growth targets, and classifications and standards.



# STRONG TOWNS PRINCIPLES

While there is no actual Strong Towns approach to park growth and development, there are a few philosophical considerations which are important to parks and open space. A Strong Towns approach to overall community development requires a fundamental paradigm shift in how we approach the growth and redevelopment of our cities—and by association, our provision of parks, trails, and recreation resources.

One of the primary considerations is that parks should be an essential part of the civic infrastructure and create community wealth for the surrounding areas. As part of this plan, a fiscal assessment on a few key parks was undertaken and determined that the existing parks system did not significantly add to the overall community wealth (see example below).



Moving forward, this plan identifies a future which adheres to Strong Towns principles by focusing on both smaller, incremental improvements and a more prudent growth strategy which, when implemented, can result in substantial changes over time. The recommendations explored later in this plan were all developed using the Strong Towns paradigm shift as a foundational principle. These include:

- Understanding that parks and other civic infrastructure should create community wealth
- Acknowledging that all cities (and parks) go through life cycles of investment, disinvestment, and rejuvenation
- Prioritizing purposeful maintenance and reallocating staff time for park improvements
- Prioritizing incremental improvement and redevelopment, not just new growth
- Being strategic about new growth targets and future commitments
- Targeting fiscal sustainability in design and operations to minimize long-term liabilities
- Improving communication about how parks contribute towards the City's overall economic prosperity
- Maximizing usage through adherence to Complete Parks principles (see pg. 13)

*To learn more about Strong Towns, please visit [www.strongtowns.org](http://www.strongtowns.org).*



“

Our problem was not, and is not, a lack of growth. Our problem is 60 years of unproductive growth—growth that has buried us in financial liabilities. The American pattern of development does not create real wealth. It creates the illusion of wealth.

”

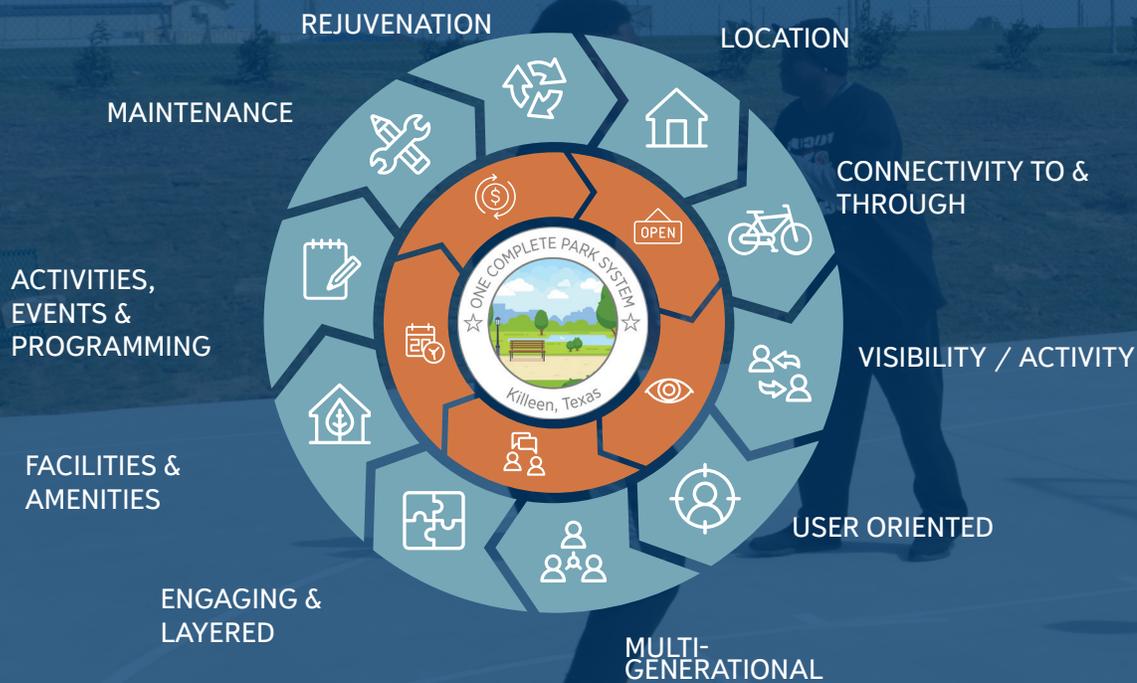
- Chuck Marohn, Founder of Strong Towns

# COMPLETE PARKS PRINCIPLES

The true measurement of success for a parks and open space system should be about maximizing the number of people who use the system. For too long parks planning has primarily focused just numbers and metrics, which are important, but do not tell the whole story. This plan proposes a new vision for Killeen—one that aspires to develop a Complete Parks system which better serves existing and future residents and visitors alike.

This Complete Parks model, developed by Halff, is comprised of five attributes which cover all aspects of a park (and park system) through its full life cycle of development, use, maintenance, and redevelopment. The five attributes include a detailed focus on accessibility, safety and comfort, social interaction, activation, and maintenance. These attributes are further delineated by 10 essential building blocks which comprise the Complete Parks model (below). The recommendations explored later in this plan were all developed using the Complete Parks model as its foundational principle.

## Complete Parks Model



# TYPES OF IMPROVEMENTS FOR COMPLETE PARKS



## ACCESSIBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

- **Crosswalks.** Painted crosswalks at all intersections which abut the parks
- **Bike Racks.** Bike racks which let park users secure their bicycles so that they can actively engage park amenities
- **Parking.** On-street parking (preferably) for neighborhood parks; off-street parking for regional, community, and linear (at trailheads) parks
- **Sidewalks & Off-site Connectivity.** Connected sidewalks and/or trail linkages to surrounding areas



## USER COMFORT & SAFETY

- **Lighting.** If parks are open to users during dark hours, lighting is recommended to keep users safe
- **Sight Visibility.** Good site visibility from the public rights-of-way; abutting properties should be designed/encouraged to have their front doors face the park to keep eyes on the park



## SOCIAL INTERACTION

- **Drinking Fountains/Bottle Refill Stations.** Because of the hot temperatures much of the year in Texas, the addition of water stations in a park is important to keep trail users and pets hydrated; these should include bottle filling stations
- **Restrooms.** Regional, community, and linear parks should include restrooms; neighborhood parks generally do not need restrooms as they typically serve immediate neighborhoods
- **Shade.** Shade should be a central focus in Texas parks including the provision of shade canopies over target amenities like playgrounds, social seating, and some sport courts like basketball; should also include a large focus on protecting existing trees or adding new shade trees throughout the park and near amenities
- **Trash/Recycling/Dog Waste Stations.** Good access to trash/recycling/dog waste stations
- **Socially-Oriented Amenities.** Purposeful design which orients the location and configuration of amenities to promote social interaction (e.g., shade playscape, mini splash pad, and centralized social group seating all oriented together so that parents can interact and socialize while watching over multiple children who are active at multiple play elements)
- **Seating and Socialization Areas.** Shaded places for seating near park amenities.



## ACTIVATED



## MAINTAINED

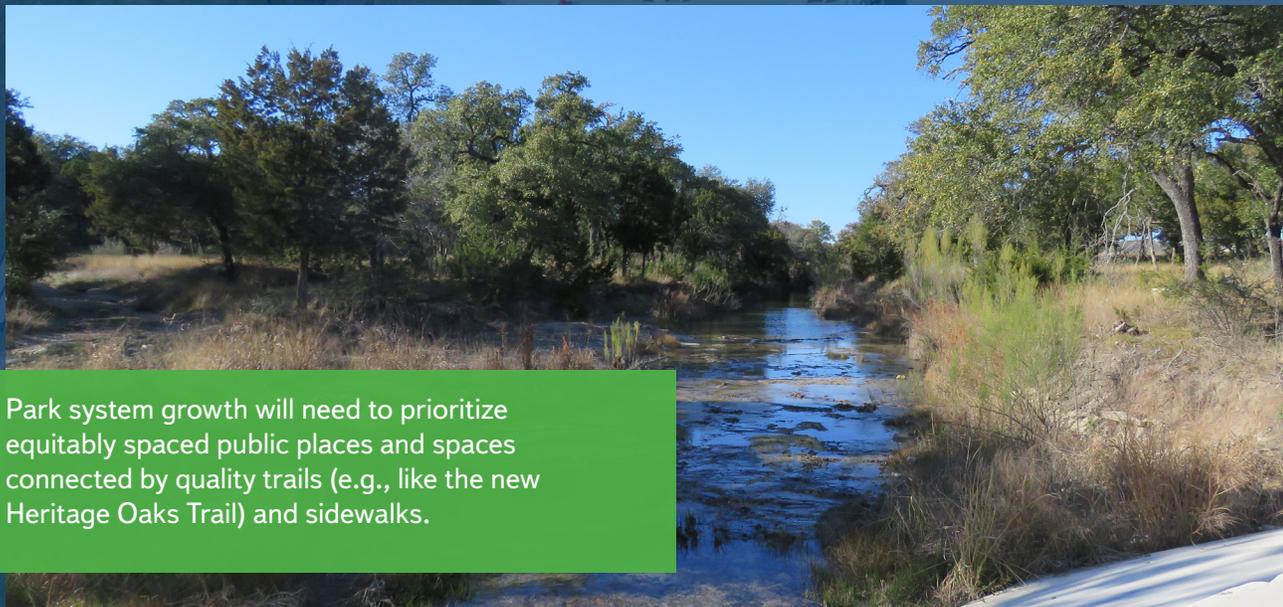
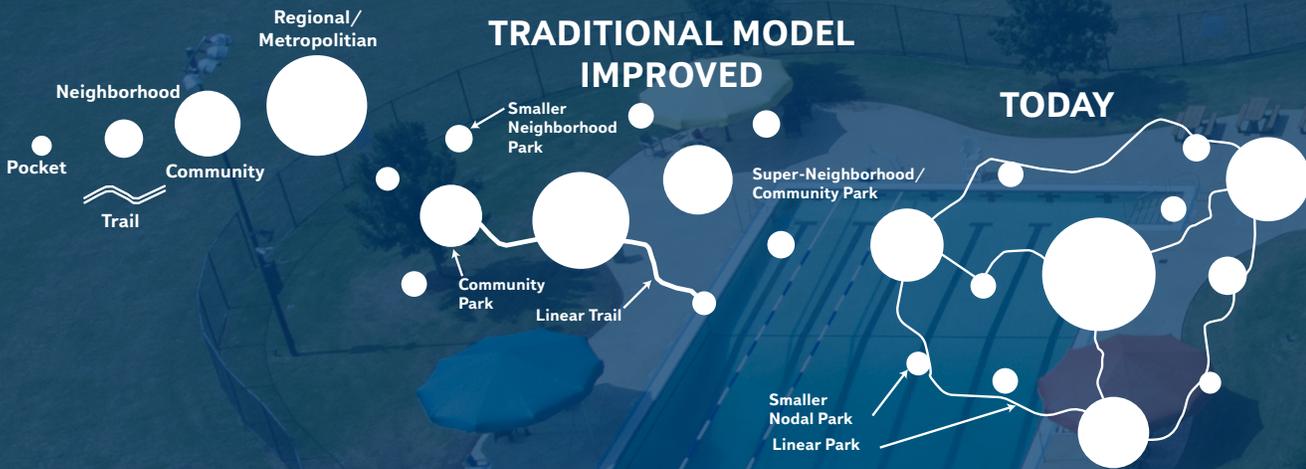
- **Multi-generation/Multi-user Design.** Design and programming considerations which maximize the largest number of users (of all age groups) at all times of the day or night
- **Loop Trails.** In-the-park ADA loop trails around the exterior of the park (with off-shoot connections to key destinations and amenities) and off-site trail and sidewalk connectivity
- **Fitness Stations.** Fitness stations along loop trails or in fitness courts; could include passive (e.g., chin up bar) or active station design
- **Programming.** Proactive consideration as to on-going City-sponsored events and programming to bring community members into the parks (e.g., in-the-park classes, food trucks, special events, etc.)

