

A vast field of bluebonnets in full bloom, stretching to the horizon under a clear blue sky. The flowers are a vibrant blue with yellow centers, interspersed with green foliage. In the background, several trees are visible against the horizon line.

ActiveEnnis

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

2023



ENNIS
TEXAS

The bluebonnet spirit of Texas

Active *Ennis*
Parks Master Plan





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Ennis has seen a tremendous transformation since 2015 when the City's Comprehensive Plan was developed. Decisions were made in the years prior that did little to ensure citizens the quality of life that they deserve. The outcome of public engagement and the planning process was to recommend a strategy for quality of life, with a set of goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve that.



Minnie McDowal Park is a beautiful space and well suited for a variety of downtown

Today the results of this course of action are seen abundantly in the revitalization of downtown as a multi-cultural destination for residents and visitors, as well as the parks and recreation system that has seen, and continues to see numerous park improvements and state-of-the-art features and amenities. However much more is to be done to bring Ennis' parks, open space, trails, and recreation offerings to a level that can compete with the best in the DFW metroplex.

The Ennis 2022 Parks Master Plan is intended to advocate for equity in parks and recreation, bolster the preservation of natural areas, champion the acquisition of parkland, and balance recreation offerings with the relatively fast growth of the city.



The state-of-the-art splash pad at Rotary Park is the envy of many communities

Vision and Goals

Public participation served as the foundation for determining guiding values for the Parks Master Plan. These values culminate in the formulation of a vision statement for Ennis' parks and recreation.

In order to bring the vision to fruition, four goals with accompanying strategies were established for the continuous improvement and enhancement of the city's parks and recreation system.

Ennis' parks and recreation system fosters a vibrant, equitable community by respecting natural assets, honoring rich cultural diversity, instilling healthy habits, and promoting a love of exploration.

Figure ES-1: Vision Statement



Community engagement included an event-in-a-park as well as surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings

Goal #1: Quality of Life



Bring parks and recreation related quality of life opportunities to reality to contribute to people's sense of worth, fulfillment and happiness.

Goal #2: Family Focused & Equitable



Provide equitable access to close-to-home parks and recreation facilities of quality for all families, individuals, and groups of people in a just and fair manner.

Goal #3: Healthy Living



Provide a variety of recreation facilities and programs to promote healthy living and to meet the changing recreational needs and preferences of the Ennis community.

Goal #4: Nature & Culture



Protect and promote the natural environment, including Ennis as "The Bluebonnet Spirit of Texas" and the multi-cultural diversity of the community.

Figure ES-2: Parks and Recreation Goals

Needs and Priorities

Priorities for parks and recreation are based on a combination of three methods to determine the needs of the Ennis community:

Demand based needs

Determined by community engagement

The top priorities in terms of demand based needs for parks and recreation are defined in **Figure ES-3**.

Resource based needs

Determined by natural and cultural assets

The top priorities in terms of resource based needs, are defined in **Figure ES-4**.

Standard based needs

Determined by target standards for parkland acreage and recreation facilities

Standard Based Needs for Facilities

Defined as the 5-year priorities, the top priorities in terms of standard based need for recreation facilities are presented in **Figure ES-5**. The top priorities in terms of standard based need for parkland are described in the following pages.

| Demand Based Needs | |
|--------------------|---|
| Priority | Items Needed |
| 1 | Trails & bikeways |
| 2 | Aquatics i.e., waterpark, swimming pools, splash pads |
| 3 | New and upgraded playground equipment |
| 4 | Pavilions, shade structures & shade trees |

Figure ES-3: Demand Based Needs Prioritized

| Resource Based Needs | |
|----------------------|--|
| Priority | Items Needed |
| 1 | Celebrate the multi-cultural aspect of Ennis |
| 2 | Protect bluebonnets and wildflowers |
| 3 | Capitalize on Lake Bardwell |
| 4 | Protect floodplains |

Figure ES-4: Resource Based Needs Prioritized

| Standard Based Needs for Recreation Facilities | |
|---|-------------------|
| 5-year Priorities for Recreation Facilities * | |
| FACILITY TYPE | Need |
| COMPETITIVE and PRACTICE FACILITIES | |
| Baseball (Competitive) | 3 fields |
| Softball (Competitive) | 3 fields |
| Soccer (Competitive) | 2 fields |
| Baseball/Softball (Practice) | 3 fields |
| Multi-purpose Practice Areas (Practice) | 2 areas |
| OTHER MAJOR ACTIVE FACILITIES | |
| Skatepark | 1 skatepark |
| Disc Golf Course | 1 course |
| Basketball Goals (Outdoor, half, and full courts) | 7 goals |
| Tennis Courts | 1 court |
| Sand Volleyball | 2 courts |
| Pickle Ball (Racquet, Futsol) | 4 courts |
| Playgrounds | 4 playgrounds |
| Play area for Corn Hole / Horse Shoe / Washer Pits | 6 pits |
| Trails | 29 miles |
| PASSIVE FACILITIES | |
| Large Pavilions and Covered Picnic Structures | Opportunity based |
| Outdoor Amphitheater | 2 amphitheaters |
| Dog Park | 2 dog parks |
| AQUATIC FACILITIES | |
| Spray Park / Splash Pad | 4 splash pads |
| Waterpark | 1 waterpark |
| Fishing Pier | 2 piers |

* The need for recreation facilities is to be met largely with the construction of new parks and renovation of existing parks

Figure ES-5: High Priority Standard Based Needs for Recreation Facilities

Standard Based Needs for Parks

The standard based needs assessment for parkland considers 1) acreage, and 2) the geographic areas served by parks.

The assessment of acreage needs is a function of city population. This Plan establishes a target standard of 22 acres per 1,000 people residing in Ennis. As a result, high priority and imminent parkland acquisition for all park categories are presented in **Figure ES-6**.

| Imminent Parkland Priorities | | | |
|---|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Standard based need for the acquisition of acreage for parkland | | | |
| Type Park/Facility | Number Units | Average Unit Size | Estimated Acreage |
| Close-to-Home Parks | | | |
| Community parks | 3 | 100 acres | 300 |
| Neighborhood Parks | 10 | 8 acres | 80 |
| Special Purpose, Pocket, and Linear Parks | | | |
| Bluebonnet conservation areas | 2 | 75 acres | 150 |
| Viewing Stations along Bluebonnet Trails | 6 | 3 acres | 18 |
| Urban plaza (Story Plaza) | 1 | ½ to 1 acre | 1 |
| Skatepark | 1 | 1 acre | 1 |
| Dog Park | 1 | 5 acres | 5 |
| Trailheads | 10 | 1 acre | 10 |
| Linear Parks | 10 miles | 75 ft width | 90 |
| Total Acreage Need: | | | 655 |

Figure ES-6: High Priority Standard Based Need for Parkland Acquisition

Community Parks

The service area of community parks is presented in Figure ES-7. It illustrates the location and spatial distribution of both existing and proposed community parks, including a two mile service radius, calculated from the center of each park.

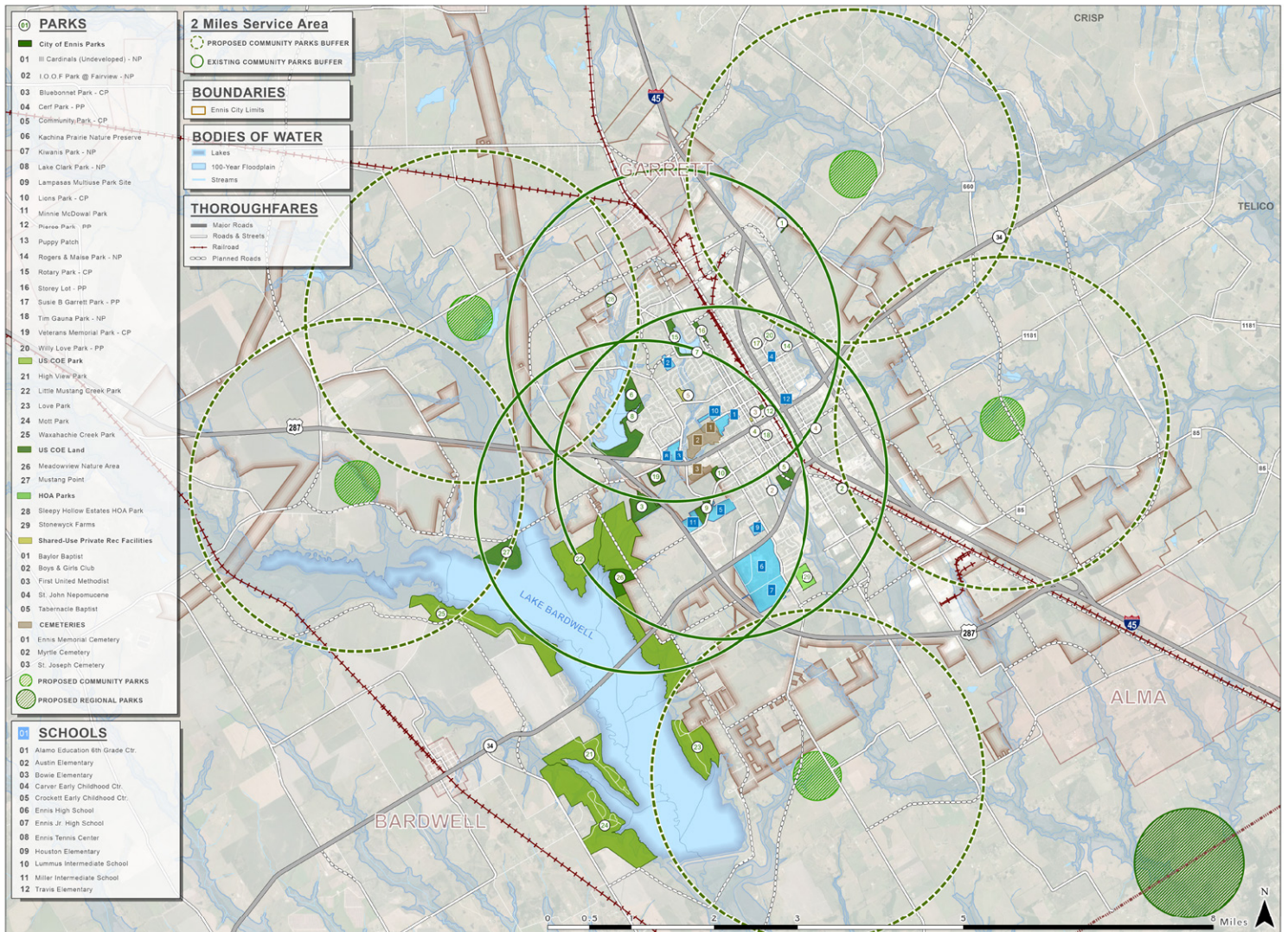


Figure ES-7: Existing and Proposed Community Parks

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Close-to-Home Parks

The service areas of existing close-to-home- parks are presented in **Figure ES-8**. It illustrates the location and spatial distribution of close-to-home parks, including a half-mile radius that signifies a five to ten-minute walking distance. Where physical constraints like railroads or highways prevent a park from reaching its entire intended service area, it has been adjusted accordingly.

Close-to-home parks refer to neighborhood parks and community parks that in effect serve as “de facto” neighborhood parks. Community parks typically include the amenities found in neighborhood parks, thereby serving nearby residents as neighborhood parks.

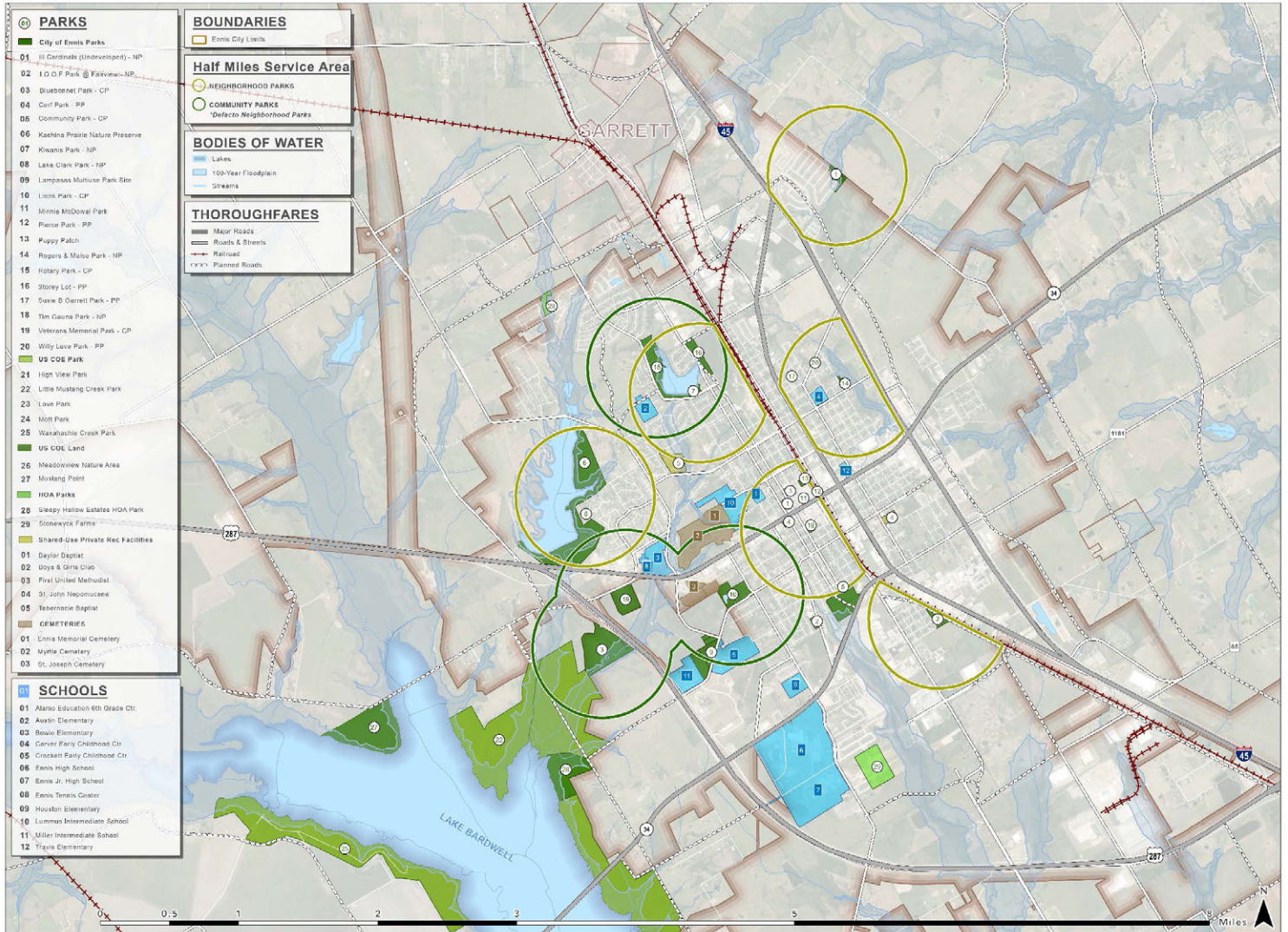


Figure ES-8: Close-to-Home Parks

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Action Items

The highest priority action items are presented in Figure ES-9.

A complete set of recommended action items are presented in **Figure ES-10**. Action items are categorized in terms of:

- Land Acquisition
- Parks & Trails Development and Improvement
- Recreation Facilities
- Initiatives & Future Studies

| Highest Priority Parks & Recreation Action Items | |
|---|---|
| Timeframe for implementing high priority action items is 1 to 3 years | |
| Priority | Action Items |
| 1 | <p>Modernize Parks</p> <p>Improve existing parks to a level that is comparable to the best parks in Ennis, i.e., Rotary and Lions.</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 2 | <p>Complete Tim Gauna Discover Park</p> <p>Finalized design and construction of this high-profile park</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 3 | <p>Waterpark</p> <p>Design and construct a waterpark that includes swimming pools, waterslides, splash pads, shade structures, and restroom facilities</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 4 | <p>Land Acquisition</p> <p>Acquire land as a matter of urgency for all types of parks including the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + 2: Family Focused & Equitable + 3: Healthy Living + 4: Protecting Nature & Culture</i></p> |

Figure ES-9: Highest Priority Parks & Recreation Action Items

Ennis Parks & Recreation Action Items

Land Acquisition

| | |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Protection of Bluebonnets Acquire three areas of land for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers @ ~ 75 acres / protected area |
| 2 | Community Parks Acquire land for new community parks @ 80 to 120 (~ 100 acres) acres / park |
| 3 | Neighborhood Parks Acquire land for new neighborhood parks in areas that do not have neighborhood parks or areas of future development @ 5 to 10 (~ 8 acres) acres / park |
| 4 | Special Purpose / Pocket Parks Acquire land for new special purpose parks, including 1) wildflower viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails, 2) dog park, 3) trailheads, 4) a skate park, and 5) the Storytelling Plaza |
| 5 | Linear Parks Acquire land @ 75ft wide easements to create linear parks, especially along creeks (5 miles easement = 45 acres) |

Parks & Trails Development and Improvement

| | |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Tim Gauna Discovery Park Implement the Tim Gauna Discovery Park |
| 2 | Bluebonnet Viewing Stations Develop viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails to include limited off-road parking and pathways |
| 3 | Rogers and Maise Park Improve and upgrade Rogers and Maise Park with a connection to the Faulkner priority and a theme to celebrate Dr's Rogers and Maise |
| 4 | Bluebonnet Conservation Parks Develop the land acquire for the protection and interpretation of bluebonnets including signage, walking paths, parking, and restrooms; high priority is placed on Meadowview Nature Area |
| 5 | Trails and Bikeways Develop trails and bikeways (an average of 1 to 2 miles of trails per year) |
| 6 | Modernize Neighborhood Parks Improve and modernize 1 neighborhood park every 2 years |
| 7 | Modernize Community Parks Improve and modernize 2 community parks every 4 to 5-years |
| 8 | New Neighborhood Parks Develop new neighborhood parks as land is acquired |
| 9 | New Community Parks Develop new community parks as land is acquired |

Figure ES-10: Complete List of Action Items

| Recreation Facilities | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Waterpark Plan for, design, and construct a water park for Ennis as part of the Municipal Multi-use Municipal Campus on Lampasas |
| 2 | Event Center Event center to replace the event center at Tim Gauna Discovery Park |
| 3 | Multi-use Recreation Center Multi-use and multi-generational recreation center with gymnasiums, meeting rooms, a wet component, and facilities for seniors |
| 4 | Dog Park Plan for, design, and construct a dog park to replace the Puppy Patch |
| 5 | Skatepark Plan for, design, and construct a skate park at a site with high visibility within an existing park or on newly acquired land |
| 6 | Athletic and other Recreation Facilities Provide additional playing fields / courts and recreation facilities with new and upgraded parks |
| Initiatives & Future Studies | |
| 1 | Branding for Parks and Recreation Incorporate the ActiveEnnis brand as part of Ennis PARD outreach, marketing, and activities |
| 2 | Parks Foundation Establish the Ennis Parks Foundation with the mission to secure funding for future parks and trails in terms of land acquisition and development |
| 3 | 10-Minute Walk Campaign Challenge Approach the Mayor to formally commit the City of Ennis to the 10-Minute Walk-to-a-Park Campaign |
| 4 | Create a Bluebonnet Protection Plan Create a plan for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers |
| 5 | Trails & Bikeways Master Plan Create a master plan for a city-wide network of trails and bikeways |
| 6 | Individual Park Master Plans Create master plans for 1) the municipal campus on Lampasas to include a water park, senior center, animal center, 2) Rogers and Maise Park including the extension to Faulkner St., and 3) future community parks |
| 7 | Capitalize on Lake Bardwell Explore recreation opportunities on USACE land associated with Lake Bardwell |
| 8 | Floodplain Master Plan Create a Floodplain Master Plan with the purpose to ensure the protection of 500- and 100-year floodplain areas at build-out conditions for the protection of flood management, habitat protection, water quality, and recreation purposes |
| 9 | Floodplain Ordinance Revise the Floodplain Ordinance to disallow reclamation of the 100-year floodplain at build-out conditions |
| 10 | Mixed-use Developments Create public/private/partnerships as a strategy to provide adequately for parks and recreation in mixed-use developments |
| 11 | Transportation Master Plan Create a master plan for multi-modal transportation to include vehicles, bicycles, transit, and pedestrians |
| 12 | Park Land Dedication Ordinance Review and revise the fees established in the City's Park Land Dedication Ordinance every three years; factors to consider include the cost of land, and inflation in terms of park development costs |



Indian paintbrushes and bluebonnets at Meadowview Nature Area



Taking photos while enjoying the beauty of the bluebonnets at Sugar Ridge

Trail Development

Ennis residents indicated that trails and bikeways are their top priority. As a result one of the action items include a city-wide Trails & Bikeways Master Plan. Since parks are intrinsically linked to trails, this Plan expands on the foundation for trails and bikeways established in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations include trail and bikeway alignments in the form of loop, spine, city, and regional trails. **Figure ES-11** illustrates recommended trail and bikeway alignments, other than regional trails.

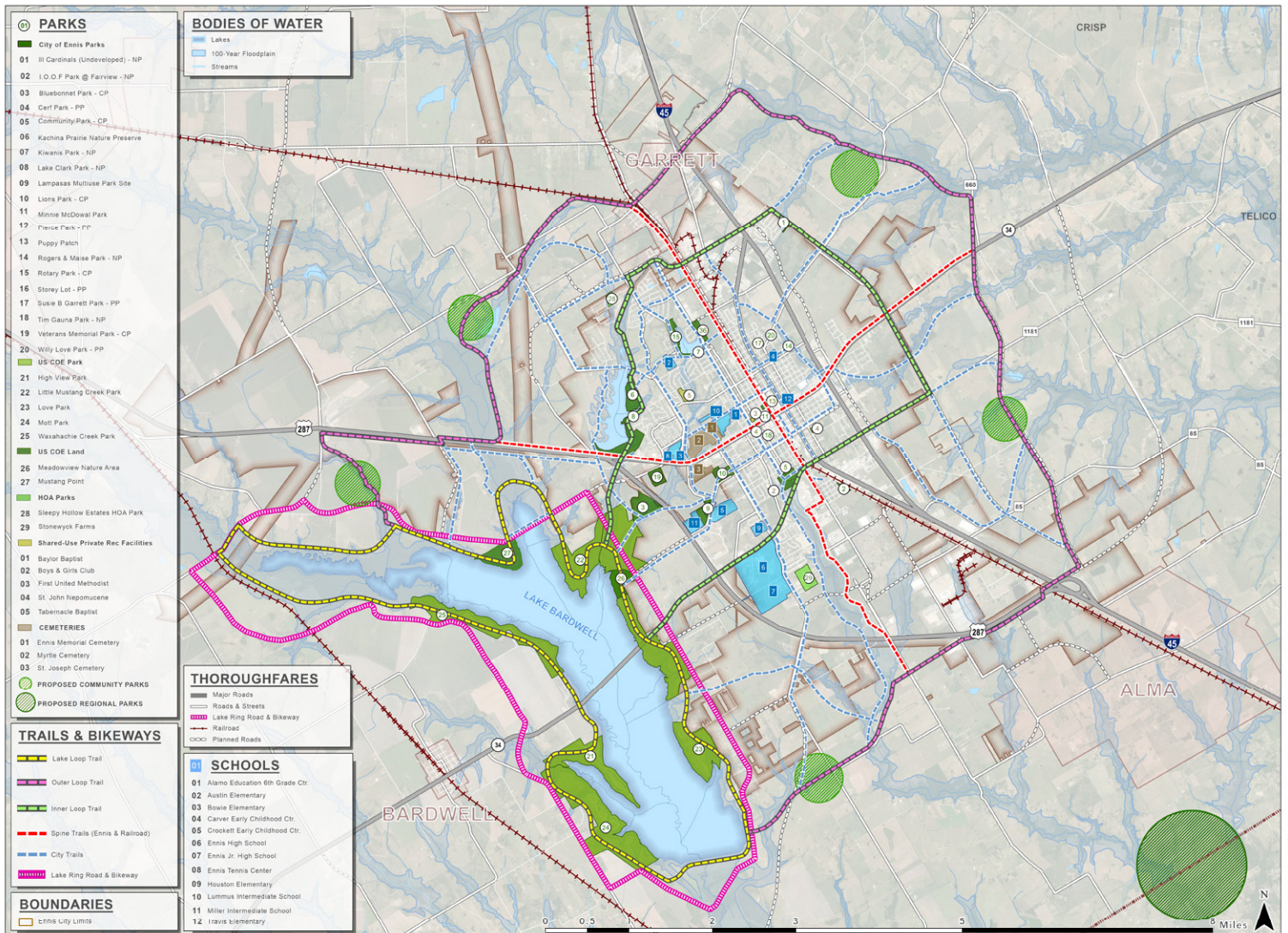


Figure ES-11: City-wide Trail and Bikeway Alignments

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Protection of Bluebonnets

The protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers is a high priority need for the Ennis community. Specific actions items include:

1. Bluebonnet viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails with limited parking, walkways, and picture-perfect views anticipated during the month of April; see **Figure ES-12**.
2. The acquisition of land for the protection of large areas known for their considerable level of wildflower blooming; proposed development for these areas is limited to bluebonnet information centers, walkways, wayfinding and interpretative signage, parking and restrooms facilities; see **Figure ES-12**.

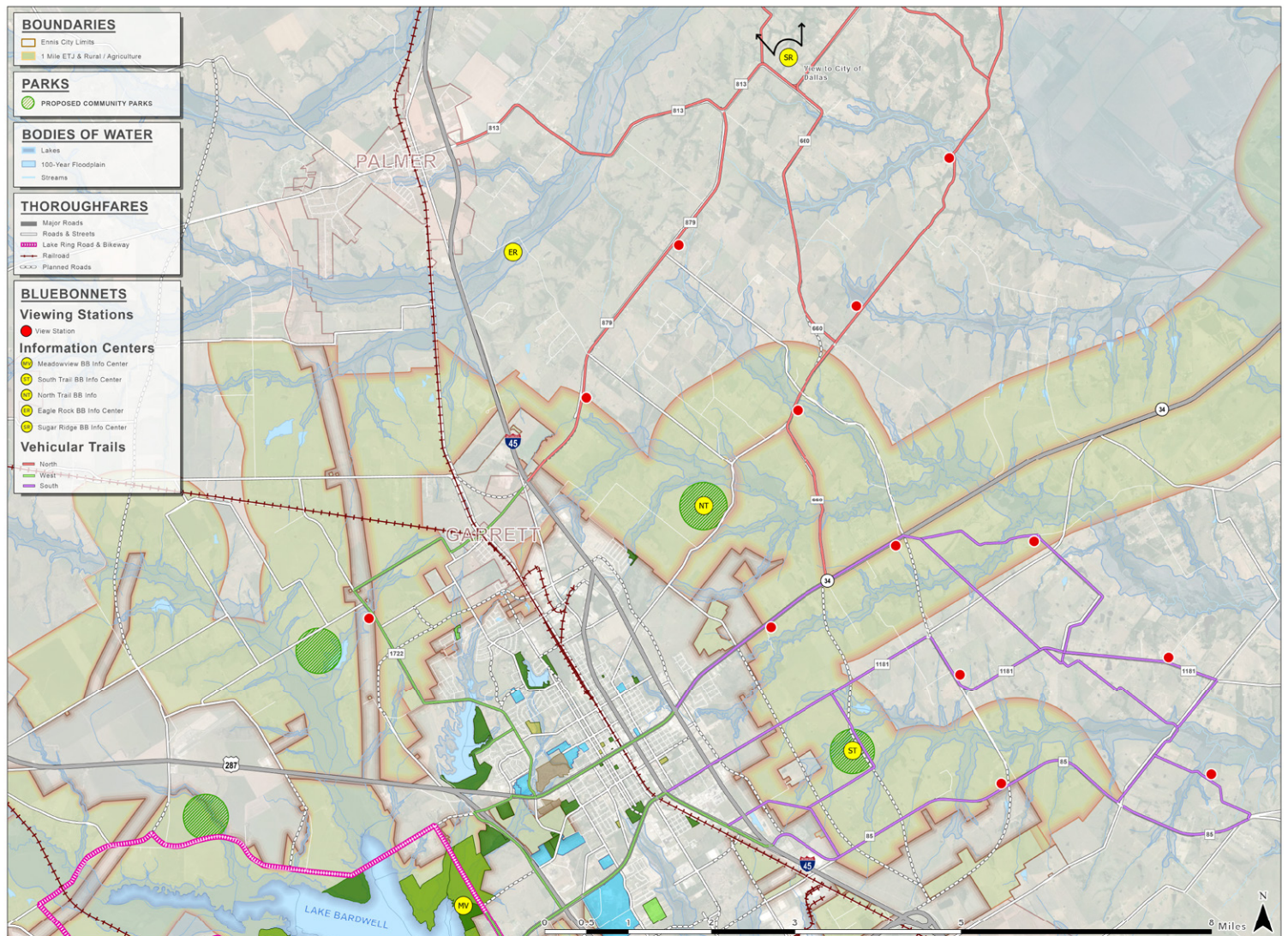


Figure ES-12: Bluebonnet Information Centers and Viewing Stations

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Implementation

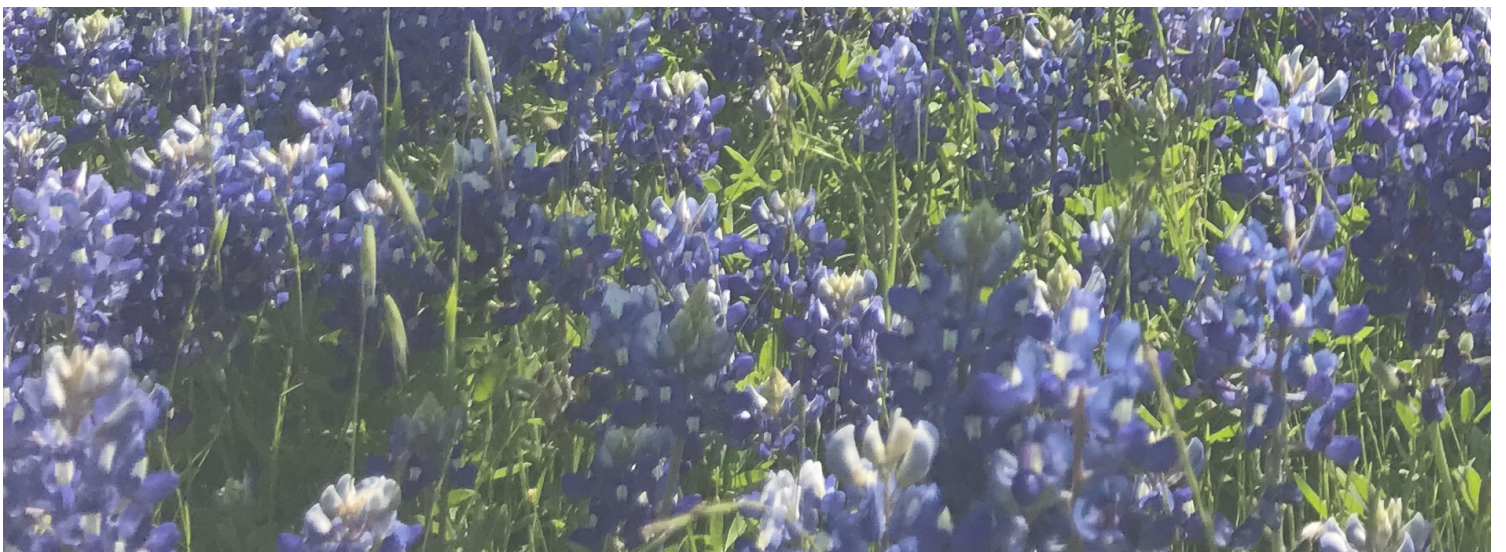
For implementation purposes, the Plan proposes a series of implementation strategies and potential funding sources.

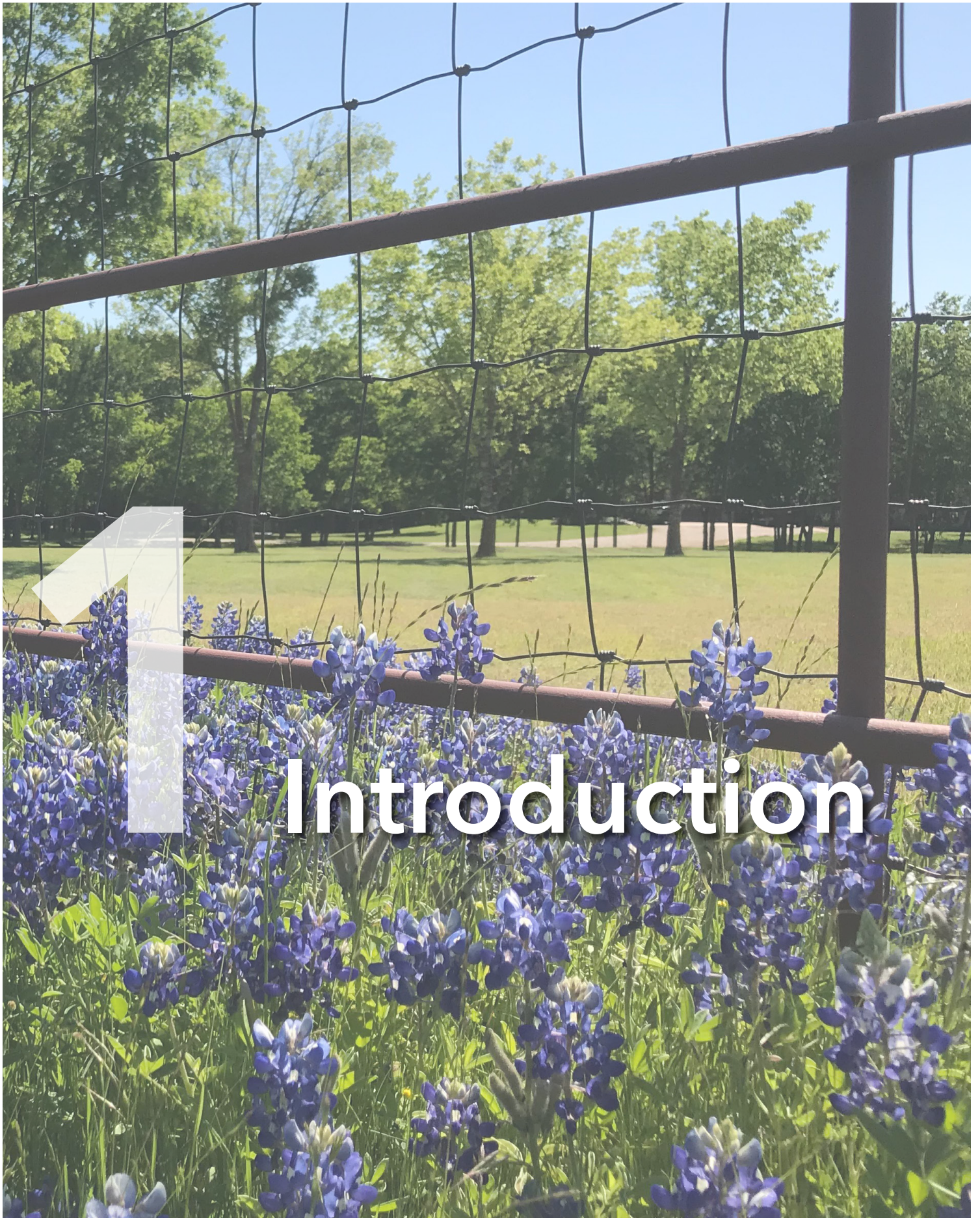
Conclusion

The Ennis Parks Master Plan serves as a guiding document for the enhancement of the city's parks and recreation system in light of imminent anticipated city growth. The Plan envisions a stellar parks and recreation system that brings people together and celebrating the beautiful landscapes of Ennis.



In addition to the huge economic benefit of bluebonnets, they are also the perfect backdrop for family and many other photos





Introduction

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Building on the city's momentum of revitalization and growth, the Ennis Parks Master Plan accounts for direction initiated in recently completed long-range planning efforts, including the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, 2016 Downtown Master Plan, and 2017 Parks Master Plan.

As the City of Ennis is positioned to experience incredible growth over the next decade and beyond, improving the current quality and level of service in the city's park system is vital in attracting the next generation of residents and businesses. This plan directs both public and private development in Ennis by incorporating parks and open space into the fabric of future growth.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Parks Master Plan is to determine the community's needs and preferences as related to parks and recreation, then provide recommendations and actionable steps in Ennis' parkland and open space development.

Recommendations address the need for future facilities, improvements to existing facilities, land acquisition, and future development. The Plan's recommendations are based on current demographic and population projections and should serve as a guide that may adjust based on actual demographics, population, and best practices. Additionally, this plan will support the City of Ennis in applying for grants from federal, state, and regional entities.

As a planning document, the themes and recommendations of the Parks Master Plan will echo the values and priorities that the community places on public space by providing the framework to guide the stewardship of Ennis' parks and open spaces for future generations to enjoy .



Gathering pavilion and shaded playground at the IOOF Park at Fairview

1.3 Planning Process

The planning process followed during the development of this Parks Master Plan is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**. A staff-prepared inventory served as the basis for an evaluation of existing conditions, facilities, and amenities. This was supplemented by a tour of the city’s existing park infrastructure

The Parks Master Plan’s development was guided by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the City Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, local recreation league directors, and various other community leaders.

Public outreach and engagement occurred by means of various touch points throughout the duration of the planning process. Targeted community meetings were held during the master plan’s “Week of Engagement,” during which time the planning team interviewed steering committee members and met with focus groups assembled under city staff’s direction.

A community survey was made available online in both English and Spanish for residents to provide input on specific parks and recreation issues. A separate survey that targeted sports and recreation organizations was distributed to league directors and leaders of community groups who use Ennis’ parks and facilities.

The analysis performed as part of this planning process and the resulting recommendations and priorities are based on the needs of the citizens as identified through the public involvement process. The Plan results in an Action Plan, which includes specific items to be implemented in the near-term (5 year) and long-term (10 year) future.

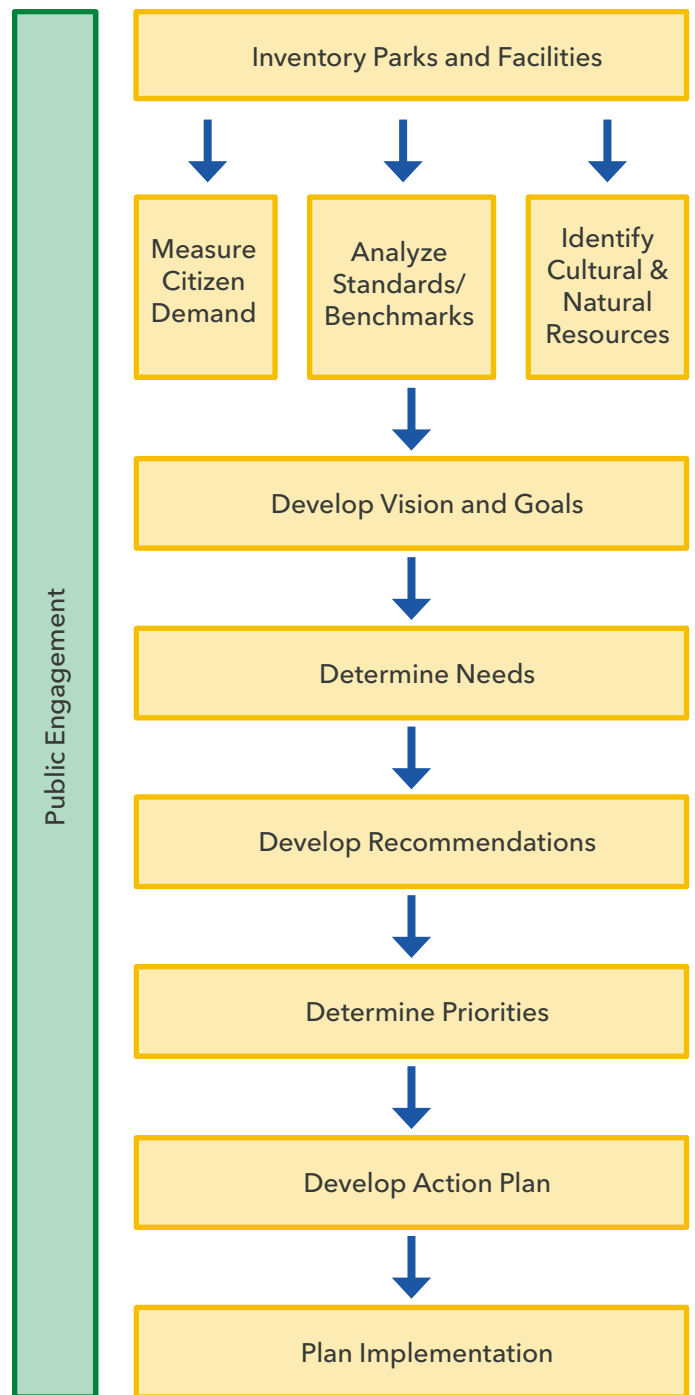


Figure 1.1: Planning Process
This flow chart illustrates the planning process followed during the preparation of the Parks Master Plan.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology for determining the parks and recreation needs of the community comprises a combination of three distinct methods:

Demand based needs

Determined by community engagement

Resource based needs

Determined by natural and cultural assets

Standard based needs

Determined by target standards for parkland acreage and recreation facilities

All three methods should inform decisions in future park planning, as each method champions a crucial component of park and recreation facility growth. These evaluation methods are not mutually exclusive from one another; in fact, needs determined by one evaluation method often serve to strengthen the need as determined by another method.



Children and grown ups enjoy feeding the ducks at Old City Lake in Kiwanis Park

1.5 ActiveEnnis

Creating a brand for the Parks Master Plan is an essential component of the planning process. It helps with easy identification of community engagement activities associated with the Plan and if so desired, may live on beyond the planning period to help advocate and promote implementation of the Plan.

The **ActiveEnnis** slogan represents the city's residents, who are both physically active as well as active citizens in their tight-knit community. The Parks Master Plan brand includes a unique logo with rotating symbols, which allows for easy identification, as well as flexibility that supports the department's wide umbrella of responsibilities. The digital version of the logo is animated to rotate through various symbols of recreation activities.

The slogan, logo, and symbols were used throughout the public engagement process, and are applied within this planning document.

The Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) may choose to use this branding in correspondence, programming materials, facilities, and marketing content. The ultimate goal is to make **ActiveEnnis** the face of all activities for which Ennis PAR is responsible.



The **ActiveEnnis** slogan applied to apparel and showcased by Steering Committee member Meg Sullivan, DTJ Project Manager Francois de Kock, and PAR Director Paul Liska.



Figure 1.2: ActiveEnnis Logo and Symbol Iterations
ActiveEnnis logo and symbol iterations as seen in the animated GIF version

1.6 Report Outline

Each chapter highlights a vital component of the park master planning process. This Parks Master Plan is organized into eight chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

The plan's introduction defines the purpose for the Master Plan, outlines a series of goals developed through the planning process, and explains the planning process.

Chapter 2: Context

Ennis' rich history is described in Chapter 2. The city's demographics are analyzed, then followed with a summarized review of previous long range planning documents that influence this Parks Master Plan.

Chapter 3: Visioning

Public outreach and community survey efforts are outlined in Chapter 3, followed by trends and common themes derived from the community's input. Following key engagement results, this chapter culminates with a vision statement and goals for Ennis' parks and recreation.

Chapter 4: Natural & Cultural Resources

This chapter describes the natural and cultural assets of Ennis and defines the community's resource-based needs.

Chapter 5: Parks & Open Space

Chapter 4 analyzes the city's existing parks and recreation facilities, focusing on needs and level of service. The chapter is rounded out with a series of recommendations.

Chapter 6: Recreation Facilities & Programming

This chapter addresses outdoor recreation facilities and programming including trails and bikeways, with some level of reference to indoor facilities.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

A key outcome of the planning process is the recommendations for various categories including land acquisition for parks, development of new parks, renovation and upgrade of existing parks, recreation facilities, and policies, city initiatives and future studies.

Chapter 8: Implementation Plan

This chapter provides a high level summary of the parks and recreation needs and recommendations, followed by implementation action items, funding sources, and partnerships.

Figures

Supporting tables, graphs, and graphics are presented as figures..

Appendices

Detailed data referencing information described and/or discussed within the report, is provided and referenced as appendices. The appendices are organized in three categories: 1) Parks and Recreation, 2) Community Engagement, and 3) Community Development and Parks.

Exhibits

Maps that describe and illustrate various aspects of the Plan are presented as exhibits.







2

Context

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT

The Context chapter is the result of the consultant team reviewing existing city documents, discussions with City of Ennis Staff as well as other agencies, publicly available information such as from the U. S. Census Bureau, and numerous other sources.

2.1 Location

Ennis is located in eastern Ellis County, less than an hour southeast of Dallas. The city has a total area of 28.2 square miles, 0.54 square miles of which is water. Ennis' humid subtropical climate results in hot, humid summers and mild to cool winters, making Ennis appealing for outdoor activities.

2.2 History

The land where the City of Ennis is located was first inhabited by the Tonkawa Native Americans. The land also served as hunting grounds for several other Native American tribes, including the Bidai, Waco, Anadarko, and Kickapoo tribes. Anglo pioneers arrived by the mid-1800's, settling in sparsely populated farmsteads throughout what is now Ellis County.

Ellis County was formally established in 1850, as communities such as Waxahachie, Ovilla, and Bristol began to take root. The land that would soon become Ennis was acquired by the Houston and Texas Central Railroad (H&TC) in 1871 with the purchase of 647 acres in southeastern Ellis County, forming the rail line's northern terminus. The City of Ennis was formally founded one year later in 1872. Cornelius Ennis, an early official of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, was the town's namesake. Ennis served as Mayor of Houston (1856-1857), incorporated and directed the Great Northern Railroad, and served as director of the H&TC Railroad.

The City of Ennis' position as a rail hub fostered the town's early growth as an agricultural, commercial, and later, industrial center. In 1920, a total of 153,000 bales of cotton were ginned in Ellis County, the most in any county in America. By 1930, Ennis was known as the place "Where Railroads and Cotton Fields Meet". As the city has grown, Ennis has successfully repositioned its strategic business focus from railroad, to agriculture, to modern industry and commerce. With a thriving industry base, today Ennis is largely a bedroom community with citizens commuting to the DFW metroplex .



Ennis Street in Downtown served as one of the main gathering places during community events in the past. Source: Ennis Historical Society

2.3 Demographic Analysis

Shifting demographics can change the makeup of a city and with that, a community's need for parks and recreation services, facilities, and programming. It is imperative to note that the demographic characteristics and projected population contained in this section are derived from the U.S. Census data, Ellis County data, and City of Ennis data and staff input. Though indicative of general size of the service area's population, projections are approximate .

Population Growth

Ennis's population growth since 1980 is documented in **Figure 2.1** Ellis County and the City of Waxahachie are included in this table for comparison purposes. Ennis' population has steadily increased since the mid-1900's, with a small slowdown in the 1980's and 2010's. Most notably, Ennis is anticipated to nearly double in size in the next 8 years and continue in a major upward trend through 2060.

| Population Growth in Ennis | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Year | Ennis | | Ellis County | | Waxahachie | |
| | Population | Growth | Population | Growth | Population | Growth |
| 1920 | 7,224 | | 55,700 | | 7,958 | |
| 1930 | 7,069 | -2.1% | 53,939 | -3.2% | 8,042 | 1.1% |
| 1940 | 7,087 | 0.3% | 47,733 | -11.5% | 8,655 | 7.6% |
| 1950 | 7,815 | 10.3% | 45,645 | -4.4% | 11,204 | 29.5% |
| 1960 | 9,347 | 19.6% | 43,350 | -5.0% | 12,749 | 13.8% |
| 1970 | 11,046 | 18.2% | 46,638 | 7.6% | 13,452 | 5.5% |
| 1980 | 12,102 | 9.6% | 59,743 | 28.1% | 14,624 | 8.7% |
| 1990 | 13,883 | 14.7% | 85,167 | 42.6% | 17,984 | 23.0% |
| 2000 | 16,045 | 15.6% | 112,448 | 32.0% | 21,426 | 19.1% |
| 2010 | 18,513 | 15.4% | 150,367 | 33.7% | 29,621 | 38.2% |
| 2019 | 20,357 | 10.0% | 184,826 | 22.9% | 37,988 | 28.2% |
| 2020 | 20,780 | 2.1% | 192,445 | 28.0% | 40,716 | 7.2% |
| 2021 | 21,203 | 2.0% | | | | |

Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/elliscountytexas>

Figure 2.1: Population Growth in Ennis

This table compares the population growth of Ennis with Ellis County and Waxahachie

| Population Projections in Ennis | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------|
| Year | Ennis | |
| | Population | Growth |
| 2021 | 21,203 | 2.0% |
| 2030 | 40,000 | 88.7% |
| 2040 | 60,000 | 50.0% |
| 2060 | 100,000 | 66.7% |

Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/elliscountytexas>

Figure 2.2: Population Projections in Ennis

This table analyzes the projected population and growth of Ennis.

Age Characteristics

Ennis has a slightly larger population of both children under 5 and children 5-17 compared to neighboring cities and the state of Texas as a whole. As a result, the city's population of adults 16-65 is marginally lower than comparable jurisdictions. Ennis' 65+ senior population is marginally higher than the comparison entities provided in the table. Overall, Ennis' age distribution is on par with nearby cities and the state of Texas.

Racial Characteristics

The U.S. Census Bureau considers Hispanic/Latino an ethnicity rather than a race. A person of any race may be of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. **Table 2.4** accounts for respondents who identify as Hispanic and those who identify as non-Hispanic, as provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.

| Age Characteristics in Ennis | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Age Group | Texas | | Ennis | | Ellis County | | Waxahachie | |
| | Population | Growth | Population | Growth | Population | Growth | Population | Growth |
| Under 5 | 2,000,716 | 6.9% | 2,000,716 | 6.7% | 1,608 | 7.9% | 2,887 | 7.6% |
| 5-17 | 7,393,950 | 25.5% | 7,393,950 | 26.5% | 5,619 | 27.6% | 9,877 | 26.0% |
| 18-65 | 15,860,747 | 54.7% | 15,860,747 | 53.7% | 10,333 | 49.2% | 20,438 | 53.8% |
| 65+ | 3,740,469 | 12.9% | 3,740,469 | 13.1% | 2,797 | 13.7% | 4,786 | 12.6% |

Source: United States Census Bureau; 2019 Estimates

Figure 2.3: Age Characteristics in Ennis

Age Characteristics in Ennis, TX.

| Race Characteristics in Ennis | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Race | Percentage (Hispanic) |
| White (Non-Hispanic) | 36.30 |
| White (Hispanic) | 37.90 |
| Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) | 15.10 |
| Other (Hispanic) | 5.36 |
| Multiracial (Hispanic) | 2.41 |
| Multiracial (Non-Hispanic) | 2.05 |
| American Indian & Alaska Native (Hispanic) | 0.38 |
| American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) | 0.31 |
| Asian (Non-Hispanic) | 0.16 |
| Black or African American (Hispanic) | 0.07 |

Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/enniscitytexas>

Figure 2.4: Race Characteristics in Ennis

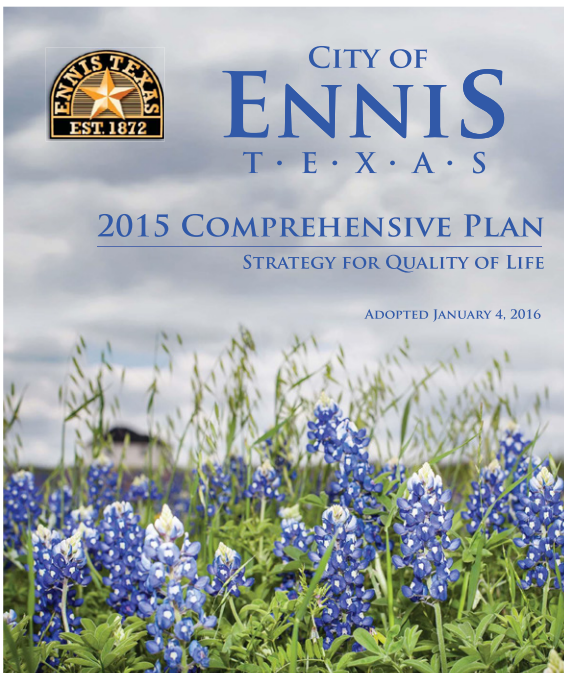
Race Characteristics in Ennis, TX.