# GROWTH MODEL

In the U.S., park system growth has undergone a continuous evolution for hundreds of years. From the Boston Common in (1634) to Frederick Law Olmstead/Calvert Vaux’s Central Park in New York City (1859) to Olmstead’s “Emerald Necklace” in Boston (1878), parks were viewed as center pieces of city growth and development. Following World War II, however, the nation turned its attention towards suburban, auto-centric growth and development and interest in public parks and civic spaces waned. Focus turned to the private spaces and places in people’s back yards and in semi-public spaces of individual subdivisions. During this time, as downtowns and inner cities declined, so did many of the great existing city park systems.

Today, cities are undergoing a renaissance in growth and redevelopment, including renewed interest in public parks and civic spaces (i.e., where parks, trails, and other outdoor civic spaces became top priorities during the Covid-19 pandemic). City’s are in a position to advance a new growth model—one where parks and trails systems are viewed as an interconnected system, and a critical component, of the overall city “civic” infrastructure.

## TRADITIONAL MODEL



Park system growth will need to prioritize equitably spaced public places and spaces connected by quality trails (e.g., like the new Heritage Oaks Trail) and sidewalks.



# ASSESSMENT METHODS

After gaining an understanding of the parks and recreation system as it is today, and the historical and projected populations, a growth needs analysis was used to begin to identify the current and future needs of the community. The intent of the analysis was to develop a clearer picture of the overall system (i.e., understanding the gaps, overlaps and deficiencies) and to make targeted recommendations for the future. This plan used a five-part growth needs analysis (developed using accepted methodologies identified by the TPWD) to help determine recommendations for the future.

## Types of Assessments



### Demand Based Assessment

Uses citizen input to determine actual and/or anticipated park usage that reflect the desires of the local community. This assessment type provides a qualitative analysis of the park system from the user perspective.



### Standards Based Assessment

Uses locally developed level of service ratios to compare existing park land and recreation facilities to the projected need based upon the current and future projected population, park land and facility benchmarks.



### Resources Based Assessment

Recognizes the opportunities offered by the built environment, the natural environment, or other relationships. The City can pursue obtaining land, developing facilities, or partnering with local organizations to address recreation demands.



### Fiscal Based Assessment

Evaluates the existing community wealth that parks have on surrounding neighborhoods. This assessment evaluates a few select parks to identify the potential impacts that parks have on abutting property market values.



### Condition Assessment

Analyzes the physical condition of facilities and amenities to reach conclusions regarding the performance of the system as a whole and of individual elements within the system.





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# COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

To ensure that this Plan embodies the vision of the citizens, an extensive public engagement process was undertaken to identify the needs and desires of where the community wants to go, and equally as important, what they are willing to support during implementation. The information collected during this process created the foundation from which the goals and actions were built. This summary contains the City's public engagement process and key takeaways.

**5** 

**PARK MASTER PLAN  
WORK GROUP MEETINGS  
(FROM 8 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS)**

**2** 

**YOUTH ADVISORY  
COMMISSION  
MEETINGS**

**5** 

**FOCUS GROUPS**

**3** 

**COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

**575** 

**SURVEY RESPONDENTS  
FROM 13 ONLINE SURVEYS**

**175** 

**ATTENDEES**

**LOVE YOUR PARK DAY  
COMMUNITY EVENT**

**200** 

**ATTENDEES**

**MOVIES IN THE PARK  
COMMUNITY EVENT**



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Concern that there is not enough lighting within the parks and trails during early morning and evening hours
- Concern that majority (86%) of residents are not involved in City athletic leagues
- Concern that restrooms within the park system are not kept clean enough
- Concern that there is not enough shade at most parks
- Need for more joint-use facilities
- Need for smaller neighborhood parks located near HOA's and schools
- Need for parks to be located within safe walking or biking distances
- Need for more gathering places like benches, picnic areas, and pavilions
- Need for additional restrooms
- Desire for additional diversified facilities & amenities
- Desire for additional skateparks, sport courts & fields, and aquatic centers
- Desire for more youth programming, like arts & crafts and special events
- Desire for more free public WiFi access within the park system
- Desire for an equitable quality of park conditions similar to some of the City's greatest park system assets—Lions Club Community Park, Andy K. Wells Hike & Bike Trail, and Killeen Community Center & Ballfields

“

Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.

- Jane Jacobs

”

# GROWTH TARGETS

Level of Service (LOS) is an assessment method to determine the quantity of park facilities needed to adequately serve a given ratio of population, oftentimes expressed as a per capita ratio of acres to 1,000 residents. Analyzing the current level of service (CLOS) and identifying future target levels of service (TLOS) helps a community understand how responsive they are in meeting the needs of their existing and future citizens as the community grows over time.

As part of this plan, TLOS was reduced compared to previous plans. This reduction was purposeful as a continued means to advance Strong Towns and Complete Park principles as it relates to future park growth and development. It acknowledges that the City is significantly behind in the provision of parks and recreation resources (compared to comparison Texas communities and national systemwide averages analyzed through NRPA’s Park Metrics database). It also acknowledges that the City will not be able to retroactively reach the acreage level of service targets set out in the previous plans while still adhering to the fiscal priorities set out in this plan. As a summary, the changed level of service targets are as follows:

## Parkland Level of Service

PARK CLASSIFICATION	LEVEL OF SERVICE (AC. PER 1,000 PERSONS)		
	2005 PLAN	2017 PLAN (UNADOPTED)	2021 PLAN
Neighborhood Parks	1.0 to 2.0	1.0 to 1.5	1.0
Community Parks	5.0 to 8.0	5.0	4.0
Special Use Parks	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard
Regional Parks	N/A	5.0 to 10.0	4.0
Linear Parks/Open Spaces	No Standard	10.0 to 20.0	4.0
Greenway Trails	1 mile / 5,000 persons	No Standard	1 mile / 5,000 persons

As seen below, the City’s current inventory of parkland does not adequately serve the existing or future needs of the population. It shows that the City’s 2020 current overall acreage inventory is woefully deficient—over 500 acres or 33% deficient even factoring in the reduced targets. Once the City catches up to current TLOS benchmarks through strategic and purposeful growth expansions and partnerships, the incremental addition of needed parkland moving forward is much less.

## Parkland Needs as Growth Occurs

TARGET YEAR	EXISTING ACREAGE	CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE (AC. PER 1,000 RESIDENTS <sup>1</sup> )	TARGET LEVEL OF SERVICE (AC. PER 1,000 RESIDENTS <sup>1</sup> )	TARGET ACREAGE	SURPLUS / DEFICIT ACREAGE	PERCENT OF NEED MET (2020)
2020	254.3	1.7	5.0 ac.	764.1	509.8 ac. deficit	33%
2025	254.3	1.6	5.0 ac.	813.1	558.8 ac. deficit	31%
2030	254.3	1.5	5.0 ac.	862.1	607.8 ac. deficit	29%



28th St

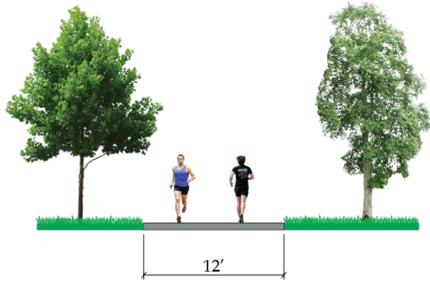
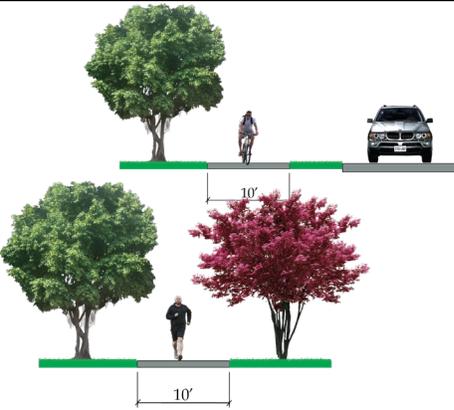


# CLASSIFICATION AND STANDARDS

Equally important to setting target levels of service (TLOS) is establishing classifications and standards for what new park and trail growth, development, and improvement looks like. This requires establishing thresholds for different types of facilities which serve different purposes and areas of the community.

Set out below are standards for four trail classifications utilized as part of this plan, but will need to be further explored in separate planning efforts (e.g., a future trails plan).

## Trail Classifications

TRAIL INTENT	TRAIL WIDTH	PREFERRED SURFACE MATERIAL	MINIMUM CORRIDOR WIDTH	POTENTIAL AMENITIES	CROSS-SECTION
<b>Greenway Trails</b>					
Multipurpose off-street pathways which provide escape from noise, traffic, and urban conflicts. Preferred location is along creeks and other natural spaces.	10' – 12' (12' preferred)	Concrete	25'	Parking, signage, lighting, water foundations, benches, trees and consideration of Complete Parks amenities.	
<b>Thoroughfare Connector Trails</b>					
Multipurpose near-street shared-use sidepaths located within the rights-of-way of thoroughfare roadways to serve to create a citywide, connected recreational trails system.	8' – 10' (10' preferred)	Concrete	15'	Trees, benches, and lighting (if not provided by thoroughfare)	
<b>Neighborhood Connector Trails</b>					
<b>Neighborhood Connector Trails</b> are located in residential areas (e.g., in drainage areas and along collector streets) providing internal linkages and connecting to other external trail types. They may also serve as neighborhood greenways.	6' – 10' (8' preferred)	Concrete	N/A	Wayfinding signage, crosswalks, lighting, etc.	
<b>In-Park Trails</b>					
In-park trails provide opportunities for walking and exercising inside of a park.	Varies	Concrete	N/A	Trees, benches, and lighting	Varies

Similarly, five park classifications have been established to identify types of park facilities to serve the Killeen community. Although the City does not currently have a regional park, one is being explored in the northwest area of the City in partnership with Ft. Hood.

## Parkland Classifications

PARK CLASSIFICATION / INTENT	SIZE	LOCATION / ACCESSIBILITY	FACILITIES/AMENITIES (COMPLETE PARKS CONSIDERATIONS)	TARGET LEVEL OF SERVICE (PER CAPITA)	TARGET SERVICE RADIUS
<p><b>Neighborhood Parks</b></p> <p>serve a single neighborhood or are central to several smaller neighborhoods</p>	3 acres	Centrally located within the neighborhood(s) prioritizing maximum walkable connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loop trail</li> <li>▪ Playscape/splash pad/social group seating</li> <li>▪ Sport court(s)/sports field</li> <li>▪ Multipurpose open space</li> <li>▪ Picnic tables or a pavilion</li> <li>▪ Trees and shaded amenities</li> <li>▪ General use lighting for targeted amenities</li> <li>▪ On-street parking or no parking</li> <li>▪ Natural areas/no grow zones</li> </ul>	1.0 acre per 1,000 residents	¼ to ½ mile (or a distance that takes a typical pedestrian roughly five to 10 minutes to walk); ½ mile is generally accepted as standard
<p><b>Community Parks</b></p> <p>provide multiple amenities and sized enough to host community/athletic events, tournaments, and other large-scale activities</p>	From 10 acres to over 50 acres	Good access to citywide thoroughfare network; prioritizing good bike/pedestrian connectivity; buffering against abutting residential uses (to offset lighting and noise)	<p>Same as neighborhood parks, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restrooms</li> <li>▪ Off-street parking</li> <li>▪ Multiple sports fields with lighting (including competitive)</li> <li>▪ Pavilions and grills</li> <li>▪ Off-street parking</li> </ul>	4.0 acres per 1,000 residents	1 to 2 miles (or a reasonable one-mile walking distance and a two-mile biking distance)
<p><b>Regional Parks</b></p> <p>are very large parks which mimic community or special use parks, but with regionally-serving destination amenities</p>	From less than 10 acres to several thousand acres	N/A	Depends on property characteristics and intended use (e.g., large regional nature park or destination sports complex), but should mimic the facilities and amenities set out for the other classification it matches	4.0 acres per 1,000 residents.	5 to 10 miles
<p><b>Linear Parks and Open Spaces</b></p>	N/A (based on use)	Good connectivity to thoroughfare connector and in-park trails; maximized access to abutting neighborhoods, schools, and other destinations	<p>Depends on property characteristics, but generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Linear greenway trails</li> <li>▪ Informal hiking and mountain biking trails</li> <li>▪ Trailhead parking, restrooms, and wayfinding</li> <li>▪ Trail lighting</li> <li>▪ Trees, benches, and shade</li> <li>▪ Natural areas/no grow zones</li> </ul> <p>Integrated neighborhood park amenities (as applicable)</p>	4.0 acres per 1,000 residents	¼ to ½ mile (or a distance that takes a typical pedestrian roughly five to 10 minutes to walk); ½ mile is generally accepted as standard
<p><b>Special Use Parks</b></p> <p>include specialized or single use amenities</p>	N/A (based on use)	Good access to citywide thoroughfare network	<p>Depends on property characteristics, but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Athletic fields or complexes</li> <li>▪ Swimming pool centers</li> <li>▪ Tennis complexes</li> <li>▪ Golf courses</li> <li>▪ Dog parks</li> </ul>	Varies with the special use(s) of the park	Varies with the special use(s) of the park.



# PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes the main recommendations of the Plan: Park Conditions, Park Improvements, Park Growth, and Operations & Maintenance. The plan recommendations are detailed in a series of technical memos to be used by Recreation Services staff and City Council for daily decision making.

## PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

### PARK CONDITIONS GOAL

Strive to develop a healthy sustainable Complete Parks system through a balance of smaller scale, incremental improvements and purposeful larger scale intensive capital investments.

#### Benchmark Targets

• Increase and maintain participation in all park and trail programming, recreational activities to meet recommended standards by 2025 and beyond.  
• Increase the number of park improvement projects undertaken by staff and volunteers.  
• Increase the number of park users and the number of park events.

### PARK IMPROVEMENTS GOAL

Strive to establish and maintain a parks and trails system where all facilities and amenities are maintained in a good condition (i.e., 4.0 or better on a park condition reassessment).

#### Benchmark Targets

• Achieve full staffed park participation for every park and trail by 2024.  
• Increase and maintain the condition of all parks and trails to achieve a moderate condition by 2024.  
• Improve the condition of at least 50% of the overall parks and trails system to achieve good condition by 2025.  
• Improve the condition of at least 75% of the overall parks and trails system to achieve park condition by 2025.  
\*Assumes the condition of all parks to good condition by 2025.

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# PARK CONDITIONS

Ensuring quality park conditions is a fundamental component of a Complete Parks system. Low quality or poor maintenance in and of itself can lead to a declining park system and continuing cycle of poor park usage. Park research has clearly shown that good maintenance is crucial to maintain public perceptions that park properties are low risk. Broken equipment, run down conditions, and vandalism all contribute to perceptions of fear because such things as litter, graffiti, and broken furniture all suggest a place is uncared for and possibly unsafe. This is inline with the community input survey, where almost 44 percent of survey respondents indicated that they do not feel safe while in City of Killeen parks.

As such, a systemwide park condition assessment was undertaken to measure the state of parkland grounds and facility repair. The conditions-based assessment measures whether a park space and the facilities located on the site are maintained in a condition suitable to be used safely, or to otherwise entice continued visitation and usage by surrounding residents and other potential users.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Overall, the Killeen parks system scored 3.3 out of 5 on a weighted scale. This means that the system scored on the lower end of the moderate condition category. As illustrated on the map on the next page, no parks scored high enough to be considered in great condition (5.0), which is not too uncommon. Only four parks scored high enough to be considered maintained in good condition (4.0-4.9). Most of the parks scored in the moderate condition category (3.0-3.9), although many of them ranked at the lower end of the range. Five parks scored low enough to be considered in poor condition (2.0-2.9). No parks scored low enough to be considered failing.

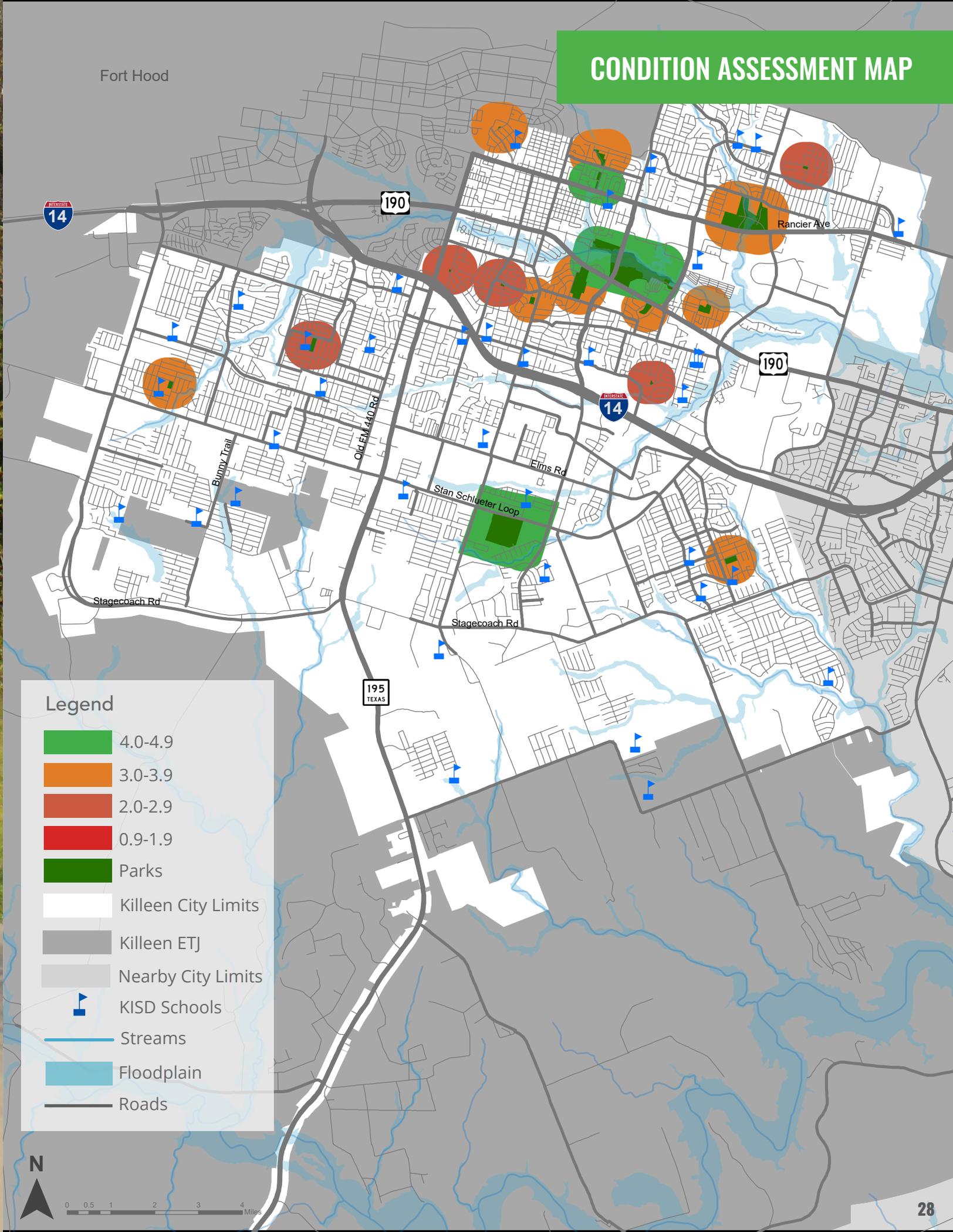
## COMMUNITY GOAL

Strive to establish and maintain a parks and trails system where all facilities and amenities are maintained in a good condition (i.e., 4.0 or better on a park condition reassessment).

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Achieve full adopt-a-park participation for every park and trail by 2024.
- Improve and maintain the condition of all parks and trails to achieve a moderate condition by 2024.
- Improve the condition of at least 50% of the overall parks and trails system to achieve good condition by 2025.
- Improve the condition of at least 75% of the overall parks and trails system to achieve good condition by 2026.
- Improve the condition of all parks to good condition by 2031.

# CONDITION ASSESSMENT MAP



## Legend

- 4.0-4.9
- 3.0-3.9
- 2.0-2.9
- 0.9-1.9
- Parks
- Killeen City Limits
- Killeen ETJ
- Nearby City Limits
- KISD Schools
- Streams
- Floodplain
- Roads



# PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Park improvement is a critical component of a Complete Parks system, particularly once there is an acknowledgment that parks go through lifecycles just like cities. Today, there is a policy shift which recognizes the need for smaller incremental investments which can transform the usability of a community park property over time.