2.4 Other City Plans

With a Comprehensive Plan that established a clear vision for the future of the City, a Downtown Master Plan that has brought new life to Ennis' beautiful Downtown, and the initial and first Parks Master Plan prepared by staff, the City has demonstrated its commitment to implement the recommendations of these planning efforts. The momentum created by these planning documents and the tremendous growth in the housing market create a sense of urgency in establishing a road map for the future of Ennis' parks and recreation system.

Comprehensive Plan

The City of Ennis adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 2015. This long-range plan calls for the equitable distribution of parkland, allowing residents to live within a five to 10-minute walk from a park. This document recommends a Parks and Recreation Master Plan be conducted, evaluating the need for recreation facilities and an updated regulatory process.



Cover sheet, City of Ennis 2015 Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive visioning process outlined a series of guiding values, each defined in terms of a reason, goal, objective, and strategy. Values set forth in this document pertain to quality of life, prioritizing the family unit, celebrating Ennis' cultural diversity and rich history, protecting the city's natural resources, growing sustainably, and fostering civic pride.

Each of these guiding values can be supported by a robust parks system. Vibrant public parks create a city that residents can be proud of. This civic pride leads to increased support for public improvement projects, which in turn improves the quality of life in a community.

Ennis' need for parkland acreage was determined by evaluating demand-based need, resource-based need, and standard-based need. The plan established a goal of having "close to home" parks throughout the city, establishing equitable access to neighborhood parks for all residents. Identifying Ennis' most valuable natural resources – i.e. grassland prairie, creeks, lakes, and rural land – the Comprehensive Plan highlights the importance of preserving and celebrating these environmental features.

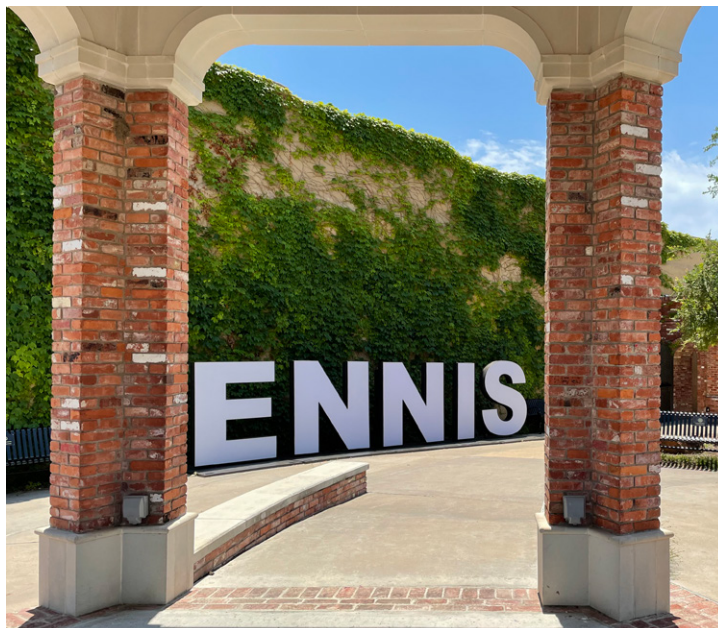
Tremendous potential exists for parkland based on existing resources found in and around the city, often involving the protection of natural and cultural features. The City of Ennis puts major emphasis on its most treasured natural resource – wildflowers. There are both cultural and economic incentives to protecting Ennis' native landscape: a healthy parks system centered around Ennis' natural environment will support a robust economy rooted in eco-tourism. Future parkland development should account for the economic impact of wildflower viewing and include measures to ensure harmony between landowners and tourists, as described in the Comprehensive Plan.

Downtown Ennis has enormous potential to function as the heart of the city. The comprehensive plan evaluates downtown's issues and opportunities, while calling for the creation of a Downtown Master Plan.

Downtown Master Plan

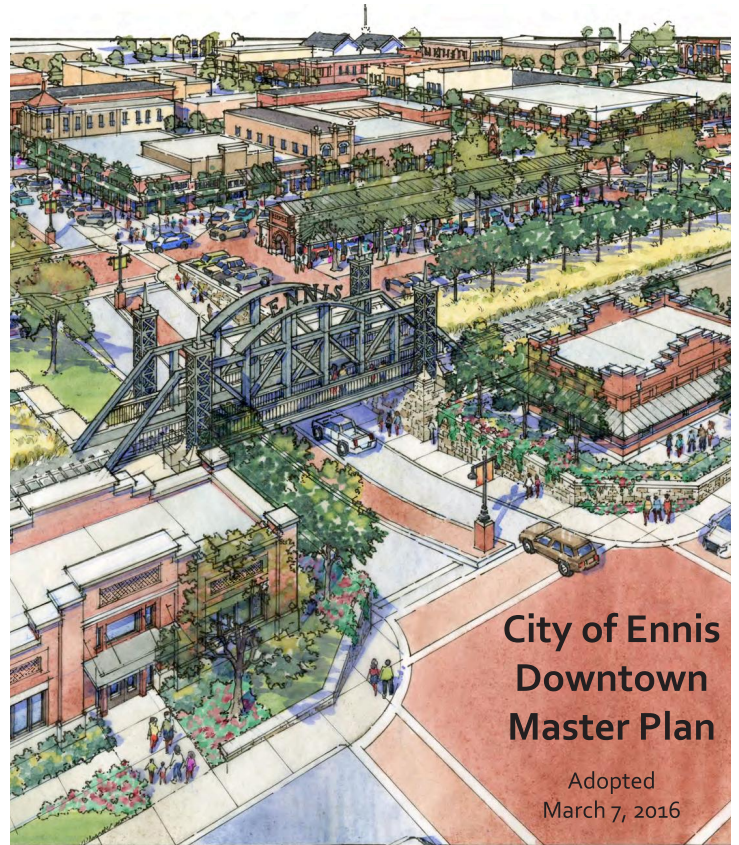
Using an extensive public input process, the Ennis Downtown Master Plan forms a cohesive concept for a revitalized and connected Downtown. This plan establishes Ennis' vision for a quaint, safe, and walkable Downtown that fosters local commerce and encourages community gatherings. By serving as a central place in residents' daily lives, Downtown Ennis in its entirety has the potential to function as a public park - "Everybody's Neighborhood."

This plan evaluates existing land use, building codes, economic and market factors, Downtown's physical fabric, while calling for improvements to water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Primary design components include entrance portals, focus points, links, and catalyst projects for implementation as well as an economic strategy for the public and private sector. Physical focal points are designed around existing cultural centers, like the Mercado Anchor Plaza. Celebrating Ennis' rich history, this master plan provides a blueprint for future growth while preserving the city's small-town charm.



The city name Ennis is proudly displayed at Minnie McDowal Park

Goals to guide Downtown's growth include forming parking and pedestrian connections, revitalizing Pierce Park, and fostering a lively destination for shopping, dining, events, and entertainment. A Framework Plan was developed to help implement the master plan's goals and identify Catalyst Projects.



Cover sheet, City of Ennis Downtown Master Plan, 2016

2017 Parks Master Plan

The 2017 Parks Master Plan establishes a series of goals aimed at improving existing parkland and programming while acquiring future parkland consistent with the city's growth. A vision for a connected open space system centered around Ennis' parks, schools, and greenbelts is outlined in the document. Special emphasis is placed on recreational programming and facility maintenance. As this master plan did not include a public engagement component, an additional goal was established to include a citizen participation process in all ongoing park planning and design and in future Park Master Plan efforts.

To aid in future parkland development, standards are established for neighborhood and community park classifications. Neighborhood parks should be comprised of equal parts active and passive recreation areas. Passive space can be used to develop a park's character, integrating it with the surrounding neighborhood. Active recreation facilities provide opportunities for residents to visit a park and experience the atmosphere created by its passive space.

Community parks are larger in size and serve a wider geographic area of the city than neighborhood parks. Thus, Community Parks are more likely to require a vehicle and additional parking to access. Special amenities help make each community park unique and incentivize visitors from across the city. Many Community Parks will feature athletic complexes but should always be accompanied by other amenities like playgrounds, game areas, picnicking facilities, and support facilities like restrooms, concession stands, and maintenance facilities.

The plan provides recommendations for improving existing parks and a list of criteria for consideration in future parks. Recommendations include incorporating US Army Corps of Engineers parkland into Ennis' park system as the city's population growth extends towards Lake Bardwell. This plan also calls for a parkland dedication ordinance to be established to secure future parkland as the city undergoes increased private development.

Trails system goals outlined in the Parks Master Plan propose building perimeter and loop trails through existing parks and providing an open space system which links parks, schools, greenbelts, neighborhoods, business/retail areas, USACE Parks, traditional gathering spaces, and open spaces. Also proposed is a web of trails, creating thoroughly vetted parkland connections throughout the city.



Playground at Rotary park





CHAPTER 3: VISIONING

3.1 Introduction

The City of Ennis finds itself amid significant opportunities to become one of the premier destinations in the DFW metroplex. Anticipating the future and what could lie ahead has prompted city leaders and staff to develop this Parks Master Plan that will proactively prepare the city for a cohesive system of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities – in particular, a city-wide parks system that is orderly, feasible, and realizes the vision, values, and goals of the Ennis community.

Every community requires a unique combination of public engagement strategies designed to reach the entire community – from seniors to students, online and offline, across multiple languages, and across all socio-economic groups. The public engagement process is used to build consensus by identifying common themes that even opposing groups share. This master plan is built around community values and priorities that have been identified during the public engagement process.

Community engagement is also the basis for determining demand based needs for parks and recreation.

3.2 Community Outreach

Outreach Meetings

The **ActiveEnnis** “Week of Engagement” was held from September 13th through September 17th. A series of meetings were held with the Steering Committee and Focus Groups to obtain input on parks and recreation matters from those who live, work, and play in Ennis. A set of discussion topics and questions was developed for these meetings to aid the planning team in identifying common themes in participants’ responses. Mural, an online collaboration tool, was used during these meetings to help guide discussion, record responses, and collect additional feedback from participants after the meeting had ended.

Focus group and steering committee members were established under the direction of City Staff and included many individuals from diverse positions in the Ennis Community. Focus groups were comprised of representatives from the city commission, parks board, EISD, local business owners, church leaders, local parents, and leaders of community and recreational organizations. Additionally, several community members were identified for individual interviews.



Community engagement during the opening of the spray park at Rotary Park

Event-in-a-Park

During the opening weekend of the splash pad at Rotary Park, the planning team and members of the Steering Committee attended the event for outreach and engagement purposes. Under a canopy set up by PARD, visitors participated in interactive activities, while the team answered questions from the public.

Website

[ActiveEnnis.com](https://www.activeennis.com) was created by CivicBrand to promote the Parks Master Plan efforts, distribute news and information related to the plan, and host the online community survey. Throughout the project's timeline, project news was published, a project status was provided, general project info was made available, and users were provided a link to the web-based community survey. The website was made available in both English and Spanish.



Homepage of the **ActiveEnnis** website

3.3 Surveys

To develop recommendations for this Parks Master Plan, it is imperative the planning team understands how Ennis residents interact with parks and open space. There are many factors that affect a park system's level of service, including location, quantity, quality, accessibility, amenities, and safety, to name a few. Public feedback is directly influenced by these factors.

Sports League Survey

A web-based survey, also hosted through Google Forms, specifically targeted feedback sports leagues and other recreational groups that use Ennis' Parks and Recreation Department facilities. This Sports League survey contained 15 questions. Survey questions and response summaries can be found in **Appendix B1: Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues Survey**.

Community Survey

A web-based survey hosted through Google Forms was administered from October 2021 to January 2022. The survey was administered in both English and Spanish to ensure all Ennis residents were able to provide their input. With 27 questions, the survey took an average of 20 minutes for residents to complete. A total of 484 survey responses were collected.

Questions gathered respondents' general demographic information and information on where respondents live, work, and play. The survey also included multi-part, open-ended, and ranking questions focusing on users' priorities and needs in their park system.

A follow-up survey was administered online resulting in a total of 27 responses. Survey questions and response summaries can be found in **B2: ActiveEnnis Engagement Report**.

Community Survey Results

The following is a selection of responses provided by the 484 residents who completed the Community Survey.

Recreation Participation

Residents' participation in recreation activities within the last year, revealed quite an interesting result:

- 90% visited a local park
- 78% participated in running/ walking/ hiking
- 63% took children to a playground
- 62% viewed wildflowers/ scenery

This tells us that parks and playgrounds play a significant role in people's lives, that trails or sidewalks are important, and that residents enjoy the annual blooming of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.

The other noticeable fact is that the top ten activities are all non-competitive activities, whereas competitive activities feature all in the bottom half of the list. This does not mean that competitive activities are not important. What it does tell us is that less than 25% of people participate in such activities, i.e., football (22%), soccer (19%), baseball (18%), and basketball (16%).

Recreation Participation

Top ten activities

- 90% - Visiting a local park
- 78% - Running / Walking / Hiking
- 63% - Taking children to playground
- 62% - Viewing wildflowers / scenery
- 48% - Training / Exercise
- 48% - Dog Walking
- 39% - Swimming
- 39% - Fishing
- 28% - Cycling
- 27% - Camping

Recreation Participation

Eleven and below

- 22% - Football
- 21% - Dancing
- 19% - Soccer
- 18% - Baseball
- 16% - Basketball
- 14% - Volleyball
- 12% - Tennis
- 9% - Skateboarding
- 9% - Softball
- 6% - Archery
- 6% - Disc golf
- 5% - Pickleball
- 2% - Hockey

Parks and Recreation

Two questions that were unprompted, meaning it was open ended with no list or examples provided, asked (1) what people like to see in parks, and (2) what they would like to see in terms of recreation.

The figures present the top four items people want to see in terms of (1) parks, and (2) recreation.

Preferences in terms of parks (unprompted)

Top four items

1. Walking/running trails
2. Playgrounds: new /upgraded
3. Biking trails and cycling
4. Shade i.e., pavilions, trees, and shaded playgrounds

Preferences in terms of recreation (unprompted)

Top four items

1. Swimming pools/ water park
2. Walking/running trails
3. Biking trails and cycling
4. Indoor recreation

Recreation Facilities

Two questions asked how important it is for Ennis to provide new or additional facilities in terms of (1) organized sport and athletics, and (2) unorganized recreation activities.

Preferences for: Organized sports & athletics

41% to 58%

- 58% - Youth baseball fields
- 55% - Youth softball fields
- 51% - Under 8 soccer fields
- 51% - Under 12 soccer fields
- 51% - Youth football fields
- 51% - Skateboard parks
- 50% - Under 16 soccer fields
- 45% - In-line hockey rink
- 44% - Tennis courts
- 41% - Sand volleyball courts

6% - 24%

- 24% - Adult soccer fields
- 22% - Adult baseball fields
- 21% - In-line skating rink
- 18% - Adult flag football fields
- 18% - Pickleball courts
- 18% - Adult kickball fields
- 7% - Rugby fields
- 7% - Lacrosse fields
- 6% - Cricket fields

Preferences for: Unorganized recreation

81% to 91%

- 91% - Lighting and security features
- 90% - Multi-use trails for walking/jogging
- 89% - Shade pavilions
- 86% - Family picnic areas
- 83% - Playgrounds
- 81% - Community gathering spaces

60% to 75%

- 75% - Water park / splash pads
- 74% - Natural habitat/nature areas
- 72% - Outdoor swimming pool
- 69% - Indoor recreation center
- 66% - Outdoor festival area
- 60% - Outdoor performance amphitheater

42% to 57%

- 57% - Basketball courts
- 53% - Wildflower viewing areas
- 52% - Dog parks / off-leash dog areas
- 48% - Open play fields for pick-up games
- 44% - Tennis courts
- 42% - Cornhole boards
- 42% - Outdoor fitness equipment

10% to 37%

- 37% - Horseshoe pits
- 32% - Disc golf course
- 30% - Bird watching facilities
- 23% - Equestrian trails
- 17% - Shuffleboard courts
- 17% - Pickleball courts
- 10% - Pump tracks

Trails and Bikeways

In terms of a city-wide trail system, a question was asked about the importance for Ennis to consider each of 11 items listed.

Items associated with a city-wide trail system

53% to 91%

- 91% - Recreational walking or hiking
- 80% - Nature trails
- 70% - Recreational cycling
- 63% - Walking/cycling connections to nearby schools
- 53% - Widen some thoroughfares for bike lanes

22% to 46%

- 46% - Road biking trails
- 43% - Cycling to get to work or a store
- 40% - Mountain biking trails
- 32% - Inline skating
- 22% - Horseback riding

Inclusivity and Accessibility

Inclusivity and accessibility are important topics. Investigating it in terms of parks and recreation led to an inquiry whether people (1) can learn about it in their own language, (2) have access to training and education, (3) need financial assistance to participate, (4) have access to gear and equipment, and (5) can participate when mobility challenged.

Considering this inquiry, a question was asked about the importance of the City of Ennis investing resources to improve inclusivity and accessibility to parks and recreation. While many respondents were neutral, much fewer were against any of the items listed.

Importance of Ennis to invest resources in improving inclusivity and accessibility

- 72% - Access for mobility challenged
- 49% - Financial assistance for participating in recreation activities
- 49% - Education / training / mentorship
- 47% - % - Access to gear / equipment
- 43% - Transportation & access to facilities
- 36% - Language translations

3.4 Community Values & Priorities

Outreach Feedback

Quality of fields for youth sports

The most traditional youth sports in Ennis – football and soccer – currently have enough fields to practice and compete on. The quality of these fields, though, often hinders teams’ ability to practice and play. Drainage issues plague nearly all fields, resulting in rained-out games. A field that cannot drain properly can result in several days of closed fields following a rain event. Rain-outs also affect tournaments at Bluebonnet Park, preventing the city from collecting valuable funds from field rental fees.

Quantity of youth sport facilities

While Ennis does have sufficient football and soccer fields for its current population, participants stated the city’s park system lacks facilities for other common youth sports like track & field events. With nowhere to participate in these sports, Ennis’ youth are forced to join leagues in surrounding cities. Participants conveyed a concern that Ennis’ talented youth are winning titles under other cities names. Ennis deserves proper recognition for the success of the community’s youth; the ability to provide facilities that meet these youths’ need will help them get there.

Connectivity

- Unsafe to bike on roads
- Few sidewalks on major roads
- Nowhere to run long along a loop
- Nowhere to bike long distances

Shade

Some of Ennis’ parks, like Lions Park, provide space for a shady stroll, though most parks lack sufficient tree cover or shade structures. Residents expressed a need for more shade throughout the parks system, especially along trails.

3.5 Issues & Opportunities

Issues

- **Limited quality of life amenities**, especially on a residential level
- **Inequitable access** to parks, trails, open space, and quality amenities are prevalent throughout the city.
- Open spaces are **disconnected**.
- Factors inhibit usability and/or playability of recreational amenities, including **shade, drainage, security, and lighting**.

Opportunities

- **Lake Bardwell** provides an avenue for lake-associated recreation.
- **Wildflowers** promote tourism and civic pride, supporting the preservation of bluebonnet trails and open spaces.
- **Ennis’ cultural diversity** presents ample opportunity for more cultural events and heritage celebrated in public spaces.
- **Imminent, rapid development** provides opportunity to incorporate parkland requirements into future development. Parkland standards of a higher caliber can be set by the city without inhibiting the city’s ability to grow.
- **Downtown’s momentum** is a catalyst for improving the downtown open spaces as well as being connected to the surrounding communities and other park
- **Invested parents and community members** help support programming, both fiscally and through volunteer efforts.



*The bluebonnet
spirit of Texas*



ENNIS
TEXAS



3.6 Vision

Guiding Values

Public participation served as the foundation for determining the community values, which contributed to the establishment of the following guiding values for the Parks Master Plan.

- Quality of life is the driving principle
- Foster lifelong, healthy habits
- Instill a love of learning and exploring
- Celebrate and respect natural assets
- Celebrate and honor Ennis' rich cultural heritage
- Support tourism
- Promote sustainable growth/ sustainable living
- Provide equitable access to parks and open spaces
- Create accessible, inclusive, family-oriented open space for every resident and visitor, regardless of age or ability, to find Ennis as a welcoming space to recreate in
- Capitalize on Downtown as a park

PARD Vision & Mission

When considering a vision for this Parks Master Plan, it is important not to dismiss the current PARD Vision and Mission. In fact, the PARD Vision and Mission are considered complimentary to the vision for the Parks Master Plan.



PARD Vision:

Creating a thriving community through people, parks, and social recreation

PARD Mission:

- Enhance the community's quality of life by providing safe, well-maintained parks and public places
- Offer practical recreational programs to meet the fitness, social, and cultural needs of the community
- Modernize athletic facilities while preserving trails, green spaces, and common areas
- Develop future park projects and enrichment needs to sustain municipal growth
- Provide prompt first class customer service to everyone who visits our park system

Figure 3.1: Vision and Mission of the Ennis Parks and Recreation Department

Vision Statement

The guiding values culminate in the formulation of a vision statement for Ennis' parks and recreation. This vision statement is complimentary to the Ennis PARD Vision and Mission.

Ennis' parks and recreation system fosters a vibrant, equitable community by respecting natural assets, honoring rich cultural diversity, instilling healthy habits, and promoting a love of exploration.

Dissecting the Vision Statement reveals the following:

Ennis' parks and recreation system fosters a vibrant and equitable community

Vibrant = Filled with life and energy.

This means that parks and recreation serve as the means to establish a community that is vibrant with people active to improve themselves and others.

Equitable = Fair minded and just.

An equitable community means all social, age, and cultural groups have easy access to parks and recreation amenities and programs.

This is achieved by:

Respecting natural assets

Meaning:

- Protecting the natural environment, i.e.
 - Creek corridors including a buffer beyond the 100-year floodplain
 - Prairieland where still available
 - Land that produces wildflowers
- Provide access with limited impact on the natural environment
 - Natural trails
 - Allow for nature exploration

Honoring rich cultural diversity

Meaning:

- Provide recreation programming attractive for all groups of people, including Hispanic, African American, Cheyenne, and other cultural groups
- Be welcoming to outside visitors to Ennis

Instilling healthy habits

Meaning:

- Provide close and convenient access to parks and trails

Promoting a love of exploration

Meaning:

- Promote nature-based activities especially around Lake Bardwell
- Program events in parks, e.g. walking tours in different languages, about the local fauna and flora, including nighttime excursions to learn about nocturnal wildlife
- Through interpretive signage promote learning about Ennis rich natural and cultural history

3.7 Goals

The goals of this Parks Master Plan have been shaped by input from the community and city staff, in conjunction with the planning team's assessment of Ennis' overall character and the city's projected growth.

The purpose of goals is to bring a vision to fruition. Goals also serve as a guide for the continuous improvement and enhancement of the City's parks

and recreation system. Underscored by the Vision Statement, the goals for the 2022 Ennis Parks Master Plan are shaped by input from the Ennis community, city staff, and the 2017 Master Plan.

In support of the City of Ennis Comprehensive Plan Goals, the first goal is to Promote Quality of Life as an overarching goal for all other goals, strategies, and activities.

Goal #1: Quality of Life



Bring parks and recreation related quality of life opportunities to reality to contribute to people's sense of worth, fulfillment and happiness.

Related to the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Value: We value quality of life; and we value civic pride.

Goal #1 Strategies

- Creating vibrant public places that are beautiful and designed thoughtfully
- Making people feel proud of the city's parks and trails
- Provide for the safe use of parks and recreational facilities
- Provide citywide connectivity by means of trails and bikeways for all modes of movement, whether walking, strolling, jogging, skating, cycling, etc.
- Treat Downtown as a park with places to recreate and socialize with intimate conversation and during large community events
- Provide ample pedestrian and cycling connectivity internally to Downtown, as well as externally to the surrounding neighborhoods
- Keep up with the maintenance of park and recreation facilities

Goal #2: Family Focused & Equitable



Provide equitable access to close-to-home parks and recreation facilities of quality for all families, individuals, and groups of people in a just and fair manner.

Related to the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Value: We value Ennis as a multi-cultural community.

Goal #2 Strategies

- Balance the distribution of park facilities, including neighborhood parks, community parks, athletic facilities, and trail corridors throughout the city
- Provide a range of recreation opportunities for all generations and lifestyles
- Support and promote family-friendly events
- Install playgrounds that are accessible to all, including differently abled individuals
- Provide facilities and programming for both indoor and outdoor recreation
- Allow for both active and passive recreation
- Support and promote cultural-based festivals, and multicultural community events for various cultural groups e.g., Hispanic/Latino, African American, and the Czech culture
- Informational and interpretative signage in both English and Spanish

Goal #3: Healthy Living



Provide a variety of recreation facilities and programs to promote healthy living and to meet the changing recreational needs and preferences of the Ennis community.

Related to the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Value:
We value quality of life.

Goal #3 Strategies

- Ensure that all residents are within a 5-to 10-minute walk from a park and/or trail along a route that is convenient and safe, e.g., sidewalk
- Promote children to learn healthy habits with easy walking and/or cycling by implementing Safe-Routes-to-School programs
- Address the active and passive recreational needs of all age groups, cultural groups, and socio-economic categories
- Provide recreational facilities and programs for young and old that promote healthy habits, both mental and physical
- Include cemeteries as destinations along trails for people to contemplate, mediate, or merely enjoy the open space

Goal #4: Nature & Culture

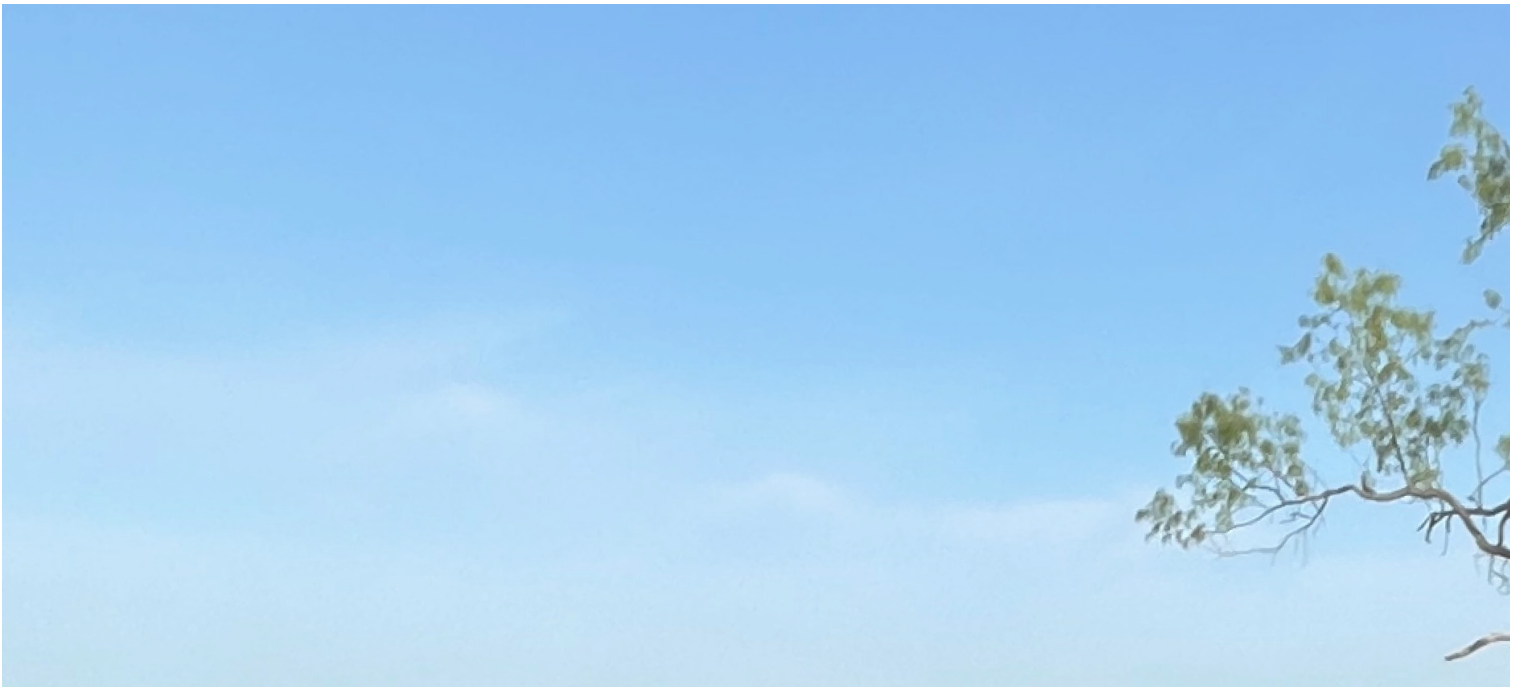


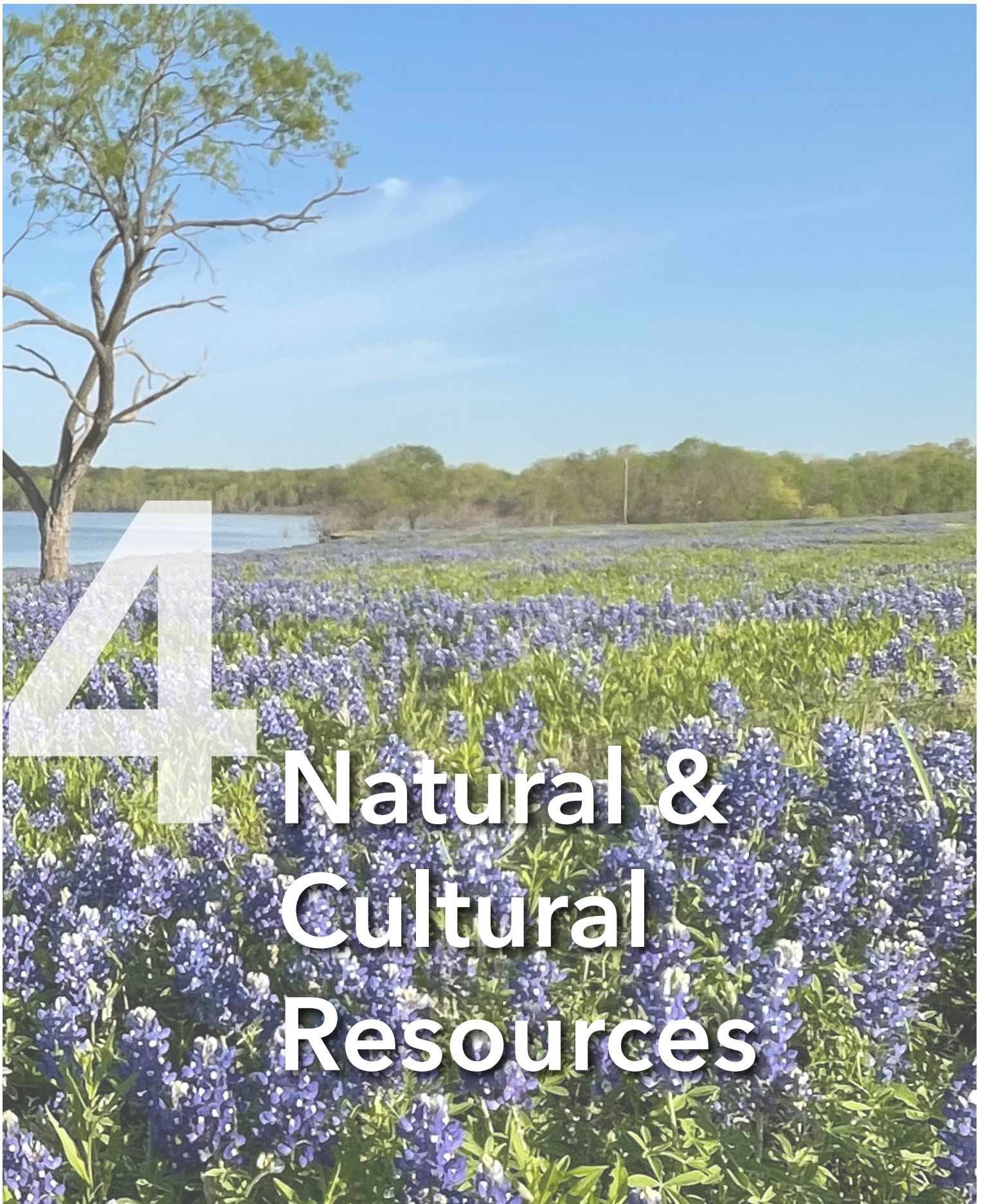
Protect and promote the natural environment, including Ennis as “The Bluebonnet Spirit of Texas” and the multi-cultural diversity of the community.

Related to the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Value:
We value the natural environment of Ennis; and we value Ennis as a multi-cultural community.

Goal #4 Strategies

- Develop long-term measures to protect the rural areas where bluebonnets and other wildflowers bloom annually
- Partner with other governmental, semi-governmental, and private organizations to acquire, manage, and protect natural areas
- Connect the city-wide train network with and through cemeteries
- Support and promote cultural-based festivals, and multicultural community events
- Work with USACE to add more recreational opportunities at Lake Bardwell
- Promote Lake Bardwell as a special destination for a unique experience of natural environments both during the day and night
- Establish protection measures for floodplains by means of ordinances and regulations
- Promote opportunities to explore nature, e.g., birdwatching, wildflower viewing, etc.





CHAPTER 4: NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.1 Introduction

Understanding the need for the protection and/or promotion of the natural and cultural assets of a community is an essential component of a parks master plan. This also forms the basis for determining the resource-based needs for parks and recreation.

4.2 Natural Resources

Blackland Prairie

The Texas Blackland Prairie ecoregion sweeps through Ennis, providing deep, fertile soils that support farming, food production – and as particularly evident in Ennis – the rich blooming of wildflowers and growth of native grasses.

Kachina Prairie, a 30-acre park of undisturbed native Blackland Prairie, was reportedly the original attraction for Ennis' Bluebonnet Trails from the 1950's to 1960's. As a result, the city established Kachina Prairie as an official city park in 1966, later designating the area as a wildflower preserve in 1971. In 1985, the Texas Land Conservancy (TLC) took over stewardship of the preserve.



Kachina Prairie

Wildflowers

The City of Ennis recognizes that wildflowers bring great economic and cultural value to the community. Wildflowers – and specifically, bluebonnets – serve as a three-legged stool of sustainability: benefiting the city's economy, social connections, and biodiversity.



Bluebonnets and Indian Paintbrushes

Lakes

Ennis contains three lakes of note, namely Lake Bardwell, Lake Clark, and Old City Lake.

Lake Bardwell forms Ennis' southwestern border. Constructed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 1965, the purpose of the lake is to provide flood damage reduction. USACE currently operates three parks along the lake's shore within the City of Ennis.

The area associated with this lake is a one of the three focus areas defined and promoted by the Comprehensive Plan. With a water surface of 3,570 acres and over 300 acres of USACE controlled land, Lake Bardwell is a key resource for the City of Ennis' parks and recreation system. The lake provides for limiting boating. Fishing is allowed, but swimming is prohibited. Land based activities include hiking, mountain biking, camping and seasonal hunting. The lake's size and location create opportunities for hike-and-bike trails.

Recommendations of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan included a 20-mile Lake Ring Road and Bikeway that loops around the lake for leisure drives, as well as training and competition rides for road cyclists. Recommendations included a 21-mile bikeped Lake Loop Trail that also loops around the lake. Lake Clark is a popular fishing spot for Ennis residents. It is home to a variety of fish including catfish, largemouth bass, bream/bluegill, red ear sunfish, white bass, carp, and crappie. The 156-acre body of water is located in western Ennis and bordered by two city parks to the east and south (Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve and Lake Clark Neighborhood Park), and the Ennis Municipal Airport to the west.

Old City Lake is a relatively small but well loved park. It is bordered by three city parks (Rotary Community Park, Kiwanis Neighborhood Park, and Storey Park, which is currently undeveloped). A well used trail borders the lake on three sides. The lake is also popular for Duck feeding, and fishing.

Creeks

Feeding into Lake Bardwell, Ennis' main creek corridors include Cummins Creek, Waxahachie Creek, and Mustang Creek. These stretches of natural creek corridors offer welcome breaks of vegetation and biodiversity in Ennis' otherwise open, rolling prairie.

These creeks and their associated floodplains provide the city with environmental benefits like flood protection, wildlife habitat, and improved water quality through natural filtration. Additionally, these corridors provide excellent recreation opportunities for trails, linear parks, and other connections throughout the city.

Often, floodplains are earmarked as prime locations to developing sports fields. However, one can argue that the characteristics of manicured turf areas stand in stark contrast to the required removal of riparian vegetation and the application of chemical fertilizers with its associated impacts on the environment.



Fishing along the water edge of Old City Lake

4.2 Cultural Resources

Heritage

Czech Culture in Ennis

In the 1870's, immigrants from Czechoslovakia became the first of many Eastern Europeans to call Ellis County home. Ennis retains a strong Czechoslovakian influence to this day, exemplified by the city's four Czech social halls and the annual National Polka Festival each Memorial Day weekend.

Black Culture in Ennis

Black citizens have been a part of Ennis since its inception when Ben Higgins bought one of the first lots offered for sale after Ennis' founding. Over the years, black citizens have made major contributions to the community through business and community improvement such as establishing Rogers & Maise Park. Presently, Black community leaders continue to improve the quality of life for all citizens. Furthermore, the city festival Blues on Main is very relevant to the Black community in Ennis.



Blues on Main Festival

Hispanic Culture in Ennis

Although originally few in numbers, Hispanics have contributed to the development of the Ennis community. Robert Roderiguez, a respected early settler and cattleman drove 3,200 head of cattle from Ennis to Montana along the Chisholm Trail and led the first prayer meeting held in this part of the country. Today, Hispanics are the majority of the local population and will be a major driver in the future of Ennis.



Dancing together



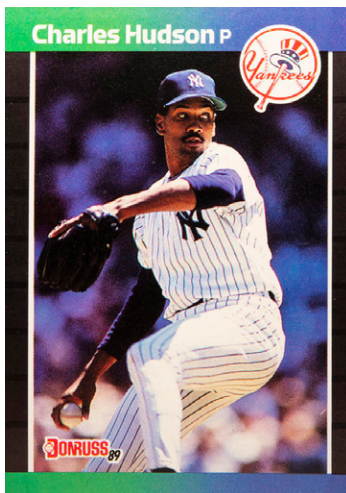
Undated photo from a Polka Festival Parade. Source: City of Ennis



Graham Harrell



Bob Finley



Charles Hudson's Yankees Baseball Card

Ennis' Athletes Hall of Fame

The professional football and baseball achievements of four Ennis born individuals are unique:

Graham Harrell | Born in 1985, Graham Harrell set several Texas High School passing records while attending Ennis High School; he set numerous NCAA passing records before joining the NFL.

Bob Finley | As a Major League Baseball player, Bob Finley spent six seasons in the Boston Red Sox organization and played as a catcher for the Philadelphia Phillies in 1943 and 1944.

Charles Hudson | He pitched from 1983 to 1989 for the Philadelphia Phillies, the New York Yankees and the Detroit Tigers.

Jack Lummus | Jack played professional football for the New York Giants in 1941 and received the Medal of Honor for his valor during World War II.

Celebrating the achievements of these men is important for civic pride, as well as inspiring Ennis' young athletes. This can be achieved very effectively with artwork, sculpture and interpretive signage.



Jack Lummus

Downtown Ennis

The Texas & New Orleans Railroad established a division point in Ennis in 1891, building a roundhouse and shops to support workers. This central core was the key to Ennis' initial growth, establishing the area that is now Downtown Ennis. Ennis' downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1986).

An EF1 tornado hit the historic district in 2013, damaging many of its homes and businesses. In response, residents led revitalization efforts, including the production of the 2016 Downtown Master Plan, focusing on urban design improvements, preservation and revitalization of the district's unique architecture, and essential infrastructure improvements.

Encompassing eight pedestrian-friendly city blocks, Downtown Ennis provides residents and visitors with a growing number of options for living, shopping, dining, and entertainment. The historic district hosts frequent community events, including festivals, markets, and parades.

With its recent revitalization, Downtown Ennis is returning to its roots as the city's front door and central gathering space. People coming together for

local events like the Bluebonnet Market is reminiscent of how the downtown space was originally used for public gatherings while functioning as a busy railroad hub. Whether it be flanked with farmer's market stalls or polka dance floors, Downtown Ennis' main drag today functions as prime community gathering space. In this sense, Downtown Ennis is a park in its own right: a place where residents can celebrate their Texas heritage including the community's bluebonnet spirit.

The Ennis Railroad and Cultural Heritage Museum is located in the former Van Noy restaurant building, which was built in 1915 to serve train passengers. The City of Ennis acquired the museum building from the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1991.

The currently undeveloped buffer area running between NW Main Street and the railroad tracks is slated in the Downtown Master Plan to become the Main Street Mall and must-needed supplemental parking. This highly visible public space will serve as a gateway to Downtown from its most heavily trafficked entry. The master plan also recommends the museum's current location be upgraded to a full museum campus, attracting a wider variety of visitors interested in the history and culture of Ennis.



The fountain at Minnie McDowal Park double up as a spray park



Minnie McDowal Park was constructed as a result of the Downtown Master Plan

Due to the city's rail-centric development, early growth was centered around the rail yard. As a result, the railroad now bisects the city, serving as both a physical and cultural barrier. In many locations, the railroad prohibits certain neighborhoods from accessing public space and amenities that would otherwise be within walkable distance.

The Downtown improvements implemented during recent years are phenomenal. Many buildings were restored to their former beauty, and secondary streets were enhanced to become much more pedestrian friendly, with measures including wide sidewalks, street trees, and brick pavers. Recreation related improvements include various parks, some of which are already constructed, e.g. Minnie McDowal Park, while others are in their planning phase, including North Plaza and South Plaza and the Ennis Avenue grade-separated crossing. Effective programming draws many people throughout the year including the Bluebonnet Market, Blues on Main Festival, and Lights of Ennis.

Beyond events, the manner in which the public spaces are programmed with activities, live music, and festive light displays, while prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists of all ages, all contribute to making Downtown



Festive participants in Ennis' annual National Polka Festival parade.

a park-like destination. It is thus very poignant that the Downtown Director's opinion is that, "Downtown is a Park." Other opportunities for integrating Downtown with parks and recreation is the City's network of trails with direct connections and signage that points towards Downtown. The question is how to optimize Downtown as a "park for leisure activities."

The City's commitment to Quality of Life, coupled with its dedication to rebuilding downtown after the 2013 tornado induced destruction, resulted in the economic revitalization of Downtown, and opportunities for numerous and diverse leisure activities to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors.



Downtown's revitalization resulted in unique destinations including this roof terrace restaurant

Public Art

Public art displayed in public spaces, including parks, has become an important aspect of quality of life. The Ennis Arts Commission and the Ennis Public Library strives to explore opportunities to promote both visual and performing arts within parks and along trails. The cast stone sculpture and Lions Park's StoryWalk are prime examples of successful public art in parks.



Contemporary sculpture displayed in front of the Ennis Library

Public art is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the natural and cultural history of a community through events like market days and visual and performing arts. The community and racial diversity of Ennis lends itself to colorful markets, public sculpture, and performance as is already expressed very effectively by the Czech and Hispanic cultures.



This beautiful relief at Minnie McDowal Park is an example of public art in Ennis



Sculpture at Veteran Memorial Park

Cemeteries

Ennis' cemeteries are a valuable, though often forgotten, component of the city's open space system. Cemeteries provide a peaceful setting for passive recreation and an opportunity to share a community's history. Their size lends itself to large, looped trails with little auto-pedestrian conflict and low improvement costs, as most cemeteries have existing footpaths. These cultural spaces should be celebrated and integrated as part of the community, rather than fenced off and used exclusively for grieving.

All three of Ennis' cemeteries are centrally located, north and northeast of Lions Park and west of Downtown. Established in 1879, St. Joseph and St. John's cemeteries are perceived as one large memorial park. Directly across Ennis Avenue sits Myrtle Cemetery. Adjacent to the Northeast is the Ennis Memorial Cemetery. The proximity and near adjacencies of these three cemeteries provides an excellent opportunity to connect the three with hiking trails.



Cemeteries are important places for reflection and meditation

Traditionally, city-owned cemeteries do not clearly fall under the responsibility of a single city department. On the precipice of city-wide growth, Ennis PARD has an opportunity to capitalize on these tranquil open spaces. By taking responsibility for the development and maintenance of city owned cemeteries, PARD can require future development to provide pedestrian access to adjacent cemeteries and more highly amenitize existing burial ground.



4.3 Resource-Based Needs

Resource-based needs are identified in addition to Standard- and Demand- based needs. With resource-based needs, the focus is on identifying the natural and cultural assets that are valuable to the community. An evaluation of these assets determines how to ensure protection of these resources and how to promote their use in a sustainable manner.

Natural Resources

Natural assets are often environmental or geographic in nature, like creeks and their associated floodplains, greenbelts, bodies of water, or ecologically significant prairies. Not all resources are natural though: railroads and utility easements can make excellent trail routes. Golf Courses may even be re-purposed for new open space uses.

A substantial portion of Ennis' outer region is not developed, meaning large, promising, parcels exist for potential future acquisition. Identifying the natural assets worth preserving in the long-term will help Ennis proactively safeguard its assets before land values prohibit the city's acquisition. Land can be acquired outright or through more creative solutions like permanent access easements.

Lake Bardwell

With substantial, already protected, frontage on Lake Bardwell, Ennis has a direct opportunity to capitalize on USACE's existing parkland. Lake Bardwell has the potential to increase its prominence as a regional fishing, boating, camping and hiking destination.

Lake Bardwell provides valuable habitat and recreation opportunities. A large portion of the lake's shoreline is heavily wooded, ripe for mountain biking and birdwatching. Other segments see rolling hills meet the water's edge, providing ample space for passive uses like picnicking and viewing wildflowers.

Bluebonnets/Wildflowers

Top conservation priorities should center around Ennis' most famous asset: wildflowers. Investing in conservation of these landscapes will not only help the community preserve its identity but help ensure Ennis' primary tourism catalyst is maintained amidst future development.

Ennis is home to a wide variety of wildflowers and other biodiversity in addition to the bluebonnets. Kachina Prairie is an excellent example of successful resource-based open space development, preserving undisturbed Blackland Prairie, presenting springtime wildflower blooms, while hosting community gatherings and daily recreational needs.



Wildflowers

Creeks & Streams

Drainage ways provide Ennis with unique and incredibly valuable recreational and environmental benefits, such as wildlife habitat, flood and water quality protection, and greenbelts opportunities throughout the city. A floodplain ordinance would serve as a valuable tool in protecting these resources as Ennis continues to experience more growth and development.

Appendix 6 provides motivation and guidance for the protection of creeks and floodplains for purposes of flood management, habitat protection, and recreation.

Cultural Resources

Needs associated with Ennis' cultural assets are largely based on history and the multi-cultural heritage of the community.

Celebrating History

With the accomplishment of many Ennis residents that have excelled in sports it is appropriate to find ways to celebrate them with park names and interpretative signage. This is also true for other individuals that have played a major role in parks and recreation, including Drs. Rogers and Mase, Sandy Anderson who is considered the "Queen of Bluebonnets" and many others.

Cemeteries

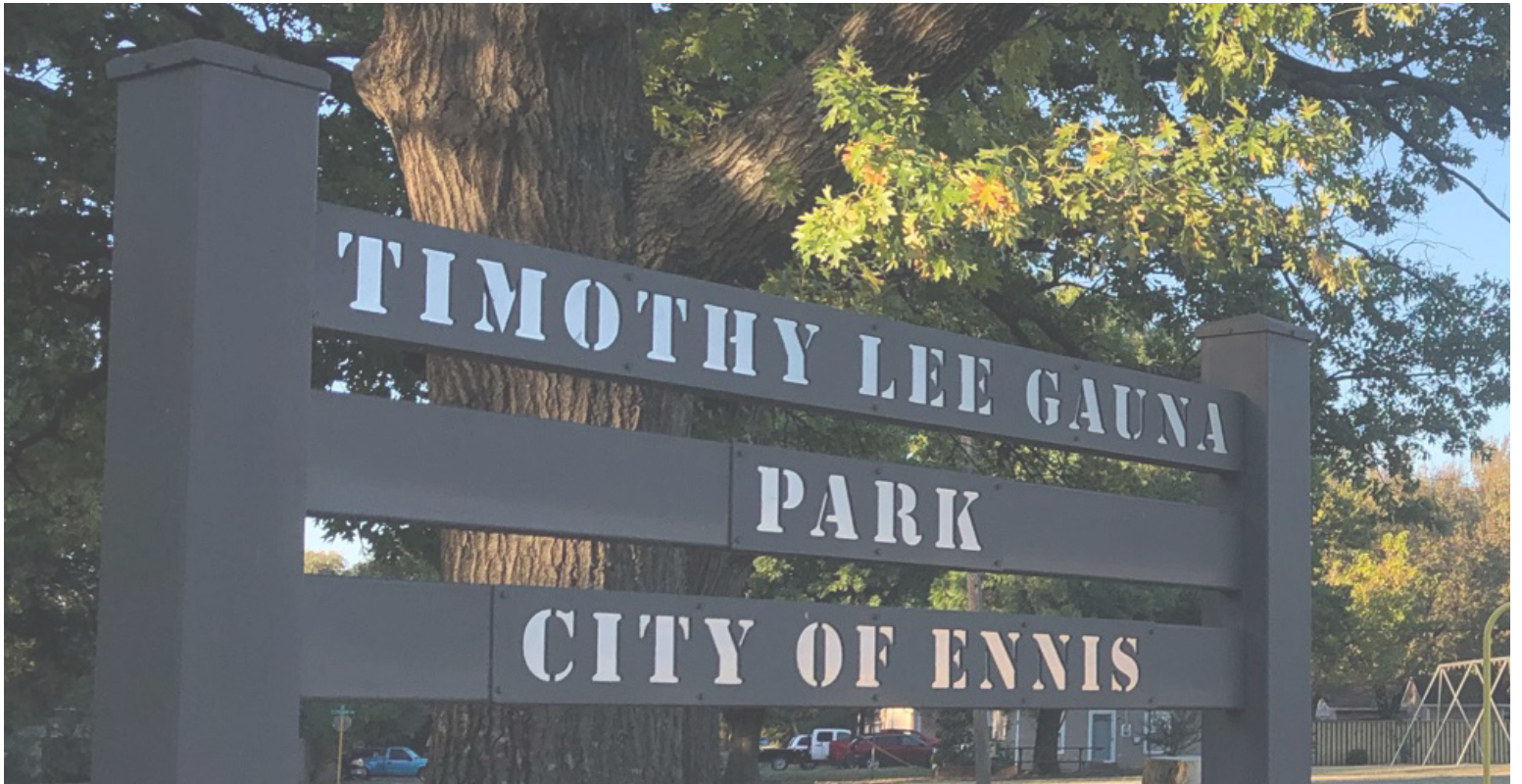
Incorporating cemeteries as destinations along a citywide network of trails, allows for more people to enjoy the open space associated with cemeteries, where much can be learned about historical figures as well.

Festivals and Events

Multicultural events and culture specific festivals are ideal opportunities to celebrate the various cultures that make up the Ennis community.



Cemeteries are a valuable cultural resource





Parks & Open Space

CHAPTER 5: PARKS & OPEN SPACE

5.1 Introduction

Identified in this chapter are the key types of parks, such as neighborhood, community, linear, etc., that are appropriate for each part of Ennis. This chapter analyzes and makes recommendations for the balanced supply of these park types, trails, and facilities throughout the City.

Park Classification

The categorization and classification of parks are not important from the public's perspective; however from an operation and management point of view, it is helpful to have such categories defined since it serves as a guide in how to plan for each type of park in the system.

Standard Based Needs

The need for parks are considered 1) geographically and 2) in terms of the level of service as a factor of the size of the current and future population.

Level of Service

Understanding the current and target level of service of parks is key in acquiring adequate park land and making provision for facilities and events needed and desired in the community.

Intergenerational Use of Parks

Opportunities for families to spend time together in places other than home is an important aspect of the quality of life that is provided by a community. Thoughtful planning and design of parks and recreation can achieve that very effectively (e.g., trails and exercise stations associated with playgrounds and recreation centers that integrate facilities and amenities for seniors, adults, and children). In many communities, senior centers are part and parcel of recreation centers.