This plan identifies a series of investment opportunities per each park which can be implemented through a combination of smaller scale, incremental improvements (many of which can be implemented by volunteer and staff efforts) and more longer-term intensive capital investments (e.g., installation of a bridge, splash pad, and pavilion).

The *LoveMyPark!* project workday is a perfect example of how these incremental investments can be undertaken by resident and neighborhood volunteers, and staff, to build community cohesion and create a lasting difference in their specific park property (see the Stewart Park vision on the next page where community volunteers planted trees and other park improvements).

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Moving forward, adherence to the Complete Parks principles can provide for significant improvements within the City's parks and trails and added community wealth. As it relates to parks improvements, key considerations should include:

- Being purposeful about reducing maintenance obligations to repurpose time towards park improvements
- Balancing incremental redevelopment with larger capital investments
- Adherence to Complete Parks principles

## COMMUNITY GOAL

Strive to develop a fiscally sustainable Complete Parks system through a balance of smaller scale, incremental improvements and purposeful longer-term intensive capital investments.

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Reduce and reallocate the percentage of staff hours spent on reoccurring maintenance activities to park improvement activities by 15-20% by 2024 over base year 2021.
- Increase the amount of in-the-park improvement projects undertaken by staff and volunteers year over year.
- Schedule and facilitate a minimum of four volunteer in-the-park community park improvement days annually.





## STEWART PARK IMPROVEMENTS

- 1** YOUTH SOCCER FIELD
- 2** SPLASH PAD
- 3** IMPROVED PLAYGROUND
- 4** LARGE PAVILLION
- 5** PICNIC AREAS
- 6** CROSSING BRIDGE
- 7** CONNECTION TRAIL
- 8** LOOPED TRAIL

# PARK GROWTH

Park growth should be concurrent with city growth. In Killeen, there was a lot of park development in the 1980s and 90s in the original parts of the City. Although the City continued to grow exponentially over the next two decades, park development did not keep up. This resulted in large parts of the City with no convenient access to public park property and an overall fragile parks system.

Moving forward, the City must think strategically about how it can improve the provision of parks and recreation in the areas of the City which are unserved, or underserved. A priority focus will be on continual investment in existing park properties. Without continual investment, and eventually redevelopment, the embodied wealth of the property or area will decrease over time, further increasing the fragility of the overall system. It also requires a priority focus on being more strategic about new park growth.

This plan identifies a series of prudent park growth strategies which maximize equitable access through a new vision of growth focused on thinking more strategically and maximizing partnerships with area partners.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The key takeaways regarding park growth are further detailed on the following pages (orange tabs) related to:

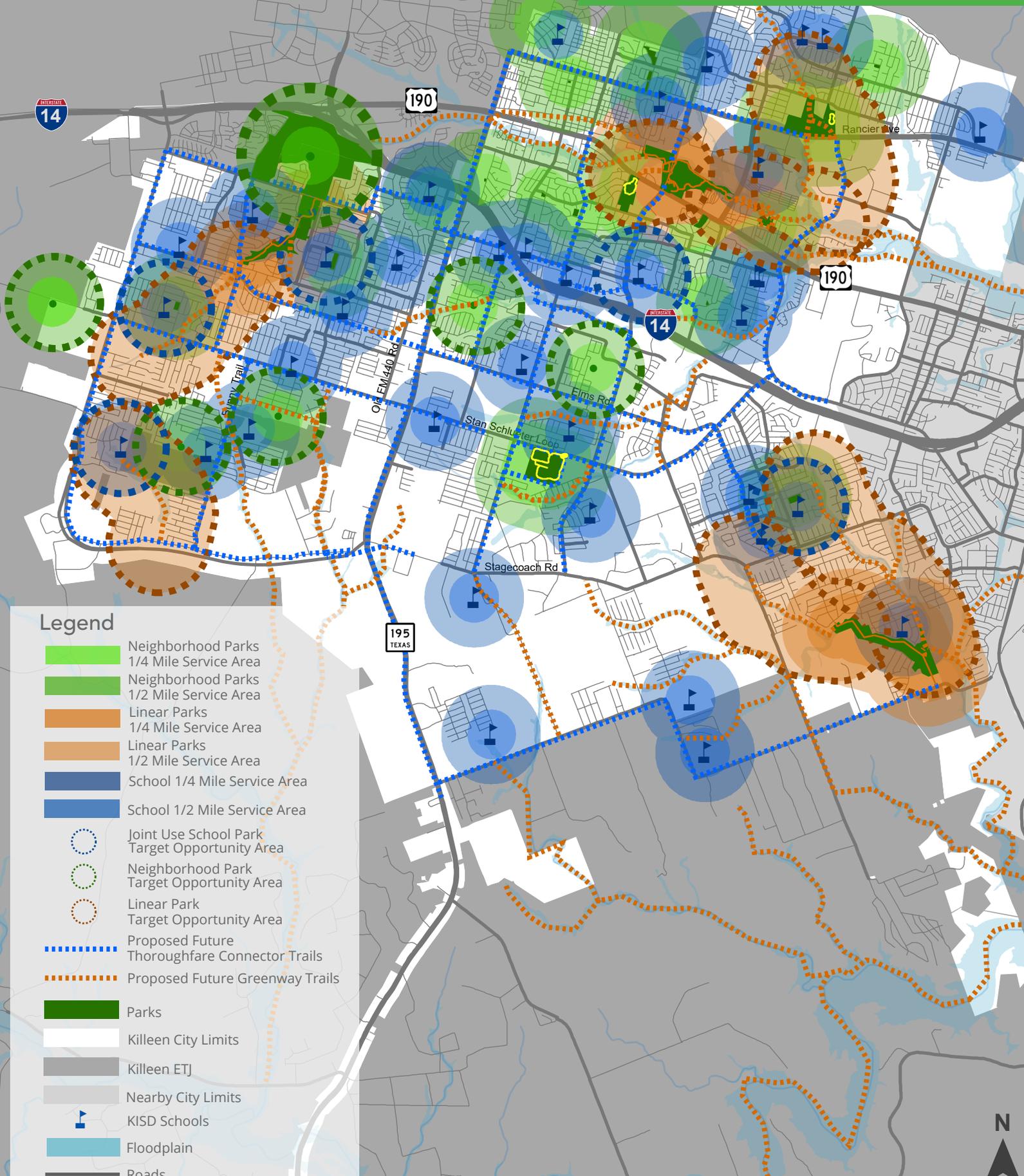
- New Parks
- Joint-Use School Parks
- Greenway Trails
- Parkland Dedication and Development

Each of these contain their own goals and benchmarks for moving forward.



# GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES MAP

Fort Hood



## Legend

- Neighborhood Parks 1/4 Mile Service Area
- Neighborhood Parks 1/2 Mile Service Area
- Linear Parks 1/4 Mile Service Area
- Linear Parks 1/2 Mile Service Area
- School 1/4 Mile Service Area
- School 1/2 Mile Service Area
- Joint Use School Park Target Opportunity Area
- Neighborhood Park Target Opportunity Area
- Linear Park Target Opportunity Area
- Proposed Future Thoroughfare Connector Trails
- Proposed Future Greenway Trails
- Parks
- Killeen City Limits
- Killeen ETJ
- Nearby City Limits
- KISD Schools
- Floodplain
- Roads

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



# NEW PARKS

Although a priority focus of this parks planning process was on improving the quality and usability of existing parks, it also identified several key new park properties which could be more quickly developed by maximizing relationships with area partners. Some of these partners include the Fort Hood and the Killeen Independent School District (KISD). During the last planning process, preliminary discussions were held and opportunities identified, but no action was followed up on as part of post-plan implementation. During this process, discussions with both organizations focused on solidifying the action items needed to take the existing partnership to a new level.

As part of the discussions with Fort Hood, a revised conceptual master plan was prepared identifying a new regional park in the northwest part of the City. This new park would serve as a destination amenity for Fort Hood personnel, Killeen residents, and visitors alike. It would include a passive recreation oriented program of activities including an extension and northern terminus of the Fort Hood Regional Trail, and other facilities and amenities such as a kiosk kayak rental station, picnicking, fishing piers, miscellaneous hiking and biking trails, etc. (see the concept on the next page). The transfer of the Fort Hood portion of the property to the City of Killeen was initiated during the planning process.

As part of the discussions with KISD, a conceptual re-envisioning of a joint use school park was developed identifying how a single set of facilities and amenities could better serve both students during school and the community outside of school hours (see the concept on page 34). A new Master Lease Agreement was drafted as part of the planning process, five school parks were identified as target opportunities (see the areas denoted with blue dashed lines on the map on page 32), and Maxwell Park was identified to serve as a prototype new joint use school park demonstration project.

The plan also identified several properties already owned by the City, and targeted parcels in private ownership, as potential targets for new neighborhood and community park development in areas of need. These six properties (see the areas denoted with green dashed lines on the map on page 32) help improve access in areas of the City which are already largely developed. Similarly, seven targeted areas were identified as low hanging fruit for expanding community connectivity and access to a growing greenway trail system (see the areas denoted in orange dashed lines on the map on page 32 and page 38). Finally, parkland dedication and development regulations were developed as part of the planning process to ensure the parks system grows concurrent with new City growth (see page 32).

## COMMUNITY GOAL

Strive to grow the park system using a fiscally prudent toolbox of park growth solutions including parkland dedication, donations, further development of other existing City non-park property, and strategic partnerships with area partners.

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Identify appropriate property and develop access to a regional park by 2026.
- Increase the amount of designated linear park acreage by 140 acres by 2026.
- Increase the amount of designated neighborhood park acreage by 75 acres by 2026
- Increase the amount of designated community park acreage by 50 acres by 2026.



# WESTSIDE PARK CONCEPT

US HWY 190

ROBERTS RD

WATERCREST RD

## LEGEND

- |                               |  |                            |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 Main Entrance               | 9 Interpretive Stations/Outdoor Classrooms | 17 Large Lakeside Pavilion |
| 2 Animal Shelter              | 10 Wildflower Meadow                       | 18 Family Pavilions        |
| 3 Dog Park at Animal Shelter  | 11 Event Lawn                              | 19 Kayak Launch Facility   |
| 4 Controlled Entry Gate       | 12 Water Turbine Pond and Dam              | 20 Archery Zone            |
| 5 Outer Loop Trail (5k Trail) | 13 Amphitheater                            | 21 Agility Course          |
| 6 Boardwalk System            | 14 Inner Loop Trail (1 Mile)               | 22 BMX Course              |
| 7 Fishing Piers               | 15 Artistic Wind/Solar Farm                | 23 Visitor Center          |
| 8 Nature/Interpretive Trail   | 16 Iconic Lookout Tower                    | 24 Artistic Solar Panels   |



# JOINT-USE SCHOOL PARKS

Historically, the City and KISD executed joint use lease agreements for three school properties for the purposes of allowing the City to erect and maintain the premises for public park purposes. The three leases were at Maxdale Elementary School (2000), Iduma Elementary School (2005), and Timber Ridge Elementary School (2006). Besides the development the large Lions Club Community Park, off E. Stan Schlueter Loop, in 1997, there were no other new park properties outside of the original core areas of the city. The leases were for a 20-year period and renewable. Currently, the lease for the Maxdale property has expired. The other two lease agreements expire in 2026 (Iduma) and 2027 (Timber Ridge).