5.2 Classification System

Functional classifications have been assigned to each of Ennis' existing parks, helping to identify needs in future parkland development. While each park will provide unique value to the city, they are assigned to one of three categories:

- **Community Parks**
- **Neighborhood Parks**
- **Other Parks**

Neighborhood and community park categories are considered "essential infrastructure" also referred to as "close-to-home" parks." They should be plentiful, adequately-sized, and well- distributed across the City to serve the entire population. The other parks category comprises several sub-types of parks that are provided as opportunities or special needs arise. i.e. special purpose parks, pocket parks, linear parks, and regional parks.

■ Neighborhood Parks ■ Community Parks ■ Special Purpose Parks
■ Pocket Parks ■ Regional Parks

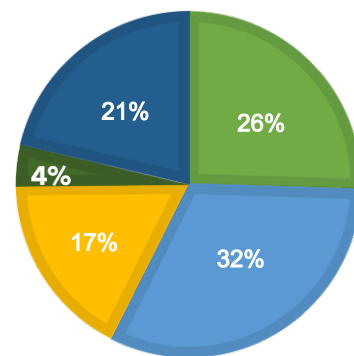


Figure 5.1: Existing Park Land Distribution

Neighborhood parks and community parks combined make up 58% of Ennis's dedicated parkland. The remaining 42% is dedicated to special purpose, pocket, and regional parks, all of which fall under the "Other Parks" category.

Community Parks

The most highly programmed of the park typologies, community parks are typically 50 to 120 acres in size. They serve as a daily recreation destination for users throughout the city while also facilitating special community events. A community park may host a variety of amenities and experiences that appeal to users across the city, while still relating to the specific neighborhood its located in.

Ideally, community parks will offer the same amenities as neighborhood parks so they can serve directly adjacent residents in a neighborhood park capacity. Amenities that fulfill the needs of both community and neighborhood parks may include playgrounds, trails, pavilions, open space for free play, sport courts, and multipurpose fields. In addition, community parks may specifically include lighted athletic fields, restrooms, concessions, and specialty amenities.

The typical service radii for community parks are 1 to 2 miles, which may require users to drive. As such, ample parking should be provided to meet the parking demands of both daily use and special events.

PARD operates four community parks at this time: Bluebonnet Park, Rotary Park, Lions Park, and Veterans Memorial Park.



A memorial bench at Veteran's Memorial Park



Bluebonnet Park's large rental pavilion



Lion's Park trail overlooking the pond



Lake Clark Park's popular fishing jetty



I.O.O.F. @ Fairview Park's new playground

Neighborhood Parks

A robust parks system relies on neighborhood parks, which typically serve 3,000 - 4,000 nearby residents. Walkability is key: a neighborhood park should be placed strategically within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the residents it serves so that the park may be integrated into daily life. Neighborhood parks should be evenly distributed throughout the city so that every resident can access one within walking distance.

Neighborhood parks are typically programmed with sport courts, playgrounds, walking paths, pavilions or other shade structures, seating, and open areas for free play, and landscaping. Picnic areas and multipurpose fields are also appropriate amenities for this park typology. While a small amount of off-street parking may be provided it is typically not required. On-street parallel parking will suffice in most cases.



Children fishing on the banks of Old City Lake in Kiwanis Park

Other Parks

Ennis' parks system contains many other types of parks. These parks are often created based on a unique opportunity, to satisfy a specific recreational need, or add a missing link to the park system.

Pocket Parks

Pocket Parks are the smallest park classification provided in this Parks Master Plan, offering predominantly passive recreation opportunities for the directly adjacent community. Their number of amenities are limited by their size, allowing these parks to embody a more distinct character than larger parks that provide a wider variety of amenities or programming. Pocket Parks typically have a ¼-mile service area and are intended to be accessed by users within close walking distance.

Ennis currently has five pocket parks: Pierce Park, Willie Love Park, Susie B. Garret Park, Cerf Park, and the Storey Lot (undeveloped). At a size of 10.34 acres, Story Lot may be developed into a neighborhood and/or special purpose park, depending on the programming determined for this park.

Special Purpose Parks

Special Purpose Parks are designed to serve a specific, often single-function, recreational use. Indoor aquatic facilities or golf courses are common examples of this park classification. These parks take on any size required to meet the determined need, therefore no set standards for size or acreage exist for Special Purpose Parks. These parks could serve the entire city in addition to visitors from outside the city.

Ennis currently has four special purpose parks: Minnie McDowal Park, the Lampasas Lot (undeveloped), Ennis Disc Golf Course, and the Puppy Patch.

Regional Parks

The largest park classification in this master plan, Regional Parks are typically centered around nature preserves or other sizable open spaces and special events. Given their size and unique attraction, Regional Parks may offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities aimed at drawing users from the wider surrounding area. These parks may contain a mix of passive and active recreational uses, from hiking trails and camp sites to sports complexes and aquatic centers.

Parking may or may not be required, depending on the use, e.g. Meadowview Nature Area is mostly a "drive-through" park during the wildflower season. Should parking be required, careful consideration should be given to parking areas so that sufficient access is provided to amenities without encumbering the natural features that draw users to the site in the first place.

Ennis currently has two regional parks: Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve on the east bank of Lake Clark, and Meadowview Nature Area, which is a USACE park on the edge of Lake Bardwell.



Picnic areas at Meadowview Nature Area



Informational signage at Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve

Greenbelts, Linear Parks, & Wildlife Corridors

Greenbelts are typically developed using existing easements or corridors, often following creeks, utility lines, or railroads. Trails are an ideal amenity to incorporate into greenbelt space, which function as a link between civic space, residential neighborhoods, retail shops and restaurants, and other community hubs. Based on community survey feedback, trails are one of Ennis residents’ most highly desired recreation amenities. Given the public feedback, Ennis has a wonderful opportunity to capitalize on its creek, railroad, and utility systems to meet the community’s need for interconnected walking and biking paths.

Of equal importance is a greenbelt’s role in supporting watershed management. Both sustainable and aesthetically pleasing, creeks and their floodplains also serve as habitat or migration corridors for local and migratory wildlife.

Open Space Preserve/Nature Areas

Intended to protect and provide access to natural areas, Open Space Preserves and Natural Areas are frequently associated with forested areas, prairies and meadows, places of topographical interest, and water bodies, including lakes and creeks. While categorized as Regional Parks, Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve and Meadowview Nature Area, fall under this category as well.

Traditionally unprogrammed and low-maintenance, there may be an occasional need for clearing but no regularly scheduled maintenance demands. Ennis residents expressed a desire for increased access to these natural areas in the community feedback survey.

Recreational Facilities

Indoor recreational facilities like athletic centers, indoor aquatic centers, and senior centers typically located on city-owned land, which can itself be qualified as a special purpose park. Total acreage and usable outdoor acreage varies depending on the facility’s intended use.

5.3 Neighborhood Parks

Typically situated to serve as a neighborhood's social and recreational hub, neighborhood parks are accessible and walkable open spaces intended for daily use. Neighborhood parks represent the largest portion of classification type in Ennis' park system.

Development Guidelines

The purpose of these development guidelines for neighborhood parks is to ensure the City provides the community with high-quality parks that meet the community's needs.

Size

Though size may vary based on unique site constraints, neighborhood parks in Ennis should be five to ten acres in size.

Location

The following criteria should be taken into account in the acquisition and design of neighborhood parks:

- *Walkability:* Neighborhood parks should be located within a five-minute walk (one-quarter mile radius) or 10-minute walk (half-mile radius) of the residents who will use those facilities.
- *Access:* Substantial frontage on a low-speed collector road allows for high visibility into the park, a neighborhood park should be accessible without having to cross major arterial streets
- *Natural Corridors:* Ideally, neighborhood parks should be linked to greenbelts and creek corridors, creating opportunity to connect into a city-wide trail system.

Neighborhood Parks in Ennis:

- Timothy Lee Gauna Park
- I.O.O.F. Park at Fairview
- Kiwanis Park
- Lake Clark Park
- Ill Cardinals (undeveloped)
- Rogers & Maise Park



Local Ennis residents feeding Kiwanis Park's beloved ducks



I.O.O.F. Park @ Fairview's looped walking trail and recently renovated playground.

Facilities

Neighborhood park designs should strive to include the following facilities, as a minimum:

- Playground equipment with safety surfacing that is safe and accessible for users of all ages and abilities
- Looped walking trails, ideally connected to a city-wide trail system where feasible
- Open, unprogrammed areas for free play
- Shade structures and/or pavilions designed with air ventilation in mind

Additional facilities may include:

- Drinking fountains
- Splash pads
- Security lighting
- Basketball courts and half-courts

Design

Since neighborhood parks are intended to meet residents' daily recreational needs, a combination of programmed and unprogrammed areas are vital in each park. Amenities like playgrounds, pavilions, and basketball courts should be clustered into a "active zone," providing ample shade and seating to support year-round use. A "passive zone" comprised of unprogrammed open space should be visually linked, though clearly delineated from the active zone. Trails, hardscape, and planting may help create this buffer.

A loop trail is an important component of every neighborhood park design, as it provides a space for daily movement in local residents' lives. When designed to maintain visual access to the active zone, looped trail in neighborhood parks can be used by a parent while their independent child plays in the active zone. If a portion of the city's trail network passes a neighborhood park, the park's loop trail should directly connect to the larger trail network.

Parking

Off-street parking is typically not necessary in the design of a neighborhood park, as their relatively small service area should encourage the use of active transportation methods like bicycling, scooting, or walking.



The newly-installed playground at Rogers & Maise Park.

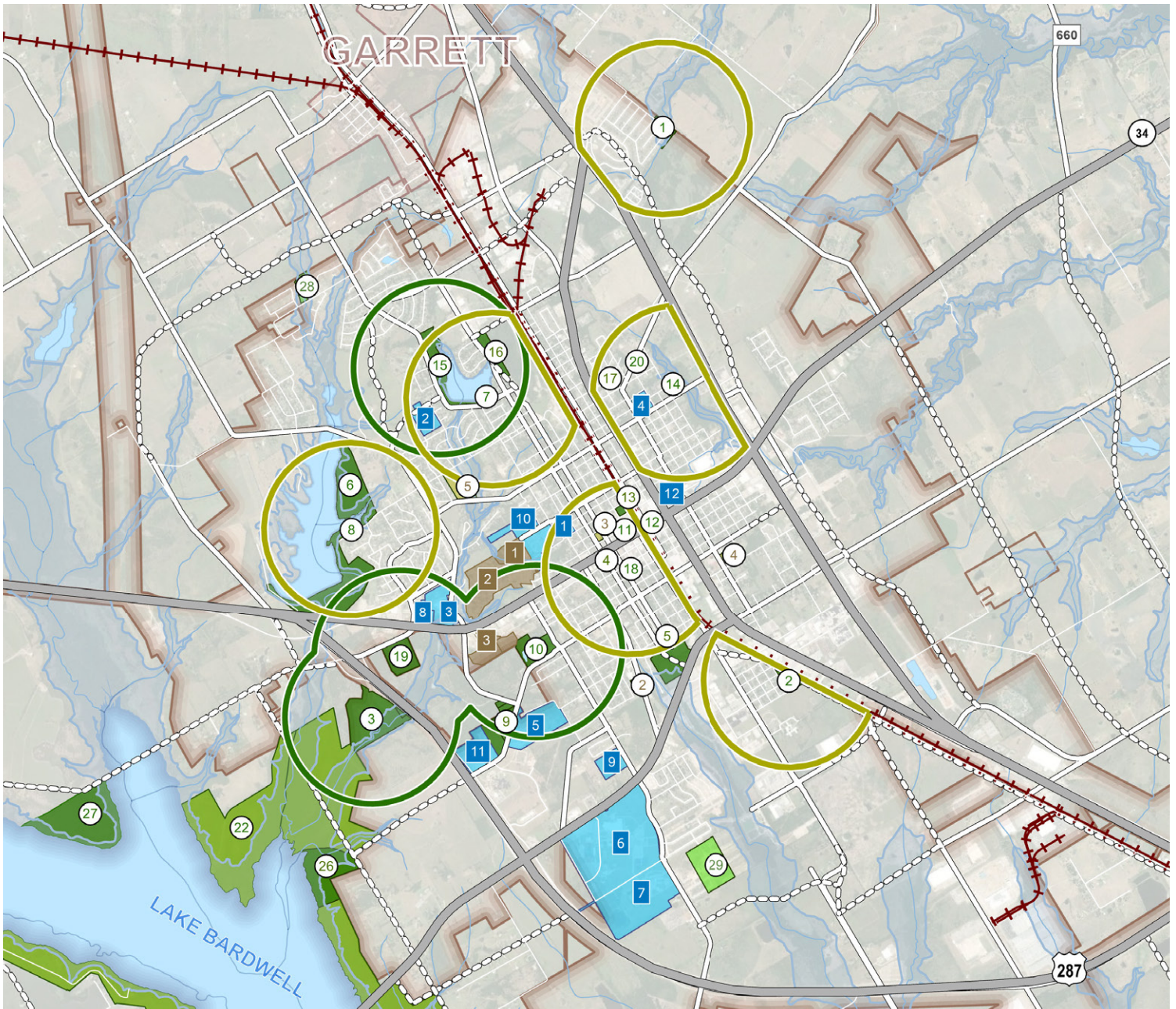


Figure 5.2 - Existing & De Facto Neighborhood Parks

This map illustrates the location and spatial distribution of neighborhood parks and community parks, which function as “de facto” neighborhood parks, in Ennis. “De facto” parks are community parks that also include the amenities of a typical neighborhood park, thereby serving nearby residents as a neighborhood park.

Each park on the map is depicted with a half-mile service radius, as neighborhood parks best serve residents within a five to ten-minute walking distance. These radii are calculated from the center of each park, though physical barriers are not entirely accounted for in the radii. Where physical constraints like railroads or highway prevent a park from reaching its entire intended service area, the services areas have been adjusted accordingly.

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Park Adjacency

Visual and physical access to a park is essential for safety purposes. In fact, visibility into a park services as a form of informal surveillance. It is thus recommended that at least 80% of a park’s boundary be bordered by single-loaded roads or creeks, with no park boundary bordered by the backs of houses.

When houses must back up to a park, the fencing between the houses and the park should be transparent (such as wrought iron fencing or similar) rather than opaque wooden fortress fencing. Transparent fencing allows a softer transition between park and residence and provides for easy surveillance of the park.

When a park is constructed adjacent to a school, the two sites should interact with pedestrian connections between the school and the park.

Inventory

Ennis currently has six neighborhood parks: Timothy Lee Gauna Park, I.O.O.F. Park at Fairview, Kiwanis Park, Lake Clark Park, Rogers & Maise Park, and Cardinals III Park (undeveloped).

Currently the largest park is the 65-acre Lake Clark Park, and the smallest is Timothy Lee Gauna Park at two acres. Including undeveloped parks that already have land acquired, neighborhood parks total approximately 87.33 acres, with the average park size being 14.56 acres. (See **Appendix A3: Parkland Standards**).

Needs Assessment

Neighborhood park needs are determined by evaluating public input in conjunction with analyzing level of service (LOS) for park acreage and service area

Acreage LOS

The Target LOS (TLOS) for neighborhood parks in Ennis is established at 4.0 acres per 1,000 population.

Service Area TLOS

The regional benchmark for a neighborhood park is approximately a five- to ten-minute walk, or a quarter-mile to half-mile radius.

Needs Assessment Results

The current and target level of service for neighborhood parks, including the acreage required to meet Ennis’ estimated population at 2060, is presented in **Appendix A3**.

| Current and Target Level of Service for Neighborhood Parks | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Existing Acreage | 87 |
| Current LOS* | 4.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target LOS** | 5.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target Acreage in 2060 | 500.00 |
| Acreage to Acquire to Meet Target | 312.67 |

Existing acreage is 21.83% of the target for 2060 conditions

*Population Estimate of 21,203 as of August 2021

**2060 population estimated at 100,000

Figure 5.3: Neighborhood Parks Current and Target LOS

Community Parks in Ennis:

- Bluebonnet Park
- Rotary Park
- Lions Park
- Veterans Memorial Park



Pond and walking trail at Bluebonnet Park



Walking trails at Lion's Park

5.4 Community Parks

Larger and more highly programmed than neighborhood parks, community parks serve as local destinations that draw residents from all over Ennis. A wide range of amenities are often found in community parks, including amphitheaters, lighted sports fields, and other unique facilities that appeal to a wide range of users.

Community parks also include amenities typically found in neighborhood parks - like playgrounds, loop trails, open play areas, and pavilions - allowing these larger parks to fulfill local residents' daily recreation needs. In this sense, community parks may also serve as "de-facto" neighborhood parks, meeting the needs of both park classifications simultaneously.

Development Guidelines

Although community parks are targeted to serve the entire city, it is imperative to also factor in the immediately surrounding residents when determining the park's programming needs. Doubling as neighborhood parks, community parks must meet the needs of the community as a whole without detracting from local users' daily recreation experiences. Facilities that give community parks their regional draw attract more users, have a larger service area, and require higher-intensity facilities such as substantial off-street parking and security or sports field lighting.

Size

NRPA standards recommends a typical community park sized between 75 to 150 acres, though acreage can vary greatly depending on site opportunities and community needs. Community parks should be sized to host a variety of programmed facilities while maintaining unprogrammed open space and natural areas. To keep up with the evolving needs of a growing city, land acquisition efforts should account for future park expansion.

Location

The following location characteristics should be taken into account in the acquisition and design of community parks:

- Centrally located
- Easily accessed by major thoroughfares
- Connected by major trails and greenbelts, may serve as a trail system hub
- When lighted facilities are required, high-intensity or “active” community parks should be located adjacent to retail, commercial, or light industrial areas. Otherwise, adequate buffers are necessary when lighted facilities are adjacent to residential areas.

Facilities

Community parks typically include a range of the following facilities:

- Lighted competitive baseball, softball, soccer, and/or football fields
- Restroom facilities
- Multipurpose practice fields, lighted or unlighted
- Play equipment with safety surfacing that is safe and accessible for users of all ages and abilities
- Adequate off-street parking
- Restroom facilities
- Looped walking trails, ideally connected to a city-wide trail system
- Open, unprogrammed areas for free play
- Shade structures and/or pavilions designed with air ventilation in mind
- Picnic areas

Community parks could also include the following facilities:

- Natural open space
- Backstops for baseball and softball practice
- Amphitheaters
- Splash pads
- Tennis courts
- Skate parks
- Sand volleyball courts
- Security lighting
- Basketball courts and half-courts
- Fishing piers

Design

The design of a community park is largely driven by the intended facilities and character unique to each park, including spatial orientation of fields and other amenities, number of playing fields, and amount and location of parking. Depending on the character of the landscape, both active and passive spaces should be accounted for in a community park’s programming. In fact, community parks are often subclassified as “active” or “passive.” Active community parks allow for active recreation including sports fields and courts, running tracks, etc. Natural areas may still be present, but limited. With passive community parks, the activity is typically passive in nature, e.g. bird watching, strolling, walking, contemplation/meditation, etc. The predominant features of such parks are typically nature based.

Community parks may contain multiple active zones – one zone may be focused on baseball amenities like ballfields, equipment storage, and concession stands, while another zone may be centered on daily recreation needs such as a playground, basketball half-court, and picnic pavilion.

Natural amenities present an excellent opportunity to delineate between programmed and unprogrammed spaces. Creek corridors and tree lines visually separate the uses and help give each separate space its own unique identity. Trails, hardscape, and planting may help create this buffer when natural elements are not present. The size of a community park lends itself to support looped walking trails more substantial in length than those found in smaller parks.

Lastly, sustainability should be at the forefront of all community park design. Sustainable methods may include low-impact development (LID) as a stormwater tool to clean runoff water and provide natural habitat for local wildlife. Native, drought-tolerant plants save water and come with the added benefit of lower maintenance requirements.

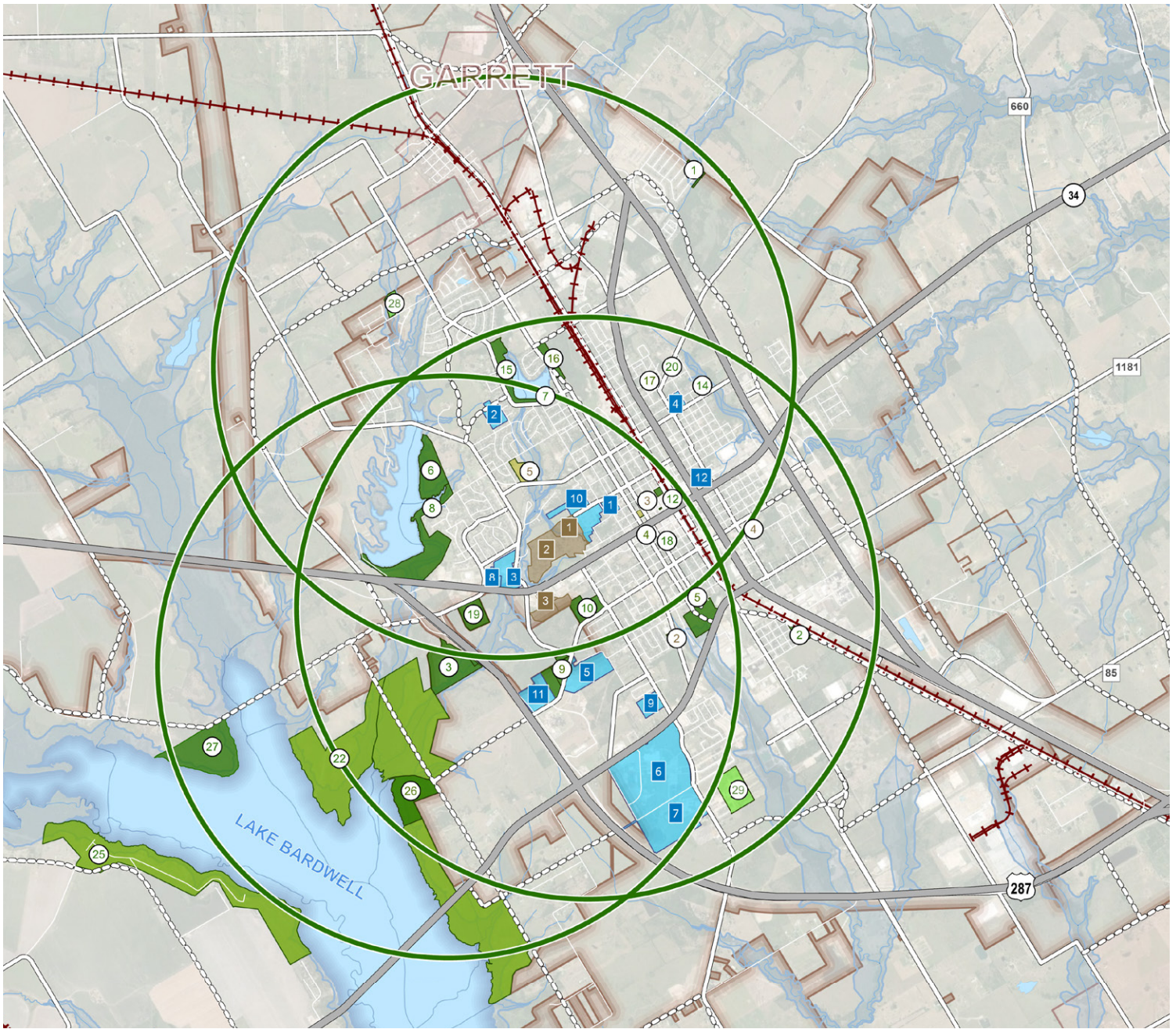


Figure 5.4: Existing Community Parks

This map illustrates the location and spatial distribution of community parks in Ennis.

Each park on the map is depicted with a one-mile service radius, as community parks best serve residents within a short driving distance. These radii are calculated from the center of each park, though physical barriers are not accounted for in the radii. Constraints like railroads, thoroughfares, or creeks may prevent a park from reaching its entire intended service area.

Full size version of this Figure can be found in the Exhibits Section

Parking

Off-street parking requirements for community parks varies depending on a park's recreation facilities and size. A minimum of five spaces per programmed acre, plus additional parking for specific amenities as needed, is recommended by the NRPA. Similar to neighborhood parks, shared-parking options should be considered with nearby community spaces such as schools, churches, libraries, or similar civic space.

While overparking a site should be avoided, special consideration should be given to the surrounding neighborhoods to ensure overflow parking on local streets does not negatively impact residents. When used in conjunction with bio-swales, permeable paving helps to offset the impact of pollution and surfaced run-off from vast expanses of parking areas.

Inventory

Ennis presently has four community parks in its parks system. Currently the largest park is the 46-acre Bluebonnet Park, and the smallest is Lions Park at 17 acres. Community parks total approximately 110 acres, with the average park size being 27 acres. (See **Appendix A3: Park Land Standards**).



Rotary Park's popular splashpad

Needs Assessment

Community park needs are determined by evaluating public input in conjunction with analyzing level of service (LOS) for park acreage and service area

Acreage LOS

The Target LOS (TLOS) for neighborhood parks in Ennis is established at 6.0 acres per 1,000 population.

Service Area TLOS

The regional benchmark for a community park is approximately a five-minute drive, or a one-mile radius. Service areas is a general baseline and may be affected by physical barriers (major thoroughfares or railroads) that prevent an intended service area from accessing a park. Physical barriers should always be considered when locating and developing new parks.

Needs Assessment Results

The current and target level of service for community parks, including the acreage required to meet Ennis' estimated population at 2060, is presented in **Figure 5.5**.



A youth soccer team warms up on the fields at Veteran's Memorial Park

| Current and Target Level of Service for Community Parks | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Existing Acreage | 110 |
| Current LOS* | 5.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target LOS** | 7.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target Acreage in 2060 | 700.00 |
| Acreage to Acquire to Meet Target | 490.57 |

Existing acreage is 18.24% of the target for 2060 conditions

*Population Estimate of 21,203 as of August 2021

**2060 population estimated at 100,000

Figure 5.5: Community Parks Current and Target LOS

5.5 Other Parks

This park category includes any other type of park within the City that is not either a community or neighborhood park.

Classification

The “other parks” category is not paired with a detailed development guideline, as the design of each park is unique to its purpose and context.

Special Purpose Park

Special purpose parks take advantage of a unique opportunity - like Minnie McDowal Park serving as a Downtown hub - or to meet a specific need - like the 18-hole Ennis Disc Golf Course or Puppy Patch dog park. The particular need for which a special purpose park is provided drives the site’s size, design, and parking requirements.

Pocket Parks

Pocket parks are small outdoor spaces, most frequently incorporated into developed areas. Generally, few amenities are provided on-site as these parks are not typically designed to support programmed activities. Despite their lack for formal programming, pocket parks serve a variety of functions: children’s play area, small event space, or gathering spaces e.g. socializing or taking a lunch break.

Inventory

Ennis has four special purpose parks that provide alternative recreational functions such as memorials, historical significance, natural environmental areas, and or places for special events. Five pocket parks help to honor the city’s rich heritage and provide spaces for both free and programmed play.

The city’s one regional park offers the chance to experience some of the only untouched Blackland prairie remaining in the region.

Other Parks in Ennis:

Special Purpose Parks:

- Minnie McDowal
- Lampasas Multi-use Lot
- Ennis Disc Golf Course
- The Puppy Patch

Pocket Parks:

- Pierce Park
- Storey Lot
- Willie Love Park
- Susie B. Garrett Park
- Cerf Park

| Current and Target Level of Service for Other Parks | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Existing Acreage | 73 |
| Current LOS* | 3.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target LOS** | 6.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target Acreage in 2060 | 600.00 |
| Acreage to Acquire to Meet Target | 541.80 |

Existing acreage is 21.20% of the target for 2060 conditions

*Population Estimate of 21,203 as of August 2021

**2060 population estimated at 100,000

Figure 5.6: Other Parks Current and Target LOS

Needs Assessment

The need for “other parks” is determined by evaluating public input in conjunction with analyzing level of service (LOS) for park acreage. Park service area is not applicable to the “Other Park” classifications.

Acreage LOS

Because the need for these unique parks is variable, each park classification in the “Other Parks” category is not assigned an individual TLOS. The TLOS developed in this master plan aims to support the city in its mission to provide all residents with equitable access to parkland and facilities that are unique.

The Target LOS (TLOS) for other parks in Ennis is established at 6.0 acres per 1,000 population.

Needs Assessment Results

The current and target level of service for “other parks,” including the acreage required to meet Ennis’ estimated population at 2060, is presented in **Figure 5.6**.

5.6 Regional Parks

The service area of a regional park extends past city limits, as implied by its name. The largest park classification in this master plan, regional parks are frequently formed around large, natural preserves.

Special interest attributes and unique facilities create these parks’ regional draw, and their size often presents the opportunity for hosting large community events. Regional parks allow for a wide variety of recreational opportunities, from highly programmed playgrounds to open, natural habitats for exploration.

Size and Location

Regional parks are often opportunity based, which in turn determines their size and location.

Needs Assessment

The current and target level of service for regional parks, including the acreage required to meet Ennis’ estimated population at 2060, is presented in **Figure 5.7**.

Regional Parks in Ennis:

- Kachina Prairie Nature Reserve
- Meadowview Nature Area

| Current and Target Level of Service for Regional Parks | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Existing Acreage | 73 |
| Current LOS* | 3.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target LOS** | 5.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target Acreage in 2060 | 500.00 |
| Acreage to Acquire to Meet Target | 427.00 |

Existing acreage is 21.20% of the target for 2060 conditions

*Population Estimate of 21,203 as of August 2021

**2060 population estimated at 100,000

Figure 5.7: Regional Parks Current and Target LOS

5.7 Mixed-Use Areas

The current level of growth in Ennis is anticipated to continue for many years. Consequently, it can be expected that certain areas will develop much denser than single family residential developments. This is partly so as many people choose to live in dense urban places with all the amenities that they offer. While mixed-use developments are typically laid out and constructed by developers with a for-profit motive in mind, the requirement for open space and parks needs to be established by the governing authority, in this case the City of Ennis.

The potential issues of living conditions in mixed-use areas are described as follows:

- Individual homes, apartments or lofts, are typically smaller in size than most detached homes and usually do not have either front or back yards
- Living and playing areas are more cramped than in single family detached homes
- Little access to physical activity or play areas
- Although the city's goal is to have residents live within ¼ mile of a neighborhood park, urban areas devoid of parkland may prohibit residents to meet this target
- Few standards for parks in mixed-use areas have been developed

From a parks and recreation perspective, specific recommended actions to address these issues are:

- Incorporate open space as a “quality of life” essential
- Use open space to define “sense of place” for the community
- Provide easy, walkable access to play space for physical activity and passive areas for shade and seating
- Provide easy, walkable access to trails
- Provide dog parks
- To off-set denser development, provide many small areas throughout the community at the same or higher standards as neighborhood parks

Improving quality of life amenities and living conditions for mixed-use residents not only helps achieve the goals of this parks master plan, but also benefits a developer's bottom line. Because of this, public/private partnerships are suggested for consideration as an implementation strategy for this plan's mixed-use recommendations.

The Target LOS (TLOS) for mixed-use parks in Ennis is established at 2.0 acres per 1,000 population, within the confounds of any particular mixed-use development. This standard may also be expressed in terms of units: either two acres per 400 living units or one acre per 200 living units.

| Level of Service for Mixed-Use Development Open Space | |
|---|--|
| Target LOS* | 2.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| | 2.00 Acres/400 Living Units |
| | 1.00 Acre/200 Living Units |
| | 0.00 Acres/1,000 Population |
| Target Acreage in 2060 | Factor of Mixed-Use Development Population |
| Acreage to Acquire to Meet Target | 0.00 |

Figure 5.8: Mixed-Use Development Open Space LOS

5.8 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Parks

Ennis and its ETJ are home to several U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) parks. Centered around Lake Bardwell, these largely natural open spaces present recreation opportunities for residents that cannot be found elsewhere in Ennis, including activities like boating, fishing, camping, and hunting. Not utilizing these parks to their maximum potential is a missed opportunity and Ennis residents echoed a desire for more access to these lake associated open spaces.

PARD is currently in a long-term lease agreement with USACE to provide access to Meadowview Nature Area. Moving forward, more of these lease agreements with USACE should be considered. The opportunity should not be overlooked to provide the community with these special outdoor spaces that will positively impact residents' quality of life.

While Meadowview Nature Area is the only USACE park detailed in the review of existing Ennis parks (see **Appendix A1.1**), five additional USACE-operated parks are located on the shores of Lake Bardwell:

East Bank Parks

Little Mustang Creek Park (accessible)

Acreage: 163 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Lake access & boat ramp

Love Park (non-accessible)

Acreage: 439 Acres (excluding Meadowview Park acreage)

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Sand volleyball court, lake access, pavilion, covered picnic areas, BBQ grills, boat ramp, restroom facilities

Northwest Bank Parks

High View Park

Acreage: 155 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Sand volleyball court, fishing pier, lake access, pavilions, covered picnic areas, BBQ grills, camp sites, boat ramp, concession building, and restroom facilities

Mott Park

Acreage: 270 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Lake access, pavilion, covered picnic areas, BBQ grills, camp sites, boat ramp, restroom facilities

Waxahachie Creek Park

Acreage: 205 Acres

Trails: 1-mile hike, bike & equestrian trail

Amenities: Lake access, pavilion, covered picnic areas, BBQ grills, camp sites, boat ramp, restroom facilities

5.9 Access to Parks

Healthy Living

Increasing park acreage per capita and improving access to existing parks are important ways to support physical activity within a community. Health disparities are more frequently exhibited in residents of neighborhoods that lack park and recreation facilities. By ensuring all community members have sufficient access to parks and open space, the City of Ennis can provide its residents with the ability to sustain healthy, prosperous lifestyles.

Visibility and Safety

Substantial physical and visual access to parks and open spaces are vital to how these spaces are experienced within the city. A park that is closed-in on three sides does not provide adequate access or visibility. Increased visibility into parks and other natural open spaces, including creek corridors, provides informal surveillance into public spaces. The more eyes a community can have into a park, the safer the park will be.

Development that backs up to open space creates a barrier preventing visual and often physical access to the open space. Single loaded roads allow for both physical and visual access to parks and open space.

10-Minute Walk Challenge

Included in this plan's analysis is the geographic location of parks, recreation facilities, and trails, based on a goal to be inclusive for all demographic groups based on age, income level, ethnicity, etc. For this purpose, a specific goal to aspire to is recommended: the 10-Minute Walk to a Park Campaign.

The 10-Minute Walk, also known as the 10-Minute Walk to a Park, refers to a grassroots parks-advocacy movement to ensure that everyone lives within a ten-minute walk to a high-quality park or green space. The effort was adopted as a resolution at the 85th annual United States Conference of Mayors convention in 2017 as a goal for cities to increase parks and green space as a civic responsibility.

So far, thirteen mayors in Texas have their cities committed to this challenge, including Denton, Fort Worth, Grand Prairie, Grapevine, McKinney, Plano, and Richardson in North Texas. This plan recommends Ennis join them in committing to ensure every resident has safe, easy access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home by 2050.

The concept has been supported by several community-based nonprofit organizations including The Trust for Public Land, the National Recreation and Park Association, the Urban Land Institute, and Fields in Trust in the UK. A ten-minute walk is commonly considered to be half a mile, which is the distance the National Park Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention uses when they link park access and public health. Source: Wikipedia

5.10 Summary of Park Needs

Using Ennis' 2021 population estimate, the current, city-wide Level of Service (LOS) for existing parkland is 16 acres per 1,000 residents. Taking into account the city's goals of cultivating a premier destination to live, work, and play, this master plan establishes a target LOS of 22 acres per 1,000 residents for city parks. By this measure, Ennis' parkland supply currently falls short by 145 acres.

Given that the city is anticipated to double in size by the year 2030, Ennis faces a parkland deficit of 920 acres if more land is not acquired over the next 8 years.

By 2060, the city faces a deficit of 1,958 acres. Strategic land acquisition and parkland requirements for new development can help the city provide adequate access to parks and open spaces as the city grows, both in population and land mass.

| Summary Standard Based Needs for Parkland | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| Need for additional parkland at build-out of 100,000 population * | | |
| Type Park | Acreage | Number of Parks |
| Neighborhood Parks | 413 | About 60 parks at an average size of seven acres |
| Community Parks | 591 | Five to six parks at an average size of 100 to 120 acres |
| Other Parks | 527 | Flexible in terms of number and size, determined by opportunity and need |
| Regional Parks | 427 | 1 to 3 parks determined by opportunity and need |
| TOTAL ACREAGE | 1958 | |

* For strategic reasons, the need for parkland is always expressed as a factor of build-out population

Figure 5.9: Standard Based Needs for Parkland



Visitors to Veterans Memorial Park enjoying the wildflowers along the trail





Facilities & Programming

CHAPTER 6: FACILITIES & PROGRAMMING

6.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses recreation facilities in terms of:

1. **Standard based needs**
2. **Demand based needs**
3. **Trails and bikeways**
4. **Programming and trends**



Minnie McDowal Park's shade trees effectively provide the park with canopy coverage



Children hard at play

Target Level of Service (LOS) and standards for facilities define the number of facilities recommended to serve each unique recreation type's needs. Standards aid in measuring facility quantities by type and identifying where deficits occur, ultimately helping to prioritize facility needs and future implementation.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has established recommended facility standards for use as a nationwide guide in park planning. The provided NRPA Target Standard is based on comparisons with the national standard, as provided by NRPA. While these targets provided a reliable baseline for typically facility needs, NRPA has not provided updated target standards in nearly 20 years, meaning these targets do not account for trends and changes in recreation patterns. Ennis' number of existing facilities, the amount of use each facility receives, and local factors that make Ennis unique were critically analyzed in addition to NRPA's targets to determine true gaps in facility LOS. The 2022 LOS standards for Ennis are established to reflect Ennis' unique recreation goals.

For the purposes of this plan, only facilities operated by the City were considered in the development of these target LOS. Several joint-use agreements between Ennis ISD grant the City of Ennis use of select district-managed facilities. While these agreements are an excellent solution to fulfill the community's immediate facility needs, long-term park planning should strive to meet all facility needs within the city's park system outright. The Parks Inventory Table (see **Appendix A2**) provides a detailed breakdown of existing parkland and the facilities contained within then, including EISD, churches, and other publicly available facilities in the community.

6.3 Key Facility Needs

Competitive Facilities

Currently, Ennis' baseball and softball fields are ample to host tournaments. The five-year projected need is for an additional 3 baseball and 3 softball fields.

Soccer is a popular sport, and well established in the Hispanic community. The five-year projected need is for 2 additional soccer fields.

Competitive football fields are adequate with no additional fields needed within the next 5 years.

Five Year Need for Competitive Fields:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Competitive Baseball Fields: | 3 Fields |
| Competitive Softball Fields: | 3 Fields |
| Competitive Soccer Fields: | 2 Fields |
| Competitive Football: | 0 Fields |

Practice Facilities

With a growing roster of recreational programming, Ennis has a need for additional practice facilities.

The 5 year projected need for baseball and softball practice facilities is 3 backstops.

The 5-year projected need for multi-practice facilities is 2 areas.

Five Year Need for Practice Fields:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Baseball/Softball Fields: | 3 Backstops |
| Multipurpose Practice: | 2 Areas |



Children warming up for youth soccer practice

Other Active Facilities

Other Active Facilities include facilities typically found in Neighborhood and Community Parks, like playgrounds, basketball goals, and open areas for pick-up games. Every Community and Neighborhood Park should include a playground and pavilion. A park may feature multiple other active facilities depending on its size.

Tennis and sand volleyball courts are most successful when clustered to allow for tournament play and rotation of users. Ennis will face a deficit of 1 tennis court and 2 volleyball courts within 5 years.

This “Other” category also includes special-purpose facilities like disc golf courses and skate parks, which allow users to engage in recreation activities that require specific facilities. These facilities are typically found in Special Purpose Parks. A community often only needs one of each of these special purpose facilities, making it challenging for a city to partially fulfill an outstanding need. For example, a city typically can add one additional soccer field to alleviate burden on existing soccer facilities more easily than building an entire skate park.

Five Year Need for Other Active Facilities

General Recreation Facilities:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Pick-up game areas: | 1 Area |
| Playgrounds: | 4 Playgrounds |
| Play area for Corn Hole / Horse Shoe / Wash Pit: | 6 Pits |
| Trails: | 29 Miles |

Special Purpose Facilities:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Skate Park: | 1 Skate Park |
| Disc Golf Course: | 1 Course |

Other Athletic Facilities:

| | |
|---|----------|
| Basketball Goals (hoops) (Outdoor, Half, and Full Courts): | 7 Hoops |
| Tennis Courts: | 1 Court |
| Sand Volleyball | 2 Courts |
| Pickle Ball (Racquet, Futsol): | 4 Courts |



Playground at Rotary Park befitting from existing shade trees

Aquatic Facilities

Ennis does not currently have a public pool, though PARD does operate two splash pads. For existing neighborhood parks, splash pads are a good solution for providing water-related activity without the long-term staffing and ongoing maintenance costs of a traditional pool.

With water slides, lap and leisure pools, a water park is a very popular recreation facility, especially during the sweltering hot Texas summers.

A growing population will certainly lead to the need for more fishing piers in Ennis. Lake Bardwell lake is of course the ideal place for the installation of additional fishing piers.

Five Year Need for Aquatic Facilities:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Lap Pool: | 1 Pool |
| Leisure Pool: | 1 Pool |
| Spray Park / Splash Pad: | 4 Splash Pads |
| Water Park: | 1 Water Park |
| Fishing Pier: | 2 Piers |

Passive Facilities

Passive park facilities require less site impact and often, less maintenance, than active park facilities. As such, passive facilities often serve to highlight the surrounding natural resources. Every Community and Neighborhood Park should include a pavilion; larger parks may contain multiple pavilions, depending on the park's programming. PARD's recent improvement efforts have prioritized adding much-needed pavilions to existing parks as opportunities arise. This positive momentum should be maintained.

Based on quantity alone, Ennis has a sufficient number of covered picnic structures to accommodate future growth. Most structures are in poor condition, though, and require improvements or replacement to keep up with the growing demand.

The primary 5-year need for additional passive facilities is 2 outdoor amphitheaters, and 2 dog parks.

Five Year Need for Passive Facilities:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Pavilions/Gazebos (large): | Opportunity Based |
| Covered Picnic Structures: | Opportunity Based |
| Outdoor Amphitheater: | 2 Amphitheaters |
| Dog Park: | 2 Dog Parks |



Lake Clark is popular for fishing

Indoor Facilities

Ennis has a dearth of indoor facilities, of which the need will only increase over time. The good news is that one indoor facility can potentially and most optimally accommodate all types of needs for indoor recreation (including gymnasiums), senior use, and aquatics, as well as meeting rooms.

Five Year Need for Indoor Facilities:

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Meeting Rooms: | 3 Rooms |
| Gymnasiums: | 2 Gyms |
| Recreation Center: | 1 Center |
| Senior Center: | 1 Center |
| Indoor Aquatic Center: | 1 Center |



The Ennis Library Story Walk in Lions Park is very popular

6.4 Demand-Based Needs

Demand-based needs are essentially, “what the people want” or preferences expressed by those who live and work in Ennis. These preferences are primarily identified through public engagement opportunities.

The public engagement process of this plan provided the community several opportunities to directly express their needs, wants, and preferences for this Parks Master Plan. The **ActiveEnnis** Parks & Recreation survey and its pursuant follow-up survey were distributed to the community in both English and Spanish. An additional survey was distributed to leaders of the city’s sports and recreation leagues to explore goals, growth aspirations, and needs of the community’s various recreational organizations.

The responses collected throughout these engagement efforts inform the demand-based needs outlined below. A summary of surveys and responses are provided in **Appendix B2**.

Trails & Bikeways

Community Needs

Ennis community members have expressed a strong desire for a connected system of trails and bikeways. Respondents’ needs were fairly evenly split between facilities for walking/running and cycling.

Residents vocalized support for loop trails around parks and trail connectivity between parks and other destinations like schools, civic spaces, or entertainment areas. Walking paths and bike trails were some of the most popular responses to the Question 14 of the community survey: “Please complete this sentence. With regards to Ennis PARKS, I would like to see...”

Residents expressed a strong desire for bike facilities. A consensus was not clear between off-street bike trails and on-street bike lanes, though Ennis’ strategic “family-oriented” goals lend themselves to off-street bike paths and trails where the greatest number of users feel comfortable riding. Substantial support for mountain biking trails was also expressed.

Upgraded Playground Equipment

One of the most requested items by survey respondents was updated playground equipment. Outdated play equipment can be unappealing and even hazardous to children; splintered wood elements and hot metal slides do not meet current standards for play equipment. As a result, these outdated playgrounds and their accompanying amenities experience decreased use and ability to meet the community’s recreation needs.

PARD’s recent and ongoing improvements often include a new playscape in conjunction with surrounding amenity additions or improvements. PARD should maintain this momentum and continue replacing or adding play equipment in both new and existing parks.



Playgrounds are essential amenities for all communities

Splashpads

Ennis' two existing splash pads are well-loved by residents. Due to their popularity, these splash pads can quickly become overcrowded during peak hours. Calls for additional splash pads, specifically in historically overlooked Wards, were frequent in survey responses.

Shade Structures & Shade Trees

Feedback that was heard consistently throughout the development of this plan was the desire for more shade within parks, particularly over playground areas. Residents repeatedly expressed that play equipment becomes so hot that it is rendered unusable in the summer, leaving playgrounds unusable in the hot Texas summers when children need amenities most. Families and guardians also require shaded seating areas to watch their children use the play equipment.

Regardless of user age or activity, all outdoor recreation facilities in Texas require shade opportunities to be utilized to their maximum potential. Park users cannot lounge, gather, or observe in direct sunlight for extended periods of time. While touring parkland, the planning team observed these issues as well. The need for shade is increasingly important as global temperatures continue to rise.

Picnic Areas & Seating

Survey respondents frequently requested seating and picnic areas throughout the city's park system. Ennis' parks provide fairly substantial existing covered picnic areas, so the survey responses may indicate that these picnic facilities are either not located in areas the community frequents or the facilities themselves are of an unsatisfactory quality.

Prioritized Demand-Based Needs

| Need | Rank |
|---|------|
| Trails & Bikeways | 1 |
| Water related i.e. waterpark, swimming pools, splash pads | 2 |
| New and upgraded playground equipment | 3 |
| Pavilions, shade structures & shade trees | 4 |

Figure 6.1: Prioritized Demand Based Needs



The tennis court in Rotary Park can easily be adapted as a skating facility

6.5 Trails & Bikeways

Overview

Activities like jogging, walking, and cycling are generally the most popular recreational activities in American communities. Easily enjoyed by all generations, the health benefits are real both from a physical and psychological point of view. For many people, cycling is not only a popular sport but also a viable mode of transportation, which has resulted in high demand for bikeways in many communities. Having access to trails and bikeways add tremendously to quality of life.

Community Needs

Through a series of surveys and public engagement events, Ennis community members have expressed a strong desire for a connected system of trails and bikeways. Respondents' needs were evenly split between facilities for walking/running and cycling.



The mothers with their children walking home after school demonstrate the dire need for sidewalks along this road

Purpose of Trails & Bikeways

The purpose of trails and bikeways for Ennis is twofold: 1) to provide opportunities for recreation whether strolling, walking, jogging, bird-watching, or cycling, and 2) to provide alternative transportation access to parks, schools, places of worship, shopping, and employment centers.

Definition of Trails & Bikeways

Two categories of infrastructure constitute a biked or trail and bikeway system:

Trails

Trails are generally multi-use pathways that follow greenbelts away from roadways, although sidepaths along roadways can be considered trails as well as bikeways. Trails are typically paved to accommodate the widest range of users, including pedestrians and cyclists, while some trails may be configured with natural surfaces.

Bikeways

Bikeways are generally part of the roadway (called on-street bikeways) or within the road right-of-way. Bikeways are typically defined as bike lanes and bike routes. Sidepaths along the sides of roadways as well as multi-use trails can also be considered bikeways.



Future improvements call for a pedestrian walkway/trail connection along Country Club Rd across Lake Clark

User Groups

One of the primary challenges in developing trail and bikeway systems that meet the needs of the entire community is understanding the characteristics, preferences, and challenges presented by the multiple user groups that will utilize the system. In addition to the traditional recreational walking and cycling groups, the spectrum of current and potential trail and bikeway users also includes runners, joggers, novice and advanced cyclists. The primary goal is to identify the common and specific needs of the groups and develop the trail and bikeway system accordingly.

Pedestrians

Pedestrians (including walkers and runners) utilize trails primarily for the recreational experience that they provide, as well as an alternative mode of transportation. It is important to provide connectivity between neighborhoods and destinations so people can walk instead of drive. However, comfort and accessibility are typically the pedestrian's primary determinants when judging the quality of a trail and desirability for its use.

Essential considerations when designing a trail for pedestrians include shade along trails; well-distributed amenities like benches, mile markers and wayfinding signage; and access points spaced regularly along any given trail. It is also important to consider how pedestrians access trails; some will walk to trails but many will drive, which requires the provision of adequate parking space at strategically placed trailheads.

While loops of trails are the most desirable, most users are satisfied with trail segments of between one and three miles long, which allow two to six mile "out-and-back" trips. In addition, 5K runs are very popular long-distance road running events over a distance of five kilometers (3.1 miles). Also referred to as the 5K road race, 5 km, or simply 5K, it is the shortest of the most common road running distances.

5K Run according to Wikipedia:

"Among road running events, the 5K distance is mostly popular with novice or infrequent runners or joggers, as it is comparatively easier to complete the distance without endurance training. This also makes the distance suitable for people looking to improve or maintain their general physical fitness, rather than develop long-distance running abilities.

The brevity of the distance means that less time is required to take part in the activity and that people from a wide range of ages and abilities may participate. The combination of the activity's simplicity, its low cost, and medium exercise intensity mean that it is often recommended by medical organizations and healthcare professionals."



An active Ennis resident walking on Lions Park's paved trail

Cyclists

Cyclists range from people of all ages (including young children) purely for recreational purposes, to skilled users that consider bicycles as a mode of transportation. For recreation, a bicycle is considered sports equipment; for the commuter, a bicycle is considered a vehicle.

Cyclists are typically differentiated by skill level. Each group has different preferences and presents unique challenges to providing for trails and bikeways.

Advanced Skill (Type A)

These cyclists are very experienced in riding their bicycle as a vehicle alongside motor traffic and generally prefer riding on streets. They often use on-street bikeways (if provided) or choose their own routes. Type A is also categorized as: "Strong and Fearless."

Basic Skill (Type B)

Most people, whether they consider themselves a "cyclist" or not, fall within this group. Basic cyclists might feel comfortable riding on-street in neighborhoods with low traffic or in areas with high ease-of-use bikeways. However, many often prefer grade-separated paths (i.e., trails). Type B is also categorized as: "Enthusied and Confident."

Children and Seniors (Type C)

While many seniors (and some children) fall into one of the two above categories, they regularly fall into this third category based on their experience levels and physical abilities. Generally slower and less quick to react, children and seniors often only ride their bicycles on grade-separated paths or on very low traffic streets. Type C is also categorized as: "Interested but Concerned."

Considering the above cyclists types, the majority of current or would-be cyclists are considered Type B, which is historically the least-served group in the United States. In many European countries, which enjoy extensive bicycle infrastructure and implement

pro-bicycle policies, cycling is often an integral part of the daily lives of most people and basic cyclists make up the majority of users. This group has the most potential for growth in Ennis and across the country and should be the primary cyclist user group considered in the planning of trails and bikeways.

Other Users

Though far less common than pedestrians and cyclists, there are other types of users that should be considered.

Inline Skaters

The characteristics and preferences of inline skaters fall somewhere between those of pedestrians and cyclists and are generally well-served by shared-use trails built with these other two groups in mind.

Skateboarders & BMX riders

This user group is most interested in skate parks and BMX tracks, but will often use trails and sidewalks to access these facilities.

Equestrians

Horseback riders are best-served by natural surface trails that are not utilized by cyclists. Physical and visual separations that minimize potential conflicts between equestrian and other trail users provide the best and safest facilities for all.



Walking trails at Lion's Park

Goals for Trails and Bikeways

Goal 1: Trails within Parks

Provide trails within existing and future parks.

- Where feasible, create looped trails along the perimeter of parks and that crisscross the park itself.
- Incorporate trees for shade, benches for resting, signage, and lighting to encourage safe and comfortable use.
- Create connections between trails within parks and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Goal 2: Citywide Connectivity

Create a trails and bikeways system that links parks, schools, greenbelts, neighborhoods, business/retail areas, USACE Parks, and gathering spaces, including Downtown.

- Establish a trails and bikeways system throughout the City that will provide opportunity for recreation and alternative modes of transport.
- Research the use of utility easements, sidewalks within the street right-of-way, and drainage ways as potential trail connections.
- Incorporate trailheads and new trail development into or through new developments by a Parkland Dedication Ordinance.
- Incorporate trails and bikeways as alternative modes of transportation into the City's Future Transportation Plan
- Connect with Inter-Cities Trails Systems, including Veloweb and other regional trails.

Goal 3: Trail Amenities for Multi-generational Use

Provide amenities that make trails more visible, comfortable, and save for multi-generational uses.

- Provide all trails with signage for purposes of wayfinding, education/interpretation, and to measure distance with markers.
- At major trail entry points, establish trailheads with informational signage, seating, drinking fountains, lighting, and limited parking.

Five Year Need for Trails

The five year need for trails and bikeways is established at 29 miles (see **Appendix 4: Recreation Facilities LOS**). In comparison, the recommended trail lengths as shown in **Exhibits 4 and 5** are described in **Figure 6.2**.



Pond and walking trail at Bluebonnet Park

6.7 Programming and Trends

Trends and Innovation

Trends change constantly over time. Some trends end up being a fad that is soon forgotten, whereas other trends become more regular fixtures that require accommodation and implementation on a broad scale. In terms of recreation, an example of the latter is pickle ball. While originally mostly enjoyed by seniors, the younger generations show more and more interested in this low impact yet active sport. The challenge of course is to know whether a trend will become a constant or whether it will pass as a fad.

Examples of parks and recreation trends include:

- Risk heavy nature play for children
- Biking at all levels, including e-biking
- Exploration, action, adventure
- Intense programming of public spaces
- Public Private Partnerships
- Revenue generating public spaces
- E-sports
- Outdoor and indoor teaching kitchens

The question is how Ennis PARD can capitalize on trends and innovation in the industry. The answer lies first and foremost in an understanding of the values of the community. Likewise, it is necessary to understand the nature of various trends and how that may be supported based on the community's values.

Trends are by nature innovative and typically new. This means that a limited number of individuals and organizations will be well versed in the intricacies of a particular trend. Consequently, one can easily be misled by those that call themselves experts but are unable to produce. The recommendation is thus to partner with world-class experts that have already demonstrated success on a large enough scale to make it believable and real. Examples of recreation facilities that require partnering with such experts include pump tracks (used by cyclists that motion themselves forward by means of a pumping action).

Finally, it is essential to be flexible and open minded when considering the planning, design, and construction of recreation facilities. Most communities have moved away from inline skating; however, it seems to be making somewhat of a comeback, specifically in Ennis. Flexibility allows for the idea of multi-purposing tennis courts that may not receive as much use for tennis today as in the past. Whether being repurposed or multipurposed, a tennis court surface can easily be modified for inline skating or futsal, which is Futsal is an association football-based game played on a hard court smaller than a football pitch. While futsal is mainly played indoors, it can also be played outdoors.

Figures 6.2 to 6.4 describe trends and innovation in parks and recreation as it relates to 1) recreational uses, 2) health and community, and 3) economics. It includes the identification of needs and issues associated with the trends, suggestions, and innovative ideas and concepts.



Family picnic in Meadowview Nature Area along Lake Bardwell

Trends + Innovation in Parks and Recreation

RECREATIONAL USES

| Observable Trend/Behavior | Underlying Need/Issue | Suggestion/Innovation |
|---|---|---|
| Multiple choices in everything, i.e. TV channels, cereals, etc. | People look forward to individualized needs being met | Places in parks that varies from quiet meditation, free play to active structured play |
| Many cities consider unconventional uses | Need for services and amenities not traditionally provided by public entities | Vendor spaces, retail associated with parks, food trucks |
| E-sports and video games | Recognition of today's reality; potential isolation | Create vibrant and socially interactive spaces |
| Electrical e-scooters, e-bikes and e-boards | Easy and cheap/ sustainable short distance commute; conflict with children and dogs on trails, pedestrians on sidewalks | Separation of electrical vehicles from pedestrians |
| Exploration, adventure, and extreme type activities | People want adventure, challenges, action, and new experiences | Adventure playgrounds, themed waterparks, rope play, pump tracks (dirt or asphalt), Ninja-like obstacle courses |
| Biking for all ages and abilities | People search for individualized choices | Bike trails and parks for kids, BMX and mountain bikes |

Figure 6.2: Recreation Focused Parks and Recreation Trends and Innovation

| Trends + Innovation in Parks and Recreation | | |
|--|---|--|
| HEALTH + COMMUNITY | | |
| Observable Trend/Behavior | Underlying Need/Issue | Suggestion/Innovation |
| Increasing number of people who live alone | Loneliness is the New Smoking; need to more naturally connect with others | Multi-generational recreation spaces |
| Exercise classes in department stores, cooking classes in grocery stores | People's desires to be engaged | To build in opportunities for experiences |
| Livability, community, sustainability | Desire to be more sustainable, with high quality of life opportunities | Build upon core values of the Ennis Comprehensive Plan |
| Changing lifestyles and preferences of older adults | Active & working adults vs. inactive or less healthy adults | Opportunities based on skill level and interests rather than age |
| Intense programming of public spaces | Need for safety | Increase eyes on the park |
| Prevalence of walking paths and bike routes | Access to healthy alternatives while addressing individual preferences | Create priority criteria for public expenditures |
| Desire for healthy living with declining life expectancy | People need to be supported to pursue healthy behaviors | Access to opportunities and environmental support |

Figure 6.3: Health and Community focused Parks and Recreation Trends and Innovation

| Trends + Innovation in Parks and Recreation | | |
|---|---|--|
| ECONOMICS | | |
| Observable Trend/Behavior | Underlying Need/Issue | Suggestion/Innovation |
| Revenue generating spaces | Need for revenue to help pay for park maintenance and operation | Paid for play/ performances, advertising, sponsorships, merchandizing, PPP |
| Public Private Partnership (PPP) | Need to benefit from increased real estate value | Examples: High Line in New York, NY; Clyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX |
| Highly attractive activities and facilities | Competitive nature of marketplace | Employ new forms of sponsorships and specialized partnerships |

Figure 6.4: Economic Focused Parks and Recreation Trends and Innovation

Trends in Parks and Recreation

The parks, open spaces, and recreational offerings of a city play a large role in defining quality of life and the city's identity and image. It also plays a role in determining where people choose to reside, which consequently affects population and economic growth. It is therefore important to understand regional and national trends related to parks and recreation facilities. The following describes several of the most prevalent national trends in recreation.

More Options

People have many more leisure activity choices. Many at-home leisure opportunities are available today, such as hundreds of channels on television, sophisticated computer games, and the internet.

Safety

Safety is a great concern to parents. Many parents do not allow their children to go to parks unattended.

Instant Gratification

We live in an era of instant gratification. People expect high quality recreation, with activities that they like. Cities should be willing to provide a broader than typical menu of recreation activities, but may have to opt out when activities become too costly.

High Expectations

Through the media and internet, we are exposed to the best from around the world. Because of this, we expect our facilities and activities to be of the highest quality possible.

Health

Concern over the health of our population is rapidly growing. Obesity is now recognized as a nationwide problem. Funding to reduce obesity rates by increasing outdoor activities may be more readily available in the future. It may also be a source of grants for parks and recreation programs and facilities.

Limited Funds

New revenue sources for public funding are difficult to come by. Even popular grant programs such as enhancement funds for trails and beautification may not always be available. In addition, less available outside funding also means an increased level of competition for these funds.

Outdoor Recreation Trends

Passive Recreation

One of the most important and impactful trends in parks and recreation today is the increased demand for passive recreation activities and facilities. Passive recreation, as compared to active recreation, includes activities such as walking on trails, cycling, picnicking, enjoying nature, and bird watching. It focuses on individual recreation rather than organized high-intensity pastimes like league athletics (which has long been the focus of parks and recreation departments nationwide). People desire opportunities to use parks and open space on their own time and in their own way.

Trails

Across the North Texas region, the provision of trails is the top priority for citizens. Numerous telephone surveys, public meetings, questionnaires, and in-person interviews have shown that people, on average, place the importance of trails above the provision of any other single type of recreation amenity or facility. Many factors contribute to this, including the demand for passive recreation (as discussed above), greater focus on health, rising transportation costs, and increasing funding opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Open Space Protection

Related to the previous two trends, the protection of and access to open space and natural areas is growing in popularity across the nation. As people are increasingly using trails, they generally prefer to use trails that are located in scenic areas in order to enjoy being outdoors.

Changing Participation Rates

While passive recreation is in greater demand, active recreation activities still play a large role in city parks and recreation systems. One major trend in the Metroplex over the last few years has been changing participation rates in various City sponsored league sports. Examples of these changing participation rates include decreased participation in youth softball, dramatically increased participation in youth soccer, and the emergence of new league sports such as adult soccer and youth lacrosse. It continues to be the case that league sport participation rates vary greatly from city to city depending, in part, on activities offered by the school district and other organizations such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and in some cases churches.

Outdoor Adventure

The goal with outdoor adventure and experiential recreation is typically to awaken the sense of discovery, experience the thrill of adventure, and learn while having fun and being challenged physically. Examples are mud runs, obstacle races, and tough mudder events. They are continuously evolving, which is typical of trends. For Ennis, the natural terrain of Lake Bardwell provides an opportunity to create featured adventure trails.

Cycling

A more recent cycling trend is Pump Tracks, defined as: "a playground for kids and adults alike, from beginners to professionals, a pump track provides a community with a sustainable and fun packed activity for all."

Indoor Recreation Trends

Consolidated Recreation Centers

There is a movement away from providing multiple smaller recreation centers to providing a single large center that is within a 15 to 20 minute travel time of its users. This trend responds to increased diversity of programming that can be provided at these larger centers, while also being more convenient for families to recreate together. These types of centers also provide increased staff efficiency.

Combined Facilities

There is a trend of combining dry side recreation with indoor aquatics for wellness and leisure activities. This reduces initial costs and reduces continuing operation costs for staff while providing more activity choices for its visitors.

Integrated Senior Activity Space

There is a trend of providing dedicated senior activity areas within a large community center. Such an area with a distinct entrance separate from the main center entrance provides the desired autonomy of seniors while providing convenient access to the various opportunities in a recreation center including indoor walking track, warm water exercising, and adequately-sized exercise areas. Furthermore, different time periods of use make the combination of senior centers within a larger community center more feasible.

Cost Recovery

Many Cities are seeking higher fee structures to help offset operational costs. Observation reveals a range from 50-60% operational cost recapture rate all the way to a 100% recapture rate in the North Texas region.

Quality of Life

University students today have elaborate recreation and aquatic facilities at their disposal. New graduates are leaving their universities with expectations for cities to provide comparable facilities. Quality of life is an important component of a new graduate's job search and decision about where to live and has influenced what new centers will provide.

Outdoor Waterpark Trends

Multifunctional Leisure Waterpark

Outdoor waterpark facilities have seen dramatic shifts in the last 20 to 25 years. They have transitioned from square boxes with barbed wire around the tops of fences located in numerous spots around town to more consolidated and larger leisure waterparks. These typically have splash pads, current channels, zero beach entries, play features, large slides, multiple shade areas, and 25-yard lap pools.

Entertainment

The new generation of waterparks have the entertainment value to create attendances that allow operators with modest fees to actually generate more revenues than expenses. This has allowed cities to develop fewer and larger centers to properly serve its citizens.

General Trends

Open Space Value

As North Texas cities continue to grow and expand, citizens are becoming increasingly aware of the diminishing amounts of open space and natural areas in and around their communities. Similarly, this increased awareness parallels an increased interest in preserving open spaces, rural landscapes, and natural areas along creeks, lakes, wooded areas, prairies, and other environmentally and culturally significant locations.

Changing Development Patterns

There is an increased interest among citizens to consider alternative development strategies in order to improve their communities. These improvements include preserving and providing access to natural areas, decreasing traffic congestion, encouraging walking and bicycling, enhancing property values, and increasing and enhancing recreation opportunities. Alternative development strategies often considered include mixed-use development, new urbanism, conservation development, context sensitive solutions (CSS), and complete streets. See **Appendix C3**.

Quality Environment

The attributes of a community play a large role in attracting (or detracting) people to a city or region. Research shows that the quality of a city's environment (its climate, park space, and natural resources) is the most significant factor in attracting (or detracting) new residents. As such, high-quality, high-quantity parks and open space systems will attract people while low-quality, low-quantity parks and open space systems will detract people.







Recommendations

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Parks and Recreation Priorities

Highest Priority Recommendations

The actions items that have transpired as the highest priority for parks and recreation are defined and described in **Figure 7.1**. Together these action items meet all four goals established for parks and recreation.

| Highest Priority Parks & Recreation Action Items | |
|---|---|
| Timeframe for implementing high priority action items is 1 to 3 years | |
| Priority | Action Items |
| 1 | <p>Modernize Parks</p> <p>Improve existing parks to a level that is comparable to the best parks in Ennis, i.e., Rotary and Lions.</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 2 | <p>Complete Tim Gauna Discover Park</p> <p>Finalized design and construction of this high-profile park</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 3 | <p>Waterpark</p> <p>Design and construct a waterpark that includes swimming pools, waterslides, splash pads, shade structures, and restroom facilities</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + Goal 2: Family Focused & Equitable + Goal 3: Healthy Living</i></p> |
| 4 | <p>Land Acquisition</p> <p>Acquire land as a matter of urgency for all types of parks including the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.</p> <p><i>Meeting Goals – 1: Quality of Life + 2: Family Focused & Equitable + 3: Healthy Living + 4: Protecting Nature & Culture</i></p> |

Figure 7.1: Top Priority Action Items

The top priority recommendations are based on a combination of the three methods to determine the needs of a community:

1. Demand Based Needs
2. Resource Based Needs
3. Standard Based Needs

The priorities for each of these categories of need are described in the paragraphs and figures that follow.

Demand Based Needs Priorities

During the various community outreach and engagement events, people from the Ennis community expressed their preferences and needs by means of interactive engagement and surveys. Referred to as Demand Based Needs, the top four needs are priorities in **Figure 7.2**.

| Demand Based Needs | |
|--------------------|---|
| Priority | Items Needed |
| 1 | Trails & bikeways |
| 2 | Aquatics i.e., waterpark, swimming pools, splash pads |
| 3 | New and upgraded playground equipment |
| 4 | Pavilions, shade structures & shade trees |

Figure 7.2: Community Needs Prioritized

Resource Based Needs Priorities

Referred to as Resource Based Needs, the top four natural environment and cultural needs of the community are prioritized in **Figure 7.3**.

| Resource Based Needs | |
|----------------------|--|
| Priority | Items Needed |
| 1 | Celebrate the multi-cultural aspect of Ennis |
| 2 | Protect bluebonnets and wildflowers |
| 3 | Capitalize on Lake Bardwell |
| 4 | Protect floodplains |

Figure 7.3: Cultural & Natural Environment Priorities

Priorities based on target standards for land acquisition

The target standards for the level of service for parkland in Ennis are described in **Chapter 4** and presented in **Appendix 3: Park Land Standards**.

The high priority acquisition need for parkland based on these target standards at built-out conditions are summarized in **Figure 7.4**. The 5-year priority need for land acquisition is summarized in **Figure 7.6**.

Priorities based on target standards for recreation facilities

The target standards for the level of service for recreation facilities in Ennis are described in **Chapter 5** and presented in **Appendix 4: Recreation Facilities Level of Service**. The 5-year priority need for recreation facilities based on these target standards are summarized in **Figure 7.5**.

| Standard Based Needs for Parkland | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|---|---|
| Need for additional parkland at projected built-out population of 100,000 | | | | |
| Type Park | Built-out Acreage | Built-out Number of Parks | Typical Acquisition | High Priority Acquisition Need |
| Neighborhood Parks | 413 acres | About 60 parks at an average size of 7 acres | Largely by developer through the Parkland Dedication Ordinance | Determined by pace of development applications |
| Community Parks | 591 acres | Five to six parks at an average size of 100 to 120 acres | Most often outright purchasing by cities | Five parks on all sides of Ennis |
| Other Parks | 600 acres | Flexible in terms of number and size, determined by opportunity and need | Outright purchase by City and/or developer agreement | Special Purpose Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bluebonnet conservation areas for preservation of wildflowers, with parking, restrooms, and informational and interpretive signage. Land for limited off-road parking and wildflower viewing stations (easements and/or purchase) Highly visible land for a skatepark Land close to multi-family developments for a dog park to replace the Puppy Patch in Downtown |
| | | | | Pocket Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One urban plaza Trailheads |
| | | | | Linear Parks Easements for trails along creeks, utility corridors, roads, and the railroad |
| Regional Parks | 500 acres | 1 to 3 parks determined by opportunity and need | Combination of partners including the City, County, and/or the State. | Priority determined by opportunity |

Figure 7.4: High Priority Need for Parkland

| Standard Based Needs for Recreational Facilities | |
|---|-------------------|
| FACILITY TYPE | Need |
| COMPETITIVE AND PRACTICE FACILITIES | |
| Baseball (Competitive) | 3 fields |
| Softball (Competitive) | 3 fields |
| Soccer (Competitive) | 2 fields |
| Baseball/Softball (Practice) | 3 fields |
| Multi-purpose Practice Areas (Practice) | 2 areas |
| OTHER ACTIVE FACILITIES | |
| General Recreation Facilities | |
| Pick-up game areas for informal use | 1 areas |
| Playgrounds | 4 playgrounds |
| Play area for Corn Hole / Horse Shoe / Washer Pits | 6 pits |
| Trails | 29 miles |
| Special Purpose Facilities | |
| Skatepark | 1 skatepark |
| Disc Golf Course | 1 course |
| Other Athletic Facilities | |
| Basketball Goals (Outdoor, half, and full courts) | 7 goals |
| Tennis Courts | 1 court |
| Sand Volleyball | 2 courts |
| Pickle Ball (Racquet, Futsol) | 4 courts |
| AQUATIC FACILITIES | |
| Lap Pool and Leisure Pool | 1 pool |
| Spray Park / Splash Pad | 4 splash pads |
| Waterpark | 1 waterpark |
| Fishing Pier | 2 piers |
| PASSIVE FACILITIES | |
| Large Pavilions and Covered Picnic Structures | Opportunity based |
| Outdoor Amphitheater | 2 amphitheaters |
| Dog Park | 2 dog parks |
| INDOOR FACILITIES | |
| Meeting Rooms | 3 rooms |
| Gymnasiums | 2 gyms |
| Recreation Center | 1 center |
| Senior Center | 1 center |
| Indoor Aquatic Center | 1 center |

*most existing shelters are dated and require improvements or replacement

Figure 7.5: Recreation Facilities 5-year Need

7.2 Land Acquisition

For the city to adequately make provision for future parks and open space, it is essential that the highest priority be placed on “close to home” parks, which are neighborhood and community parks, as well as land with conservation value that will be lost to future development.

The need to acquire land for certain parks and recreation uses are often based on opportunities and need that may present themselves in the future. The very purpose of this Master Plan is to anticipate future need for parks and recreation facilities.

Examples of future land acquisition in addition to the 5-year horizon includes:

- Special Purpose Parks e.g., nature preserves, and other specialized recreation facilities
- Pocket Parks e.g., additional urban plazas, and trailheads
- Linear Parks e.g., additional easements for trails
- Regional Parks e.g., conservation areas

USACE parkland

Not accounted for above are USACE parks associated with Lake Bardwell as follows:

- 163 acres of accessible east bank parks
- This is in addition to the Meadowview Natural Area already accounted for as a regional park within the City of Ennis
- 439 acres of non-accessible east bank parks
- This is due to the USACE limitation placed on the use of these parks
- 630 acres of northwest bank parks
- These parks are on the far side of Lake Bardwell and outside the ETJ of the City of Ennis

Imminent Land Acquisition for Parks

The ultimate need for parkland is a function of built-out conditions. However, Ennis is growing at a fairly fast pace, which results in higher land values and scarcer land. For that reason, the aggressive acquisition of parkland is recommended to be in front of the curve in obtaining land for parks, recreation, and conservation. The priority goals for land acquisition is summarized in **Figure 7.6**.

| Land Purchase Goals | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Type Park/Facility | Number Units | Average Unit Size | Estimated Acreage |
| Bluebonnet conservation areas | 2 | 75 acres | 150 acres |
| Community parks (on all sides of Ennis) | 5 | 100 acres | 500 acres |
| Neighborhood Parks | 10 | 8 acres | 80 acres |
| Skatepark | 1 | 1 acre | 1 acre |
| Urban plaza (Story Plaza) | 1 | 1 acre | ¼ acre or +/- 10,000 sq ft (rounded to 1 acre) |
| Trailheads | 10 | 1 acre | 10 acres |
| Total Acreage Need: | | | 742 acres |
| Easement Goals | | | |
| Off-road parking and wildflower viewing stations | 6 | 3 acres | 18 acres |
| Linear Parks | Total length of 10 miles | 75 ft width | 90 acres |
| Total Easement Need: | | | 108 acres |

Figure 7.6: High Priority Parkland Acquisition

7.3 Park Development and Improvement

The following action items describe the development of new and improvement of existing parks.

Bluebonnet Viewing Stations

Wildflower viewing is a major activity in the Ennis area during the spring, but April particularly, of each year. It is recommended to establish ten to 15 viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails. These stations will include limited off-road parking (max. 8 spaces) and pathways allowing visitors to come in close contact with the flowers.

Bluebonnet Conservation Parks

Develop the land acquire for the protection and interpretation of bluebonnets and other wildflowers, including signage, walking paths, parking, and restrooms. The idea is to leave vast areas of land untouched with minimal management so as allow for the optimum blooming of the flowers each year. High priority is placed on Meadowview Nature Area.

Rogers and Maise Park

While the park is named after Drs. Armond Rogers and Grant Maise, there is little else that help to celebrate who they were and what they did for the Ennis community.

With the expansion of this park towards Faulker St. it is recommended to perform a complete redesign of the enlarged Rogers and Maise Park. This calls for comprehensive research of the lives of Drs. Rogers and Maise, and to create a concept plan that inform and educate people about the civic contribution of these gentlemen, while serving as an inspiration for others to be civic minded as well.

Storytelling Plaza

The Vision Statement for parks and recreation in Ennis includes amongst others, 1) honoring rich cultural diversity, and 2) promoting a love of learning. What better way to do so by celebrating the history of a community through storytelling. The new design for Tim Gauna Discovery Park is a good example of the physical expression of Tim's life.

The improvement and upgrade of Rogers and Maise Park described above is another example of storytelling. An exploration of this concept led to the idea of a place where storytelling literally takes place. Consequently, it is recommended to create a place in Downtown where people on certain times during the month/week can tell their stories and be recorded doing so. The idea is to build a memory of Ennis and its people over time.

While the actual telling of stories is ephemeral by nature, the remembrance of prominent Ennis people will be told with multimedia displays of their stories. The commonality of these people's stories may be their connection with parks and recreation. Examples include:

- Tim Gauna (fallen hero and Navy veteran)
- Sandy Anderson (Bluebonnet queen)
- Dr. Armond Rogers (first practicing Black physician who, with Dr. Maise, contributed to recreation opportunities for Ennis' Black youth)
- Dr. Grant Willie Maise (first practicing Black dentist in Ennis)
- Jay Justin Clarke (minor league baseball player hitting 8 home runs in a single game)
- Bob Finley (major league baseball player)
- Charles Hudson (major league baseball player)
- Jack Lummus (professional football player receiving the Medal of Honor for his valor during World War II)

While some of these individuals will be remembered with more detail elsewhere, e.g. Tim Gauna at Tim Gauna Discovery Park, having all being introduced at one place will add prominence to their memories.



The grain silos on the corner of Ennis and Breckenridge is very iconic

The suggestion is to locate this plaza at the foot of the grain silos, and in association with the future Museum Campus as described in the Downtown Master Plan. The purpose of the latter is to expand the historic train depot ambiance south across Ennis Ave.

This storytelling plaza may include some of the following features:

- The intimate setting of an arena with a small stage
- The grain silos as a backdrop for the projection of images either for small gatherings of people, or for large projections along the full height of the grain silos to allow for visibility from afar
- For special ambiance a fire ring to contain a fire that is built like a campfire surrounded by circles of seating stones.

Modernize Parks

The majority of existing parks in Ennis were constructed more than 20 years ago. This means that many of the recreation facilities and amenities are old and obsolete. These parks also lack features that have become standard in many communities, e.g. splash pads.

It is recommended that the City makes a concerted effort to improve and modernize at least one neighborhood park every two years. That means that within a period of 12 years, all of the 6 neighborhood parks in Ennis will have been upgraded.

For community parks it is recommended to improve and upgrade the City's 4 existing parks within a period of 10 years. Special purpose and pocket parks include a mixture of old and new parks, two of which are recommended for donation (Willy Love) or selling (Susie B. Garret), while others are earmarked for major upgrades (Pierce Park) as part of other City projects.

Dog Park

Develop a dog park for different size dogs. When the City is ready to develop either a new dog park or to replace Puppy Patch, it is recommended to research and study the best location for such a facility. Items to consider include:

1. Proximity to where most dog owners live
2. Multi-family communities that typically have less available open space
3. Accommodation for different size dogs
4. Size to accommodate for dogs to run free
5. Shade and ccess to water
6. Amenities for dog handlers and owners, including seating and shade

Site Specific Improvements

When developing new parks/trails or upgrading existing parks/trails, there are certain items that are essential for the success and enjoyment of these spaces.

- Understand the purpose of the park/trail and plan for and design it accordingly
- Considering city-wide branding for parks and trails
- Incorporate cultural and natural features of the site to provide each park and/or trail system a unique identity
- Focus on the arrival sequence and experience that are key in creating long-lasting memories
- Enhance play experience for children by incorporating nature inspired play, which is often site specific
- Safety is key for all public spaces; for that purpose, both physical and visual transparency and a variety of ingress and egress options are essential
- Pedestrian lighting needs to be thoughtfully designed and installed; horizontal lighting that allows for face is important
- Explore and implement the most up-to-date technology, e.g., WiFi

Native Plants

The use of plants is an important aspect of park and trail design. Plants provide shade, screening, as well as beauty to the landscape. From a storm water runoff point of view, plants also serve to prevent erosion and to filtrate water runoff. While the choice of a particular plant species is largely based on the intended use, it is also a factor of options and availability.

While exotic plants are typically readily available, and are used extensively in the landscape industry, the argument for native plants as an alternative and often most superior choice, cannot be overstated. Native plants are by nature well adapted to the local climatic and soil conditions. The use of native plant material ensures the following:

- Creates and maintains the unique character of Ennis
- Ensures a native plant legacy
- Limits water use
- Reduces maintenance requirements
- Promotes civic responsibility to support indigenous materials of the local ecology

Of special note is to consider why the use of certain exotic plants (even though climatically adapted) may not be encouraged in Ennis. As an illustration, reference is made to a specific small tree used extensively in the DFW metroplex.

One of the most successfully used ornamental trees used in the landscape industry today is the small crape myrtle tree (*Lagerstroemia indica*), which is an exotic plant, native to India. The very fact of this being a practical, drought tolerant small tree with many blossoms and colorful bark has caused this tree to be overused extensively as the ornamental tree of choice from the eastern states of Florida and the Carolinas, across the country to California.

This resulted and still results in the planted landscapes of this immense area to be uniform and somewhat boring. In fact, it may be argued that this is one of many contributing factors that have affected and essentially diluted the uniqueness of many communities. After all, it is the natural environment, including native plants, that determine the unique and special quality of a place. Small ornamental trees, also referred to as "Understory Trees" are an important and necessary component of the urban landscape. Alternative small trees that are native to Texas, are listed below.

The following is a list of native plant species recommended for use in parks, along trails, in parkways, and medians.

Indigenous Canopy Trees

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Shumard Red Oak | <i>Quercus shumardii</i> |
| Live Oak | <i>Quercus virginiana</i> |
| Cedar Elm | <i>Ulmus crassifolia</i> |
| Bald Cypress | <i>Taxodium distichum</i> |
| Bur Oak | <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> |
| Chinquapin Oak | <i>Quercus muhlenbergii</i> |
| Texas Ash | <i>Fraxinus texensis</i> |

Indigenous Understory Trees

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Texas Redbud | <i>Cercis canadensis var. texensis</i> |
| Flameleaf Sumac | <i>Rhus lanceolata</i> |
| Mexican Buckeye | <i>Ungnadia speciosa</i> |
| Eve's Necklace | <i>Sophora affinis</i> |
| Indigo Bush | <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> |
| Mexican Plum | <i>Prunus mexicana</i> |
| Rusty Blackhaw | <i>Viburnum rufidulum</i> |
| Western Soapberry | <i>Sapindus saponaria</i> |

Indigenous Shrubs

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Common Buttonbush | <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> |
| Texas Sage | <i>Leucophyllum frutescens 'Compacta'</i> |
| Dwarf Wax Myrtle | <i>Myrica cerifera var. pumila</i> |
| American Beautyberry | <i>Callicarpa americana</i> |
| Smooth Sumac | <i>Rhus glabra</i> |
| Texas Sage | <i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i> |
| Yellow Bells | <i>Tecoma stans</i> |
| Texas Lantana | <i>Lantana urticoides</i> |
| Autumn Sage | <i>Salvia greggii</i> |
| Red Yucca | <i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i> |

7.4 Trail Development

Trails and bikeways are by far the highest priority for the community of Ennis. The first priority is to create a Trails and Bikeways Master Plan with specific alignments identified and design standards to ensure a network of accessible and safe trails and bikeways in Ennis.

Subject to the outcome of this study, an average of about 6 miles of trails are recommended for construction each year. While this appears aggressive, it prepares the City to achieve its ultimate goal of 125 miles of trails at build-out of 100,000 population.

Trailheads should be constructed in concert with trails, in locations and per design guidelines as will be specified in the future Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.

Trail and Bikeway Alignments

Initial trails and bikeway alignments were identified in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. Even though it is not the focus of this Plan, additional alignments are proposed as part of the Parks and Recreation Plan. The ultimate goal is to create a more robust and detailed Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.

Two maps illustrate pedestrian and bicycling connectivity at two different scales throughout Ennis and the surrounding areas. For ease of reference, **Exhibit 4** shows all trails except Regional Trails. The latter is included in **Exhibit 5**.

These trail and bikeway alignments are conceptual and do not differentiate between on-road bicycle routes, sidewalks that coincide with a particular trail alignment, and off-road multi-use trails that may be used for mountain biking, recreational cycling, jogging, walking, and/or strolling. Nor does the map differentiate between hard surface and soft surface

trails.

As alluded to before, serious cyclists may prefer vehicular roads and recreational cyclists may prefer off-road trails. Similarly, for bird watching a winding, low impact natural surface trail may be preferred, whereas some joggers may prefer a concrete surface, and other joggers may prefer a soft surface nature trail.

Citywide trail and/or bikeway connectivity for Ennis is recommended as follows:

Inner City Loop Trail

This loop trail connects key destinations within and on the outer reaches of the city.

Outer City Loop Trail

The purpose of this the Outer City Loop Trail is twofold: 1) to serve as the containment of the residential component of the City of Ennis, and 2) to connect all of the five recommended community parks.

City Spine Trails

This category serves as internal connections along Ennis Road and the Railroad up to where they connect with the Outer City Loop Trail.

City Trails

These trails are all within the area defined by the Outer City Loop Trail and provide internal links to parks, schools, and other destinations.

Regional Trails

The goal of regional trails is to connect with other cities/communities and regional destinations including the Trinity River. In addition, the future Veloweb Alignments could connect Ennis directly with the DFW Metroplex.

Lake Loop Trail

The intent of a Lake Loop Trail is to connect existing as well as future USACE parks, trails, and amenities

while traversing beautiful natural habitat associated with the lake. Such a loop trail will at a minimum be 21 miles long. However, it does require access across boundaries, e.g. between future city acquired trail easements and USACE managed land, including private property subject to an agreement between the city (and USACE) and property owners.

Lake Ring Road & Bikeway

This bikeway aligns with the planned Lake Ring Road that loops around Lake Bardwell. More specifically, the Lake Ring Road and Bikeway:

- Provides both vehicular and bicycle access to the various recreation destinations along the edge of the lake.
- Provides beautiful views and vistas to the lake and surrounding nature parks and protected USACE land.
- Is considered ideal for serious road cycling; at a distance of about 20 miles, it is ideal for both training along a scenic route and to host regional cycling events.
- Allows for leisure family drives.

For both the Lake Loop Trail and Lake Ring Road, the 2015 Comprehensive Plan recommended a new multi-modal bridge at approximately the same alignment as the now abandoned Ennis Parkway Creek Crossing. Designed as an iconic bridge that accommodates vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, it will help emphasize Lake Bardwell as a major destination within the region.

Five Year Need for Trails

The five year need for trails and bikeways is established at 29 miles (see **Appendix 4: Recreation Facilities LOS**). In comparison, the recommended trail lengths as shown in **Exhibits 4 and 5** are described in **Figure 7.7**.

Length of Trails and Bikeways

| Individual Trails and Bikeways | Distance |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Inner City Loop Trail | 14.3 miles |
| Outer City Loop Trail | 35.1 miles |
| Spine Trails (Ennis Road) | 6.6 miles |
| Spine Trails (Railroad) | 4.1 miles |
| City Trails | 55.6 miles |
| Regional Trails | 194.4 miles |
| Lake Loop Trail | 20.8 miles |
| Lake Ring Road Bikeway | 20 miles |
| <i>SUBTOTAL:</i> | <i>351 miles</i> |

| Total length of Trails and Bikeways | Distance |
|---|-------------------------|
| Above, minus the following: | |
| Lake Loop Trail section of Inner City Loop Trail: | 1.3 miles |
| Lake Loop Trail section of Outer City Loop Trail: | 8.9 miles |
| <i>TOTAL:</i> | <i>341 miles</i> |

| Total length of Trails and Bikeways excluding Regional Trails | Distance |
|---|--------------------------|
| | 340.7 miles |
| minus | 194.4 miles |
| <i>TOTAL:</i> | <i>146 miles*</i> |

*This total length of trails and bikeways is close to the 125 miles of trails and bikeways required at a build-out population of 100,000, which constitutes a target standard of 1 mile per 800 population (see **Appendix 4: Recreation facilities Level of Service**)

Figure 7.7: Length of Trails and Bikeways

7.5 Recreation Facilities

Athletic Facilities

Athletic facilities can either be provided as part of a new community park or as a stand alone special purpose park. In either case, the following describes strategies for the design and construction of athletic facilities.

Amenities

Include all appropriate and relevant amenities when developing Athletic facilities. Such amenities include: off-street parking, restrooms, bleachers, concessions, fencing, walkways, warning tracks, scoring areas, dugouts and equipment/material storage. Also consider speakers and amplifiers for the announcement of games.

Diamonds

Baseball and softball diamonds can accommodate both games and practices because the impact on any given part of the field is minimal except around the bases. Provide batting cages to allow one team to use the field while another is taking batting practice.

Rectangular Sports Fields

Fields can easily be overused, with even the best fields that can only accommodate 30 hours of play per week maximum. This should not be exceeded because it results in more rapid field deterioration.

The Ideal Soccer Complex

When developing Rectangular Fields it is recommended to build the largest fields possible and then divide the fields as needed. See **Figure 7.8** that shows an area of 200 by 400 yards with multiple fields configured within the boundaries, and adequate space for safe play and spectating on each field.

Practice Fields

Build and designate practice fields for sports using rectangular fields. These practice fields can be developed for much less money, use more hardy and tolerant species of grass; don't need to be lighted or irrigated; and cost at least 75% less annually to maintain. If strategically located, they can be used as open play areas available to renters of picnic shelters, as well as pick-up games for informal practice and play.

Synthetic Turf Fields

Synthetic turf fields are not always the answer to the demand for field space. This may be particularly true in hot climates such as that of the City of Ennis. Generally, an irrigation system is necessary to keep the field temperature down. However, the fields are available 24/7 and can be configured for any sport. If maintenance at 30 hours of use per week is inadequate synthetic turf may need to be considered as an alternative.

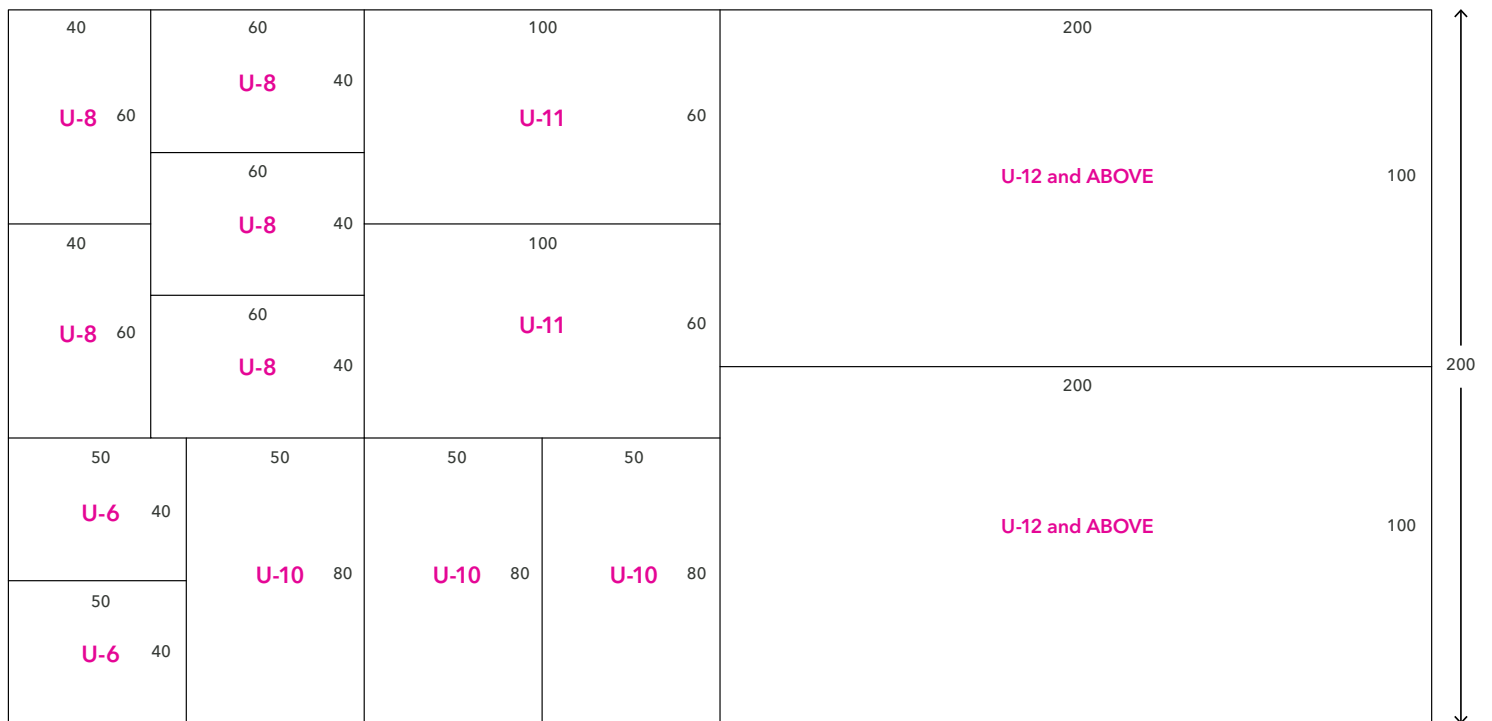


Figure 7.8: The Ideal Soccer Complex

This chart illustrates ideal dimensions of a soccer complex ; the overall area is 200 yards by 400 yards, which equals 16.5 acres (80,000 sq yards = 720,000 sq feet)



Soccer practice at Veterans Memorial Park

Waterpark

Prepare a master plan for and develop the municipal campus to include a waterpark, senior center, animal center, etc.

Skatepark

For the development of a skatepark, it is recommended that the City engages The Skatepark Project. It is a non-profit organization that assists communities in the planning and development of skateparks.

The Skatepark Project

<https://skatepark.org/>

The Skatepark Project supports disadvantaged communities and at-risk children. We are the only national grant-writing organization focused solely on the development and financing of free, quality public skateparks. We know that skateparks provide a safe and inspiring avenue for skaters to practice and excel at their sport, and the process of developing their local skatepark encourages and teaches young people about how to make positive changes within their own communities.

The Skatepark Project has been working with municipalities and community groups to help them realize their dream of a quality public skatepark in their community. For Tony Hawk, the organization's Founder, skateboarding was a healthy outlet and a recreational challenge, and it provided a social group of creative, like-minded individuals. It's also a sport that helped him build confidence, taught him to persevere, and through his mentoring of younger skaters helped him develop leadership skills. The Skatepark Project works every day to be able to bring these same lessons to youth around the world.

Capitalizing on Lake Bardwell

To capitalize on Lake Bardwell and the surrounding USACE parks was identified as a high priority. This can be met by providing opportunities for recreation that includes elements of exploration, action, and adventure. Examples are tree canopy ziplines, Ninja-like obstacle courses, etc.

Event Center

Plan for, design, and construct an event center to replace the event center at Tim Gauna Discovery Park.

Indoor Recreation Center

Plan for, design, and construct a multi-use and multi-generational recreation center that includes gymnasiums, meeting rooms, a wet component, and facilities for seniors.



Taking pictures of bluebonnets at the old Eagle Rock golf course

7.6 Recreation Programming

Programming of Parks

Opportunities to improve usage and expand recreation programming for existing and future parks exist through the parks system of Ennis. For each new community and neighborhood park, it is recommended to consider the inclusion of athletic and other recreation facilities based on the need identified in **Chapter 5**, defined in **Appendix A4: Recreation Facilities LOS**, and summarized in **Figure 7.5: Recreation Facilities 5-year Need**.

Indoor Programming

One of the most pressing needs of the Ennis is for dedicated, city-owned recreational indoor space in order to fulfill the programming needs of the community. The city relies heavily on local organizations such as the Ennis Boys & Girls Club, Ennis Golden Circle, churches, and private groups to provide most of the recreational programming.

Currently, the city is operating under a joint use agreement with the Ennis ISD for the use of a renovated gymnasium. While this agreement is generous in nature (cost-free) and serves PARD's initial need to provide youth indoor sports, the expected growth of the City will call for increased space and usage. Also, this facility is strictly a sports-only site as it does not contain meeting rooms, classrooms, or activity rooms for exclusive youth, adult, or senior activities.

The following are activities that could be held in a recreational/activity center for which PARD currently does not have the capacity for:

- Adult Exercise Classes
 - Yoga
 - Spin
 - Pilates
 - HIIT
 - Zumba/Salsa
 - Boot Camp
- Senior Social Activities
 - Arts & Craft
 - Bingo
 - Board Games
 - Dancing
 - Social Hour
 - Senior Stretching Exercises
- Youth Activities
 - Karate/Judo
 - Tumbling
 - Gymnastics
 - Summer Camps
 - Winter Camps

7.7 Future Initiatives & Studies

The following describes city initiatives and studies for the city of Ennis to consider.

Branding for Parks and Recreation

The **ActiveEnnis** brand was established as a means to advertise, promote, and support the efforts of this master planning effort. The original idea was to incorporate this brand as part of Ennis PARD outreach, marketing, and activities once the Parks Master Plan is complete. It was suggested that **ActiveEnnis** can become the public facing brand for all activities under Ennis PARD including future special projects, facilities, and programming.

Parks Foundation

Establish the Ennis Parks Foundation with the mission to secure funding for future parks and trails in terms of land acquisition and development.

Create a Bluebonnet Protection Plan

The annual flowering of bluebonnets is a huge annual draw to Ennis that climaxes during the Bluebonnet Trails and Festival event in April. The economic and cultural value of bluebonnets and wildflowers cannot be overstated. Protecting the bluebonnets in Ennis and surrounding areas is thus of paramount importance. **Appendix A5** describes a framework for preparing a plan for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers in Ennis.

10-Minute Walk-to-a-Park Campaign

Joining the mayors of 13 cities in Texas, it is recommended that the mayor of Ennis commits to the challenge called the 10-Minute Walk-to-a-Park Campaign. The purpose of this campaign is to “inspire and enable action to create a world in which 100% of people in U.S. cities --LARGE AND SMALL -- have safe access to a quality park or green space within a 10-minute walk of home by 2050.”

Mixed-use Developments

Consider and create public/private/partnerships as a strategy to provide adequately for parks and recreation in mixed-use developments.

Trails & Bikeways Master Plan

The network of trails recommended as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan needs to be studied, reviewed, and prioritized by means of a Trails and Bikeways Master plan that considers multi-use pathways for biking, walking, jogging, and other forms of active transportation. Ideally, such a Trails Plan should be done in concert with a new Thoroughfare Plan to accommodate bikeways as an alternative mode of transportation.

In order to ensure that the system is developed in a consistent manner and is safe and easy to use, trails and bikeways should be developed based on a set of design standards. In addition to mandated state and national standards* that shape certain safety and accessibility factors, a set of Ennis specific design standards should be developed for trail width, trailheads, bridges, access points, pavement markings, and overlooks. The goal is for these design standards to serve as the aesthetic directive or “brand” for the community’s trails and bikeways system. In addition to prioritizing trail segments, such a plan should identify funding tools and partnerships for implementation.

** Source: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities; Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG/TAS); Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS); Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD)*

Individual Park Master Plans

Create master plans for 1) the municipal campus on Lampasas to include a waterpark, senior center, animal center, 2) Rogers and Maise Park including the extension to Faulkner St., and 3) future community parks.

Floodplain Protection Plan

Creeks and their floodplains have tremendous value in terms of trail connections, flood management, and providing habitat for wildlife. In order to preserve and manage these areas for public use, public safety, water quality, and the protection of open space, this 2015 Plan Update recommends a citywide floodplain protection plan. The major component of such a plan would be the development of a detailed hydraulic and hydrology study that identifies the fully developed 500- and 100-year floodplains at anticipated build-out conditions for all major drainage corridors in the city. It is important to consider fully developed conditions to ensure the long-term health and quality of floodplains and economic sustainability of the city. Furthermore, protecting the floodplain at fully developed conditions affords more opportunities for recreational uses—including trails, nature exploration, and open space preserves—along creek corridors.

Thoroughfare Plan Update

An update of the City's Thoroughfare Plan is needed to reflect recent as well as anticipated development in the City of Ennis and its ETJ. Such an update should include the following:

- New roads constructed and that are planned for.
- An evaluation of the recommended modifications to the Thoroughfare Plan per the 2015 Plan Update where relevant.
- Multi-modal transportation to accommodate for vehicles, bicycles, transit, and pedestrians.
- Bikeways both on-road and off-road.
- Pedestrian connections associated with roadway corridors including sidewalks and trails.

7.8 Operations & Maintenance

Maintenance Goals

The primary maintenance goal is to provide sustainable maintenance for all assets assigned to maximize their expected life cycle. This is a function of balancing adequate resources to address the workload responsibility.

A maintenance analysis is intended to examine the resource available in the form of staff, dollars, equipment, and materials to maintain the park and recreation assets. The standard of evaluation is a sustainable level of maintenance that makes it possible to keep assets in their usable condition over the course of their expected life cycle.

The objective is to balance the workload with the available resources to conduct the required maintenance activities. The three key considerations are:

1. Adequate and properly trained staff
2. Adequate work and storage space
3. Appropriate equipment for the jobs assigned.

These three factors allow PARD to optimize their productivity and provide cost effective services for the City.

The City of Ennis with a population near 22,000 is 22% of the way to the build out target of 100,000 residents. The current park and open space acreage are 15 % of the target goal recommended in this Master Plan.

Parks and open space are a considerable economic value to the City both for the growth of population and retention of the residents that move to the city before build-out. It is thus essential to match the growth of parks and open space with the development of the residential and commercial real estate.

Maintenance Facility

Figure 7.9 illustrates the maintenance crew's driving time from the City's maintenance facility (on Lampasas) and back as it relates to the physical layout of the City of Ennis.

Once a crew has reached their starting point on their route the travel time is not going to change much between parks. It is the time to and from the route that becomes inefficient as distance and traffic density start to impact travel time. In the future as more parks are being built and roads are more heavily used, the drive times should not exceed 30 minutes per person per day.

The current maintenance facility is considered functional as a location for the next ten years at which time it will have to be reassessed.

Maintenance Recommendations

Create an inventory of assets for sustainable maintenance

Sustainable Maintenance is defined as a level of maintenance necessary to ensure the life-cycle cost of the asset is consistent with the estimated life expectancy of the asset. The City, having invested funds in the acquisition and development of the parks has a fiduciary responsibility to optimize the investment.

Assets include parks, open spaces, recreation facilities, infrastructure, and amenities as well as all public assets that are maintained. The PARD needs to create an inventory of their assets that must be provided with sustainable maintenance. The GIS element of NRPA's PRORAGIS is free to members and provides an asset inventory system for use.

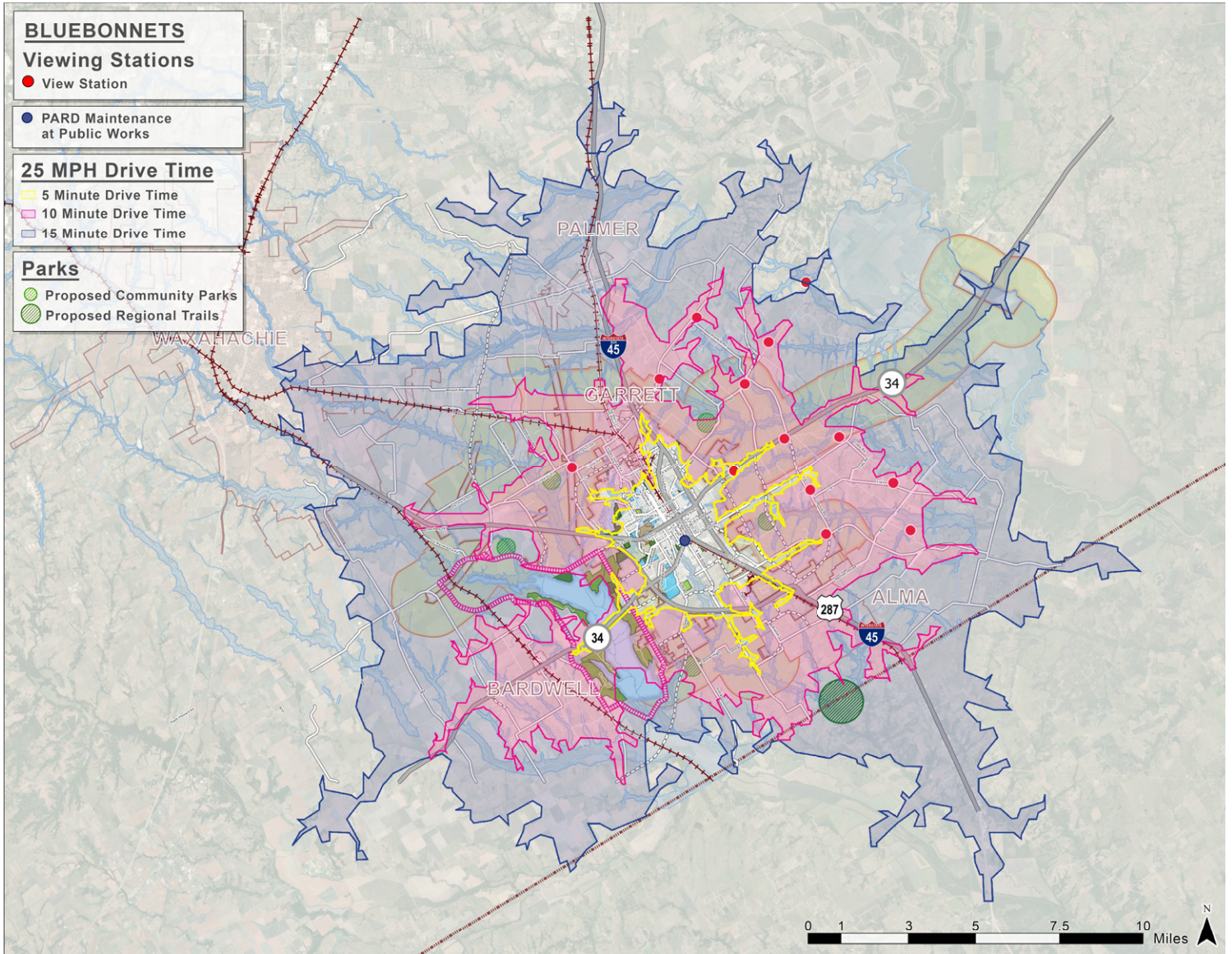


Figure 7.9: City Maintenance Drive Time

The map shows an outline of Ennis in brown. Blue represents a 15-minute drive time from the current PARD maintenance facility at Public Works. Pink is a 10-minute drive time and the area within the yellow boundary is a 5-minute drive time.