During this planning process, several good conversations between City and KISD staff have led to an interest in taking next steps in the partnership. This involved an acknowledgment that the City had not historically prioritized good maintenance on the existing properties. Moving forward, the City and KISD staff agreed to expand upon the partnership to be better stewards of limited available resources.

The Maxdale Park Concept Plan illustrates a development of a true Complete Park. It includes areas immediately south of the school building designed to meet the basic needs of school children during the school day, including a covered sports court, covered playscapes and social seating. It also includes a mini-splash pad/water feature which would not be turned on during school hours but could be activated by push button outside of school hours. It also includes a raised seating berm (#14) providing separation and enclosure of the primary area serving school kids during school hours. An additional in-the-park-fence could be considered to further provide separation/enclosure (with signage) of the typical school play areas. Improving Maxdale Park would add a quality neighborhood park to Council District 3.

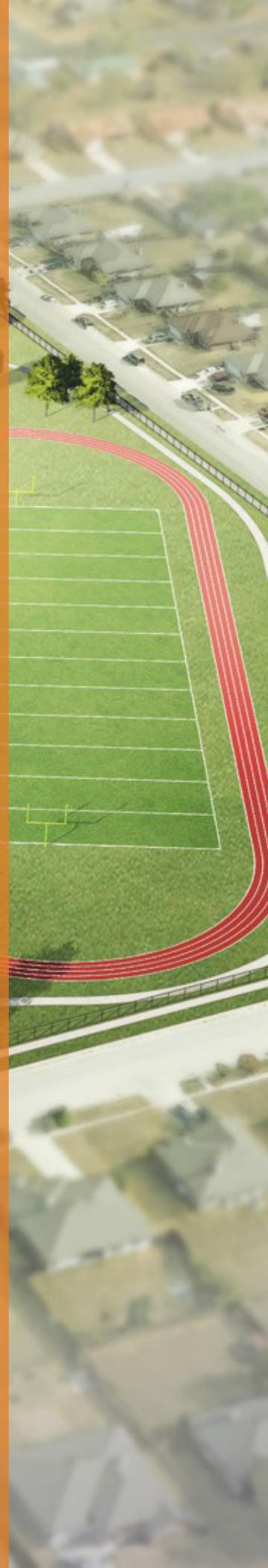
The benefits of joint use for both entities include: (1) Gives kids and communities a safe, accessible places to exercise and socialize after school and/or on weekends; (2) Maximizes use of limited community resources; (3) Reduces the cost burden on both entities (all paid by the taxpayer) in that one entity does not have to buy land and other does not have to buy and maintain equipment; (4) Increases physical and social activity levels of both children and adults; and (5) Increases “eyes on the street” for both the school and the park.

## COMMUNITY GOAL

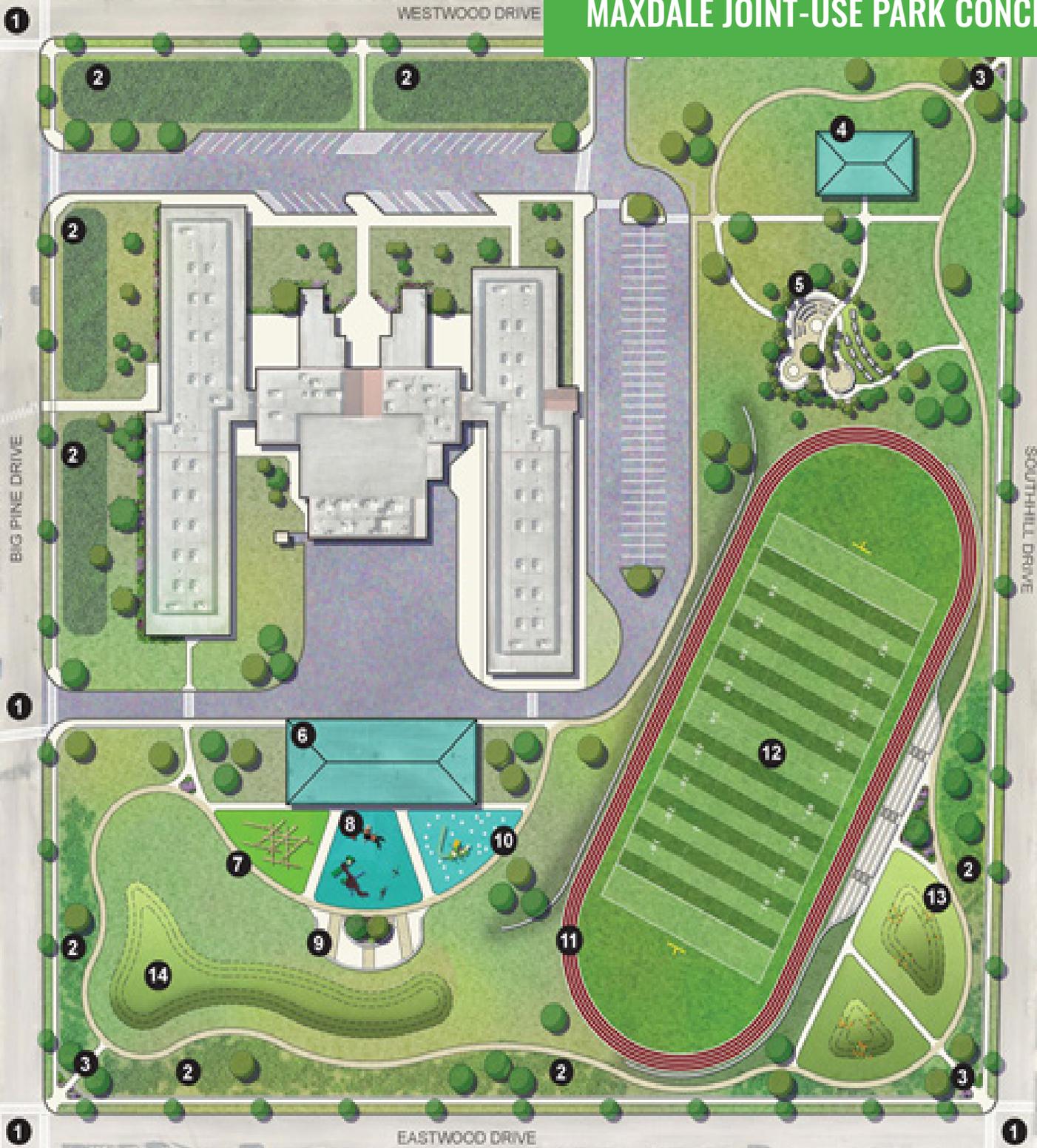
Maximize opportunities to partner with KISD and other area partners to develop Complete Parks in areas of need in a fiscally responsible manner.

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Execute a new master joint use agreement by 2023.
- Fund a pilot joint use Complete Park at Maxwell Park by 2023.
- Master plan and budget for Complete Park retrofits at Iduma and Timber Ridge Parks by 2024.
- Master plan and budget for two additional joint use parks in areas of need by 2025.



# MAXDALE JOINT-USE PARK CONCEPT



1 Painted Crosswalks

2 No-Mow Areas

3 Entrance Areas and Signage

4 Pavilion

5 Outdoor Education Classrooms

6 Covered Basketball Court

7 Climbing Structure

8 Playscape (2 age ranges)

9 Social Group Seating

10 Splash Pad / Water Feature

11 4 Lane Track

12 Football / Multi-Purpose Field

13 Climbing Skills Course

14 Seating Berm

# TRAILS

Trails are seeing continued growth in popularity throughout the country and are increasingly an implementation goal for community planning efforts. Trails improve the quality of life of users and provide alternative commuting options. Additionally, trails improve marketability of public and private property, which benefit from proximity and access to the trails.

Trails also create multi-generational recreation opportunities, promote health, improve the overall quality of life, and provide non-vehicular transportation alternatives. Having close access to trails has become important for communities all over the country as people are gaining more interest in pursuing a healthier lifestyle—even more so since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. As facilities intended for pedestrian and bicycle access, trails have a service area of one-quarter-mile to one-half-mile. As desired by the residents of Killeen, trails should be planned and constructed for the benefits of today's and tomorrow's population.

Although the City has only a few existing trail segments, this plan identified future trail system opportunity areas for both near-street (i.e., thoroughfare connector trails) and off-street (i.e., greenway linear trails) trail linkages. Together, these two trail types help create an interconnected trail system maximizing access to all parts of the community.

Since the City is significantly behind in its provision of public park property, a priority focus on expanding the greenway trail system serves as a great opportunity to quickly improve level of service and resident access to the City's parks system.

This plan identified seven priority low hanging fruit trail segments—on property already owned by the City, or on property owned by potential area partners who would also benefit from improved connectivity—which improve community access to key destinations such as parks, schools, etc. The plan also identifies the importance of cross-purposing floodplains and drainage corridors throughout the City for future greenway trail opportunities.