Develop a reporting system for each maintenance function

In concert with the Asset Inventory, the Maintenance Unit of PARD should develop a reporting system for each maintenance function performed. With sustainable maintenance as the goal, the reporting is done by using the assets identified and the work unit standards to determine the following:

- The need for full-time staff, non-full-time, and contractors
- Material and supply needs
- Equipment needs
- Funding required to conduct sustainable maintenance

Prepare a drive time study

Among the data that is unknown is the average travel time per employee. It is generally best to keep travel time below 40 minutes average per day. Per **Figure 7.9** the current drive time map shows the entire city within a 15 minute drive time of the maintenance yard. The implication is that there is no need to create a second maintenance yard until the travel times are approximately double what currently exists.

Consider maintenance contracts

The determination of how to staff the developed parks, open space and facilities should depend on the market conditions and the functions being performed. The planning team accepts that PARD should have a major role in the maintenance of the City's grounds and related amenities. It is not, however, always best practice to have the park staff actually doing the work. For instance, the medians and Rights-Of-Ways (ROWs) may be more cost effectively maintained under contract. Such a contract should be managed by PARD to ensure quality work. This would free staff to work in other park areas where additional staff is needed.

Note: Contracting for Grounds Services Best Practice includes the following Key Practices.

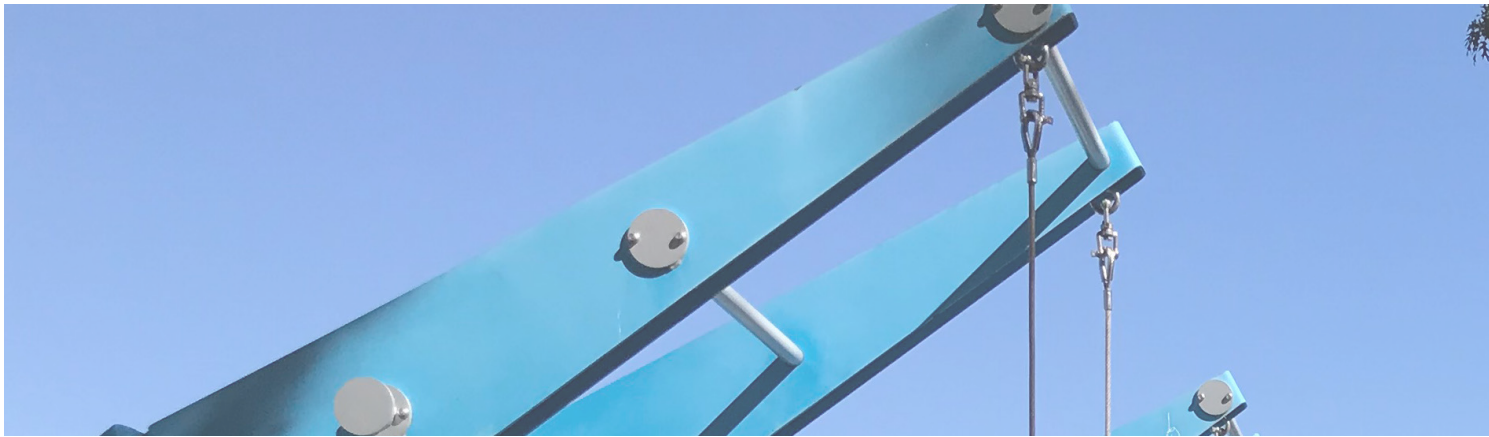
- Know what it costs you to provide the service at the desired level of quality to effectively evaluate bids.
- Determine the length of contract necessary to optimize the value of the contract.
- Include measurable performance expectations that the contractor is expected to meet. In other words, be detailed.

Study the value of commercial and residential properties adjacent to parks

Monetary benefits may accrue for the City from parks creating a premium tax value for properties adjacent to park lands. The New York City Hi-Line Park extending over a mile on vacated rail tracks clearly showed the value both commercial and residential locations place on the proximity to passive park spaces and in some case to active park sites.

In 2006 the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metro government found that the premium tax rate for living adjacent to a nature preserve was \$1,181,878 annually for 5,172 houses. Round Rock in 2010 estimated that their 1,797 acres of land generated \$602,504 annually in proximate tax values. Ennis could also study the proximate value of its commercial and residential properties adjacent to parks and dedicated some, or all, of the premium to the maintenance of the park properties.







Implementation

CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

8.1 Introduction

This Parks Master Plan is intended to provide a broad vision and course of implementation for the future of Ennis's parks, recreation, and open space. Action items and cost estimates are provided for recommended parks, open space, trails, and recreation facilities. These actions are based on analyses of existing conditions, needs assessments, and community outreach.

Purpose

This chapter summarizes the recommendations and implementation items contained within the Parks Master Plan. It provides a summary of funding sources, include grants, partnerships with public agencies, and partnerships with private entities. Partnerships with private entities include working with residential developers as needed to provide neighborhood and community parks for their developments consistent with current levels of service. Information regarding compliance with the TPWD requirements for park master plans is included.

Coordinated Implementation

Maintaining the City of Ennis's effective interdepartmental coordination is an important consideration for the successful and efficient implementation of projects identified in this Plan. Coordinating these actions with projects from other departments (such as planning, water or wastewater projects, right-of-way acquisition, drainage improvement, and flood management projects) will reduce overall capital costs to the City and speed up the implementation of this Parks Master Plan.

There is a strong, symbiotic relationship between high-quality parks, accessible trails, protected open space, and healthy economic development. High-quality, well-maintained recreation facilities that are distributed across the City and are highly visible indicate high quality of life and economic prosperity. This plays a large role in attracting new businesses.

On the other hand, funding for parks and recreation is dependent on sales and property tax revenues, which increase with sustainable economic development. In order to further capitalize on this natural symbiosis, it is recommended that the coordination between PARD and the Ennis Economic Development Corporation continue and that funding levels for parks and recreation be maintained or increased in the future.

Business Plan / Capital Improvement Plan

The City of Ennis's business plan or capital improvement plan (CIP) as it specifically refers to parks, recreation, open space, and trail projects, is the appropriate tool to maintain the relevance of the Parks Master Plan and to implement the recommendations contained in this Master Plan. Consequently, this business plan or CIP needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Based on available funding, the CIP should identify and prioritize specific projects including the acquisition of park and open space land, to be funded each year based on City Commission, Park Board, and Ennis EDC input. Finally, it should be flexible to respond to changing needs and to account for implemented actions.

Plan Updates

It is recommended that City Staff conduct periodic reviews of this Parks Master Plan. Regarding the plan's recreation-oriented components, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department requires master plans to be updated every five years (see paragraph 7.4 TPWD Master Plan Compliance, for additional information). Plan updates can be published in short report format and attached to this Parks Master Plan for easy use.

8.2 Action Plan & Cost

The Action Plan is presented in **Figure 8.1**. It includes four categories namely:

1. Land Acquisition
2. Parks & Trails Development and Improvement
3. Recreation Facilities
4. Initiatives & Future Studies

The majority of the action items shown on the Action Plan should be implemented or initiated over the general life of this Master Plan, which covers the next five to 10 years. However, the Master Plan also includes other longer range action items.

A relatively large amount of funding is required to accomplish the goals of the Ennis Parks Master Plan, but with vision, commitment, and a concerted effort to secure funding from available sources, many of the recommendations can be accomplished.

Ennis Parks & Recreation Action Items

Land Acquisition

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Protection of Bluebonnets Acquire three areas of land for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers @ ~ 75 acres / protected area |
| 2 | Community Parks Acquire land for new community parks @ 80 to 120 (~ 100 acres) acres / park |
| 3 | Neighborhood Parks Acquire land for new neighborhood parks in areas that do not have neighborhood parks or areas of future development @ 5 to 10 (~ 8 acres) acres / park |
| 4 | Special Purpose / Pocket Parks Acquire land for new special purpose parks, including 1) wildflower viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails, 2) dog park, 3) trailheads, 4) a skate park, and 5) the Storytelling Plaza |
| 5 | Linear Parks Acquire land @ 75ft wide easements to create linear parks, especially along creeks (5 miles easement = 45 acres) |

Parks & Trails Development and Improvement

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Tim Gauna Discovery Park Implement the Tim Gauna Discovery Park |
| 2 | Bluebonnet Viewing Stations Develop viewing stations along the Bluebonnet Trails to include limited off-road parking and pathways |
| 3 | Rogers and Maise Park Improve and upgrade Rogers and Maise Park with a connection to the Faulkner priority and a theme to celebrate Dr's Rogers and Maise |
| 4 | Bluebonnet Conservation Parks Develop the land acquire for the protection and interpretation of bluebonnets including signage, walking paths, parking, and restrooms; high priority is placed on Meadowview Nature Area |
| 5 | Trails and Bikeways Develop trails and bikeways (an average of 1 to 2 miles of trails per year) |
| 6 | Modernize Neighborhood Parks Improve and modernize 1 neighborhood park every 2 years |
| 7 | Modernize Community Parks Improve and modernize 2 community parks every 4 to 5-years |
| 8 | New Neighborhood Parks Develop new neighborhood parks as land is acquired |
| 9 | New Community Parks Develop new community parks as land is acquired |

Figure 8.1: Action Items

| Recreation Facilities | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Waterpark Plan for, design, and construct a water park for Ennis as part of the Municipal Multi-use Municipal Campus on Lampasas |
| 2 | Event Center Event center to replace the event center at Tim Gauna Discovery Park |
| 3 | Multi-use Recreation Center Multi-use and multi-generational recreation center with gymnasiums, meeting rooms, a wet component, and facilities for seniors |
| 4 | Dog Park Plan for, design, and construct a dog park to replace the Puppy Patch |
| 5 | Skatepark Plan for, design, and construct a skate park at a site with high visibility within an existing park or on newly acquired land |
| 6 | Athletic and other Recreation Facilities Provide additional playing fields / courts and recreation facilities with new and upgraded parks |
| Initiatives & Future Studies | |
| 1 | Branding for Parks and Recreation Incorporate the ActiveEnnis brand as part of Ennis PARD outreach, marketing, and activities |
| 2 | Parks Foundation Establish the Ennis Parks Foundation with the mission to secure funding for future parks and trails in terms of land acquisition and development |
| 3 | 10-Minute Walk Campaign Challenge Approach the Mayor to formally commit the City of Ennis to the 10-Minute Walk-to-a-Park Campaign |
| 4 | Create a Bluebonnet Protection Plan Create a plan for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers |
| 5 | Trails & Bikeways Master Plan Create a master plan for a city-wide network of trails and bikeways |
| 6 | Individual Park Master Plans Create master plans for 1) the municipal campus on Lampasas to include a water park, senior center, animal center, 2) Rogers and Maise Park including the extension to Faulkner St., and 3) future community parks |
| 7 | Capitalize on Lake Bardwell Explore recreation opportunities on USACE land associated with Lake Bardwell |
| 8 | Floodplain Master Plan Create a Floodplain Master Plan with the purpose to ensure the protection of 500- and 100-year floodplain areas at build-out conditions for the protection of flood management, habitat protection, water quality, and recreation purposes |
| 9 | Floodplain Ordinance Revise the Floodplain Ordinance to disallow reclamation of the 100-year floodplain at build-out conditions |
| 10 | Mixed-use Developments Create public/private/partnerships as a strategy to provide adequately for parks and recreation in mixed-use developments |
| 11 | Transportation Master Plan Create a master plan for multi-modal transportation to include vehicles, bicycles, transit, and pedestrians |
| 12 | Park Land Dedication Ordinance Review and revise the fees established in the City's Park Land Dedication Ordinance every three years; factors to consider include the cost of land, and inflation in terms of park development costs |

8.3 TPWD Master Plan Compliance

One of the primary purposes of this Parks Master Plan is to serve as a parks, recreation, and open space master plan as defined by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

TPWD Requirements

TPWD stipulates that park master plans must cover at least a ten-year period. Plans must be updated every five years to remain eligible for grant funding (a completely new plan is required every ten years). At a minimum, updates should include a summary of accomplishments, new public input, most recent inventory data, updated needs assessment, priorities, new implementation plan, demographics, population projections, goals and objectives, standards, and maps. Priorities should be updated as implementation items are accomplished. A new resolution is not required when updating priorities; however if the City changes or revises its priorities, it must submit a new resolution adopting the new priorities.

High Priority Needs

Consistent with TPWD requirements, **Figure 8.2** lists the top priorities for parks, recreation, open space, and trails in Ennis. These priorities have been determined based on community outreach, needs assessments, and City staff and City official input in order to provide an effective set of actions to enhance quality of life in the community for purposes of grant applications.



Walkway bridge in Bluebonnet Park

The high priority parks and recreation needs as determined during a process of community outreach and engagement, are presented in **Figure 8.1**.

| High Priority Parks & Recreation Needs | |
|---|--|
| Land Acquisition | |
| The acquisition of parkland is an overarching need. Adequate land in terms of acreage and location is essential for the recreation and open space needs of the Ennis community, including the protection and preservation of natural areas. | |
| <i>Outdoor Facilities</i> | |
| 1 | City-wide network of multi-use trails |
| 2 | The modernization and upgrade of neighborhood parks with playgrounds, pavilions, loop trails, and open play areas |
| 3 | Additional active and passive athletic facilities on existing and to be acquired parkland |
| 4 | Skatepark to accommodate skate boards, BMX, and scooter |
| <i>Wet and Indoor Facilities</i> | |
| 1 | Waterpark that includes swimming pools, waterslides, splash pads, shade structures, and restroom facilities |
| 2 | Multi-use and multi-generational recreation center with gymnasiums, meeting rooms, a wet component, and facilities for seniors |

Figure 8.2: High Priority Parks and Recreation Needs

8.4 Plan Updates

This Parks Master Plan is a guide to be used by the City to develop and expand the existing parks, recreation, trails, and open space system for future needs over the next five to ten years. Since recreation trends and needs change over time, it is necessary to consider this Plan as a living document that should be updated regularly. Potential factors necessitating a revised Master Plan include:

- The population may increase more or less rapidly than projected;
- The recreation needs, preferences, and priorities of the community may change; and
- The implementation of certain action items may stimulate and inspire other needs.

Three key areas for focus of these periodic reviews are as follows:

Facility Inventory

An inventory of new facilities should be recorded as well as any significant improvements of facilities provided by the Ennis ISD whenever such facilities may become available for public use.

Facility Use

Facility use is a key factor in determining the need for renovation or additional facilities. Updates on league participation of sports facilities should be prepared each season with data from each association. Changes in participation of those outside the City limits as well as the citizens of Ennis should be recorded.

Public Involvement

As mentioned previously, this Master Plan reflects the current population and attitudes as expressed by the citizens. However, those attitudes and interests may change over time as the City changes. Periodic surveys are recommended to provide a current account of the attitudes of the citizens and additional direction from the public on issues that may arise.

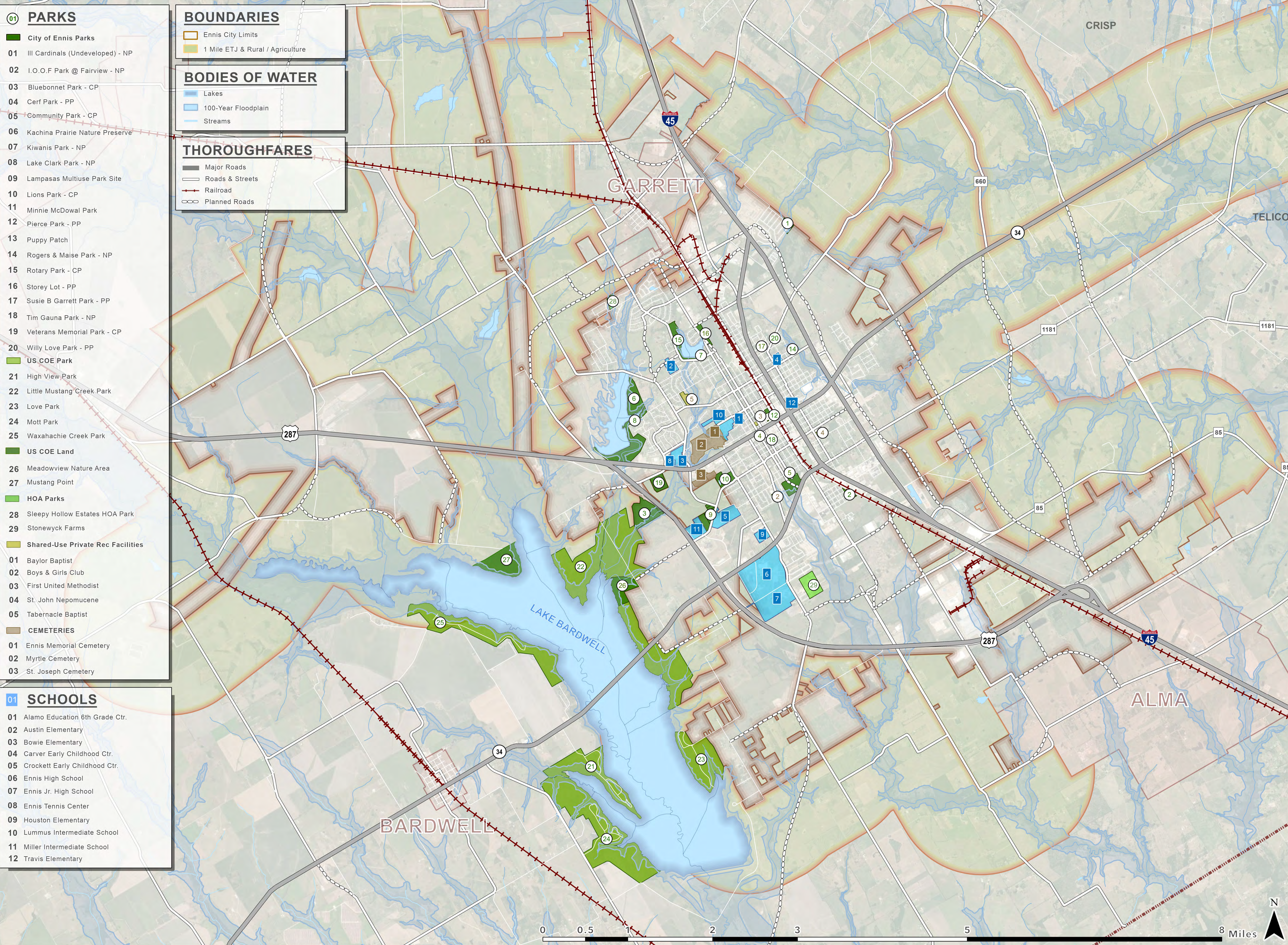
Maintaining a regularly-updated Parks Master Plan will ensure that the needs of Ennis's citizens continue to be met and that the vision and goals set forth in **Chapter 3: Visioning** can be achieved.







Exhibits



- 01 PARKS**
- 01 City of Ennis Parks
- 01 Ill Cardinals (Undeveloped) - NP
- 02 I.O.O.F Park @ Fairview - NP
- 03 Bluebonnet Park - CP
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- 21 High View Park
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- 23 Love Park
- 24 Mott Park
- 25 Waxahachie Creek Park
- US COE Land
- 26 Meadowview Nature Area
- 27 Mustang Point
- HOA Parks
- 28 Sleepy Hollow Estates HOA Park
- 29 Stonewyck Farms
- Shared-Use Private Rec Facilities
- 01 Baylor Baptist
- 02 Boys & Girls Club
- 03 First United Methodist
- 04 St. John Nepomucene
- 05 Tabernacle Baptist
- CEMETERIES
- 01 Ennis Memorial Cemetery
- 02 Myrtle Cemetery
- 03 St. Joseph Cemetery

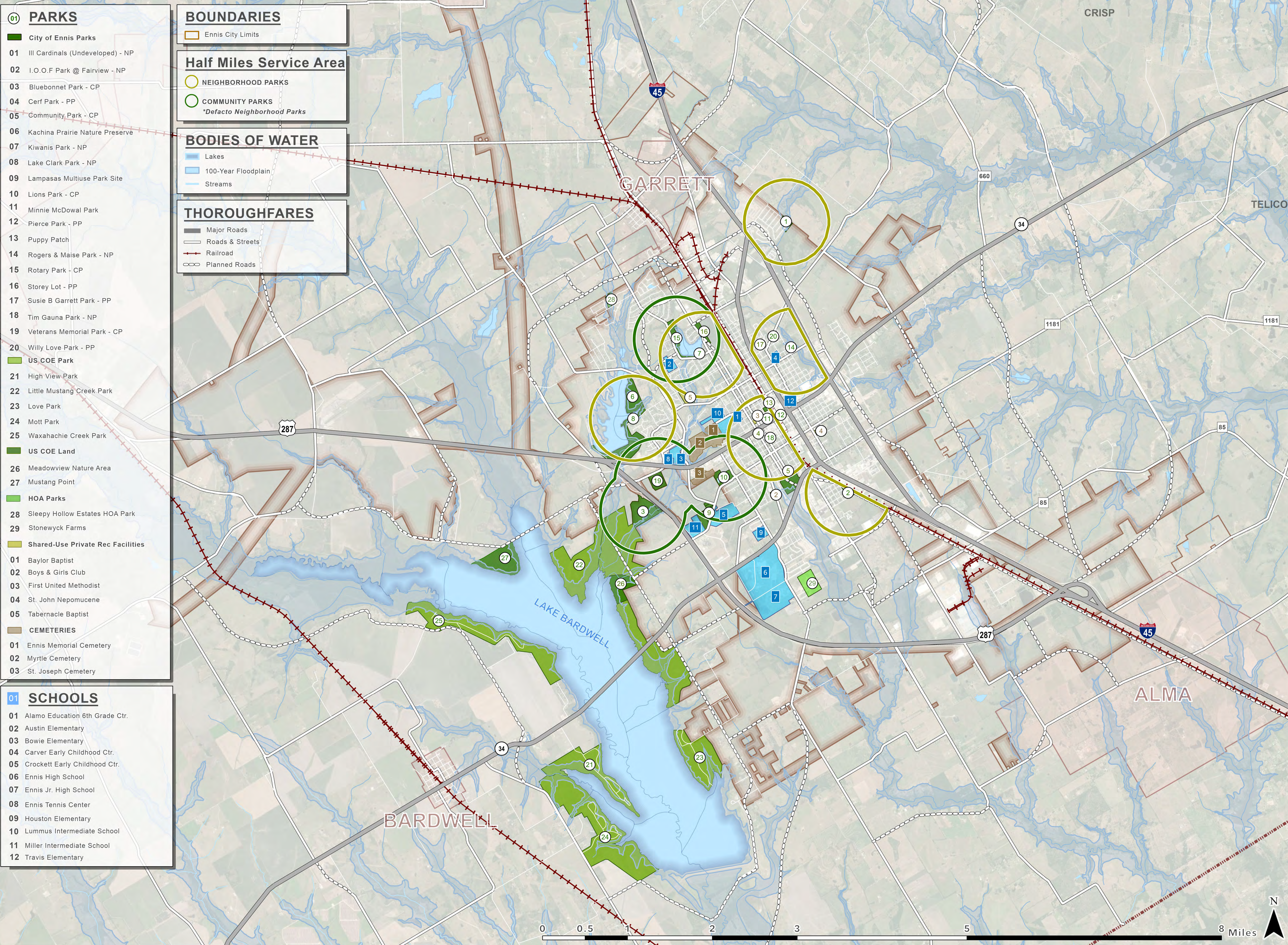
- BOUNDARIES**
- Ennis City Limits
- 1 Mile ETJ & Rural / Agriculture

- BODIES OF WATER**
- Lakes
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Streams

- THOROUGHFARES**
- Major Roads
- Roads & Streets
- Railroad
- Planned Roads

- 01 SCHOOLS**
- 01 Alamo Education 6th Grade Ctr.
- 02 Austin Elementary
- 03 Bowie Elementary
- 04 Carver Early Childhood Ctr.
- 05 Crockett Early Childhood Ctr.
- 06 Ennis High School
- 07 Ennis Jr. High School
- 08 Ennis Tennis Center
- 09 Houston Elementary
- 10 Lummus Intermediate School
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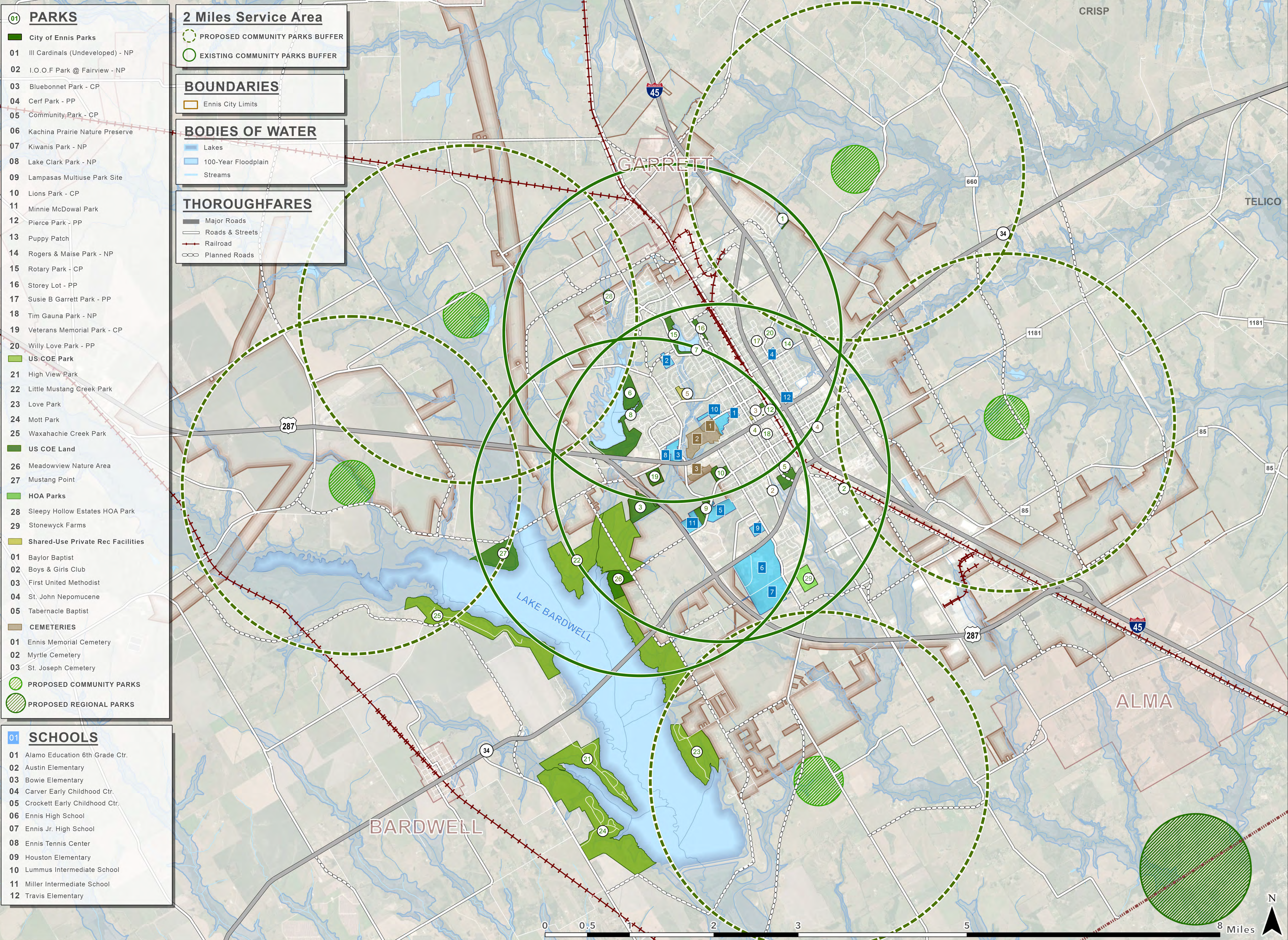
- Ennis City Limits
- Half Miles Service Area**
- NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
- COMMUNITY PARKS
**De facto Neighborhood Parks*

BODIES OF WATER

- Lakes
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Streams
- THOROUGHFARES**
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- Railroad
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 - 03 St. Joseph Cemetery
 - PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS
 - PROPOSED REGIONAL PARKS

2 Miles Service Area

- PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS BUFFER
- EXISTING COMMUNITY PARKS BUFFER

BOUNDARIES

- Ennis City Limits

BODIES OF WATER

- Lakes
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Streams

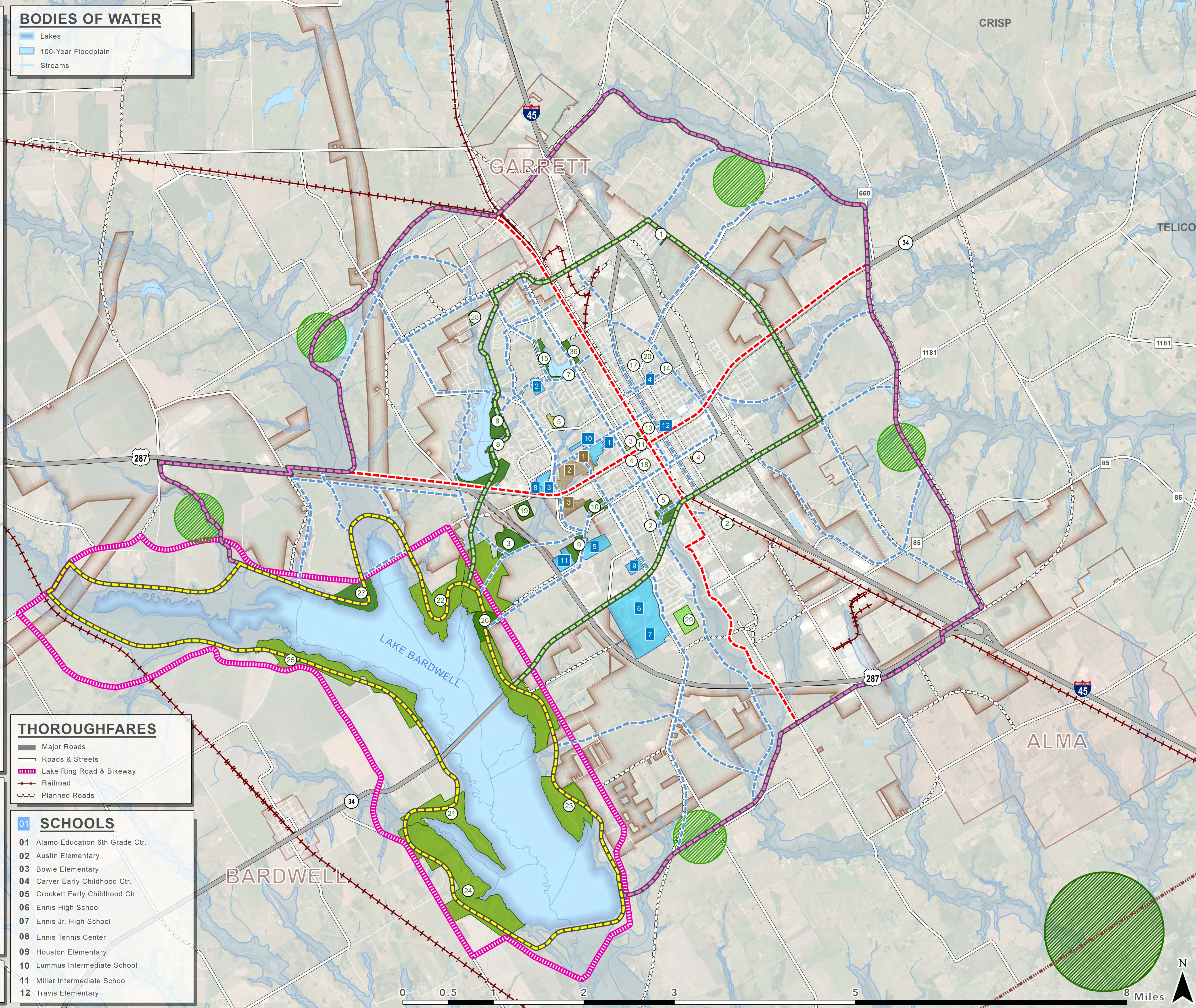
THOROUGHFARES

- Major Roads
- Roads & Streets
- Railroad
- Planned Roads

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 - PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS
 - PROPOSED REGIONAL PARKS
- TRAILS & BIKEWAYS**
- Lake Loop Trail
 - Outer Loop Trail
 - Inner Loop Trail
 - Spine Trails (Ennis & Railroad)
 - City Trails
 - Lake Ring Road & Bikeway
- BOUNDARIES**
- Ennis City Limits

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 - 100-Year Floodplain
 - Streams
- THOROUGHFARES**
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Trails & Bikeways - Complete Trail Network

2022 Ennis Parks & Recreation Master Plan



TRAILS & BIKEWAYS

- Lake Loop Trail
- Outer Loop Trail
- Inner Loop Trail
- Spine Trails (Ennis & Railroad)
- City Trails
- Regional Trails
- Veloweb Bikeways
- Proposed Veloweb
- Lake Ring Road & Bikeway

BLUEBONNETS

- Viewing Stations**
- View Station
- Information Centers**
- MV Meadowview BB Info Center
 - ST South Trail BB Info Center
 - NT North Trail BB Info
 - ER Eagle Rock BB Info Center
 - SR Sugar Ridge BB Info Center
- Vehicular Trails**
- North
 - West
 - South

PARKS

- City of Ennis Parks
- US COE Park
- US COE Land
- Cemeteries
- PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS
- PROPOSED REGIONAL PARK

THOROUGHFARES

- Major Roads
- Roads & Streets
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- Railroad
- Planned Roads

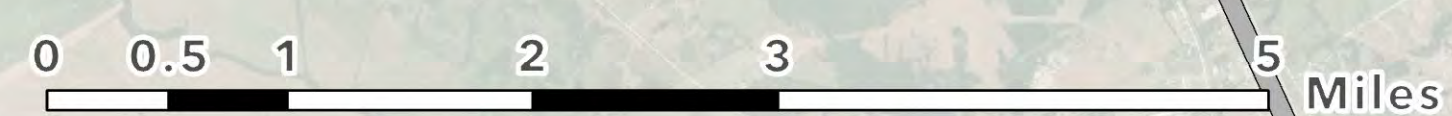
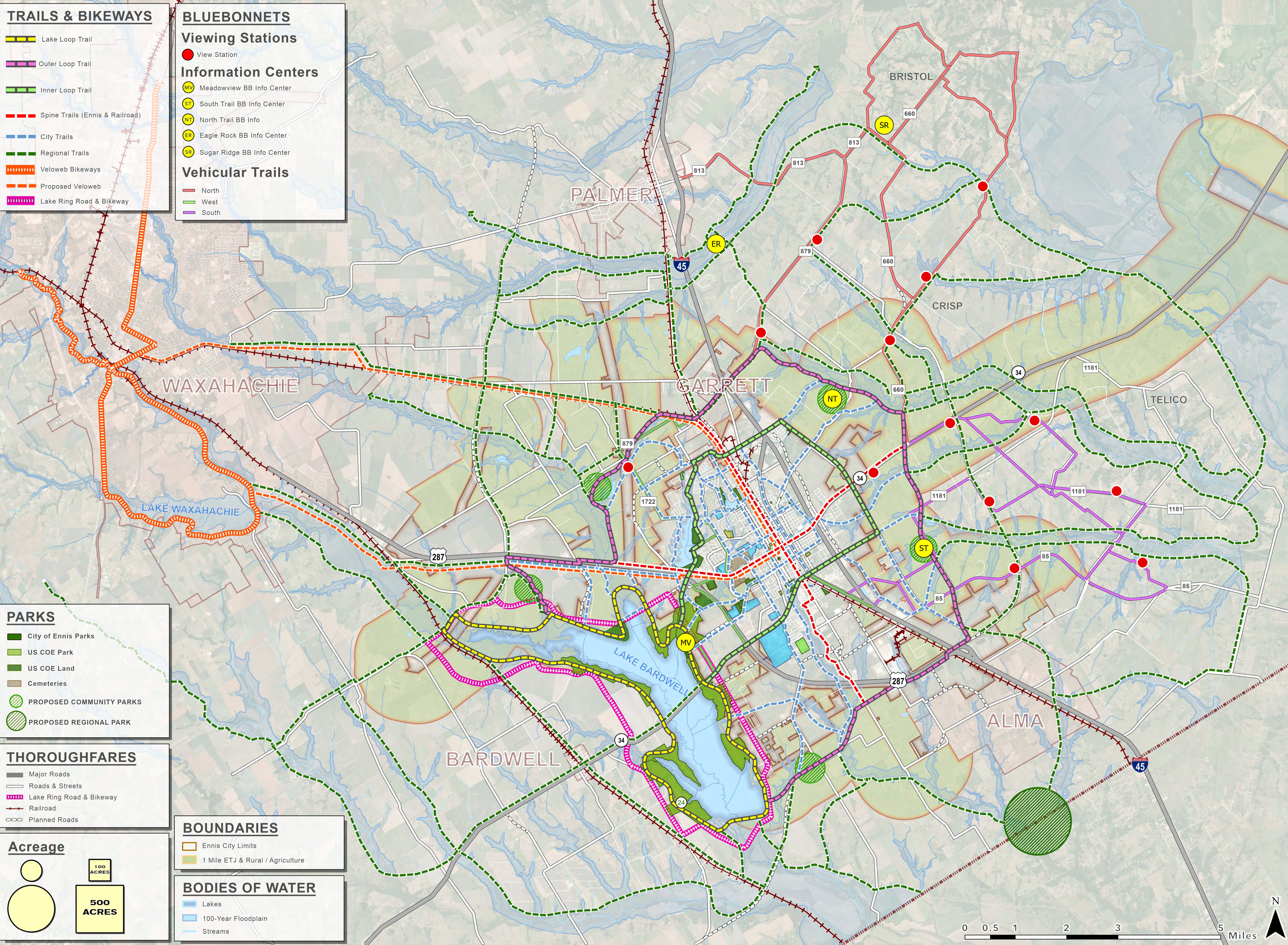
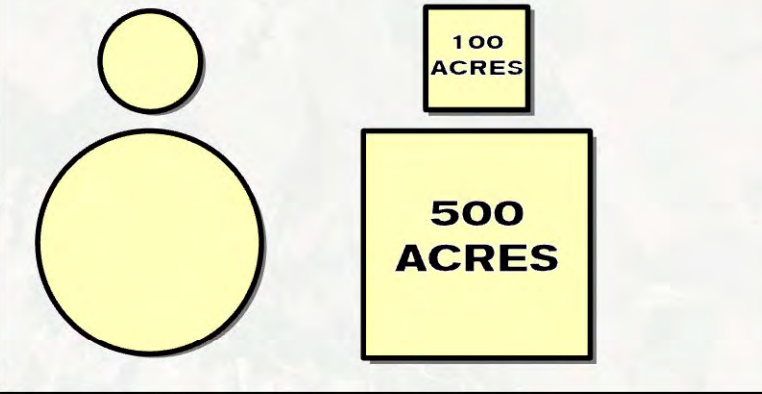
BOUNDARIES

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BODIES OF WATER

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- 100-Year Floodplain
- Streams

Acreage



Bluebonnet Protection & View Stations
2022 Ennis Parks & Recreation Master Plan



BOUNDARIES
Ennis City Limits
1 Mile ETJ & Rural / Agriculture

PARKS
PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARKS

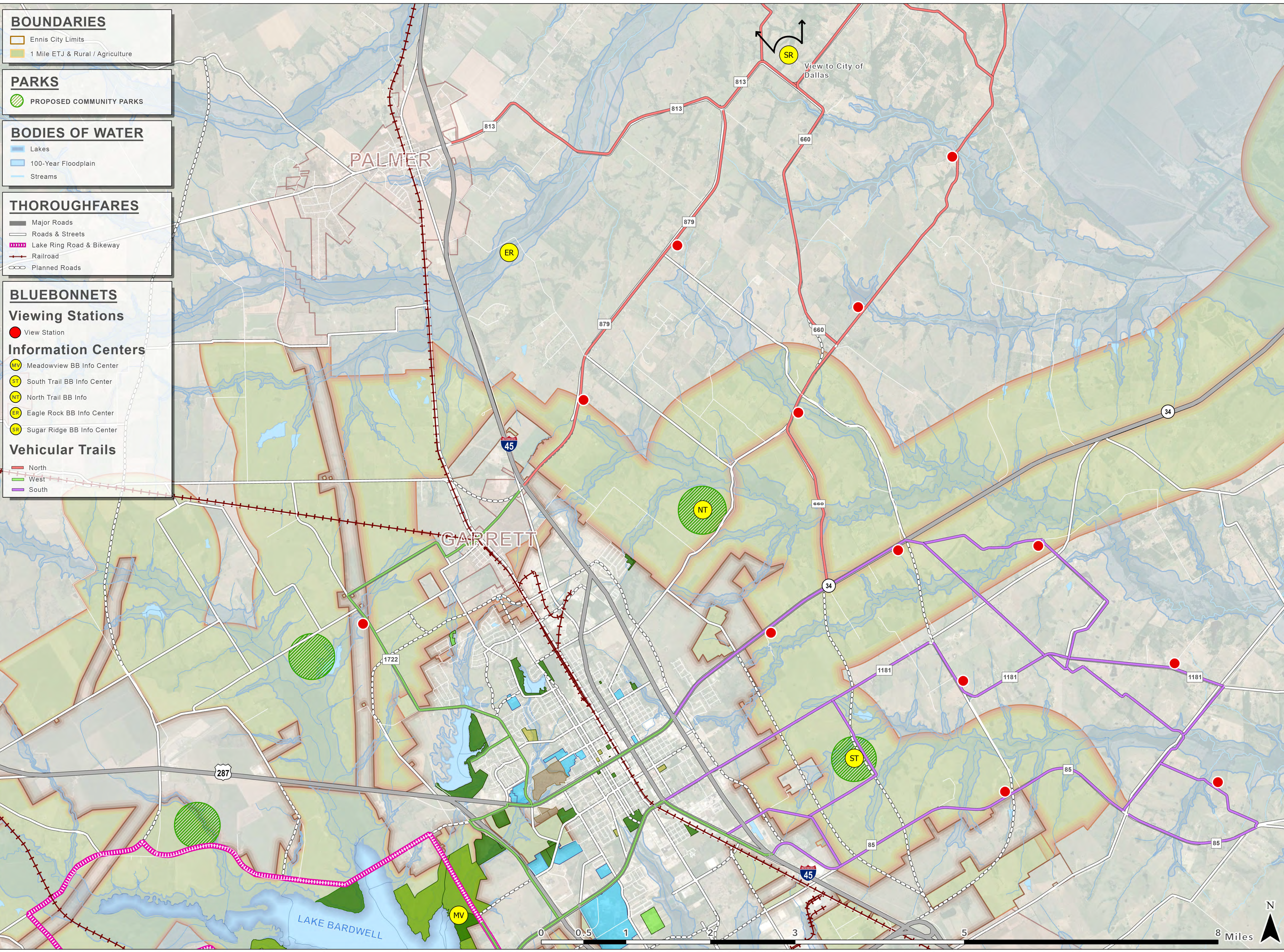
BODIES OF WATER
Lakes
100-Year Floodplain
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THOROUGHFARES
Major Roads
Roads & Streets
Lake Ring Road & Bikeway
Railroad
Planned Roads

BLUEBONNETS
Viewing Stations
View Station

Information Centers
Meadowview BB Info Center
South Trail BB Info Center
North Trail BB Info
Eagle Rock BB Info Center
Sugar Ridge BB Info Center

Vehicular Trails
North
West
South



SR
View to City of Dallas

PALMER

ER

879

813

660

879

660

45

NT

34

1181

1181

1181

287

1722

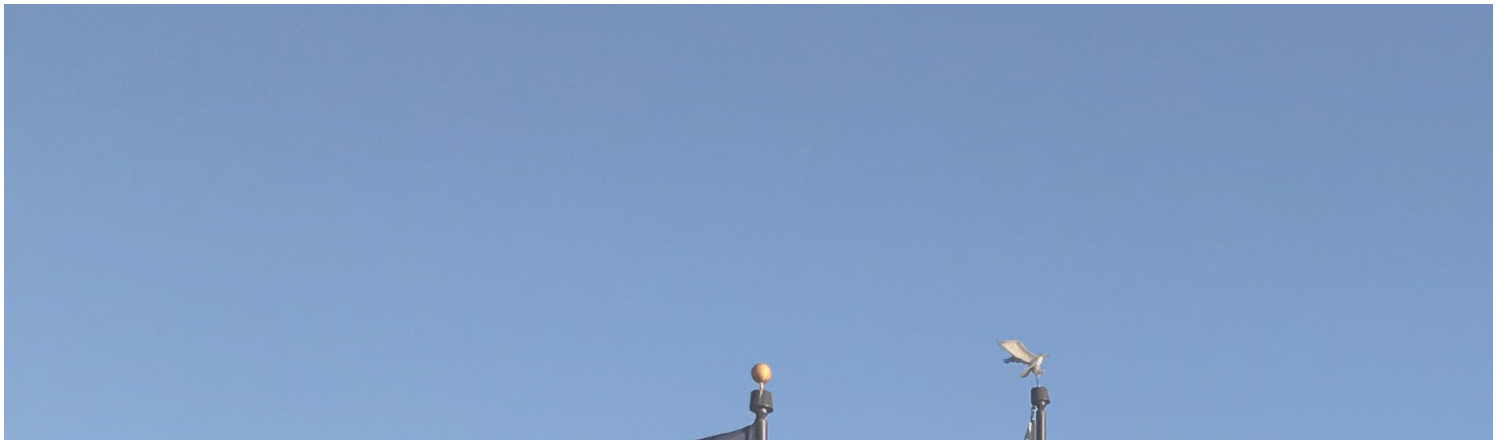
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Appendices

List of Appendices

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- Appendix A1: Parks Review
 - Appendix A1.1: Existing Parks
 - Appendix A1.2: Undeveloped Parks
 - Appendix A1.3: Future Downtown Parks
- Appendix A2: Inventory of Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Appendix A3: Park Land Standards
- Appendix A4: Recreation Facilities Level of Service
- Appendix A5: Bluebonnets Protection Plan
- Appendix A6: Implementation Strategies & Funding Sources

Appendices B: Community Engagement

- Appendix B1: Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues
- Appendix B2: ActiveEnnis Engagement Report

Appendices C: Community Development and Parks

- Appendix C1: Development Review Guidelines
- Appendix C2: Creeks and Streams
- Appendix C3: Alternative Development Strategies

Description of Appendices

Appendices A: Parks and Recreation

Support information and data associated with parks, recreation, open space, and trails in the City of Ennis.

Appendices B: Community Engagement

Support information and data associated with the results of public outreach and engagement as part of the planning process for the 2022 Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Appendices C: Community Development and Parks

Support information for consideration the requirements for parks, open space, and trails related to community development in the City of Ennis.

Appendix A1: Parks Review

Appendix A1.1: Existing Parks



Bluebonnet Park

201 S. US-287

Park Classification: Community Park

Acreage: 47 Acres

Trails: 3/4-mile walking trail

Amenities: 4 lighted baseball fields, 4 lighted softball fields, 13-acres of natural open space, 2 playgrounds, covered pavilion, several picnic gazebos, concession stands, restroom facilities, and a large fishing pond

Recommendations:

- Improve drainage of fields so as to shorten the play waiting time after rain events.
- Upgrade athletic fields so they remain playable no matter the circumstances. The City may consider synthetic turf in special circumstances, although this should not be a default option due to maintenance and sustainability concerns.
- Construct a trail link to Veterans Memorial Park, utilizing the large culvert underneath US HWY 287.
- Plant additional trees to support future tree coverage for shade, particularly in gathering spaces near the athletic fields.
- Expand parking facilities to accommodate large events and tournaments.

Hosting both local and regional tournaments, Bluebonnet Park's four baseball and four softball fields serve as the competitive home for the Ennis Baseball & Softball Association. With concession stands, restroom facilities, picnic gazebos, two playgrounds, and a fishing pond, the park offers amenities to keep families entertained and active while a child plays a game or competes in a tournament. The ball fields are often faced with drainage challenges after rain events, causing games or entire tournaments to be canceled. Drainage improvements or turf upgrades would help mitigate rain-outs.

A new playground – the first of its kind in Texas – is currently being installed in the park's shady southeast corner, adjacent to the $\frac{3}{4}$ Ralph Evans Nature Trail. The trail traverses both wooded areas and rolling open space, introducing children and adults alike to Texas' diverse blackland prairie. The Ennis Parks and Recreation Department intends to create a trail connection under Highway 287, linking pedestrian access between Bluebonnet Park and Veterans Memorial Park.

A covered pavilion, available for rentals, overlooks the fishing pond to its north and a small meadow to its east. This gentle hill is used for community events like family movie nights and holiday gatherings. A historical marker at the entrance to the baseball fields memorializes an eight home run game played in Ennis in 1902 at the park that is now known as Timothy Gauna Park in Downtown.



Veterans Memorial Park

2301 Ennis Parkway

Park Classification: Community Park

Acreage: 19 Acres

Trails: 3/4-mile walking trail

Amenities: memorial for local war veterans, 3 lighted soccer fields, 2 unlighted soccer fields, 5 multi-purpose fields, 1/4 mile paved path, concessions, restrooms, picnic tables, playground

Ten fields are scattered across the park's 19 acres, allowing the fields to flex for a variety of uses and age ranges. A quarter-mile, hardscaped walking trail weaves through soccer fields and a small wooded area. Picnic tables sit in the shade of a small tree grove east of the veteran's memorial. A central concession building, including restrooms, is conveniently anchored in the center of the site.

The site gently drops towards the southeast corner, providing views of the prairie beyond. The vast expanse of open space is conducive to hosting larger community gathering events, including Ennis' Freedom Fest. The park's flexible layout even helps the community pivot in a time of crisis - Veteran's Memorial Park served as Ennis' primary COVID-19 testing location.

The park's crown jewel is its tribute to local war veterans - a moving, contemplative space to honor the community's heroes. The memorial honors service men and women from all military branches, from Ennis and the greater reaches of Texas. Integrating this memorial into a highly-amenitized city park allows park users to encounter the memorial without having to plan a dedicated visit to view it.

Recommendations:

- Construct a trail link to Bluebonnet Park, utilizing the culvert underneath US HWY 287.
- Plant additional trees to support future tree coverage for shade, particularly in gathering spaces near the athletic fields and concession stand.
- Designate areas for future athletic field expansion to accommodate future programming expansion, in conjunction with planned programming expansion.



Lions Park

1200 Lampasas Street

Park Classification: Community Park

Acreage: 18.5 Acres

Trails: 1/2-mile paved walking path

Amenities: StoryWalk, benches and overlooks, pond, covered pavilion, playground, and restroom facilities

Centered around a large pond, the heart of Lions Park is a 1/2-mile paved trail featuring the Ennis Library's StoryWalk. Each month, the library features a new children's book placed page-by-page in kiosks along the trail. StoryWalk supports Ennis' families by fostering an appreciation for movement, family bonding, and early literacy.

Surrounded by dense tree cover, a large, covered pavilion overlooks the pond. BBQ grills, covered picnic areas, pond overlooks, and fishing areas are dotted along the trail and water's edge.

The park's playground sites higher up towards the intersection of Lampasas and Hall Streets. Although dated, the playground features multiple play structures and charming character. This area receives no shade from tree coverage, which makes for an unpleasant combination with metal slides.

Recommendations:

- Upgrade the existing playground with a themed playground that correlates with a greater, system-wide theming effort.
- Install shade structures to help keep the playground usable during hot summer months.
- Plant additional trees to support future tree coverage for shade, particularly near the playground area.
- Improve the pavilion area by addressing storm water runoff and the culminating erosion problems.



Rotary Park

2300 Park Street

Park Classification: Community Park

Acreage: 35.5 Acres

Trails: 3/4-mile Ivan Goodwin Walking Trail

Amenities: Splash pad, fitness court, tennis courts, pickleball courts, lighted sand volleyball courts, practice diamonds, playground, picnic gazebos, covered pavilions, restrooms

A haven for Ennis' most active citizens, Rotary Park is home to tennis and pickleball courts, practice baseball diamonds, and newly-renovated, lighted, sand volleyball courts. Perhaps the park's most innovative addition is the National Fitness Center Fitness Court – the first and only of its kind in Ellis County. The highly-anticipated splash pad, coupled with a pair of new covered pavilions and restrooms, opened in 2021. New playgrounds are next in line for the park's list of improvements

Rotary Park has sparse tree coverage, though the few swaths of tree canopy are capitalized on with well-located picnic areas. The recently-extended Ivan Goodwin Trail connects to the adjoining Kiwanis Park along historic Old City Lake.

Recommendations:

- Plant additional trees to support future tree coverage for shade, particularly in the northern portion of the site where little canopy cover currently exists.
- Install a trailhead to serve the internal park trail as well as the city-wide trail system.



Kiwanis Park

610 Park Street

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.3 Acres

Trails: Ivan Goodwin Walking Trail extension

Amenities: playground, picnic gazebo, jetty

Lovingly coined, “The Duck Park,” Kiwanis Park occupies a small triangular parcel on the southern edge of Old City Lake. Originally created to supply water for the train station and machine shops, the Old Lake Dam now provides flood control and recreation opportunities for local residents. The park’s jetty is frequented by locals eager to see both permanent and migratory duck residents.

The park’s central core includes both covered and uncovered picnic areas, a small metal playground and swing set, and BBQ grills. The Ivan Goodwin Trail extension is nearing completion in Kiwanis Park, connecting the entire stretch of parks along Old City Lake together and into the adjacent neighborhoods. Several large, mature trees are spread throughout Kiwanis Park, providing both shaded areas for relaxing and sunny, open areas for flexible use.

Recommendations:

- Upgrade the existing playground with a themed playground that correlates with a greater, system-wide theming effort.
- Install signage, which fits a city-wide theme for neighborhood parks along Park St. where it would be most visible.



Timothy Gauna Park

301 W. Crockett Street

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 2 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: playground, basketball half-court, mini-soccer goals, community center

Named in honor of a local Navy hero, Timothy Lee Gauna Park is located in the heart of Ennis – just southwest of Downtown. This urban neighborhood park is one city-block from Downtown’s South Plaza, which is slated to serve as a major community node after its redevelopment. The park site is home to an event center. While it receives use from the local community, it is in desperate need of renovation. However the anticipated renovation costs outweigh the benefits. Of particular concern is the indoor restrooms that are not compliant in terms of ADA accessibility codes.

This park was once the town’s hot spot, home to the Optimist Swimming Pool which was closed and filled in the 1970’s. The pool’s bathhouse and tanning deck are the only remnants of the park’s previous function. The bathhouse’s exterior features intricate brickwork, while the interior includes a maze of abandoned showers and locker rooms.

Recommendations:

- Timothy Gauna Park is currently undergoing a complete redesign process and will serve as a crown jewel park for the Ennis community while providing a sense of pride and gathering space for the local neighborhood.
- Improvements slated for the redesign include a water feature, basketball facilities, and most importantly, a memorial celebrating the park’s namesake, Timothy Lee Gauna.



Lake Clark Park

2100 W. Baldrige Street

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 10 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: playground, picnic gazebos, fishing pier, boat launch, stocked pond

Situated on the western shore of Lake Clark, this popular fishing spot provides a land jetty and pier for fishermen to cast off from. The boat launch off of W. Baldrige Street is used for both fishing boats and recreational watercraft like kayaks and paddleboards. W. Baldrige Street provides direct access to Lake Clark Park as well as residential homes, terminating in a loop as the road approaches Lake Clark's water line. Several pieces of play equipment and a picnic pavilion are located in the center of this loop. While ample acreage exists in this loop for these amenities, being bound by a public road creates an unsafe environment for those using these amenities.

Little tree cover exists near the primary park amenities, providing no shade to the play structure but allowing unobstructed views of the lake. Lake Clark Park's general expanse is flat and open with a gentle downslope towards the water line. Currently undeveloped open space to the south provides potential connection opportunities to the Ennis Disc Golf Course. Lake Clark's waterline requires frequent maintenance from the Parks and Recreation Department to prevent overgrown weeds and maintain a shoreline.

Two small parking areas provide parking for approximately 12 cars near W. Baldrige's western terminus and a parking lot with an additional 20 trailer-length spaces are located near the boat launch. Wood bollards line the street and parking areas, preventing parking in the Lake Clark Park's open fields.

Recommendations:

- Relocate an upgraded playground & park amenities to the corner of Baldrige St./ Kachina Prairie Rd. to provide a safer pedestrian environment for children to play.
- Install signage, which fits a city-wide theme for neighborhood parks along Baldrige St.



I.O.O.F. Park At Fairview

4100 4th Street

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 5.25 Acres

Trails: 1/2-mile walking trail

Amenities: 2 baseball fields, playground, pavilion, walking trail

Managed in conjunction with the International Order of Odd Fellows, The City of Ennis entered a lease agreement with the I.O.O.F. allowing PARD to make necessary improvements. In recent years, the park has received a large, upgraded playground, new pavilion, and a ½-mile natural surface walking trail - including two drainage way crossings.

The original ballfield lighting was removed in the 1990's and has not yet been replaced. While this park is included in PARD's regular mow and maintenance schedule, local adult leagues help keep the field playable in the interim times between mowing.

Recommendations:

- Improve ballfields, including lighting, upgraded dugouts, and a more frequent maintenance plan to keep fields playable.
- Plant additional shade trees, especially along the walking trail.
- Install signage, which fits a city-wide theme for neighborhood parks near the corner of Knighthurst and Avenue B for maximum visibility and a second sign near the midway point between Avenue C and Avenue D, along 4th St.



Rogers & Maise Park

900 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 3.8 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Lighted softball field (backstop, dugouts, enclosed outfield fence w/ foul poles), basketball half-courts, playground, restrooms

Separated from the Faulkner Lot by a quaint wooded creek, Rogers & Maise Park provides a variety of recreational opportunities for residents of Ward 4.

The park's three basketball half-courts - a popular spot for adult pickup games - are currently being upgraded to include a full-length court. A lighted, competitive softball field creates the park's southern boundary across from Fire Station No.2. Upgraded ball field lighting and playground are currently underway. Picnic tables take advantage of the creek's shady overstory and restroom facilities are located towards the ball field's northeast corner.

The site is generally flat and only includes tree cover along the park's edge near the creek. Little usable open space exists at this time, but future expansion north into the Faulkner Lot will provide substantial additional open space.

Recommendations:

- Expand the park's northern boundary via a pedestrian bridge into the adjacent Faulkner Lot, forming a northern entry point to the park.
- Capitalize on the surrounding shaded creek area by creating a trail that connects the Faulkner Lot to Martin Luther King Drive.
- Construct a trail heading south to Chamber of Commerce Drive, ultimately connecting into a city-wide trail system.
- Design and construct a pedestrian bridge over the creek to connect the original park space with the Faulkner Lot expansion.
- Install signage, which fits a city-wide theme for neighborhood parks near the corner of MLK and Jones Avenue.



Minnie McDowal Park

119 Dallas Street

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 0.16 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: gazebo, plaza, restrooms, seating, water feature (often used as a splash pad), art wall, water and electricity for events

Located in the heart of Downtown Ennis, Minnie McDowal Park is part of the historic entertainment district. The park's gazebo frequently rotates through art displays, live music, and community activities while the park's ample seating and restrooms serves as a launchpad for residents and visitors alike. Families flock to the central gathering space for "Mornings at Minnie" or to catch local performers at the gazebo.

Originally constructed in 1993 and renovated in 2016, "Minnie 2.0" was the first completed project in Downtown's revitalization. A curbless intersection with bollards allows the park to spill into downtown's cozy street network, enhancing the district's pedestrian-first environment. Historical plaques and an art wall overlook a splash pad and climbing rocks, providing amenities for users of all ages. Several deciduous trees provide shade for users during the summer months.

Recommendations:

- n/a.



Ennis Disc Golf Course

3000 W. Ennis Avenue

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park
Acreage: 46.5 Acres
Trails: n/a
Amenities: 18-hole disc golf course, picnic pavilion

Wrapping the southeast side of Lake Clark, the 18-hole Ennis Disc Golf Course was designed by the Ennis Disc Golf Association and built and maintained by PARD staff. The course's development has been supported by the enthusiastic Ennis Disc Golf Association.

Most holes are highly wooded, though future expansion opportunities exist to the northeast. Incorporating the flat, open land between the disc golf course and Lark Clark Park would allow for the creation of several open fairway holes and a looped course with multiple access points. The park faces drainage issues that can result in a muddy course, but PARD's recent installation of new concrete tee pads helps maintain the course's playability.

An unpaved parking area, indicated by wood bollards, is located off Airport Drive. Beyond this parking area lies a picnic pavilion and flat, lake-side expanse frequented by fishermen. Signage for the Ennis Airport is located on the NWC of Business 287 and Airport Drive, though no such signage currently exists for the disc golf course. Small metal signage near the first tee provides course rules.

Recommendations:

- Improve drainage conditions to mitigate muddy course.
- Install permanent hole monuments/markers and maps.
- Construct a paved, off-street parking area.
- Expand/reroute course to the northwest to allow for several open holes and a looped course.



The Puppy Patch

302 N. Dallas Street

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 0.5 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: dog wash station, dog park furnishings, benches

The space used for this dogpark is only temporarily, as the site is earmarked for the future North Plaza. Considered a major downtown focal space, recommendations for this plaza include various public amenities, i.e. an outdoor auditorium, water feature, and public restroom facilities in close proximity.

This plaza will be bookended by South Plaza that will contain Hispanic-inspired gathering spaces.

Recommendations:

- Identify location for a new, larger dog park facility for relocation once North Plaza redevelopment commences.



Pierce Park

200 N.W. Main Street

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 1.72 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: WWII monument, flagpole, lighting, special event electrical panels

Forming a gentle buffer between Downtown Ennis and the railroad tracks, Pierce Park is a strip of greenway two blocks in length. A WWII monument, flanked by the City's flagpoles, sits at the terminus of Knox Street. The park currently lacks any functional recreation amenities, separating Downtown Ennis from the historic railroad attractions just east of the tracks.

The 2016 Downtown Master Plan calls for the conversion of Pierce Park into the Main Street Mall, a flex space to be used for market, festivals, gatherings, and parking. The plan recommends preserving the WWII memorial, converting the Knox Street node into a more condensed but highly celebrated memorial area. Most of the open space is slated to be converted to parking and flexible, covered market space. The park's mature trees are slated to be preserved in this redesign.

Recommendations:

- Connect Downtown along the railroad from Pierce Park to Kiwanis Park to the north and I.O.O.F. @ Fairview Park to the south with a shared-use trail.
- With parking to be added as part of the future Main Street Mall, renders this park as an ideal trailhead along the Railroad Spine Trail.



Willy Love

705 Crisp Road

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 0.25

Trails: n/a

Amenities: play equipment

Willy Love Park lies at the corner of Crisp Road and Faulkner Avenue, adjacent to a church property. Several dated play structures sit within the small fenced-in pocket park. Five mature trees provide shaded space for a bench, but no direct shade is provided for the play structures. Several off-street parking spaces are available on the adjacent church property. A small, dedicated off-street parking area is located on the south edge of Willy Love and ample on-street parking surrounds the property.

Willy Love is bounded by largely undeveloped property to the northwest across Crisp Road, and homes to the northeast across Faulkner Avenue. Faulkner Lot, the future northern entry to Rogers & Maise Park, is located within a 3-minute walk of Willy Love Park.

Recommendations:

Two options are recommended for consideration:

1. Consider donating the park and its contents to the Mt. Olive Baptist Church.
2. Consider selling this property to focus efforts and funding into other recreation facilities in the surrounding neighborhood.

Reason: Rogers & Maise Park and its future expansion into the Faulkner Lot is located in close proximity to Willy Love Park, which meets the local community's level of service needs.



Susie B. Garret Park

400 E. Moore Street

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 0.79 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: basketball half-court

Susie B. Garret Park sits on three former residential lots acquired by the City of Ennis. Surrounded on three sides by residential properties, this site faces major access challenges. Bounded to the south by E. Moore Street, direct site access is prohibited by a large drainage ditch running parallel to the road. E. Moore Street has a narrow paving width, which does not allow for on-street parking. Significant improvements would be required to provide off-street parking that serves Susie B. Garret.

The 0.79 acre park provides a half-court basketball net, but no other amenities at this time. Susie B. Garret is located in close proximity to both Willy Love Park and Rogers & Maise Park.

Recommendations:

- Rogers & Maise Park and its future expansion into the Faulkner Lot is located in close proximity to Susie B. Garrett Park, which meets the local community's level of service needs.
- The drainage ditch running along Moore Street prevents the construction of off-street parking. Moore Street itself is too narrow to allow for on-street parking.
- Consider selling this property to focus efforts and funding into other recreation facilities in the surrounding neighborhood.

Cerf Park

501 W. Ennis Avenue

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park
Acreage: 0.07 Acres
Trails: n/a
Amenities: Butterfly garden

Located on the site of the former Cerf Mansion, Cerf Park sits adjacent to the Ennis Library. The mansion was donated to the City of Ennis and later demolished to make way for new civic space. The home's original fencing was integrated into the park's design to preserve a piece of the community's history.

Maintained by the local chapter of Master Naturalists, Cerf Park features a butterfly garden with lush roses and other planting. A historical marker dedicated to Jack Lummus, a Congressional Medal of Honor soldier of WWII hailed as a local Ennis hero.

Recommendations:

- n/a.



Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve

1816 W. Baldrige Street

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 35 Acres

Trails: 3/4-mile trail

Amenities: Nature trail, bison statue, benches, informational kiosk

Stretching across 30-acres of native, never-plowed prairie, Kachina Prairie Park is the product of a conservation effort between the City of Ennis, the Indian Trail Master Naturalists, the Ennis Garden Club, and the Texas Land Conservancy. As one of the few remaining examples of untouched Blackland Prairie, the site serves as a research center and example of tallgrass prairie conservation.

A mowed, 3/4-mile trail runs through the prairie, guiding visitors through educational markers, benches, and a life-size bison statue. Thanks to recent efforts from local boy scouts, 1/8-mile markers line the grassy trail. Informational signage and a pet waste station greet users at the park's entry, just beyond the unmarked parking area. The prairie itself is surrounded by a dense tree canopy on all sides. Community events including campfire story nights and wildflower walks are hosted by the Indian Trail Master Naturalists and the Ennis Public Library.

Recommendations:

- Connect Kachina Prairie Nature Preserve to Lake Clark Park via a multi-use trail.
- Provide pedestrian access into Kachina Prairie from Lakeridge Drive and Baldrige Street.
- Provide parking off Baldrige Street and create a welcoming paved walk aligned with trees to connect with the park's entrance.
- Design and install a well defined park entry monument.



Meadowview Nature Area

1901 Laneview Drive

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park

Acreage: 39 Acres

Trails: n/a

Amenities: Covered picnic areas

Located along the northeastern shore of Lake Bardwell, Meadowview Nature Area is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and operated by the City of Ennis through a lease agreement. This park is primarily used during bluebonnet season, and only open to vehicular access in April and May. The rest of the year, users are allowed to park outside the entry gate and access the park on foot. 20 picnic pavilions are scattered throughout the site, but no restroom facilities exist to allow extended use.

The site features wide, open spaces and pristine lake frontage. Due to its adjacency to the lake, the site is prone to flooding during heavy rain events.

Recommendations:

- Provide porta-potties during the wildflower season.
- Improve the park road to allow for year-round vehicular access.
- Provide pedestrian trails in addition to the improved vehicular path.
- Design and develop more modern picnic, shade, and seating areas.
- Consider a rentable picnic pavilion.

Appendix A1.2: Undeveloped Parks

Storey Park

2300 Preston St.

Park Classification: Pocket Park
Acreage: 10.34 Acres
Trails: n/a
Amenities: Backstop and open space
Status: Undeveloped

The “Storey Lot” is an open field area located just south of the former Storey Manufacturing Building on Preston Street. The lot is more than 10 acres in size with about 4 acres considered natural and about 6 acres available for park development.

The park currently has a small practice baseball backstop on the northeast corner. The eastern border of the lot is adjacent to an electric easement and the railroad yard. The southern side of the property has heavy tree cover in areas and extends down to an area across the street from Kiwanis Park and Old City Lake.

Recommendations:

- Extend trails from Kiwanis Park into the Storey Lot.
- Install a trail to connect with the northeast portion of Rotary Park.

Lampasas Multi-use Lot

1700 Lampasas St.

Park Classification: Special Purpose Park
Acreage: 20 Acres
Trails: n/a
Amenities: None
Status: Undeveloped

The “Lampasas Lot” is a 20 acre, triangle shaped property located near Hwy 287 at 1700 Lampasas Street, on the north side of the street. The property is adjacent to EISD’s Dorrie Miller Intermediate school on the west. The road frontage along Lampasas Street begins at the intersection of Lampasas and Jeter and continues until the intermediate school.

Recommendations:

- Create a master plan for the site to include:
 - Water Park
 - Senior Center
 - Community Services Center
 - Animal Center

III Cardinals

Cardinal Dr.

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park
Acreage: 4.18 Acres
Trails: n/a
Amenities: Backstop and open space
Status: Undeveloped

This park site is located at the far corner of a new housing development east of IH45. This neighborhood abuts the future Inner City Loop Trail on two of its four sides (about half the length of its boundary), and the northeast edge of the park.

Recommendations:

- Make provision to connect this park with the future Inner City Loop Trail along the northeast edge of the park.
- Incorporate the drainage way as a unique feature of the park.

Appendix A1.3: Future Downtown Parks

North Plaza

The Downtown Master Plan calls for the creation of a major focal space at the north end of Dallas Street, on the westerly portion of the city-owned Safeway Property. This project will:

- Provide a public space interface with surrounding/ abutting neighborhood
- Host public/ festive/ civic activities
- Provide public restrooms
- Create additional retail opportunity for retail projects that cannot be accommodated within the spatial limitations of the Ennis historic downtown fabric.

South Plaza

A major focal space is recommended at the south end of Dallas Street. According to the Downtown Master Plan, this project will:

- Provide public space for interface with the surrounding/ abutting neighborhood
- Host public/ festive/ civic activities
- Provide public restrooms
- Create additional retail opportunity for the expansion of (and aggregation of) Hispanic businesses.

Museum Campus

(SE Main St.)

The Downtown Master Plan recommends the creation of a major interpretation of local Ennis history at a scale that will be attractive to a wide range of visitors (especially those seeking history and culture). The interpretation will include recreation of actual Ennis Urban history as it is related to the Railroad (so influential to the growth and development of Ennis). According to the Downtown Master Plan, this will greatly expand the current wildflower focus of the visitor center and seek to interpret the History of Ennis in an experiential way.

Main Street Mall

The existing Pierce Park is reimagined as a highly visible, usable, and symbolic public space as the first experience of downtown when entering from the East (the most commonly used entry). This space will be of a size and physical flexibility necessary to host many varied public activities (that currently have no proper space accommodation in the downtown area). The space will be regularly programmed so that the entry to downtown is continuously active (instead of passive as it is today).

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Appendix A2: Inventory of Parks and Recreation Facilities

City of Ennis Parks Master Plan - Table 1: Parks & Recreation Facilities

| | City Ward # | Developed (acreage) | Developable (acreage available for future development) | Natural other than Open Water (acreage) | Developed + developable + Natural (no water) (acreage) | Open Water (acreage) | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Softball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Softball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Backstops (other than baseball/softball fields) | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Football Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Football Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Multi-purpose Practice Fields (S & F) | Rugby | Cricket | Fields / areas for informal use / pick-up games | Basketball (Full courts) | Basketball Goals (Half courts) |
|--|-------------|---------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Existing City Parks & Recreation Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Neighborhood Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Timothy Lee Gauna Park | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2.0 | 0 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| IOOF Park at Fairview | 2 | 5.25 | 0 | 0 | 5.3 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Kiwanis Park | 3 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 4.3 | 27.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lake Clark Park | 5 | 19 | 13 | 33 | 65.0 | 140 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ill Cardinals (Undeveloped) | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2.18 | 4.2 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rogers & Maisie Park | 4 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 0 | 6.6 | 0 | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Neighborhood Parks Subtotal | N/A | 34.35 | 17.8 | 35.18 | 87.3 | 167.5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Community Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bluebonnet | 5 | 33 | 0 | 13 | 46.0 | 1.8 | 4 | | 4 | | | | | 2 | | 8 | | | | | |
| Rotary Park | 3 | 21.1 | 0 | 6.35 | 27.5 | 27.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| Lions Park | 5 | 14.7 | 0 | 2.28 | 17.0 | 3.49 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Veterans Memorial Park | 5 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 19.0 | 0 | | | | | | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 5 | | | | | |
| Community Parks Subtotal | N/A | 87.8 | 0 | 21.63 | 109.4 | 32.79 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Special Purpose Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Minnie McDowal | 2 | 0.12 | 0 | 0 | 0.1 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lampasas Multiuse Lot | 5 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 20.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disc Golf Course | 5 | 14.5 | 10 | 14.5 | 39.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Puppy Patch | 2 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Purpose Parks Subtotal | N/A | 15.12 | 30 | 14.5 | 59.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pocket Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pierce Park | 2 | 1.72 | 0 | 0 | 1.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Storey Park | 3 | 2.99 | 3.39 | 3.96 | 10.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Willie Love Park | 4 | 0.25 | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Susie B. Garrett Park | 4 | 0.79 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Cerf Park | 2 | 0.07 | 0 | 0 | 0.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pocket Parks Subtotal | N/A | 5.75 | 3.39 | 3.96 | 13.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Regional Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kachina Prairie Nature Reserve | 5 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 34.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Regional Parks Subtotal | N/A | 0 | 0 | 34 | 34.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| City Owned & Managed Subtotal | N/A | 143 | 51.2 | 109 | 303.6 | 200.29 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| Existing County + State + Federal Parks & Recreation Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accessible East Bank Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Meadowview Nature Area - Regional Park | N/A | 39 | 0 | 0 | 39.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Little Mustang Creek Park | N/A | 12 | | 151 | 163.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accessible USACE East Bank Parks Subtotal | N/A | 51 | 0 | 151 | 202.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Non-Accessible East Bank Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Love Park (minus Meadowview) | N/A | 49 | | 390 | 439.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Accessible USACE East Bank Parks Subtotal | N/A | 49 | 0 | 390 | 439.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Northwest Bank Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE High View Park | N/A | 84 | | 71 | 155.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Mott Park | N/A | 54 | | 216 | 270.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Waxahachie Creek Park | N/A | 63 | | 142 | 205.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| USACE Northwest Bank Parks Subtotal | N/A | 201 | 0 | 429 | 630.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| USACE Parks Subtotal | | 252 | 0 | 580 | 832.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ellis County Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None Existing | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ellis County Parks Subtotal | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Citywide Public Parks Total | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1135.6 | N/A | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 3 |

City of Ennis Parks Master Plan - Table 1: Parks & Recreation Facilities

| | City Ward # | Developed (acreage) | Developable (acreage available for future development) | Natural other than Open Water (acreage) | Developed + developable + Natural (no water) (acreage) | Open Water (acreage) | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Softball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Softball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Backstops (other than baseball/softball fields) | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Football Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Football Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Multi-purpose Practice Fields (S & F) | Rugby | Cricket | Fields / areas for informal use / pick-up games | Basketball (Full courts) | Basketball Goals (Half courts) |
|--|-------------|---------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
|--|-------------|---------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|

Private Parks & Recreation Facilities

| | City Ward # | Developed (acreage) | Developable (acreage available for future development) | Natural other than Open Water (acreage) | Developed + developable + Natural (no water) (acreage) | Open Water (acreage) | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Softball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Softball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Backstops (other than baseball/softball fields) | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Football Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Football Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Multi-purpose Practice Fields (S & F) | Rugby | Cricket | Fields / areas for informal use / pick-up games | Basketball (Full courts) | Basketball Goals (Half courts) |
|--|-------------|---------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| HOA Parks | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sleepy Hollow Estates HOA | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.79 | 4.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stonewyck Farms (Future) | 5 | 4.166 | | | 4.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Legend Classic Home LTD | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 4.0 | 0.94 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HOA Parks Subtotal | | 4.166 | 0 | 4.79 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other Entities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boys and Girls Club | 2 | 1.21 | 1 | 0 | 2.2 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| St. John Nepomucene | 1 | 6.94 | 6.22 | 0 | 13.2 | 0 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| Baylor Baptist (in downtown) | 1 | 1.43 | 0.4 | 0 | 1.8 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tabernacle Baptist | 3 | 11.32 | 1.75 | 5.93 | 19.0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| First United Methodist (in downtown) | 1 | 2.1 | 0 | 0 | 2.1 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ennis Golden Circle (private) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other Entities Subtotal | | 23 | 9.37 | 5.93 | 38.3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Citywide Private Parks Total | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 38.3 | N/A | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Citywide Public & Private Total | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1173.9 | N/A | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 3 |

Existing School + College Recreation Facilities

| | City Ward # | Developed (acreage) | Developable (acreage available for future development) | Natural other than Open Water (acreage) | Developed + developable + Natural (no water) (acreage) | Open Water (acreage) | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Baseball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Softball Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Softball Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Backstops (other than baseball/softball fields) | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Soccer Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Football Fields (Competitive) - lighted | Football Fields (Competitive) - no lights | Multi-purpose Practice Fields (S & F) | Rugby | Cricket | Fields / areas for informal use / pick-up games | Basketball (Full courts) | Basketball Goals (Half courts) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Elementary | | | | | | | Active Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Crockett ECC | 5 | 10.50 | 21.00 | 0.00 | 31.5 | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Carver ECC | 4 | 6.94 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 6.9 | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Austin Elementary | 3 | 4.35 | 8.37 | 0.00 | 12.7 | N/A | | | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| Bowie Elementary | 5 | 4.92 | 14.80 | 0.00 | 19.7 | N/A | | | 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | 1 |
| Houston Elementary | 5 | 4.87 | 8.03 | 0.00 | 12.9 | N/A | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travis Elementary | 1 | 3.77 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 3.8 | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lummus Intermediate | 5 | 14.84 | 11.46 | 3.70 | 30.0 | N/A | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Miller Intermediate | 5 | 14.85 | 9.84 | 0.00 | 24.7 | N/A | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 3 | |
| Junior High | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ennis Junior High | 5 | 29.60 | 23.00 | 19.20 | 71.8 | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| High School | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ennis High School | 5 | 30.18 | 11.82 | 0.00 | 42.0 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | | 2 | | | | | |
| Ennis Tennis Center | 5 | 4.02 | 1.61 | 0.00 | 5.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alamo Education Center (DAEP) | 5 | 6.37 | | | 6.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Private School | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| College | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| School & College Total | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.0 | N/A | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| All totals | 5 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Total available for public use | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Total available summary (primary use) | 8 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 4 | | | | |

| Other City and Private-related open space | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| City Cemeteries | | | | | | |
| Cemetery Name | 5 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | N/A |
| Privately-Managed Cemeteries | | | | | | |
| Myrtle Cemetery | 5 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 43.0 | N/A |
| St. Joseph Cemetery | 5 | | | | 23.6 | |
| Ennis Memorial Cemetery | 5 | | | | 13.4 | |
| Cemetery Subtotal | N/A | N/A | N/A | 80.0 | N/A | N/A |

Appendix A3: Park Land Standards

| Park Land Standards | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| PARK/OPEN SPACE TYPE | 2021 Existing Acres | CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE | NRPA TARGET STANDARDS | ENNIS TARGET STANDARD |
| Neighborhood Parks | 87.33 | 4.12 Acres / 1,000 pop. | 1 - 2 Acres/ 1,000 pop. | 5 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |
| Community Parks | 109.43 | 5.16 Acres / 1,000 pop. | 5 - 8 Acres/ 1,000 pop. | 7 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |
| Neighborhood and Community Parks Subtotal | 197 | 9.28 Acres / 1,000 pop. | 6 - 10 Acres/ 1,000 pop. | 12 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |
| Special Purpose Parks | 59.63 | 2.81 Acres / 1,000 pop. | Variable | Variable |
| Pocket Parks | 13.10 | 0.62 Acres / 1,000 pop. | Variable | Variable |
| Linear Parks | 0.00 | 0.00 Acres / 1,000 pop. | Variable | Variable |
| Other Parks Subtotal | 73 | 3 Acres / 1,000 pop. | | 6 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |
| Regional Parks Subtotal ¹ | 73 | 3 Acres / 1,000 pop. | | 5 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |
| CITY PARK GRAND TOTAL | 342 | 16 Acres / 1,000 pop. | n/a | 23 Acres/ 1,000 pop. |

¹ Regional Parks include Kachina Prairie Nature Reserve and the Meadowview Nature Area

Park Land Standards

| 2021 Target Acres | 2021 POPULATION: ±21,203 | 2030 Target Acres | 2030 POPULATION: ±40,000 | 2060 Target Acres | 2060 PROJECTED POPULATION: ±100,000 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 106 | (deficit of 19 acres) | 200 | (deficit of 113 acres) | 500 | (deficit of 413 acres) |
| 148 | (deficit of 39 acres) | 280 | (deficit of 171 acres) | 700 | (deficit of 591 acres) |
| 254 | (deficit of 58 acres) | 480 | (deficit of 283 acres) | 1,200 | (deficit of 1,003 acres) |
| | n/a | | n/a | | n/a |
| | n/a | | n/a | | n/a |
| | n/a | | n/a | | n/a |
| 127 | (deficit of 54 acres) | 240 | (deficit of 167 acres) | 600 | (deficit of 527 acres) |
| 106 | (deficit of 33 acres) | 200 | (deficit of 127 acres) | 500 | (deficit of 427 acres) |
| 488 | (deficit of 145 acres) | 920 | (deficit of 578 acres) | 2,300 | (deficit of 1,958 acres) |

Appendix A4: Recreation Facilities Level of Service

| Recreation Facilities Level of Service | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| FACILITY TYPE | ACCESSIBLE CITY & SCHOOL | 2022 EXISTING LOS @ 22,000 | 2022 TARGET LOS | Five Year NEED @ 30,000 POPULATION |
| COMPETITIVE FACILITIES | | | | |
| Baseball (Competitive) | 8 fields | 1/ 2,750 pop. | 1/ 2,750 pop. | 10.91 ~ 11 Fields ¹ (Deficit of 3 Fields) |
| Softball (Competitive) | 7 fields | 1/ 3,143 pop. | 1/ 3,000 pop. | 10.00 ~ 10 Fields (Deficit of 3 Fields) |
| Soccer (Competitive) | 5 fields | 1/ 4,400 pop. | 1/ 4,000 pop. | 7.50 ~ 7 Fields (Deficit of 2 Fields) |
| Football (Competitive) | 5 fields | 1/ 4,400 pop. | 1/ 6,000 pop. | 5.00 ~ 5 Fields (Deficit of 0 Fields) |
| PRACTICE FACILITIES | | | | |
| Baseball/Softball | 7 backstops | 1/ 3,143 pop. | 1/ 3,000 pop. | 10.00 ~ 10 Backstops (Deficit of 3 Backstops) |
| Multi-purpose Practice Areas | 6 areas | 1/ 3,667 pop. | 1/ 3,500 pop. | 8.57 ~ 8 Areas (Deficit of 2 Areas) |
| OTHER ACTIVE FACILITIES | | | | |
| General Recreation Facilities | | | | |
| Pick-up game areas for informal use | 6 areas | 1/ 3,667 pop. | 1/ 4,000 pop. | 7.50 ~ 7 Areas (Deficit of 1 Singluar Area) |
| Playgrounds | 12 playgrounds | 1/ 1,833 pop. | 1/ 1,800 pop. | 16.67 ~ 16 playgrounds (Deficit of 4 playgrounds) |
| Play area for Corn Hole / Horse Shoe / Washer Pit | 0 play areas | 0 | 1/ 5,000 pop. | 6.00 ~ 6 pits (Deficit of 6 pits) |
| Trails | 8 miles | 1/ 2,750 pop. | 1/ 800 pop. | 37.50 ~ 37 miles (Deficit of 29 miles) |
| Special Purpose Facilities | | | | |
| Skate Park | 0 skate parks | 0 | 1/ 30,000 pop. | 1.00 ~ 1 skate park (Deficit of 1 skate park) |
| Disc Golf Course | 1 course | 1/ 22,000 pop. | 1/ 15,000 pop. | 2.00 ~ 2 courses (Deficit of 1 course) |
| Other Athletic Facilities | | | | |
| Basketball Goals (hoops) (Outdoor, Half, and Full Courts) | 5 goals | 1/ 4,400 pop. | 1/ 2,500 pop. | 12.00 ~ 12 goals (Deficit of 7 goals) |
| Tennis Courts | 11 courts | 1/ 2,000 pop. | 1/ 2,500 pop. | 12.00 ~ 12 courts (Deficit of 1 court) |
| Sand Volleyball | 5 courts | 1/ 4,400 pop. | 1/ 4,000 pop. | 7.50 ~ 7 courts (Deficit of 2 courts) |
| Pickle Ball (Racquet, Futsol) | 2 courts | 1/ 11,000 pop. | 1/ 5,000 pop. | 6.00 ~ 6 courts (Deficit of 4 courts) |

1: only number .85 and higher will be rounded to a full number up; below .85 is rounded to a full number down

2: lap pool and leisure pool could be combined in one facility

3: most existing shelters are dated and require improvements or replacement

Recreation Facilities Level of Service

| FACILITY TYPE | ACCESSIBLE CITY & SCHOOL | 2022 EXISTING LOS @ 22,000 | 2022 TARGET LOS | Five Year NEED @ 30,000 POPULATION |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| AQUATIC FACILITIES | | | | |
| Lap Pool ² | 0 pools | 0 | 1/ 25,000 pop. | 1.20 ~ 1 pool (Deficit of 1 pool) |
| Leisure Pool | 0 pools | 0 | 1/ 25,000 pop. | 1.20 ~ 1 pool (Deficit of 1 pool) |
| Spray Park / Splash Pad | 2 splash pads | 1/ 11,000 pop. | 1/ 5,000 pop. | 6.00 ~ 6 splash pads (Deficit of 4 splash pads) |
| Water Park | 0 water park | 0 | 1/ 30,000 pop. | 1.00 ~ 1 water park (Deficit of 1 water park) |
| Fishing Pier | 5 piers | 1/ 4,400 pop. | 1/ 4,000 pop. | 7.50 ~ 7 piers (Deficit of 2 piers) |
| PASSIVE FACILITIES | | | | |
| Pavilions/Gazebos (large) | 10 pavilions | 1/ 2,200 pop. | n/a | Opportunity Based |
| Covered Picnic Structures ³ | 40 structures | 1/ 550 pop. | n/a | Opportunity Based |
| Outdoor Amphitheater | 0 amphitheater | 0 | 1/ 15,000 pop. | 2.00 ~ 2 amphitheaters (Deficit of 2 amphitheaters) |
| Dog Park | 1 dog parks | 1/ 22,000 pop. | 1/ 10,000 pop. | 3.00 ~ 3 dog parks (Deficit of 2 dog parks) |
| INDOOR FACILITIES | | | | |
| Meeting Rooms | 1 room | 1/ 22,000 pop. | 1/ 10,000 pop. | 3.00 ~ 4 rooms (Deficit of 3 rooms) |
| Gymnasiums | 0 gyms | 0 | 1/ 15,000 pop. | 2.00 ~ 2 gyms (Deficit of 2 gyms) |
| Recreation Center | 0 center | 0 | 1/ 30,000 pop. | 1.00 ~ 1 center (Deficit of 1 center) |
| Senior Center | 0 center | 0 | 1/ 30,000 pop. | 1.00 ~ 1 center (Deficit of 1 center) |
| Indoor Aquatic Center | 0 center | 0 | 1/ 30,000 pop. | 1.00 ~ 1 center (Deficit of 1 center) |

1: only number .85 and higher will be rounded to a full number up; below .85 is rounded to a full number down

2: lap pool and leisure pool could be combined in one facility

3: most existing shelters are dated and require improvements or replacement

Appendix A5: Bluebonnets Protection Plan

The following describes a framework for preparing a plan for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers in Ennis. It is partly the result of a meeting scheduled by Ennis PARD in April 2022 to discuss the ways and means to protect and preserve the bluebonnets and wildflowers in Ennis and surrounding areas. Participation included the City of Ennis, Ellis County, the Trust for Public Land, and the consultant group.

Data Gathering

Data is power in that it provides motivation and justification for future actions. It is essential that the city promptly embarks on a process of data gathering that may include:

- Yearly record of areas with best performing blooming of bluebonnets and wildflowers.
- Define and describe hotspots in terms of viewsheds where the most bluebonnets bloom most of the time (including geotags on Instagram/Pintarest).
- Number of visitors associated with the viewing of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.
- Number of reported incidences, e.g., traffic/pedestrian conflict, owner conflict.
- Management of bluebonnets and other wildflowers; determine best land management practices associated with the cultivation and preservation of bluebonnets that result in optimum chances for good blooms year after year.

Economic Analysis/Study

Prepare a study to determine the current and potential economic benefits of bluebonnets and other wildflowers. Study items may include:

Revenue via Products

- Bluebonnet and wildflower products, e.g., soap, oils, candles, etc.; this requires the identification of areas to harvest the flowers for that purpose.
- Use of amenities associated with the viewing of bluebonnets and wildflowers.

Revenue via Events

- Events associated with the time of blooming
- Ennis Bluebonnet Trails and Festival; this is already a hugely successful event that generates a fairly large amount of revenue for the City.
- Bicycle rides
- Outdoor camping amongst the bluebonnets

Options for Funding

- Establish the Ellis County Wildflower Trust.
- Explore funding available through tax exemptions.

Partners

It will take collaboration and cooperation of various partners to be successful in the protection of wildflowers. Potential partners are as follows:

Landowners

- Landowners are a key component of the plan.
- Any landowner that chooses to be part of the Protection Plan, would want to know what is the benefit of doing so.
- The Protection Plan/Program may allow for landowners to opt into it for a defined period of time, e.g., 5 or 10 years.
- What are incentives for landowners to preserve bluebonnet fields?
- Identify landowners that would be interested in leaving a legacy for the protection of wildflowers on their land for future generations.

TPL

Trust for Public Land

- TPL is very resourceful and supportive when it comes to the acquisition of land, including easements for parking and viewing areas.
- They are a great support in the identification of funding agencies and partners.

TPWD

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

- TPWD urban biologists serve to provide professional advice about the protection of the natural environment in urbanized areas.
- TPWD may also be a source of funding for this project.
- Having them at the table ensures participation at the state level.

Ellis County

- Much of the land that requires special protection and/or management is under the jurisdiction of Ellis County, which makes them key partners in this project.
- The majority of roads where off-road parking and viewing spots may be installed are on county roads.

Texas A&M Extension Office

- Texas A&M is steeped in ranch and land management practices.
- Knowledge is readily shared through their local extension offices.

Community Engagement

- The community's buy-in and support of this initiative is essential through a process of public outreach and engagement.
- This may include an education campaign about the benefits of bluebonnets for Ennis.

Visioning

- Based on community engagement, partners involvement, and the values of the community, create a vision for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.
- Establish objectives and goals to help guide the discussion as well as implementation of the Plan.
- Explore answering the question: what does success look like?

Implementation

- Determine the top three to five action items.
- Define actions in terms of protection goals, general need, and urgent need.
- Develop concepts for the off-road parking and viewing areas, including picnics and short distance walking paths



Visitors to Veterans Memorial Park enjoying the wildflowers along the trail

Appendix A6: Implementation Strategies & Funding Sources

Implementation Strategies

Optimization of Existing Resources

While the optimization of existing resources has always been a desirable practice in the public sector, it has become an even higher priority in today's economy. These resources can be physical, human, and even intangible, but they can and should become a priority for the community.

Park and recreation professionals have long been the initiators of such approaches with the general public being the recipients of their efforts. Ennis PARD is fortunate to have a staff that is well-motivated and skilled in such optimization approaches.

Optimization Strategies

The following list outlines strategies that can be embraced by an agency that lays the ground work for optimization. Ennis PARD with the information secured through this planning effort is well aligned to incorporate these strategies.

Reflect The Important Needs and Issues of a Community.

Regardless of how a department or area of responsibility defines "community", it is critical that the needs identified are ones that specifically and strongly reflect those needs and issues that are important to that community. The need to protect the bluebonnets and wildflowers of Ennis is a need very specific to the Ennis community.

From Individual Services to Community Wide Benefits and Outcomes.

In surveys conducted across the nation, individuals are consistently able to cite the role and importance that parks and recreation plays in their own lives. While this is most positive for public parks and recreation, it doesn't mean that a department should place individual services and programs ahead of the more beneficial and widespread community outcomes.

The special events undertaken by Ennis PARD are an excellent example of transforming individual attributes to community-wide impact.

Outcomes over Activity.

The development of a comprehensive program plan along with individual program planning should address the outcomes to be accrued rather than only focusing upon variety of activities.

From Full Service to Facilitator.

Residents within a community have a multitude of recreational interests and public park and recreation staff have program ideas of their own. When these suggestions and ideas are coupled with the customer-service orientation of most public park and recreation departments, it can result in a proliferation of direct program services. While these expressions of interests and ability by staff are assets for a department, it is critical for a public department to maintain a balance between offering programs and services to residents and making people aware and helping to secure access to existing activities, programs, and facilities provided by others in the community.

Optimization through Organizations

In addition, there are also existing practices that can be utilized including the following:

Park Foundations: Private, non-profit organization that raises and secure funds for either park and recreation agencies as a whole or a specific park location. With the community's huge interest in additional and the improvement of existing parks and trails, an Ennis Parks Foundation is highly recommended for the city.

Sponsorship through Businesses: is a means to secure funding through businesses operating in Ennis. Entities can contribute through a Foundation (once established) or directly support Ennis PARD construction or programming efforts.

Adopt-A-Park: Individuals or small groups of people

such as existing clubs and organizations agree to provide resources for a particular park or trail; resources could be financial or volunteering time and effort.

Friends' Groups: Non-profit organizations that work on behalf of park sites to assist with daily programs, special events, fund raising, and public education. These groups serve as important links to local communities and park user groups as well.

Youth Service Providers: A variety of youth organizations, Boys and Girls Scouts, 4-H, and even schools have a requirement for community service and more formalized arrangements with such organizations can result in a number of worthwhile community projects.

Service groups in communities such as Rotary, Kiwanis, and others often seek specific projects or days of service for their members.

Partnerships with Interest or Volunteer Groups that are typically non-profit organizations keenly interested in particular subjects. E.g. aesthetics, theater, art, and human interaction with nature including wildlife and native plants.

Such Volunteer Groups are often willing to contribute time and energy free of charge for the betterment of public spaces within a city. The Ennis Garden Club is an example of a Volunteer Group hugely instrumental in the protection and promotion of the enjoyment of bluebonnets and other wildflowers.

Designating an individual(s) within a department to identify potential projects, create relationships with various organizations, and provide support for their efforts is a prime way to optimize these existing resources. As Ennis grows, plans should be made to secure the services of a full-time staff member directed towards both individual and organizational volunteer efforts.

Shared Resources and Agreements

Shared resources, human, facility, and expertise established by agreements between two or more entities can serve to optimize existing resources in ways that are very beneficial to a community, its residents, and its finances. Some of these opportunities include:

Joint Programs: There are a number of options where programs are jointly planned and executed by two or more entities, i.e. wellness activities with local hospitals, special events with Chamber of Commerce.

Social Issue Action: When a community is faced with a critical or important social issue such as increasing the high school graduation rate or supporting independent living among the elderly, there is an opportunity for several entities to join forces and undertake initiatives to address the issue. Such an approach enhances the ability of seeking and receiving grant funding as well.

Joint Facility Usage: The most common and efficient agreements for optimizing existing resources is to share facilities. The agencies with the most facilities are often school districts; parks and recreation departments across the country have formal agreements involving use of school facilities and fields.

Potential Funding Sources

City Generated Funding Sources

General Fund Expenditures are primarily used for improvements or repairs to existing parks and facilities. Typical general fund expenditures are for smaller repair and replacement efforts.

Municipal Bonds

Debt financing through the issuance of municipal bonds is the most common way in which to fund park and open space projects. This type of funding is a strategy wherein a city issues a bond, receives an immediate cash payment to finance projects, and must repay the bond with interest over a set period of time ranging from a few years to several decades. General obligation bonds—the most common form of municipal bond—is the primary bond type for park and open space projects.

Tax Increment Financing/Public Improvement Districts

These related tools allow a development district to divert a portion of its property taxes to fund infrastructure improvements within its area. This can include plazas, pocket parks, linear parks, and other types of facilities.

Electric Utility Partnerships

This type of partnership can be established for the purpose of providing and enhancing linear parks and trails along utility easements. This partnership typically does not involve monetary contributions. However, through use agreements and/or easements, it makes land for trail corridors accessible at little or no cost to the community.

Half Cent Sales Tax Funds

This fund contributes to a city's EDC Type B Corporation, which is specifically focused on quality of life projects.

According to the Ennis EDC website: *"Our ultimate purpose is to enhance the quality of life within our community and to promote continuous economic development for the City."*

Park Donations Funds

This fund can be used for applicable projects, equipment, and general facility improvements.

Park Improvement Fee Funds

For many cities, this funding received from developers is a very helpful revenue source for park development. The requirement for such a fee needs to be written into the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance.

Cash in Lieu of Conveyance of Land

As part of many cities' Parkland Dedication Ordinance subject to specific prescribed conditions, a cash amount may be accepted in lieu of the conveyance of land. The goal is for the city to have the option to purchase land of an equal amount that was to be conveyed, elsewhere in the city.

Utility Bill Contributions

In many cities, residents are allowed to electively add a small amount to their utility collection bills to fund park improvements. As an example, the City of Colleyville has a Voluntary Parks/Library Fund, which allows citizens to donate \$4.00 per month through their water utility bills. This results in approximately \$300,000 per year, which is used to fund library material, library operations, and parks throughout their community. This is in addition to the Colleyville EDC that helps fund the city's park with a half cent sales tax.

Tree Restoration Funds

The source of such a fund is a city that levies fines against developers for removing quality trees for development. The revenue generated is used to plant trees and to irrigate City properties enhancing the City.

Governmental Grant Sources State Government

A variety of grant sources exist, but three general sources account for most of the major potential sources of grants for parks in Texas. These include programs administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the Department of the Interior through the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program. The following is an overview of major grant programs.

TPWD - TRPA account

The Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) account funds the following grants:

Outdoor Recreation Grants (TPWD)

This program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with a population less than 500,000 to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas.

Indoor Recreation (Facility) Grants (TPWD)

This program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with a population less than 500,000 to construct recreation centers, community centers, nature centers and other facilities (buildings).

CO-OP Grant (TPWD)

The Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) grant helps to introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. This is not a land acquisition or construction grant; this is only for programs. Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, municipalities, counties, cities, and other tax-exempt groups. The purpose of the Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) is to expose participants to environmental and conservation programs as well as outdoor recreation activities.

Recreational Trail Grants (TPWD)

TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants (TPWD)

TPWD administers the Texas apportionments of LWCF through the Texas Recreation Park Account. If an entity is applying for an Indoor Grant, Outdoor Grant, or Small Community Grant, TPWD may consider the application for LWCF funding. No separate application is required.

Regional Park Grants administered by TPWD

This grant program was created to assist local governments with the acquisition and development of multi-jurisdictional public recreation areas in the metropolitan areas of the state. It allows cities, counties, water districts, and other units of local government to acquire and develop parkland. The program provides 50% matching fund, reimbursement grants to eligible local governments for both active recreation and conservation opportunities. Grants are awarded yearly by TPW Commission when funds are available. There is no ceiling on match amounts, but grant awards are dependent on the number of applicants and the availability of funds.

TPTF Grants

Eligibility: historic structures, archaeological sites, archaeological curatorial facilities, and heritage education projects.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) awards grants for preservation projects from the Texas Preservation Trust Fund (TPTF). Created by the Texas Legislature

in 1989, the TPTF is an interest-earning pool of public and private monies. The earned interest and designated gifts are distributed yearly as matching grants to qualified applicants for the acquisition, survey, restoration, preservation or for the planning and educational activities leading to the preservation of historic properties, archaeological sites and associated collections of the State of Texas.

Competitive grants are awarded on a one-to-one match basis and are paid as reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred during the project. Applications are typically available early each year.

The TPTF grant cycle is typically once a year. Information for the next grant cycle will be posted on this web site (www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/) when funds become available.

Local Government

Ellis County

Ellis County does not have parks and recreation initiatives and programs that other Texas counties have in place for the acquisition of parkland and park development. However, Ellis County officials were invited to a meeting in April 2022 about a City initiative for the protection of bluebonnets and other wildflowers. It is highly recommended that city staff continues to include the county for their participation in future efforts about the topic.

Sustainable Development Funding Program

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Sustainable Development Funding Program was created by its policy body, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), to encourage public/private partnerships that positively address existing transportation system capacity, rail access, air quality concerns, and/or mixed land uses. By allocating transportation funds to land use projects promoting alternative transportation modes or reduced automobile use, NCTCOG and its regional partners are working to address mounting air quality, congestion, and quality of life issues.

The program is designed to foster growth and development in and around historic downtowns and Main Streets, infill areas, and passenger rail lines and stations. To support this effort, the Regional Transportation Council designates funds for sustainable infrastructure and planning projects throughout the region. Types of projects include:

Infrastructure:

An infrastructure project is a construction project that provides public infrastructure in the public right-of-way and can be used to support private vertical development. Examples include pedestrian amenities, landscaping, intersection improvements, lighting, street construction, traffic signalization, etc.

Planning:

Planning projects include market, housing, and economic analyses, transit station planning, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning, General Planning (subdivision regulations, creation of new code/zoning regulations, master planning, updates to pedestrian and/or bicycle plans, etc.), and others.

RTC Partnership Program

Through the Local Air Quality Program, NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will fund transportation projects that address the new air quality standard, including traffic signal timing, trip reduction, air quality outreach and marketing programs, vanpool programs, bicycle/pedestrian regional connections, high-emitting- vehicle programs, diesel freight programs, off-road construction vehicle emissions reduction programs, park-and-ride facilities, and other air quality strategies.

TE Program funds

Through the Statewide Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program, the Texas Department of Transportation makes funds available for construction of non-traditional transportation projects such as bicycle routes, pedestrian safety, and landscaping of transportation facilities. NCTCOG typically reviews the projects within the Metropolitan Planning Area for eligibility, ranked the projects, and provided the state-required Letter of Transportation Improvement Program Placement.

The new program provides monetary support for transportation activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the transportation system. Funding is on a cost reimbursement basis, and projects selected are eligible for reimbursement of up to 80% of allowable cost. This funding program is not available on a yearly basis, but intermittently only, often in 5-year periods apart.

Federal Government

NPS Programs

National Park Service (NPS) programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR), which provide funds for parks and recreation. Congress appropriates both funds. Typically, the funding sources have supported traditional parks rather than linear systems. Environmental Protection Agency can provide funding for projects with money collected in pollution settlements.

Other Governmental Sources of Funding

PDRs & TDRs

Purchase of development rights (PDR) and transfer of development rights (TDR) are programs for landscape preservation whereby a municipality, county, or other entity can pay landowners (typically farmers and ranchers) to limit development on their land. Through PDR, land- owners are paid an amount relative to the development potential of their land, required to maintain their land generally as-is (greatly limiting any future development), and maintain ownership of the land and residence. The land is thereby conserved, either in a natural or cultivated state.

Taking the PDR model a step further, TDR programs conserve rural landscapes through "trading" potential development intensity between sending areas and receiving areas. Areas to be protected (significant cultural, rural, or natural landscapes) are designated as sending areas while areas where more intense development is desirable are designated as receiving areas. In this model, landowners in sending areas are allowed to sell their right to develop their land to developers in receiving areas.

Both of these programs can offer a financially competitive alternative to selling land for development.

Other Private & Quasi Private Funding Sources

Developer & Private Land Owner Partnerships

Partnering with developers and private land owners is possible by implementing parkland dedication rules, whether voluntary or mandatory. Such an ordinance provides a vehicle for development of parks, open space, and trails as land is developed in a city. Ennis has such an ordinance in place and needs to be updated on a regular basis. The purpose of an up-to-date land dedication ordinance is to ensure land is set aside for parks and sufficient funding is provided so that tangible park improvements can be made, rather than token improvements.