## COMMUNITY GOAL

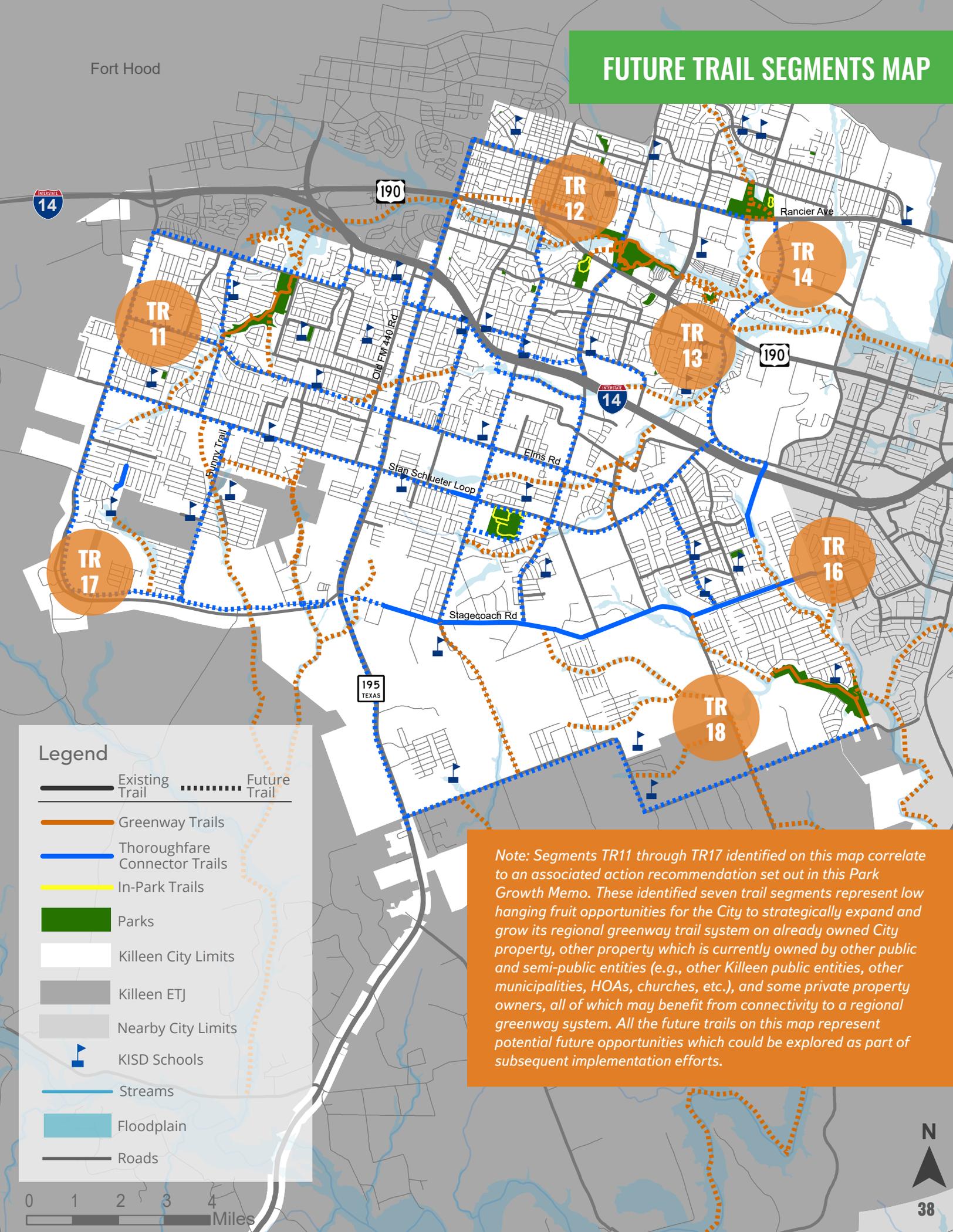
Strive to develop a connected, enhanced citywide trail system through the purposeful acquisition and development of properties and partnerships.

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Achieve improved trail connectivity and development standards by 2023.
- Target a doubling of the citywide greenway trails system (i.e., adding 8.7 more miles) by 2026.



# FUTURE TRAIL SEGMENTS MAP



## Legend

- Existing Trail
- Future Trail
- Greenway Trails
- Thoroughfare Connector Trails
- In-Park Trails
- Parks
- Killeen City Limits
- Killeen ETJ
- Nearby City Limits
- KISD Schools
- Streams
- Floodplain
- Roads

*Note: Segments TR11 through TR17 identified on this map correlate to an associated action recommendation set out in this Park Growth Memo. These identified seven trail segments represent low hanging fruit opportunities for the City to strategically expand and grow its regional greenway trail system on already owned City property, other property which is currently owned by other public and semi-public entities (e.g., other Killeen public entities, other municipalities, HOAs, churches, etc.), and some private property owners, all of which may benefit from connectivity to a regional greenway system. All the future trails on this map represent potential future opportunities which could be explored as part of subsequent implementation efforts.*



*Based on the significant need for improving coverage of public park property across the existing and future developed areas of the city, consideration should be given to maximizing public benefit in the most fiscally responsible manner as possible. One way to accomplish this is to maximize opportunities to achieve multiple purposes as part of a single project like acquiring and developing greenway trails along the City's natural floodplains and drainageways .*

*These undevelopable natural floodplain and drainageway corridors provide unique opportunities not just to serve drainage conveyance purposes, or just for greenway recreational trails, but could also be used (potentially in conjunction with adjacent developable land) to expand these corridors into fully developed and amenitized linear parks (see the original concept plan for Heritage Park on the next page).*

# HERITAGE OAKS PARK



- Water Courses
- Roads
- Trees
- Lots & Homes
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Parking Area
- Pedestrian Access Point
- Trailheads / Overlooks
- Low Water Crossing

- 1** North trail extension
- 2** School connection amenities
- 3** Playscape and splashpad amenities
- 4** Rosewood bridge connection & overlook
- 5** Multipurpose practice fields
- 6** Potential community-scaled Complete Park

# PARKLAND DEDICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As is evident in the City's recent growth and development, the public expansion of the parks and recreation system has not kept up with private sector development. Indeed, much of the existing park system acreage was acquired and developed decades ago and most of it is located in the original core area of the City. There has been relatively little new park development in any of the growth areas going as far back as the mid-1990s. Without further assistance as part of new private sector development, there is a strong likelihood that this trend will continue. This is particularly true considering post-recession nationwide trends where increasing demand for new or expanded services is being met with stronger calls for fiscal conservatism.

As set out on page 21, the City is over 500 acres or 33% deficient in the provision of public parkland even factoring in the reduced targets set out in this plan. Overcoming this projected deficit will require the City to pursue future park development in concert with private sector development. One way many jurisdictions accomplish this is through the enactment of parkland dedication and development regulations.

The purpose of the regulations are to ensure that there is sufficient land dedicated or otherwise set aside, and resources for development, to meet the public demand for parks, trails, and open space that arises from population growth. In this way, when new growth and development occurs, a proportionate and reasonable contribution of land dedication, park development, fees in lieu of land conveyance or park development, or combination thereof, allows the parks, trails, and open space system to grow concurrently. All dedication of parkland and improvements, or fees-in-lieu thereof, must be applied within the same park benefit zone (see the map on page 42). This is to ensure that property dedicated and money collected directly benefits the residents of those same geographic areas.

As part of this planning process, new parkland dedication and development regulations were developed. While not the result of a regulatory requirement, the Heritage Oaks subdivision shows how the design of a new residential neighborhood can set aside new park and trail property to serve the Killeen community (see page 40).

## COMMUNITY GOAL

Draft, develop, and implement a parkland dedication development ordinance to have new parks concurrent with growth.

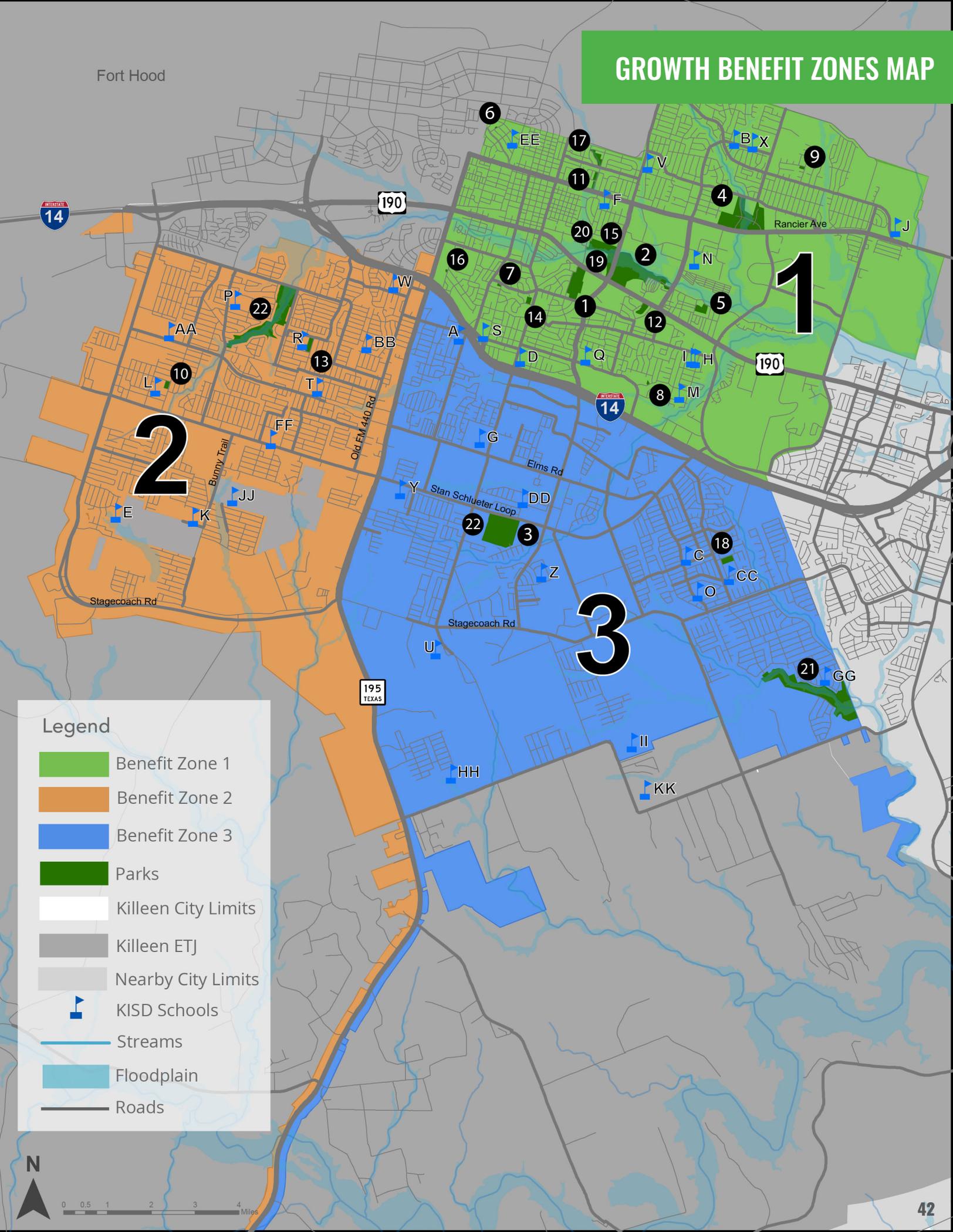
## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Adopt a parkland dedication and development ordinance within 2022.



# GROWTH BENEFIT ZONES MAP

Fort Hood



## Legend

- Benefit Zone 1
- Benefit Zone 2
- Benefit Zone 3
- Parks
- Killeen City Limits
- Killeen ETJ
- Nearby City Limits
- KISD Schools
- Streams
- Floodplain
- Roads

N

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

# OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The Recreation Services Department had a total operating budget for FY2021 of a little under \$7.5M. It is estimated that approximately 40% of that or \$2.9M is dedicated to maintenance of the City's parks and facilities. They currently employ about 95 full-time employees (FTE's). Approximately 39 of those are dedicated to park operations and maintenance by focusing on litter control, mowing, maintenance of sports fields, playscape inspection and maintenance, tree maintenance, trail maintenance, pool maintenance and miscellaneous cleaning and repair of parks and associated facilities.