Other Foundation & Company Grants

Such grants would assist in direct funding for projects, while others exist to help citizen efforts get established with small seed funds or technical and publicity assistance. Before applying for any grant, it is crucial to review The Foundation Directory and The Foundation Grants Index published by the Foundation Center to learn if a particular project fits the requirements of the foundation.

Grants for Greenways

This is a national listing that provides descriptions of a broad spectrum of both general and specific groups who provide technical and financial support for greenway interests.

Private Sponsorship Programs/Naming Rights

Obtaining private sponsorship for parks and recreation facilities—often by selling naming rights—can be an effective tool for acquiring additional financing. The long-term success of this financing tool depends greatly on a concerted effort by the City to ensure the ongoing prominence of the sponsored facilities through appropriate marketing efforts and a commitment to an excellent maintenance program.

NEH Grant Program

As part of its We the People initiative, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has a grant program designed to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for humanities activities that explore significant themes and events in American history, thereby advancing knowledge of the founding principles of the United States in their full historical and institutional context.

Grants may be used to support long-term costs such as construction and renovation, purchase of equipment, acquisitions, and conservation of collections. Grants may also be used to establish or enhance endowments that generate expendable earnings for program activities.

Because of the matching requirements, these NEH grants also strengthen the humanities by encouraging non-federal sources of support. Applications are welcome from colleges and universities, museums, public libraries, research institutions, historical societies and historic sites, public television and radio stations, scholarly associations, state humanities councils, and other nonprofit entities. Programs that involve the collaboration of multiple institutions are eligible, as well, but one institution must serve as the lead agent and formal applicant of record.

Land Trusts

Land trusts provide a valuable service to municipalities across the country in helping to acquire natural areas, open space, and other land for public use. Typically, land trusts not only assist in funding land acquisition but also assist in managing the transaction and financing. Often, each land trust will have a specific set of requirements for the types of land they are willing to help acquire and/or how that land will be used. The Texas Land Trust Council can be contacted for more information, as well as the Trust for Public Land.

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Appendices B: Community Engagement

Appendix B1: Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues Survey

Appendix B2: ActiveEnnis Engagement Report

Appendix B1: Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues Survey

This document records the existing conditions, goals, and needs of the recreational organizations and sports leagues within the City of Ennis. It is the result of a request for information (RFI) that staff sent to the various sports leagues and organizations associated with recreational activities in Ennis.

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

1. How would you describe your organization?

| | Competitive | Non-competitive | Fitness Community | Club | Social | Team-building | Educational |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------|--------|---------------|-------------|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Camp Gladiator | X | | X | | | | |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | X | | | | | | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | X | | | | X | X | X |
| Ennis Baseball Association | X | | | | | | |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | | X | | | | X | X |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | Hospital | | | | | | |
| Ennis Soccer Association | X | X | | | | X | |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Not-for-profit marine corps league | | | | | | |
| Girls volleyball | X | | | | | | |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | | | | | | | X |
| Lady lion volleyball | X | | | | | | |
| Softball and volleyball | X | | | | X | X | X |
| Texas Connection Athletes | X | | | | X | X | X |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

2. Approximately how many participants are involved in your organization?

| | Teams | Players | Coaches | Support Staff | Referees | Parent / Guardians |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------|--------------------|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | 40 | 8 | 1 or 2 / team | 5 / week | 2 / game | Averages 2 / child |
| Camp Gladiator | Campers 65 | NA | 1 | NA | NA | NA |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | 6 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 50 |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Several | Several | Several | Several | Several | Several |
| Ennis Baseball Association | 30-40 girls & boys | 12-Oct | 60-70 | 1 | 15-Oct | 15-60 |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | 6 | 10-Sep | 6 | 2 | 1 | 5-7 per team |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | NA | NA | NA | 155 | NA | NA |
| Ennis Soccer Association | 55 | 8-16 / team | 40 | 4 | 10 | Game day: 300-500 |
| | | | | | | Practice: 150-250 |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Girls volleyball | 6 | 8 to 10 | 6 to 12 | 6 to 12 | 4 | 40 to 50 / game |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | NA | NA | NA | 20-Oct | NA | NA |
| Lady lion volleyball | 6 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 10 |
| Softball and volleyball | 6 and up | 10 to 12 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 and up |
| Texas Connection Athletes | 5 teams | 10 to 15 / Team | 8 Coaches | 4 to 6 | 4 | 30 to 60 |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

3. Please list the approximate number of NON-PARTICIPANTS who attend events or practices. For example, parents watching a practice or siblings tagging along to a game.

| | 0 - 5 | 13-May | 13 - 18 | 19 - 24 | 25 - 32 | 33 - 39 | 40 - 49 | 50 - 55 | 56 - 65 | 65 -74 | 75+ |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | 0 | 21-30 | 21-30 | 10-Jan | 41-50 | 41-50 | 41-50 | 20-Nov | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 10-Jan |
| Camp Gladiator | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | 10-Jan | 20-Nov | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 20-Nov |
| Ennis Baseball Association | 21-30 | 61-70 | 0 | 20-Nov | 31-40 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 21-30 | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | 10-Jan |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ennis Soccer Association | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | | | | | |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Girls volleyball | 10-Jan | | | | | 31-40 | | | | | |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lady lion volleyball | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10-Jan | 10-Jan | 0 | 10-Jan | 0 | 0 |
| Softball and volleyball | | | | | 20-Nov | 10-Jan | | | | | |
| Texas Connection Athletes | 21-30 | 21-30 | 31-40 | 21-30 | 10-Jan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

5. What location(s) does your organization or group use to practice/play?

| | City-Owned Property | Private Facilities | Ennis ISD | Location outside of Ennis | Other |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | X | X | X | | Open spaces for Flag Football practice |
| Camp Gladiator | | X | | | |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | | | X | | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | X | | X | | |
| Ennis Baseball Association | X | | | | |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | X | | | | |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | NA | | | | |
| Ennis Soccer Association | X | X | X | | |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | X | | | | |
| Girls volleyball | X | | | | |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | X | | X | X | |
| Lady lion volleyball | | | X | | |
| Softball and volleyball | X | X | | X | |
| Texas Connection Athletes | X | X | X | | |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

6. List the names of the locations checked in the question above.

| | |
|--|--|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Bluebonnet Park, Ennis ISD Gyms, Boys & Girls Club |
| Camp Gladiator | Tabernacle Baptist Church |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | BF Thomas Gym |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Veterans Field; BF Thomas Gym |
| Ennis Baseball Association | Bluebonnet Park Baseball Field |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | Old Jr. High (Original HS) Gymnasium |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | Veterans Park, Bowie elementary, Tabernacle, Roger Maise, Rotary Park |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Veterans Memorial Park |
| Girls volleyball | Old girls jr high gym |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | Kachina Prairie, Lake Clark |
| Lady lion volleyball | Thomas gym |
| Softball and volleyball | Bluebonnet Park |
| Texas Connection Athletes | Roger Maise Park, Veterans Memorial Park- Arena and Sports Venue, and Ennis Jr. High |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

7. What days/times does your organization or group typically use these locations?

| | |
|--|--|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Monday - Friday from 5pm - 9pm. Seasonal depending on sport |
| Camp Gladiator | MWTHF- 5am, 8:30, 4:15pm, 5:30pm |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | T-W 6-8pm |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Tuesday 6-8 pm; Wednesday 6-8 pm |
| Ennis Baseball Association | M,Tu,Th,F, Sa, 5-10pm |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | Tue. - Thurs. 6 - 8 p.m. and Sat. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | Sunday thru Thursday, practices 5-8:30, games 8am-3pm |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Various dates/times throughout the year. |
| Girls volleyball | Thursday 6 to 8 and Saturday mornings for games |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | Varied |
| Lady lion volleyball | We'd 6 to 8pm |
| Softball and volleyball | Weekends |
| Texas Connection Athletes | Mon-Thur 5:30pm-8:30pm /Mon-Thur 5:30pm-8:00pm if weather is bad/ Sat 8:00am until dark if lights work. Will be using Jr. High in the future on Saturday |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

8. Do you believe your organization should pay user fees to use city facilities?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | No |
| Camp Gladiator | No |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | Maybe |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Maybe |
| Ennis Baseball Association | Yes |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | No |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | Yes |
| Ennis Soccer Association | No |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | No |
| Girls volleyball | No |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | No |
| Lady lion volleyball | No |
| Softball and volleyball | Maybe |
| Texas Connection Athletes | No |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

9. What are your organization’s growth prospects for the next 5 years?

| | Participants | Expand to specific age/gender divisions: | Teams | Other growth prospects? |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | 250 | Based on registrations | 70 | Cheerleading, dance, e-sports |
| Camp Gladiator | 100 | All ages | NA | More involvement in the city |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | 100 | Boys and Girls 4-6 grades | 10 | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Several | Yes | 10 | Yes |
| Ennis Baseball Association | 20-100 | no | 40-50 | More seasons. Spring, summer, fall |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | 100 | Separate 4th, 5th & 6th grade divisions | 10 | Incorporate either a separate male league or create a mixed gender league |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | Over 500 | Ages 3- 17 years old | 70 | No |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | 5 | N/A | N/A | None |
| Girls volleyball | No limit | Yes and yes | Could increase a lot | Lessen the age gap different age groups |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Lady lion volleyball | 80 girls | 4 th , 5 th , and 6 th grade division | 6 in each league | No |
| Softball and volleyball | 12 | Female | 5 | |
| Texas Connection Athletes | Triple in numbers | Under 5 31-40, 5-17 51-60, 18-34 61-70 | 40 Teams | More Sponsors; more locations indoor and outdoor; expand advertising |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

10. What are the goals for your organization or group?

| | |
|--|---|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Providing an affordable opportunity for youth to learn and develop skills and maintain an active lifestyle |
| Camp Gladiator | Giving back and community involvement |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | To develop players for the next level - junior high |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Mentor youth |
| Ennis Baseball Association | Survive |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | To expand the number of teams in the league, allow the registration fees to include purchase of knee pads and a team practice t-shirt |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | Community Outreach |
| Ennis Soccer Association | To continue to provide our players and families with a fun and safe environment to enjoy |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Maintain and enhance Ennis Veterans Memorial for all future generations; petition City of Ennis to have portion of Ennis Parkway in front of the Memorial be renamed to 'Veterans Memorial Parkway' |
| Girls volleyball | Help high school coaches get kids interested earlier |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | Expose individuals to nature and the environment |
| Lady lion volleyball | To introduce volleyball and teach fundamentals |
| Softball and volleyball | |
| Texas Connection Athletes | To provide sound structure in sports and the classroom; to support those who are less fortunate; give the community more activities in our area and exposure to bigger cities; to demonstrate a positive outlook; to develop a positive mental attitude and good sportsmanship; teaching and guiding to improve individual talents, teaching the importance of knowing each person will learn differently and at their own ability. |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

11. What factors do you feel hinder/help in meeting your organization or group’s goals?

| | |
|--|---|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Funding and space |
| Camp Gladiator | Positive: campers are interested in giving back to the community. Park clean up and more. |
| | Negative: time |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Indoor facilities |
| Ennis Baseball Association | Communication is difficult, number of volunteers gets less each year. |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | N/A |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | COVID-19 |
| Ennis Soccer Association | Upkeep of facilities, quality of turf and lack of number of fields |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Weather and vandalism; security cameras are reactive effort versus proactive |
| Girls volleyball | At the time nothing. More is better |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | Participants |
| Lady lion volleyball | Our organizer was amazing and helped a ton |
| Softball and volleyball | Places to play |
| Texas Connection Athletes | <p>Funding for safe equipment, training tools and transportation.</p> <p>Trying to partner with EISD to donate old school equipment to help with overhead cost of having to buy for those who cannot afford it.</p> <p>Need is great with single parents, grandparents raising grand children, and families with more than 1 child that seem to have a harder time affording the cost to participate.</p> <p>Our small town and integrated town make need of or lack of support for less fortunate more visible</p> |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

12. What physical improvements to City of Ennis parkland would help your organization or group meet its goals? How so?

| | |
|--|--|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Indoor Rec Center |
| Camp Gladiator | Ennis is doing great. We are loving the fitness pad. |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Indoor facility |
| Ennis Baseball Association | More parking, more fields and ac in the concession stands. |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | A better recreational facility that allows additional parking, more sport options would be beneficial to the community when it comes to games and community involvement. A swim team is greatly desired by many of the children, so a recreational pool for practices & meets is needed. |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | Fields need to be properly built and have quality turf |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | The city is always 100% supportive and goes out of their way to help support our efforts. No physical improvement recommendations at this time. |
| Girls volleyball | Now we are getting places they can play at the parks. It's not just a school function. |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | Restrooms, for obvious reasons |
| Lady lion volleyball | An outdoor volleyball court would be awesome! |
| Softball and volleyball | Indoor batting cages for bad weather |
| Texas Connection Athletes | Regulation sized courts and fields. This would give our teams a better opportunity to sponsor events to have home season events and would cut down on the cost of teams having to travel as much because those options would be available to use in our city. |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

13. What programming opportunities would help your organization meet its goals? How so?

| | |
|--|---|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | Partnerships with space |
| Camp Gladiator | Awareness of community needs |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Tournaments |
| Ennis Baseball Association | N/A |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | I understand the city can't fundraise, but communication to the volunteer coaches that it is allowed by their teams would help assist with team purchases, like additional uniform equipment. |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | None |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Further pushing to the local populace the various ceremonies that we hold at the Memorial would be a recommendation. |
| Girls volleyball | Little longer seasons. Some kids just want this |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | NA |
| Lady lion volleyball | A YMCA or a city gym, |
| Softball and volleyball | Availability |
| Texas Connection Athletes | Opportunity for educational support. Stressing the more they learn the more they want to come and participate. Places to host tournaments and select play. We have some special talent in our city and these platformS right here in their city will help bring out that talent. This would allow the city to be more involved and gives us an opportunity to give back more and get more people involved. |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

14. How can the Ennis Parks & Recreation Department enhance its communication capabilities to properly advertise recreational programming?

| | |
|--|---|
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | I think it has been good |
| Camp Gladiator | Maybe through the schools |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | Internet |
| Ennis Baseball Association | no clue |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | Radio spots, Ennis NOW magazine ad, FB and Instagram ads (but not the local paper because no one reads that stupid thing). |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | N/A |
| Ennis Soccer Association | None. Parks director communicates well with us now |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | Unknown |
| Girls volleyball | Elementary gym teachers need to be informed of our try outs and maybe send home something at schools |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | NA |
| Lady lion volleyball | None |
| Softball and volleyball | Facebook |
| Texas Connection Athletes | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Stay on all social media. Have posting stations with information at each park with updates 2) Include organizations like ours to help get the communication out where there is a lack 3) Seek to see why the system is not public friendly 4) Keeping in mind that everybody does not use social media or computers |

Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Recreational Organizations and Sports Leagues: Goals and Needs

15. What park and facility improvements would most benefit your organization?

| | Fields/ courts/ tracks/ amenities | | Add / improve concessions | Add / improve restrooms | Add / improve spectator areas | Add / improve playgrounds | Other |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| | Improve existing | Additional | | | | | |
| Boys & Girls Club of Ennis | X | X | | X | X | | |
| Camp Gladiator | | X | | | | | Traditional track/field open community! |
| City of Ennis Girls Volleyball League | X | X | | | X | | |
| City of Ennis Parks & Recreation | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Ennis Baseball Association | X | X | X | | | | |
| Ennis Recreational Volleyball League | X | | X | | | | A CITY POOL |
| Ennis Regional Medical Center | | | | X | | | |
| Ennis Soccer Association | X | X | | | X | | |
| Ennis Veterans Memorial Committee | | | | | | | N/A |
| Girls volleyball | | X | X | | | | |
| Indian Trail Master Naturalist | | | | X | | | |
| Lady lion volleyball | | X | | | | | |
| Softball and volleyball | X | | | | | | |
| Texas Connection Athletes | X | X | X | X | X | | |

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Appendix B2: ActiveEnnis Engagement Report

This appendix provides the results of the community outreach and engagement process. Initiatives and activities included branding, the steering committee, outreach in a park, and results of the first **ActiveEnnis** survey, as well as the follow-up survey.

Active *Ennis*
Parks Master Plan



ENGAGEMENT REPORT

LAST UPDATED 11.09.2022

CivicBrand

BRANDING

WHAT WE DID

To create greater awareness, participation and pride we developed branding for the project. The goal was to develop an identity that could not only be used for the current planning efforts but that could live on and serve as the brand that encompasses everything Ennis has to offer from a Parks & Rec standpoint.

The ActiveEnnis name has two meanings. The first meaning is in regards to being physically active. As this is the parks and recreation plan we want to encourage and celebrate a healthy and active lifestyle for all Ennis residents from children to senior citizens and everyone in-between. The second meaning is in regards to active citizens. Through a robust and equitable approach to public engagement we want to reach the entire community and encourage them to be active participants in shaping this plan and ultimately their community.



WEBSITE



DEMOGRAPHICS

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Date: | Duration of project |
| Group: | Public |
| Primary Language: | English & Spanish |
| Location: | Online |

WHAT WE DID

We launched a project website at ActiveEnnis.com. The website features the project branding and serves as the hub for all information related to the project. This includes the project timeline, project news, and the ability to sign up for project notifications. The website is provided in both English and Spanish and is fully responsive for all devices.

WEBSITE VISITORS

| ENGLISH | SPANISH |
|--------------------|------------------|
| August 2021 - 862 | August 2021 - 0 |
| September - 678 | September - 207 |
| October - 413 | October - 0 |
| November - 590 | November - 43 |
| December - 774 | December - 0 |
| January 2022 - 315 | January 2022 - 9 |
| February - 344 | February - 0 |
| March - 319 | March - 8 |
| April - 594 | April - 0 |
| May - 398 | May - 0 |
| June - 1072 | June - 7 |
| July - 1463 | July - 0 |
| August - 1574 | August - 0 |
| September - 1690 | September - 0 |
| October - 1230 | October - 15 |

FOCUS GROUP: STEERING COMMITTEE



Screenshot of Mural exercise



Committee responses to “What one thing are you passionate about and hope this plan will achieve?”

DEMOGRAPHICS

Date: September 14, 2021
Group: Steering Committee
Number of Participants: 16
Primary Language: English
City: Ennis, TX

WHAT WE DID

A Mural board exercise where we discussed the city’s strongest parks and rec assets and needs or missing amenities, based on multiple different audience personas.

There were also a handful of broader questions related to parks and connectivity/walkability.

AB.2-4

OUR FINDINGS

Themes that came up were: (1) equitable access to parks, (2) improving walkability and connections, and (3) variety of amenities and opportunities.

The new splash pad was often cited as a strong asset for the community. There are also a variety of opportunities for active youth, and those that like to run/walk in parks.

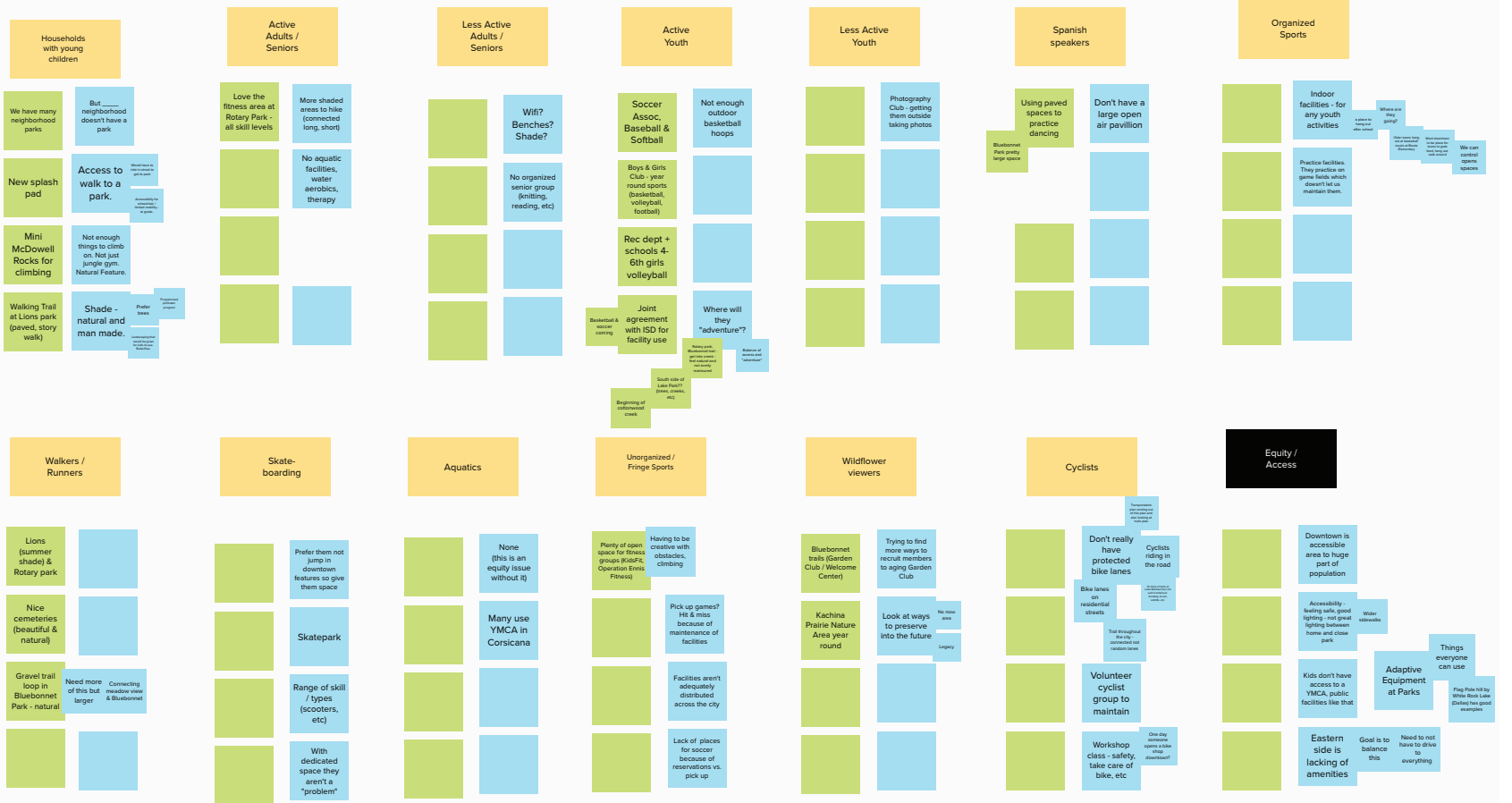
However Ennis lacks aquatic amenities and residents have to travel to other communities for those types of activities. It was also noted that it is relatively unsafe to walk/bike places because of a lack of protected bike lanes or safe walking paths, and that not every part of the city has equal access to existing parks facilities. There is also a lack of practice facilities for organized sports, so they practice on the game fields which makes them difficult to maintain.

The group also pointed out that while new amenities and facilities are important, maintaining wildlife and natural areas is also critical to preserve their environment and the wildflowers they are known for.

Personas

What are our strongest assets?

What are we missing? What do we need?



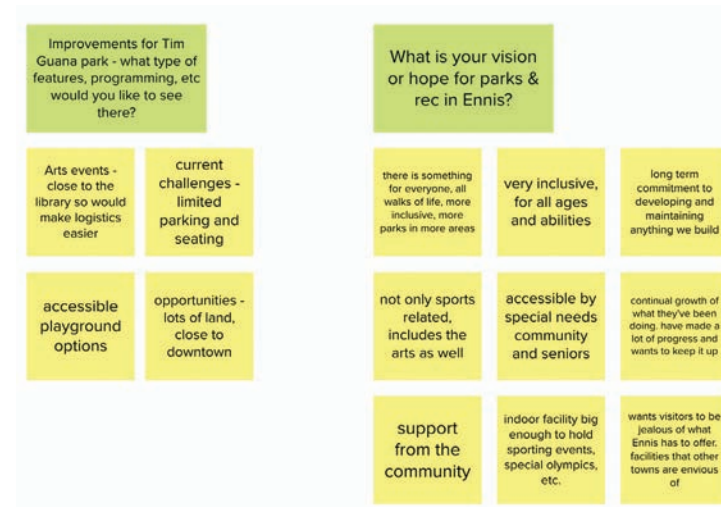
What one thing are you passionate about and hope this plan will achieve?

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Ashley - playground equipment is really unique and makes them stand out from other cities | Matt - walkability. improve connections so people can walk places. lots of disjointed sidewalks | Becky - public arts program to help make parks more engaging | Meg - connecting people with nature. expand parks and let nature do a lot of the building. more trees, etc. opportunities to connect with natural world |
| Bill - because of population growth we are seeing, we need variety. lots of people moving in that have different likes and dislikes | David - finding right opportunity for what is right for community. finding the right mix that meets our needs | Bruce - equity. each part of town needs to have facilities and things youth can participate in | Marty - best in class amenities, equitable access, actionable projects |
| Gina - 1. maintain wildflower viewing areas, don't get overdeveloped 2. places to play basketball, indoor and outdoor 3. neighborhood parks that people can walk to in every area | Paul - parks become a point of pride for community | Ginger - equity. evenly distributed assets across the city. as we do that, it will build community | Ryan - parks and rec incorporated in downtown |
| Francois - downtown. get more people to lake bardwell. wildflowers | Jennifer - accessibility. physical accessibility and access in every neighborhood | Jim - more opportunities for youth, indoor and outdoor | Brisa - connectivity between amenities |

FOCUS GROUP: PUBLIC #1



Screenshot of Mural exercise



Screenshot of Mural exercise

DEMOGRAPHICS

Date: September 14, 2021
 Group: Public #1
 Number of Participants: 8
 Primary Language: English
 City: Ennis, TX

WHAT WE DID

A Mural board exercise where we discussed the city's strongest parks and rec assets and needs or missing amenities, based on multiple different audience personas.

There were also a handful of broader questions related to parks and connectivity/walkability.

AB.2-7

OUR FINDINGS

Themes that came up were: (1) accessibility for people of all abilities, (2) there are great existing open spaces and amenities, and (3) a desire for longer trails to walk and run.

The disc golf course and fitness pad were mentioned as some of the strongest existing assets, and that there is currently a lot of space for activities.

However this group would like to see more trails, connections and loops to run or walk, as there is currently not anything longer than a half mile loop. A large part of the discussion was focused on equity and accessibility for all people with all types of abilities. For example, on trails they would like to see more shaded sitting areas to take breaks, playgrounds should be more accessible for those with sensory issues, and there should be more wheelchair and low grade access to amenities. Someone also stated that aquatics facilities are the city's "biggest need," and the group mentioned that they would like to see a skatepark.





What features or amenities do you enjoy that you can walk to?

walk to both Lake Clark and Veterans parks. 3/4 times a week, take the kids, etc.

Lake Clark Park's equipment is outdated

Library is in a part of town close to many neighborhoods

new developments - subject to ordinance that makes developers provide land or cash in lieu



What features or amenities do you wish you didn't have to drive to?

wish we had a water park that is closer

beer garden

golf course

downtown - traffic on country club is not safe for walking/biking

both a distance and safety issue

not always sidewalks, or sidewalks that aren't safe

Improvements for Tim Guana park - what type of features, programming, etc would you like to see there?

What is your vision or hope for parks & rec in Ennis?

Arts events - close to the library so would make logistics easier

current challenges - limited parking and seating

there is something for everyone, all walks of life, more inclusive, more parks in more areas

very inclusive, for all ages and abilities

long term commitment to developing and maintaining anything we build

accessible playground options

opportunities - lots of land, close to downtown

not only sports related, includes the arts as well

accessible by special needs community and seniors

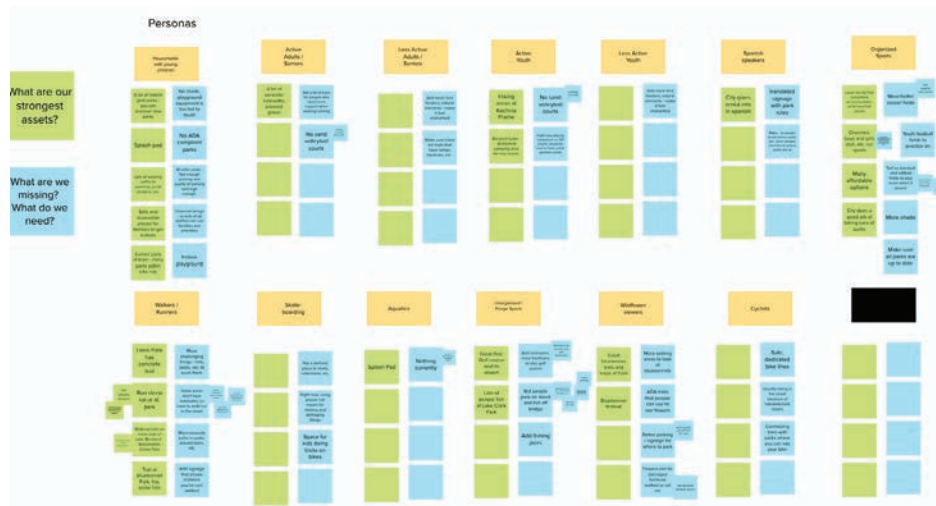
continual growth of what they've been doing. have made a lot of progress and wants to keep it up

support from the community

indoor facility big enough to hold sporting events, special olympics, etc.

wants visitors to be jealous of what Ennis has to offer. facilities that other towns are envious of

FOCUS GROUP: PUBLIC #2



Screenshot of Mural exercise

DEMOGRAPHICS

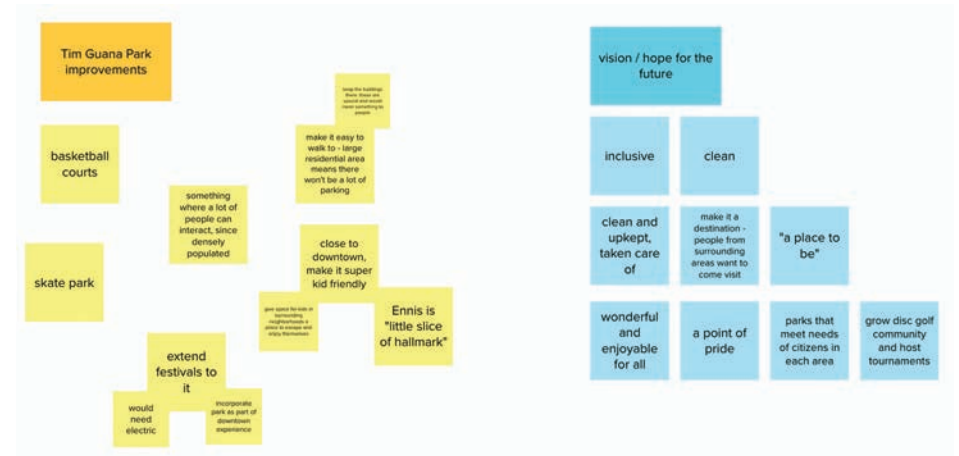
Date: September 15, 2021
 Group: Public #2
 Number of Participants: 9
 Primary Language: English
 City: Ennis, TX

WHAT WE DID

A Mural board exercise where we discussed the city's strongest parks and rec assets and needs or missing amenities, based on multiple different audience personas.

There were also a handful of broader questions related to parks and connectivity/walkability.

AB.2-11



Screenshot of Mural exercise

OUR FINDINGS

Themes that came up were: (1) there are great existing places to walk, and (2) the need for more safe sidewalks and connecting trails.

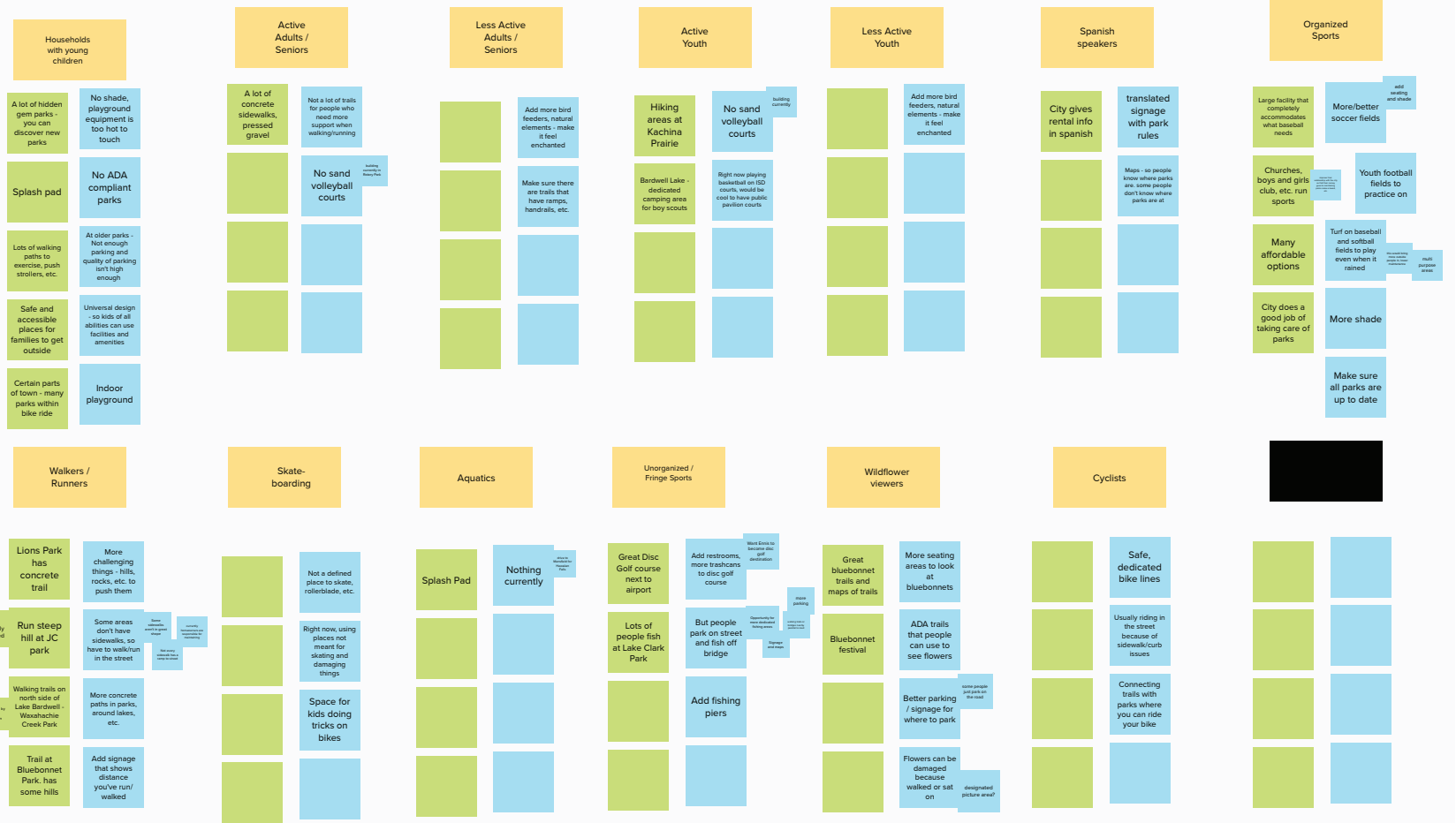
The splash pad again came up as one of the strongest assets. Participants mentioned that there are currently many walking paths to exercise, push strollers, etc. in existing parks, and that many parks are within biking distance for some parts of town. The hiking areas at Kachina Prairie are very popular, and there is even a dedicated camping area for boy scouts at Bardwell Lake.

Participants would like to see ADA accessible trails, universal design so that kids of all abilities can use amenities, and better sidewalks and connectivity so that residents don't have to run/walk in the street. Especially in busy areas, while a park may be close, it is not always safe to walk or bike to.

Personas

What are our strongest assets?

What are we missing?
What do we need?



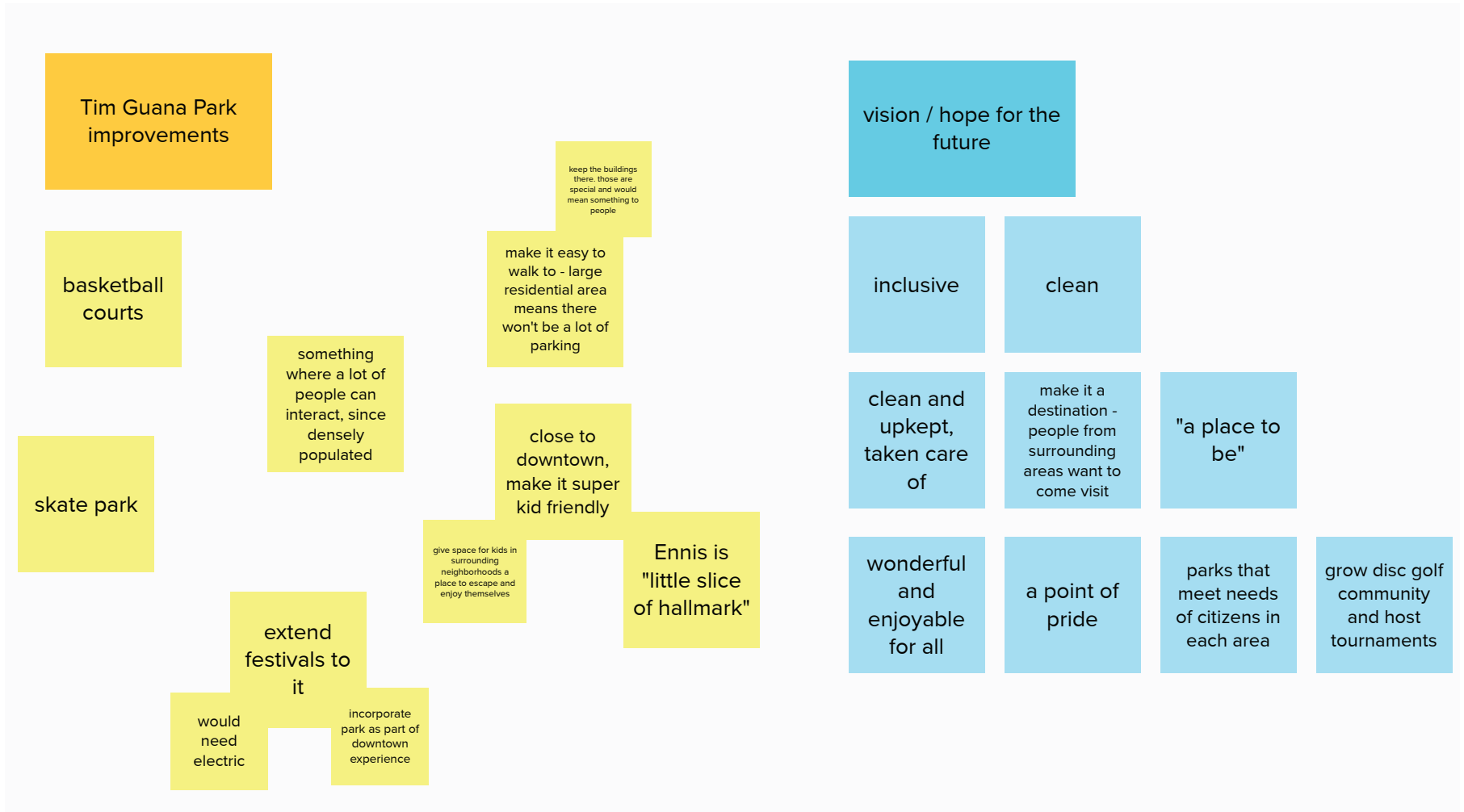


What features or amenities do you enjoy that you can walk to?



What features or amenities do you wish you didn't have to drive to?





FOCUS GROUP: PUBLIC #3



Screenshot of Mural exercise

DEMOGRAPHICS

Date: September 16, 2021
 Group: Public #3
 Number of Participants: 12
 Primary Language: English
 City: Ennis, TX

WHAT WE DID

A Mural board exercise where we discussed the city's strongest parks and rec assets and needs or missing amenities, based on multiple different audience personas.

There were also a handful of broader questions related to parks and connectivity/walkability.



Screenshot of Mural exercise

OUR FINDINGS

Themes that came up were: (1) there are great walking areas around existing parks, (2) accessibility issues, and (3) a desire to maintain the natural beauty of the area.

Participants noted that there are a lot of great parks already, like Lions Park and the camping area by Lake Bardwell.

They would like to see more designated areas kept natural, especially when it comes to wildflower season, as many areas get trampled on when families take pictures. Part of the conversation focused on accessibility issues because many sidewalks are unsafe or do not connect from one area to another. For example, someone pointed out that Lions Park is hard to walk to because there are no sidewalks. They would like to see connected trails to safely travel further distances. Another point was to make Ennis parks so great that other communities want to visit Ennis and use their facilities, instead of Ennis residents traveling to other facilities in outside communities.

Personas

What are our strongest assets?

What are we missing?
What do we need?





What features or amenities do you enjoy that you can walk to?

walking is
really easy
downtown

want to
see more
shopping

need more
sidewalks to
make this
safer

VISION / HOPE

Keep things as natural as possible, but engaging and accessible for all people. Make Ennis a place people want to live and enjoy

accessible

kids and families can go to parks and hang out instead of staying home on technology

YMCA / community center

think outside the box

safety. especially at secluded/less traveled areas

ability to enjoy nature

keep natural beauty

community - inviting spaces that people want to go to

keep parks clean, keep ennis outside and enjoying parks as a community

safe place to get together and hangout, also be entertained. safe and fun

encourage people to get outside, especially young people

a place that attracts a lot of new visitors. don't have to leave ennis for the unique amenities

SURVEY 1 RESULTS

485 total respondents

Open 10.27.2021 through 02.28.2022

EQUITABLE RESPONSE TARGETS AGE

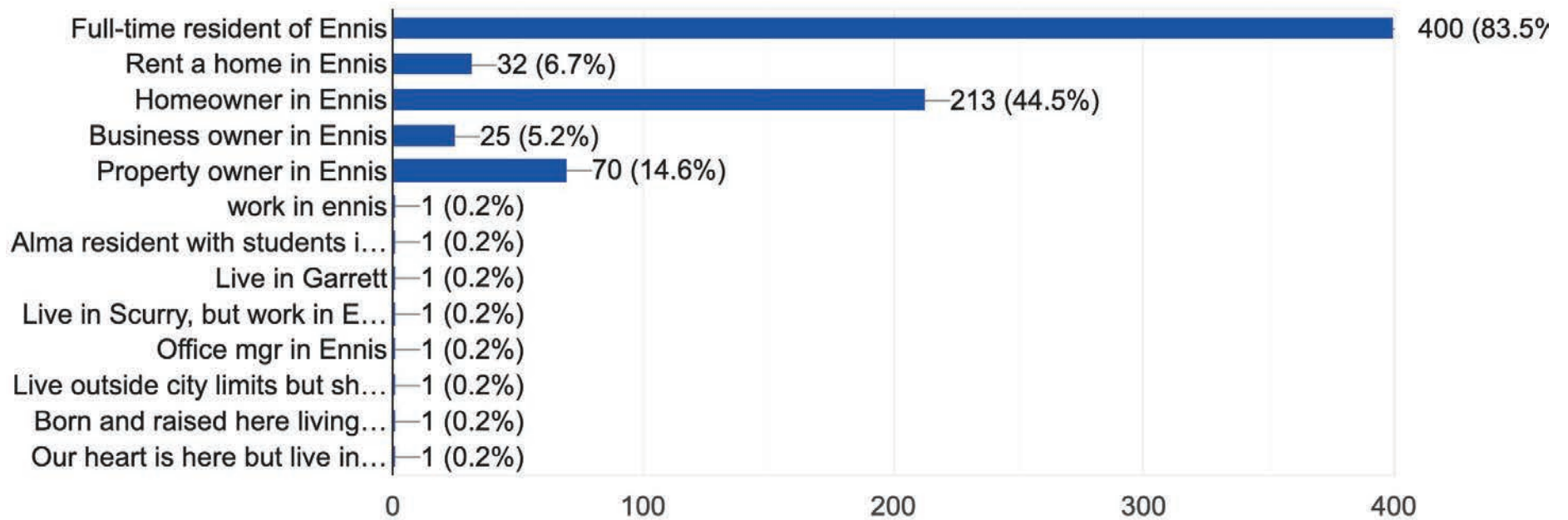
| | Total population (est.) | Percentage of city population | Target sample size | Target sample size | Survey respondents as of 2/7 | Survey respondents as of 3/1 | Difference between actual and target |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | based on <i>n</i> as percentage of city population | rounded to nearest whole | | | |
| City | 20,159 | 100.00% | 377 | 377 | 481 | 485 | 108 |
| Under 18 | 5,564 | 27.60% | 104.052 | 104 | 3 | 3 | -101 |
| 18 to 24 years | 1,953 | 9.69% | 36.5313 | 37 | 12 | 13 | -24 |
| 25 to 34 years | 1,820 | 9.03% | 34.0431 | 34 | 120 | 123 | 89 |
| 35 to 44 years | 1,766 | 8.76% | 33.0252 | 33 | 117 | 117 | 84 |
| 45 to 54 years | 1,623 | 8.05% | 30.3485 | 30 | 91 | 91 | 61 |
| 55 to 64 years | 1,720 | 8.53% | 32.1581 | 32 | 72 | 72 | 40 |
| 65 to 74 years | 1,478 | 7.33% | 27.6341 | 28 | 56 | 56 | 28 |
| 75+ | 1,089 | 5.40% | 20.358 | 20 | 6 | 6 | -14 |

EQUITABLE RESPONSE TARGETS RACE/ETHNICITY

| | Total population (est.) | Percentage of city population | Target sample size | Target sample size | | Survey respondents as of 2/7 | Survey respondents as of 3/1 | Difference between actual and target |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 141 | 0.70% | 2.639 | 3 | | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Asian | 40 | 0.20% | 0.754 | 1 | | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Black or African American | 3,064 | 15.20% | 57.304 | 57 | | 19 | 21 | -36 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0 | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| White | 7,318 | 36.30% | 136.851 | 137 | | 343 | 344 | 207 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 9,293 | 46.10% | 173.797 | 174 | | 109 | 110 | -64 |
| Multi-ethnic | 907 | 4.50% | 16.965 | 17 | | 1 | 1 | -16 |

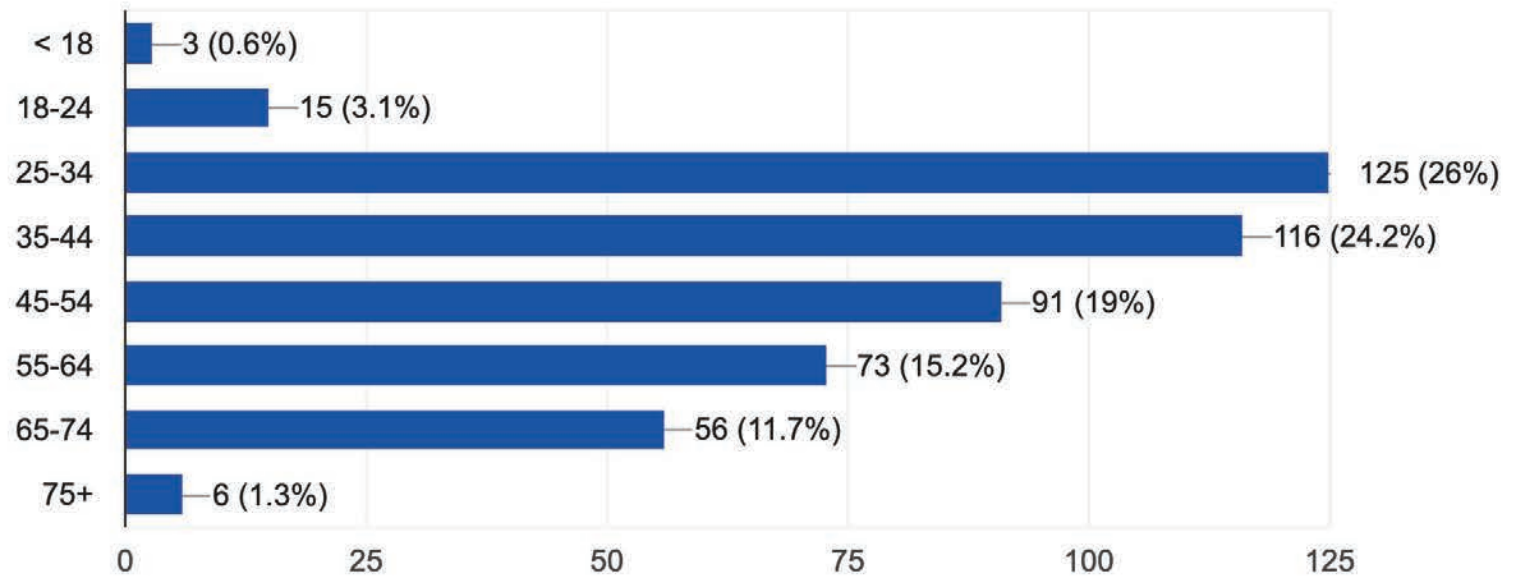
Q1 - Which of the following best describes you? (check all that apply)

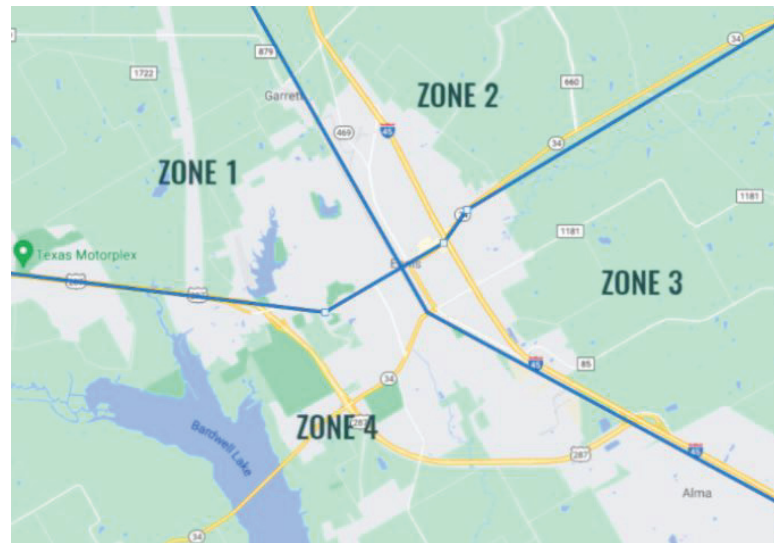
479 responses



Q2 - What is your age?

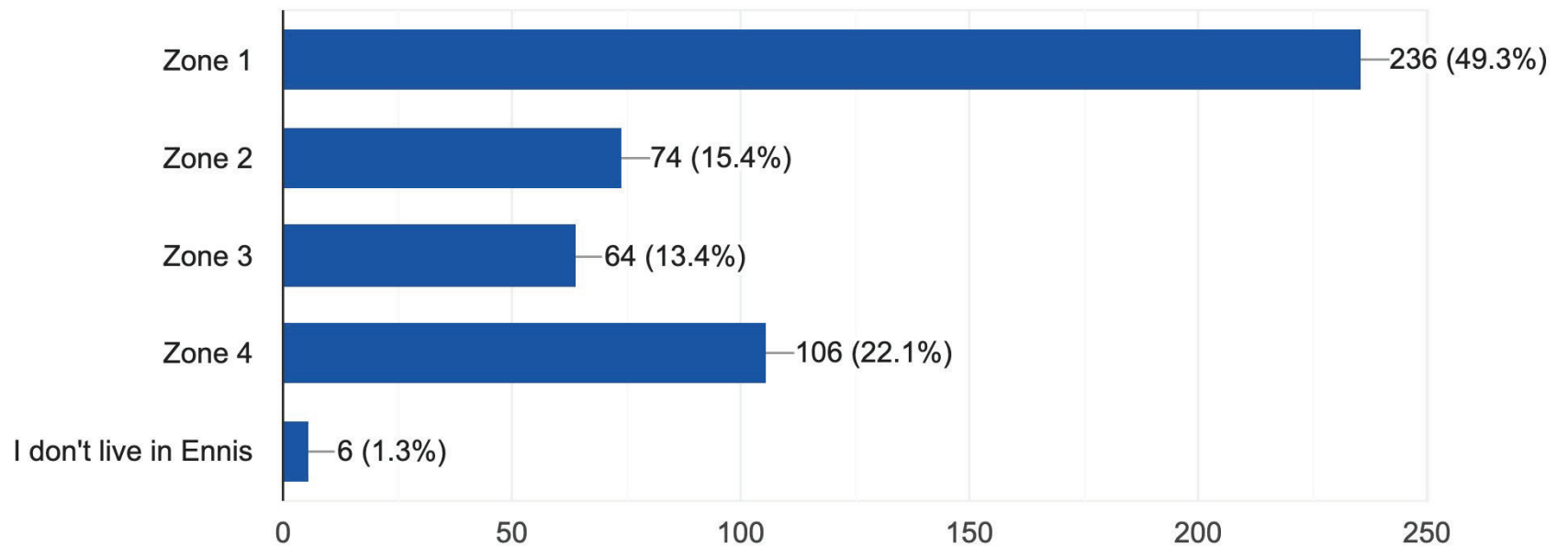
480 responses





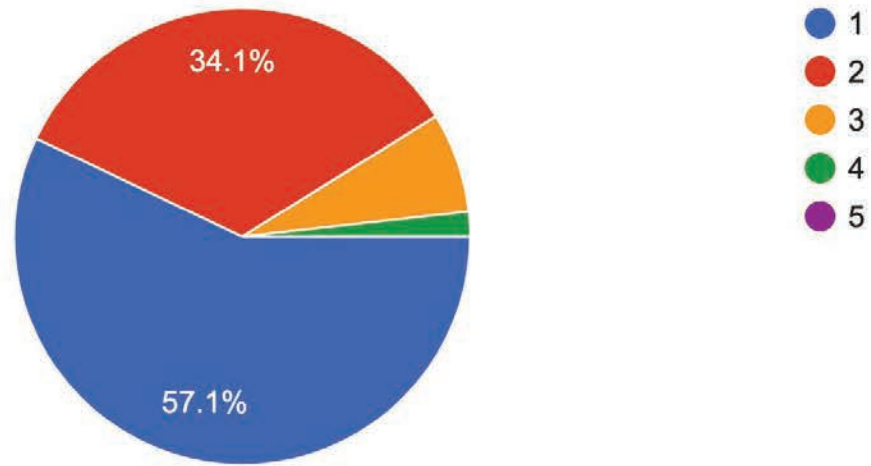
Q3 - Referencing the attached map, where in Ennis do you live?