As part of this planning process, an operations and maintenance assessment was undertaken for the City's four community-scaled parks to establish appropriate levels of service and best management practices based on existing conditions/analysis, City staff input, community expectations and availability of resources. A new O&M framework was developed as template so that City staff could self-expand the assessment to their neighborhood-scaled parks in the future.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Approximately 34% of the acreage (171 acres of the approximate total of 509 acres) that is maintained by Recreation Services is not related to a park, recreation facility, trail or greenbelt. Parks are unnecessarily mowed curb-to-curb increasing reoccurring maintenance costs. Establishing "grow zones" throughout the park system provides an opportunity to repurpose limited staff availability for other important purposes like park improvement and incremental investment.

## COMMUNITY GOAL

Strive to establish and maintain a parks and trails system where all facilities and amenities are maintained in a good condition (i.e., 4.0 or better on a park condition reassessment).

## BENCHMARK TARGETS

- Execute a contract to outsource building maintenance by 2022.
- Establish a grow zone pilot program in each community park by 2022.
- Target 25 acres of grow zones in community parks by 2024.
- Reduce the cost of mowing by 5% by 2023.
- Target CAPRA certification by 2026.



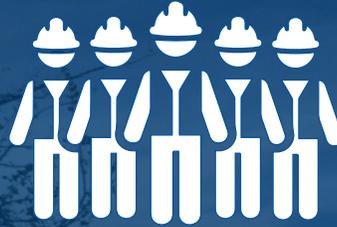
# NRPA FTE'S PER NUMBER OF ACRES MAINTAINED

250 acres or less



17 FTE's

3,500 acres or more



266.7 FTE's

## COST PER MAINTAINED ACRE



Killeen  
\$5,811.62



Georgetown  
\$3,000.00



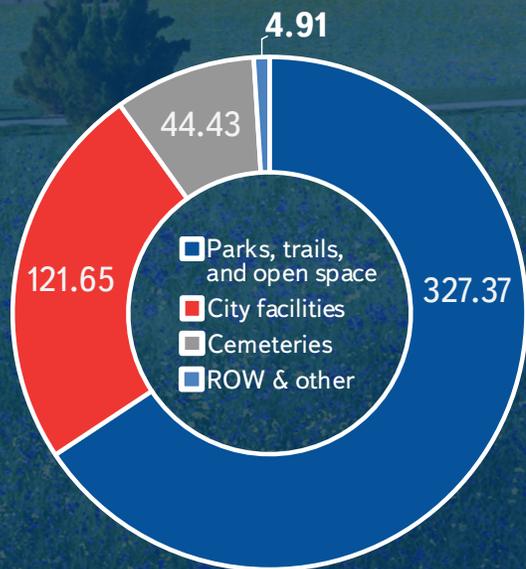
Waco  
\$1,600.00



~34%

~34% OF TOTAL ACRES MAINTAINED ARE NOT RELATED TO PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE

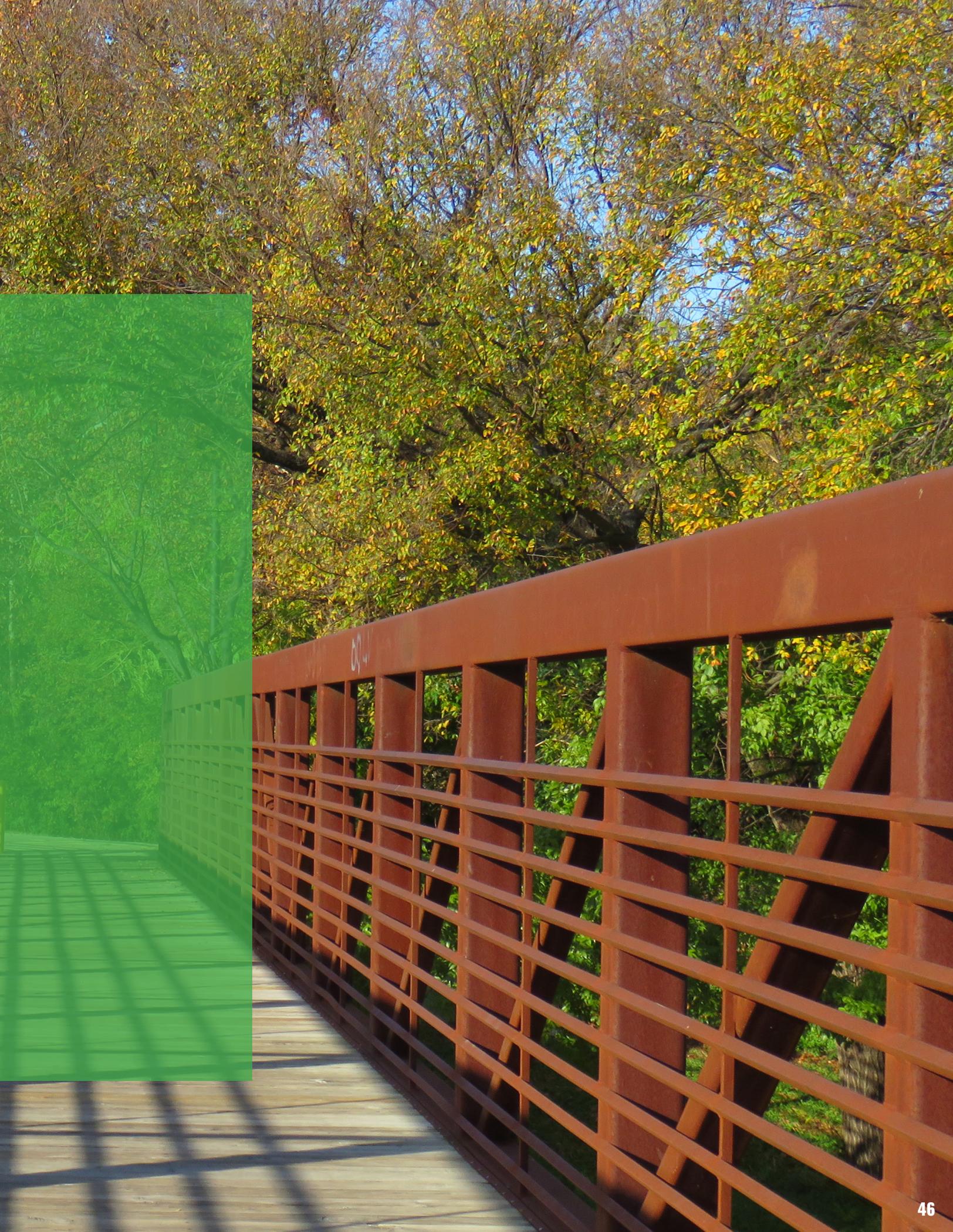
## CITY OF KILLEEN MAINTAINED ACRES = 498.46





# PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines the goals and actions necessary to implement the vision set out in this Parks and Open Space Master Plan. This section will guide the Recreation Services Department and allow them to turn this vision into a reality— one investment at a time.



# SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM

## SHORT TERM (0-3 YEARS) PRIORITIES FOR RECREATION SERVICES

- Finalize and adopt the parkland dedication and development ordinance
- Apply the operation and maintenance framework to all neighborhood parks in the park system
- Execute a Master Lease Agreement with KISD to expand park acreage within park system (on-going)
- Establish grow zones within the park system at several parks (on-going)
- Utilize the parks condition assessment to build on replacement cycles through FY O/M and capital budgets
- Launch the YAC Park Ambassador program
- Establish new park properties so that park deficiencies start to be addressed
- Continue City staff led incremental park improvements
- Expand the “Love My Park” workday into a quarterly park investment program
- Work towards benchmark targets identified in the various plan memos
- Focus on maximizing the number of people in the parks



Park improvements can occur through a variety of different mechanisms, from small-scale quick enhancements to large-scale capital projects. The involved effort can come from staff as part of their normal work program or through paid contractors. It can also occur through volunteer park improvement workdays which oftentimes require staff support. In general, the scale and extent of potential improvements grow as the work effort increases in skillset and expertise.



The measure of any great civilization is its cities; a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.

- John Ruskin

# IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
<b>Park Growth Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Strive to grow the park system using a fiscally prudent toolbox of park growth solutions including parkland dedication, donations, further development of other existing City non-park property, and strategic partnerships with area partners.</b>							
PS1	Adhere to Complete Parks principles regarding the future design and development of new parks as it relates to general park features and amenities.				■	City	Operational
PS2	Develop the new Westside Regional Park in the northwest portion of the city.	■				City	Capital
PS3	Identify a property to develop a new community park in an area of need in the western side of the city.	■				City	Study
PS4	Identify properties and develop two additional community parks in areas of need in the southern portion of the City as growth continues to the south.		■			City	Study, Capital
PS5	Identify properties and develop additional neighborhood-scaled parkland in areas of need.		■			City	Study, Capital
PR6	Evaluate opportunities to develop a new 4.57-acre neighborhood park on City-owned property to serve the Bellaire Heights and Loma Vista subdivisions.		■			City	Study
PR7	Evaluation of acquisition opportunities for three new neighborhood parks in need areas.			■		City	Study
PR8	Explore opportunities to improve existing and future indoor recreation centers to better serve multi-generational users.		■			City	Operational, Study
PR9	Explore opportunities to serve multigenerational users across the entire outdoor park system.				■	City	Study
PR10	Continue to explore opportunities to develop additional unprogrammed athletic space for open community use.				■	City	Study
PR11	Develop a second gym at the Killeen Community Center.		■			City	Capital
PR12	Identify opportunities to add Complete Park amenities to linear park properties.				■	City	Study, Capital
PR13	Identify opportunities to fund and construct the additional neighborhood-scaled park amenities originally conceptualized for the Heritage Oaks Linear Park.	■				City	Study, Capital
<b>Joint Use Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Maximize opportunities to partner with KISD and other area partners to develop Complete Parks in areas of need in a fiscally responsible manner.</b>							
JU1	Coordinate with Killeen Independent School District (KISD) to execute a new master city-school joint use agreement for the sharing of resources related to school parks.	■				City, KISD	Coordination, Study
JU2	Utilize Maxdale Park as a pilot project to design and develop a joint-use Complete Park.	■				City, KISD	Capital

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
JU3	Maxdale Park Joint Use Concept Plan.		■			City, Consultant	Study, Capital
JU4	Coordinate between the City and KISD to master plan Complete Park opportunities for Iduma and Timber Ridge Parks.		■			City, KISD	Coordination
JU5	Coordinate between the City and KISD to determine opportunities to develop two additional joint-use Complete Parks on existing KISD properties in areas of need.				■	City, School Districts	Coordination, Study
JU6	Continue to coordinate between the City and KISD to determine opportunities to proactively identify and develop joint use Complete Parks as part of new future school design and development.				■	City, KISD	Coordination., Study
JU7	Continue to coordinate between the City and KISD to determine opportunities to proactively identify and develop additional joint recreational facilities which mutually serve both entities.				■	City, KISD	Coordination, Study
<b>Linear Park / Trail Growth Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Strive to develop a connected, enhanced citywide trail system through the purposeful acquisition and development of properties and partnerships.</b>							
TR1	Prepare a Citywide Trails Plan to increase connectivity and accessibility to parks and key destinations.	■				City, Consultant	Capital
TR2	Add sidewalks along City streets to complete missing segments on all park properties.	■				City	Capital
TR3	Support the establishment of the regional bicycle and pedestrian system.		■			City	Policy
TR4	Update the City's subdivision regulations to improve trail connectivity and development standards.	■				City, Consultant	Capital, Regulation
TR5	Develop an Active Transportation Plan identifying on-street bike lane connectivity between parks and other citywide key destinations.		■			City, Consultant	Capital
TR6	Preserve drainage corridors and key connections to the existing and future Citywide trail network.				■	City	Policy
TR7	Coordinate with local public transportation providers to ensure that routes are available to City parks.				■	City	Coordination
TR8	Adhere to trail development standards as part of new trail development and redevelopment.				■	City	Regulation
TR9	Adhere to Complete Parks principles for expanding the usability of City greenways and other trails as it relates to for general trail features and amenities.				■	City	Policy
TR10	Coordinate directly with the cities of Nolanville and Harker Heights to explore regional partnerships in connecting the Killeen greenways system to their systems along Nolan and Trimmer Creeks.				■	City	Coordination
TR11	Identify funding and develop a southwest greenway extension of the Ft. Hood Regional Trail.	■				City	Study
TR12	Identify funding and develop a greenway extension between Conder Park and the Andy K. Wells Trail.		■			City	Study
TR13	Identify funding and develop a greenway trail connection along South Nolan Creek between the eastern terminus of the Andy K. Wells Trail and AA Lane Park.		■			City	Study

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
TR14	Identify funding and develop a greenway trail connection along South Nolan Creek and Long Branch to connect AA Lane Park to Long Branch Park.			■		City	Study, Capital
TR15	Identify funding and develop a greenway extension of the Heritage Oaks Trail north along Acorn Creek/Rosewood Drive.			■		City	Study, Capital
TR16	Identify funding and develop a greenway extension of the Heritage Oaks Trail along Trimmier Creek.			■		City	Study, Capital
TR17	Identify funding and develop a southwest greenway extension of the Ft. Hood Regional Trail.	■				City, Fort Hood	Study, Capital
<b>Parkland Dedication and Development Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Strive to grow the park system using a fiscally prudent toolbox of park growth solutions including parkland dedication, donations, further development of other existing City non-park property, and strategic partnerships with area partners.</b>							
PD1	Adhere to Complete Parks principles regarding the future design and development of new parks as it relates to general park features and amenities.				■	City	Policy
<b>Park Improvements Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Strive to develop a fiscally sustainable Complete Parks system through a balance of smaller scale, incremental improvements and purposeful longer-term intensive capital investments.</b>							
PI1	Establish a Park Amenities Foundation and Donation Program.	■				City	Operational
PI2	Improve connectivity and ADA access to all facilities and amenities.				■	City	Policy, Capital
PI3	Improve and strengthen park identity by incorporating new signage throughout park system.				■	City	Capital
PI4	Apply environmental design principles as a key component of crime prevention to provide patrons a greater sense of safety and comfort.				■	City	Policy
PI5	Identify funding and resources to improve the provision of additional site amenities throughout the park system.		■			City	Study
PI6	Identify funding and resources to improve the provision of social gathering spaces in the park system.	■					
PI7	Identify funding and resources to diversify uses and improve the activation throughout the park system.	■				City	Study
PI8	Identify funding and resources to incorporate shade features throughout the park system.				■	City	Study
PI9	Evaluate opportunities to install splash pads in areas of need.				■	City	Study
PI10	Consider development of new dog parks in areas of need.		■			City	Capital
PI11	Identify funding and opportunities to enhance site lighting throughout the parks system for security, light-sensitive amenities, and after hour uses.				■	City	Study, Capital
PI12	Evaluate hours of operation for certain parks and facilities to determine if adjustments could be made for flexibility and usability.				■	City	Operational
PI13	Identify opportunities to add “no grow” areas to reduce maintenance and increase the amount of areas of natural landscapes within each of the parks.				■	City	Study, Operational
PI14	Build upon the LoveMyPark! park improvement day to fund and schedule reoccurring community improvement volunteer days.				■	City	Operational

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
PI15	Evaluate opportunities to increase food access and safety in parks and during special events.				■	City	Study, Operational
PI16	Improve communications to the public regarding parks, events, and for other park promotions.				■	City	Operational
PI17	During facility improvements and building upgrades, identify more holistic opportunities to create more efficient and sustainable sites and buildings.				■	City	Policy
PI18	Implement overall park design guidelines to steer proper design and construction of new and improved facilities and amenities.				■	City	Regulation
PI19	Allocate funding to begin incremental investment to improve Camacho Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PI20	Continue the incremental investment to improve AA Lane Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PI21	Continue the incremental investment to improve Phyllis Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PI22	Allocate funding to begin incremental investment to improve Fox Creek Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PI23	Continue the incremental investment to improve Iduma Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PI24	Continue the incremental investment to improve Stewart Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PI25	Allocate funding to begin incremental investment to improve Lions Neighborhood Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PI26	Continue the incremental investment to improve Hunt Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PI27	Allocate funding to begin incremental investment to improve Fowler Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PI28	Continue the incremental investment to improve Maxdale Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment

### Park Conditions Assessment Focused Recommendations

**Goal: Strive to establish and maintain a parks and trails system where all facilities and amenities are maintained in a good condition (i.e., 4.0 or better on a park condition reassessment).**

PC1	Develop an official Parks to Standards Program to ensure all parks and trails are all consistently maintained across the system.				■	City	Policy
PC2	Conduct a park condition assessment every five years or with each plan update.				■	City	Study
PC3	Continue to pursue sponsors and community volunteers for the Killeen Adopt-a-Park program.				■	City	Coordination
PC4	Develop a formalized playground risk management inspection schedule and replacement plan.				■	City	Operational, Policy
PC5	Identify best practices and target necessary funding to improve trash management within the parks and trails system.				■	City	Study
PC6	Identify and prioritize funding to proactively and comprehensively improve the general site conditions of parks categorized as poor condition by 2024.		■			City	Study, Capital
PC7	Identify and prioritize funding to proactively improve the general site conditions to good by 2025 for at least 50% of parks currently categorized as moderate condition.		■			City	Study, Capital

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
PC8	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Fox Creek Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC9	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Timber Ridge Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC10	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Lions Club Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC11	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Iduma Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC12	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Fort Hood Regional Trail.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC13	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Maxdale Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC14	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Santa Rosa Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC15	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Flower Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC16	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Phyllis Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC17	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Green Avenue Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC17	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Camacho Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC19	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Stewart Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC20	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Lions Neighborhood Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC21	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Rotary Club Children’s Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
PC22	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Killeen Community Center Athletic Complex.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC23	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Condor Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC24	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Marlboro Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC25	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of AA Lane Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC26	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Long Branch Park.				■	City	Incremental Investment
PC27	Evaluate opportunities to improve the conditions of Hunt Park.	■				City	Incremental Investment
<b>Operations and Maintenance Focused Recommendations</b>							
<b>Goal: Strive to establish and maintain a parks and trails system where all facilities and amenities are maintained in a good condition (i.e., 4.0 or better on a park condition reassessment).</b>							
OM1	Continue to identify opportunities to add No Mow Zones across the parks system.				■	City	Incremental Investment
OM2	Continue to identify opportunities to continue outsourcing non-park or trail related efforts to protect park’s staff resources.				■	City	Study

Action #	Action Recommendation	Initiation Time Frame				Involved entities	Action Type(s)
		Short term (1-2 yrs.)	Mid term (3-10 yrs.)	Long term (10+ Yrs.)	On-going		
OM3	Develop an official Parks to Standards Program to ensure all parks and trails are all consistently maintained across the system.		■			City	Capital
OM4	Develop a formalized playground risk management inspection schedule and replacement plan.	■				City	Capital
OM5	Identify best practices and target necessary funding to improve trash management within the parks and trails system.	■				City	Study
OM6	Identify and prioritize funding to proactively and comprehensively improve the general site conditions of parks categorized as poor condition by 2024.				■	City	Study
OM7	Identify and prioritize funding to proactively improve the general site conditions to good by 2025 for at least 50% of parks currently categorized as moderate condition.		■			City	Study
OM8	Pursue CAPRA Certification.	■				City	Capital
OM9	Prioritize budget and resources to continue to develop and digitize park infrastructure and assets into the Cityworks AMS asset management system.				■	City	Capital
OM10	Continue to enter parks system and operations data into NRPA's Park Metrics system.				■	City	Coordination
OM11	Replace or renovate the Conder Park maintenance facility.		■			City	Capital
OM12	Evaluate the need to add satellite park maintenance facilities concurrent with growth to maximize staff resource proximity to different parks and trails in the City.	■				City	Study
OM13	Consider the establishment of a tree nurse on City park property so there is a cost-effective resource for near- and longer-term tree saplings.		■			City	Capital
OM14	Evaluate strategies to improve the safety of users while visiting City parks.				■	City	Incremental Investment

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Killeen Parks and Open Space Master Plan was developed by the City of Killeen with the technical assistance from Halff. Special thanks goes to the many residents and community leaders for their insight and support throughout the duration of this study. The following individuals are recognized for their significant contributions to the preparation of the 2022 Master Plan.

## MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Jose L. Segarra, Mayor  
Debbie Nash-King, Mayor Pro Tem,  
Councilmember District 2  
Ken Wilkerson, Councilmember at Large  
Mellisa Brown, Councilmember at Large  
Rick Williams, Councilmember at Large  
Jessica Gonzalez, Councilmember District 1  
Nina Cobb, Councilmember District 3  
Michael Boyd, Councilmember District 4\*

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Louie Minor, Vice Chairman  
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Emilio Fenderson, At-Large\*  
Anthony Kendrick, At-Large\*

## PARKS MASTER PLAN WORKGROUP

Rodolfo Alvarez - Youth Advisory Commission  
Patsy Bracey - Former RSAB  
R. David Cole - Former RSAB  
Kelly Flading - Former RSAB  
Jason Johnson - KISD  
Michael Love - Fort Hood  
Tanida Mullen - Visitor Bureau  
Dr. Marc Nigliazzo - TAMU Central  
Brian O'Connor - Chamber of Commerce  
Kama Rangel - Youth Advisory Commission

Note: members of the PMPW who are also members of another board or commission are denoted with an \* on this page

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Heather Buller, Assistant Director of Recreation Services  
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Luke Behrens, Grounds Superintendent

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Effective implementation of this plan necessitates ongoing community engagement. New programs established as part of this planning process (e.g., the Youth Advisory Commission Park Ambassador Program and the Love Your Park Day!) are a mechanism to continually engage the citizens of Killeen in capacity building and the incremental investment in their park system—one which leads to a Complete Parks system founded in Strong Towns principles and increased community wealth building over time.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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