479 responses



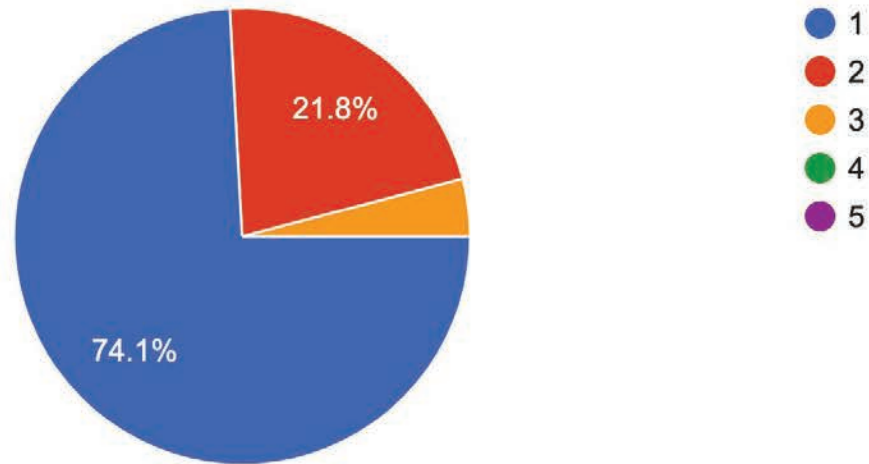
Q4 - How many children live at home with you that are in the age range of 0-6 years old?

170 responses



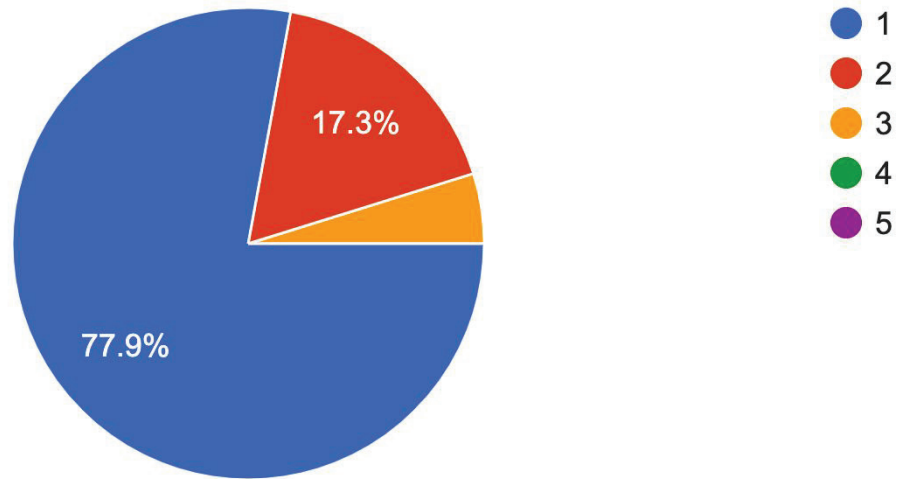
Q5 - How many children live at home with you that are in the age range of 7-12 years old?

147 responses



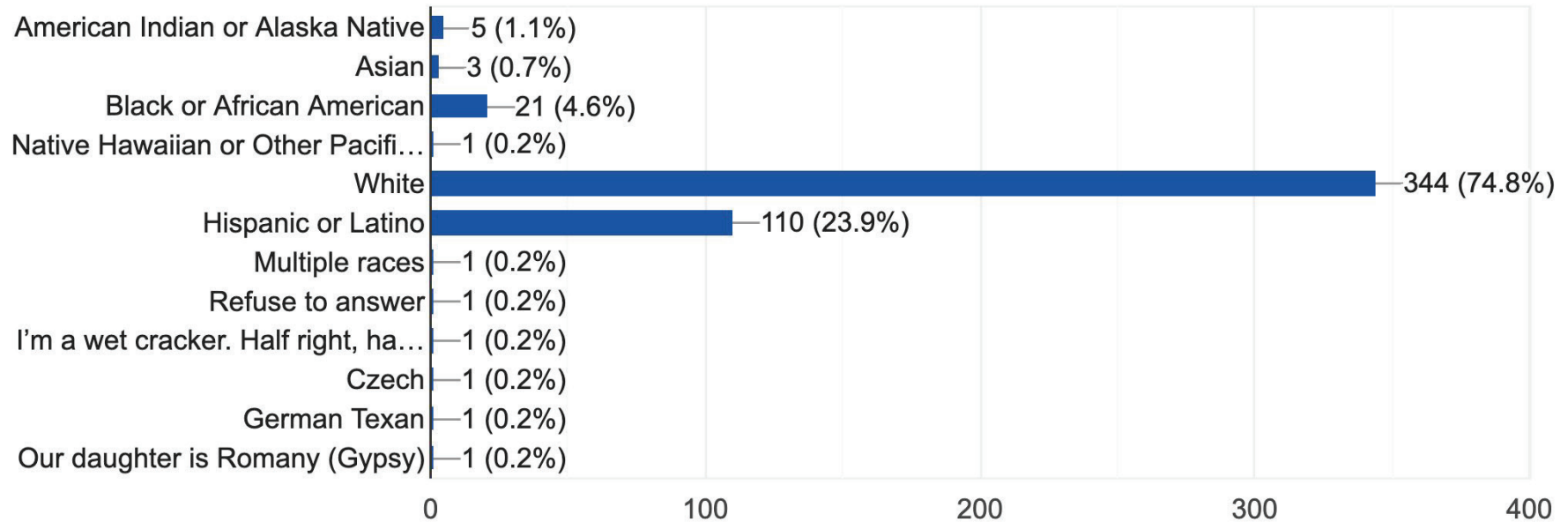
Q6 - How many children live at home with you that are in the age range of 13-17 years old?

104 responses



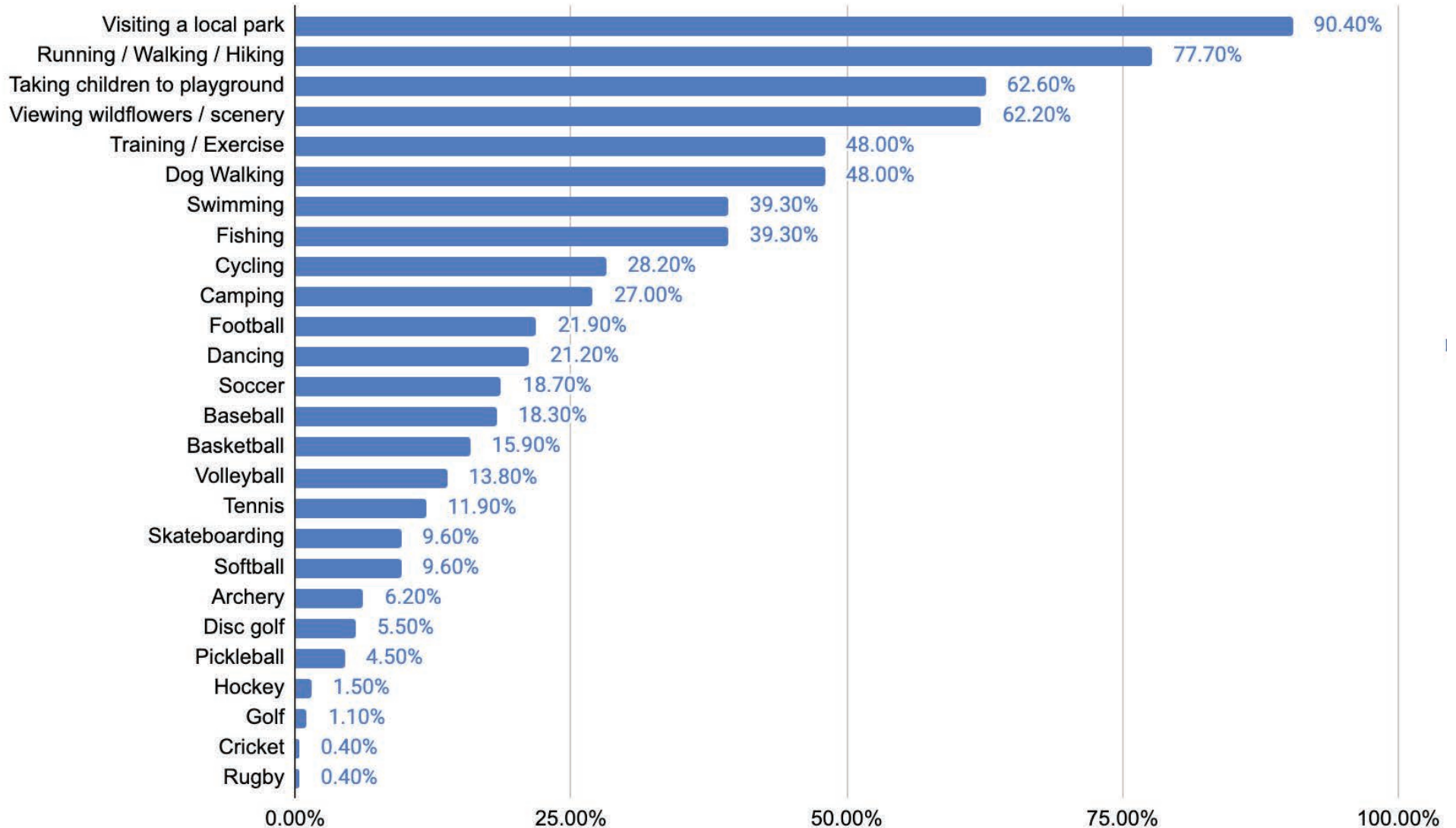
Q7 - With which do you identify? (optional)

460 responses



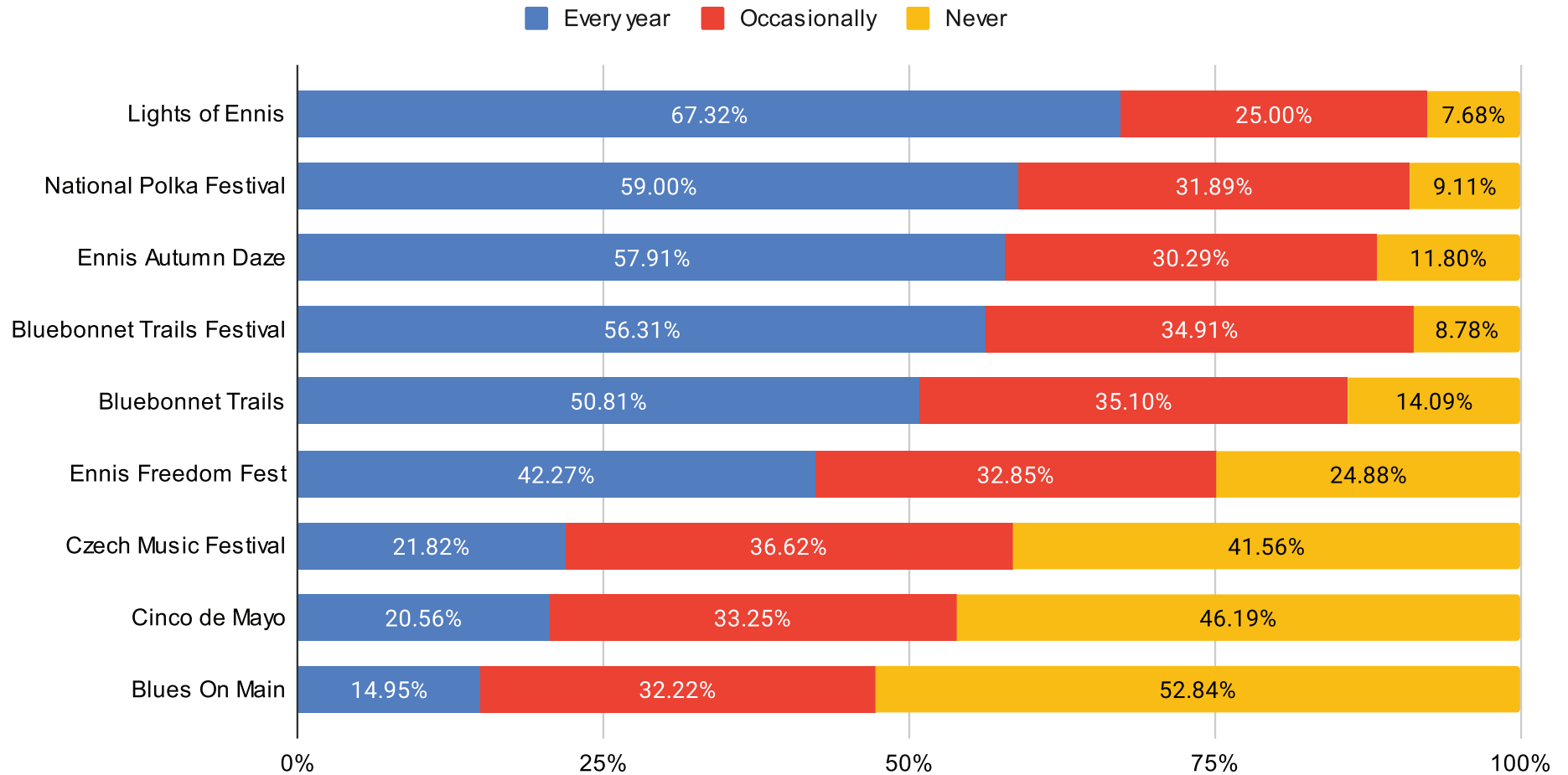
Q8 - From the following list please select all recreation activities that you or someone from your household has participated in within the last year (Check all that apply)

471 responses



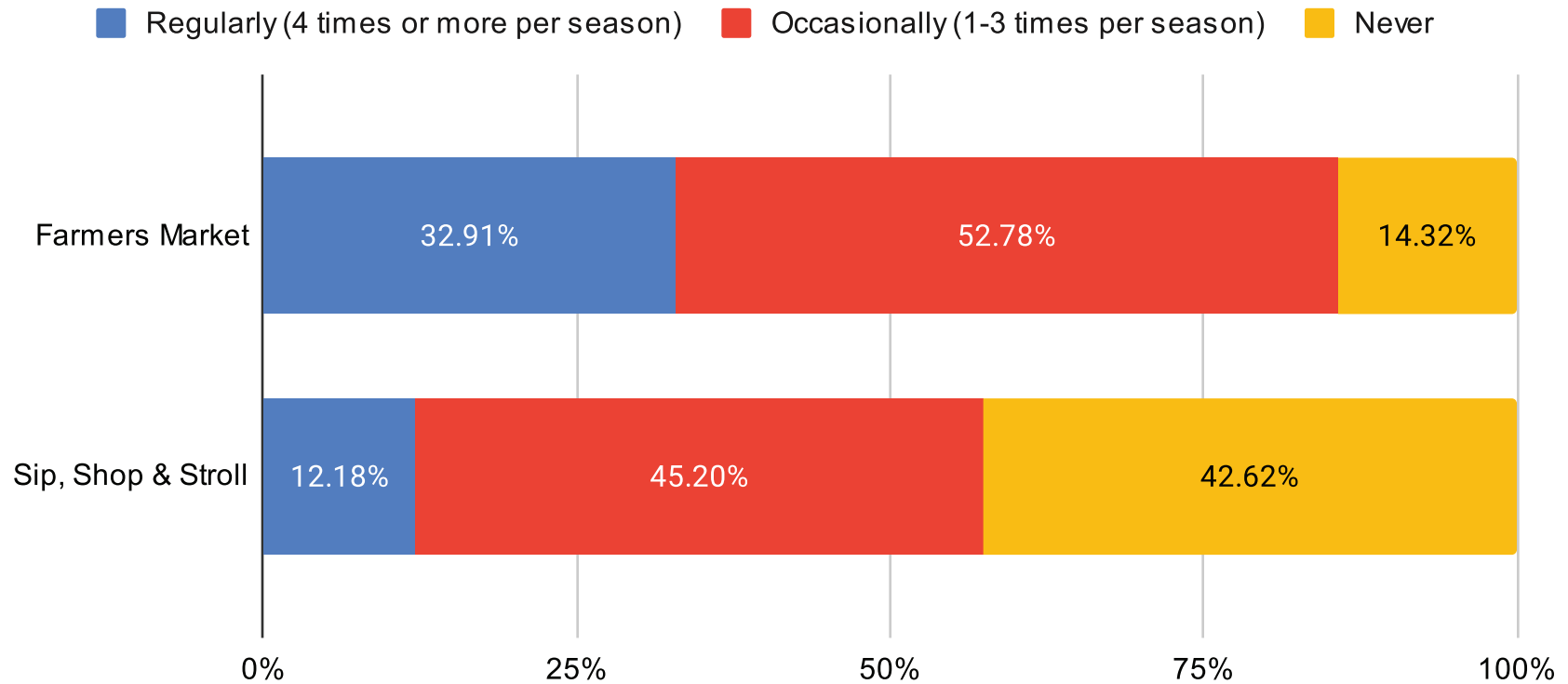
Q9 - In which annual City events do you participate? (Check all that apply)

461 responses

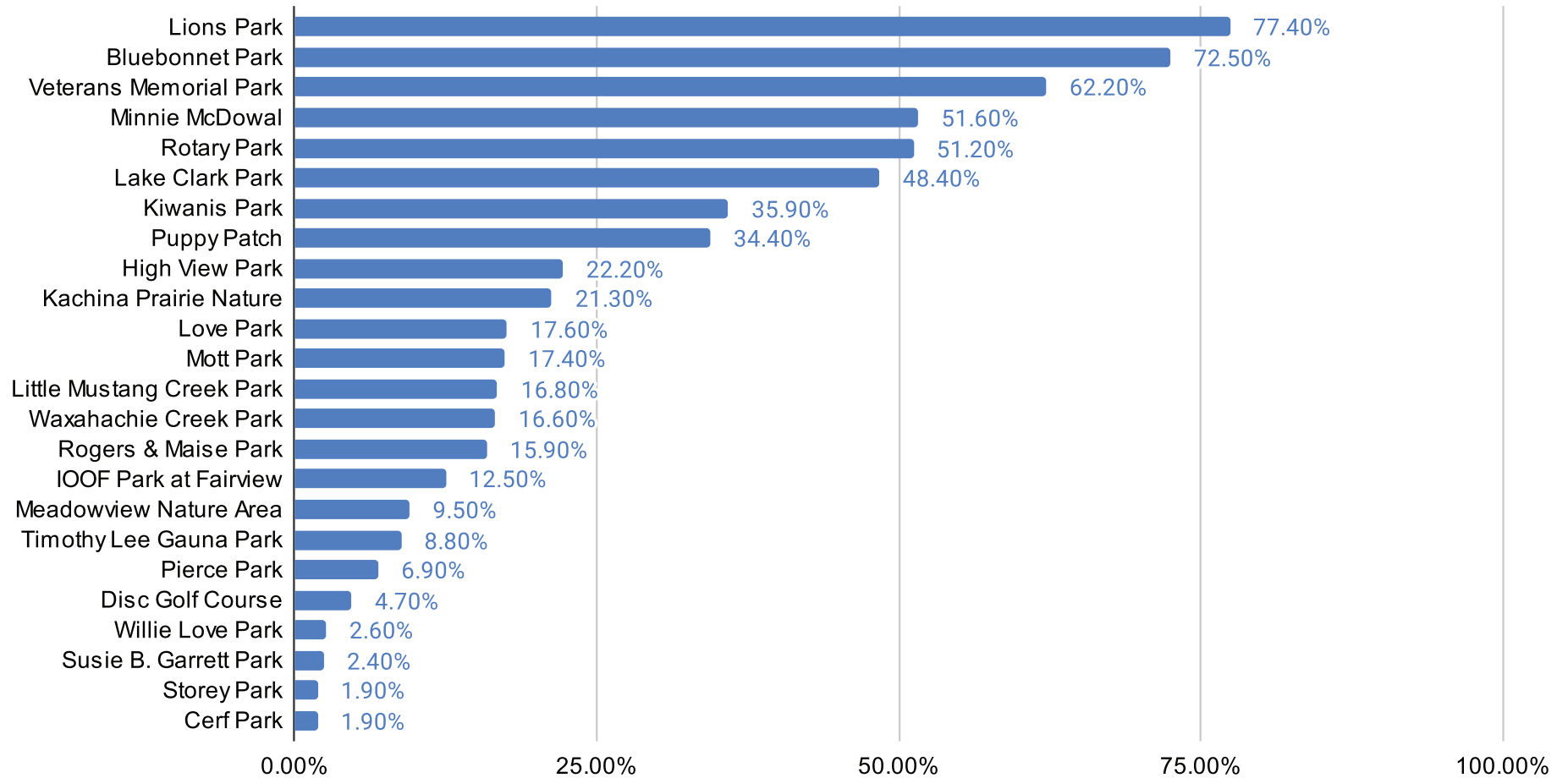


Q10 - In which other City events do you participate? (Check all that apply)

468 responses

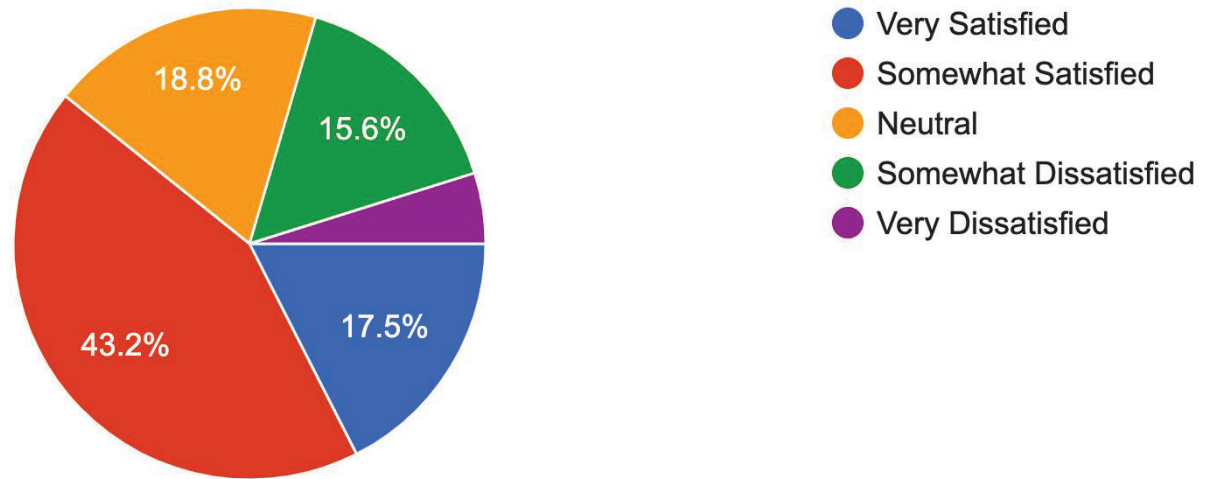


Q11 - From the following list, please select all parks, trails and open spaces that you have visited within the last year



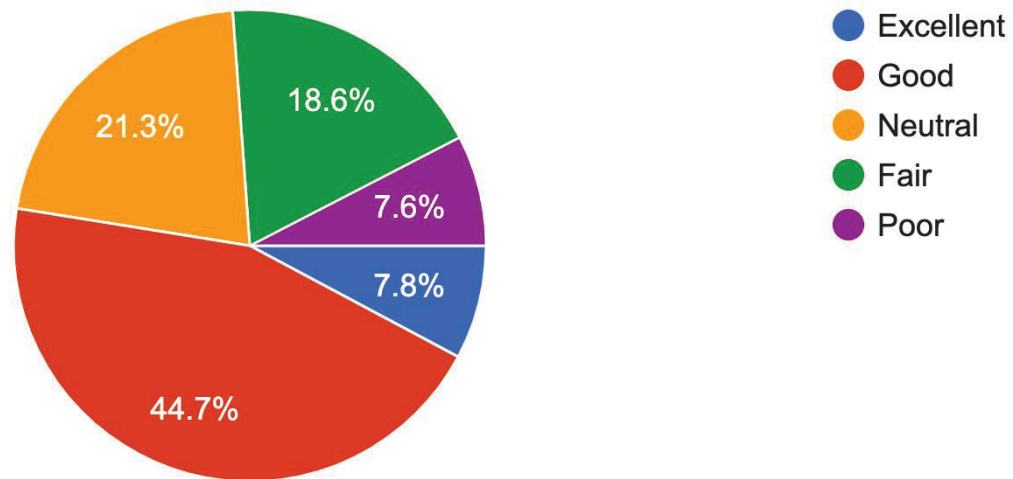
Q12 - Please rate your satisfaction with the current Ennis parks system

474 responses



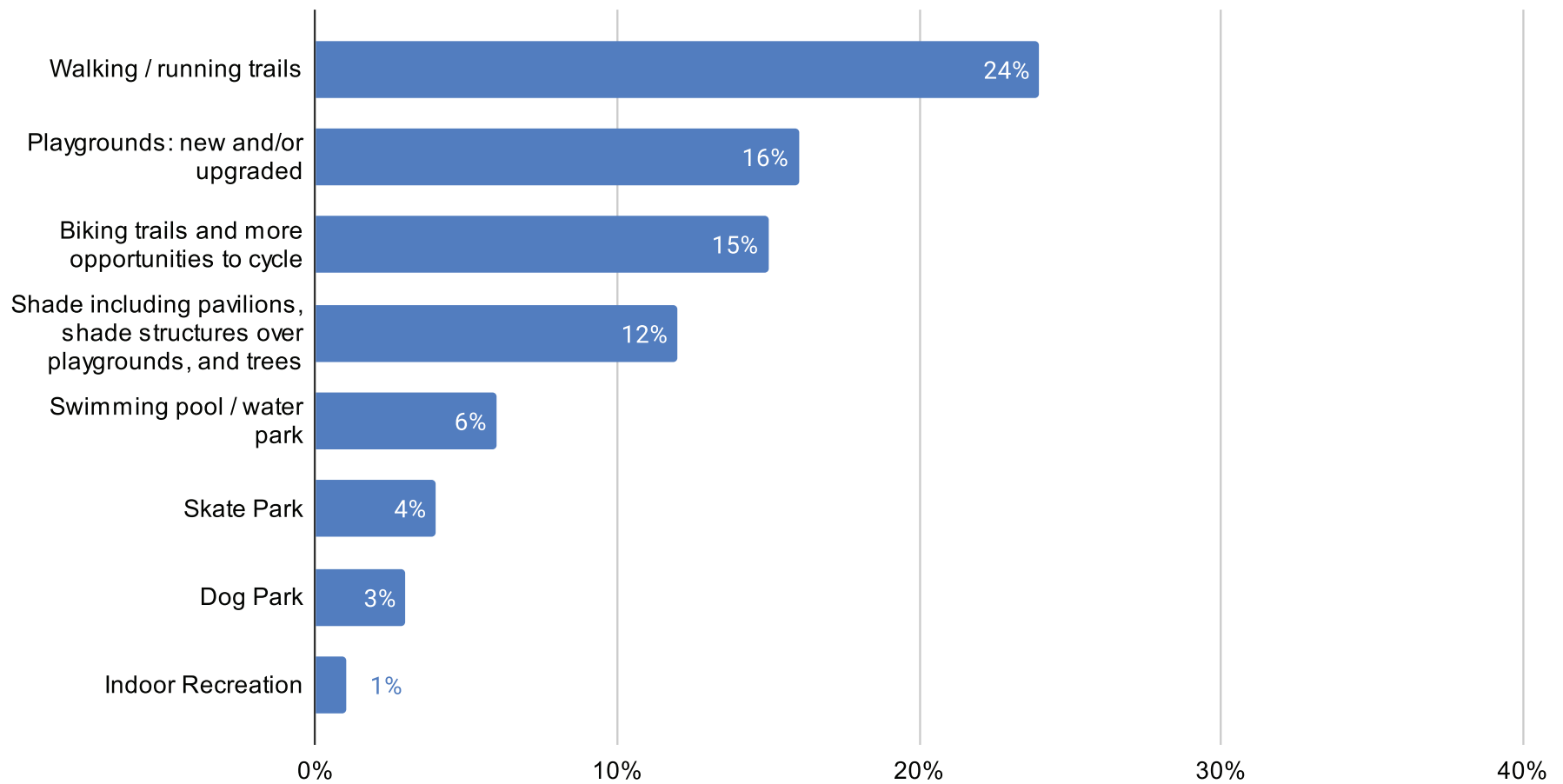
Q13 - Overall, how would you rate the physical condition and quality of ALL parks in Ennis?

474 responses



Note: A total of 386 people responded to this open-ended question with no examples provided in the survey. The top 8 responses are as follows:

Q14 - Please complete this sentence. With regards to Ennis PARKS, I would like to see...



This is a wordcloud of the most common words across all responses.

Q14 - Please complete this sentence. With regards to Ennis PARKS, I would like to see...

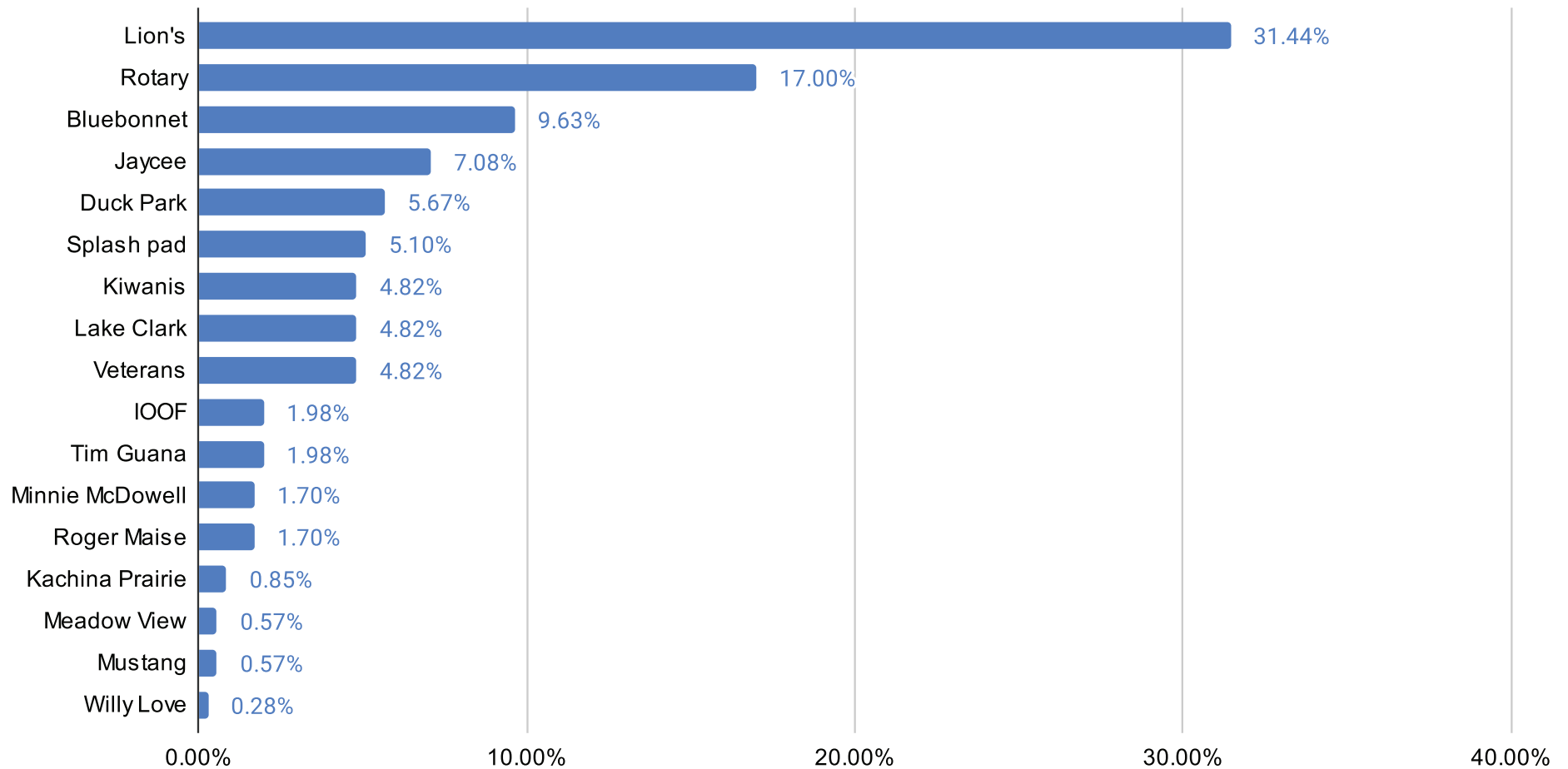
383 responses



Note: Open ended, not prompted with park names

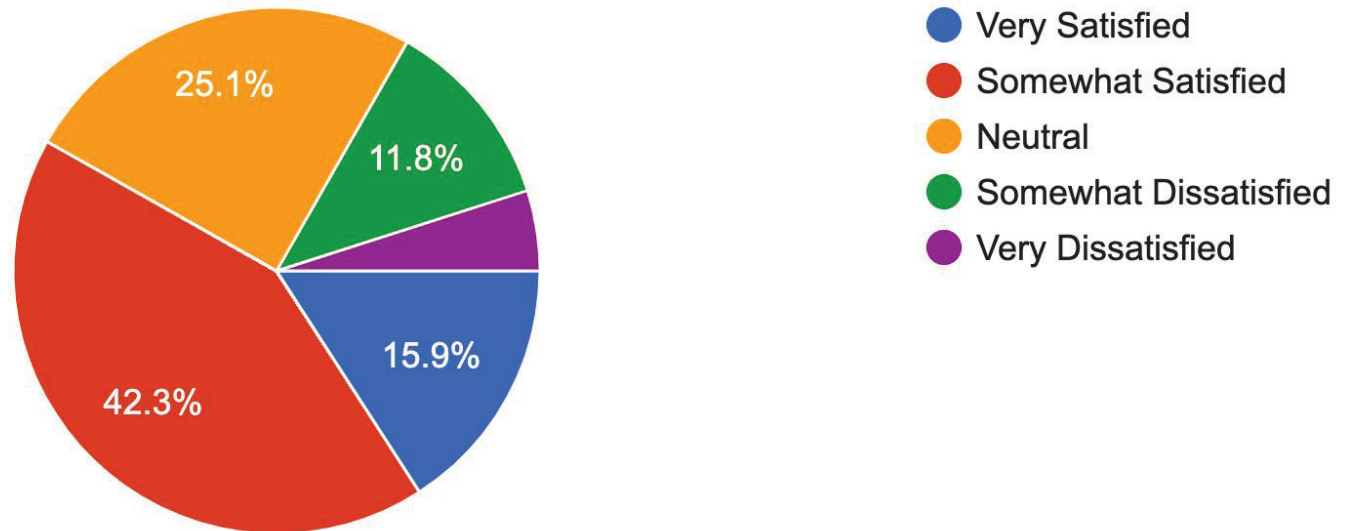
What is your favorite park in Ennis?

353 responses



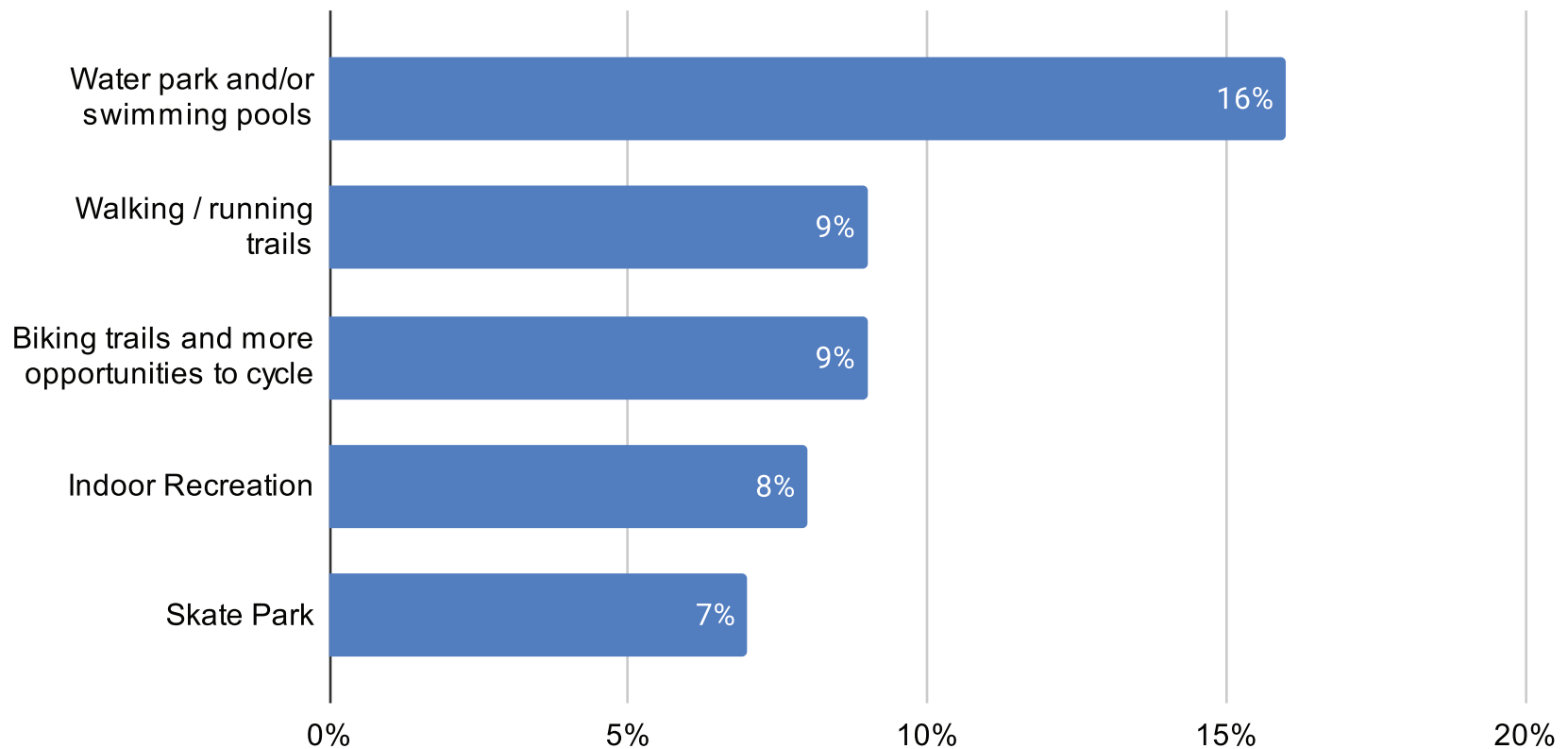
Q16 - Please rate your satisfaction with the current Ennis recreation offerings

466 responses



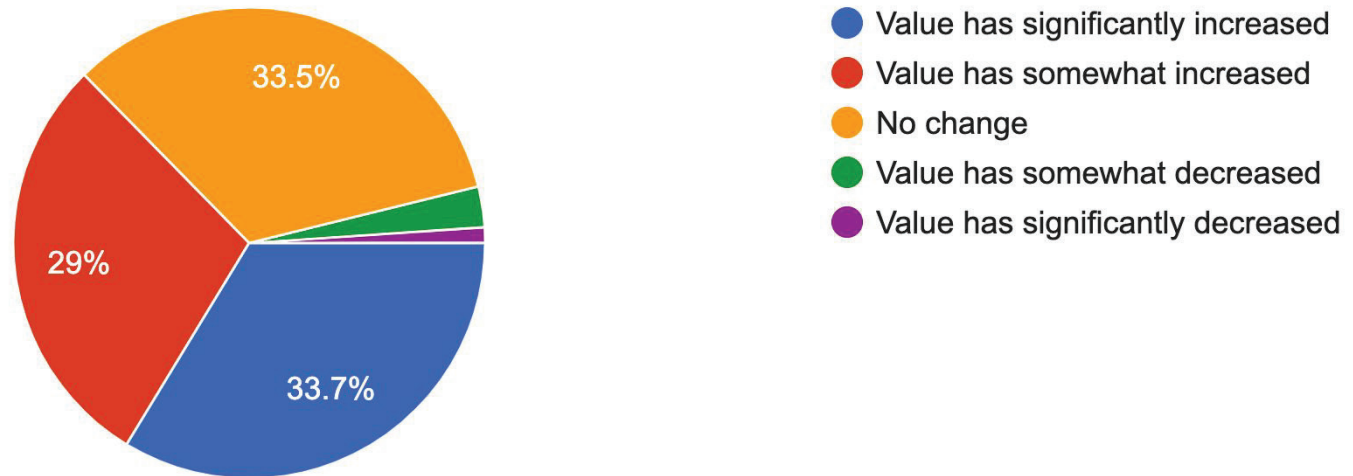
Note: A total of 283 people responded to this open-ended question with no examples provided in the survey. The top 5 responses are as follows:

Q17 - Please complete this sentence. With regards to Ennis RECREATION, I would like to see...



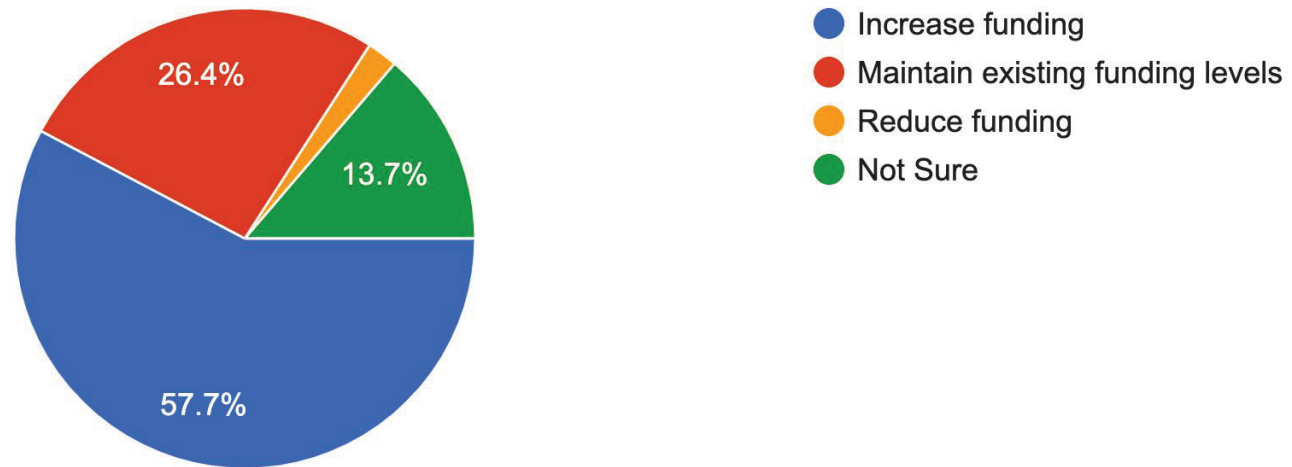
Q18 - Given the COVID19/Coronavirus pandemic, how has you and your household's perception of the value of parks, trails, open space, and recreation changed?

466 responses

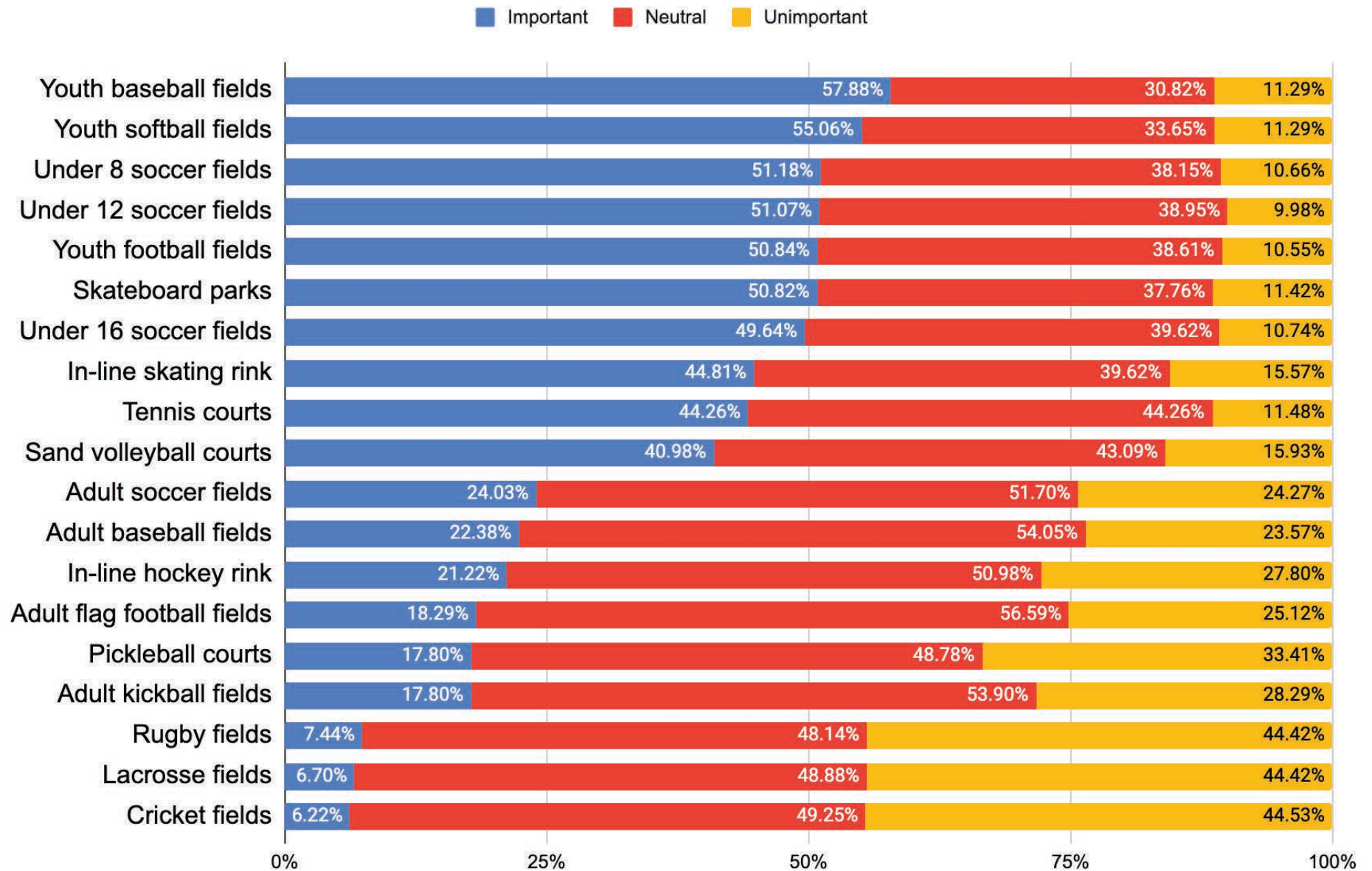


Q19 - Based on your perception value in the previous question, how would you want the City of Ennis to fund future parks and recreation needs?

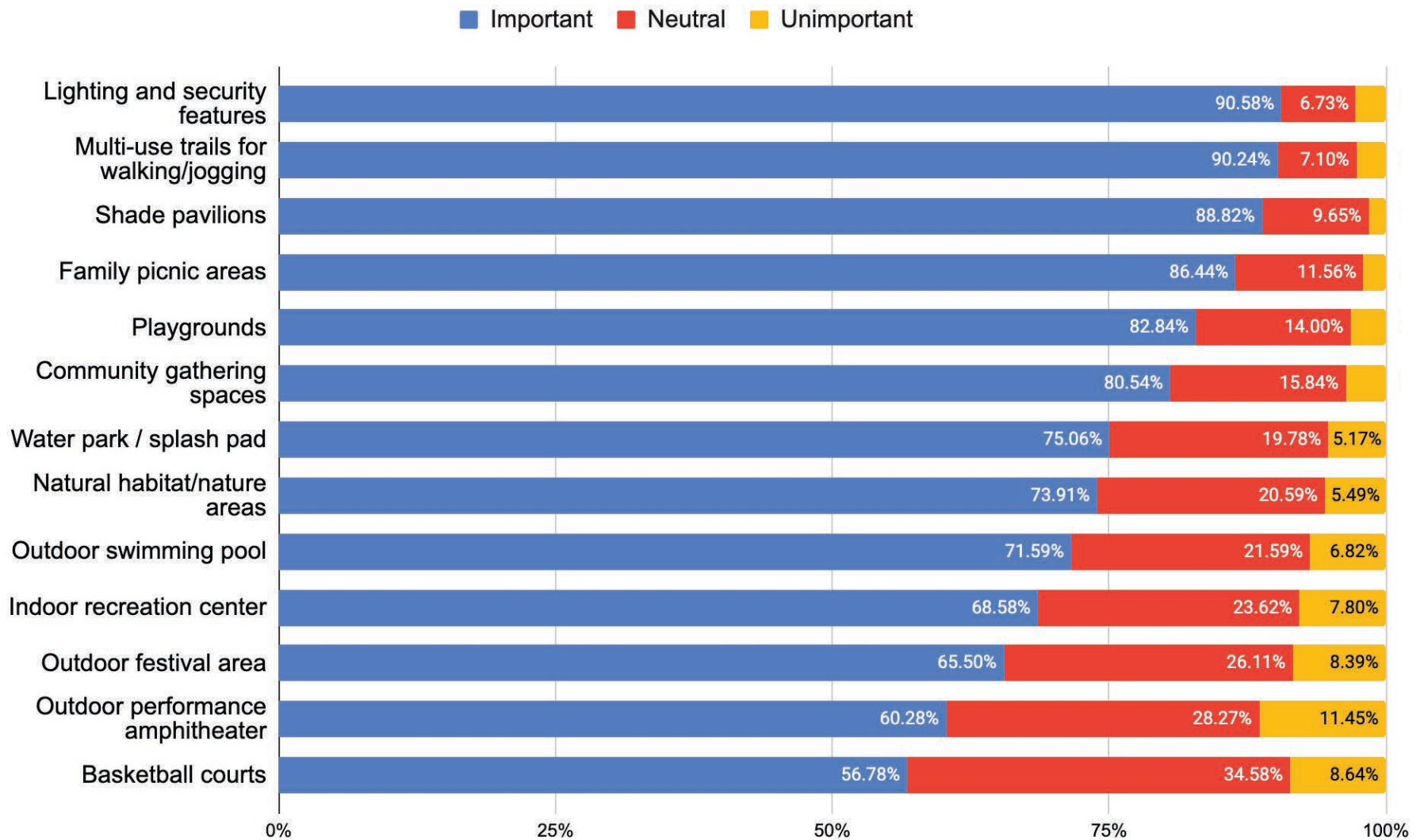
466 responses



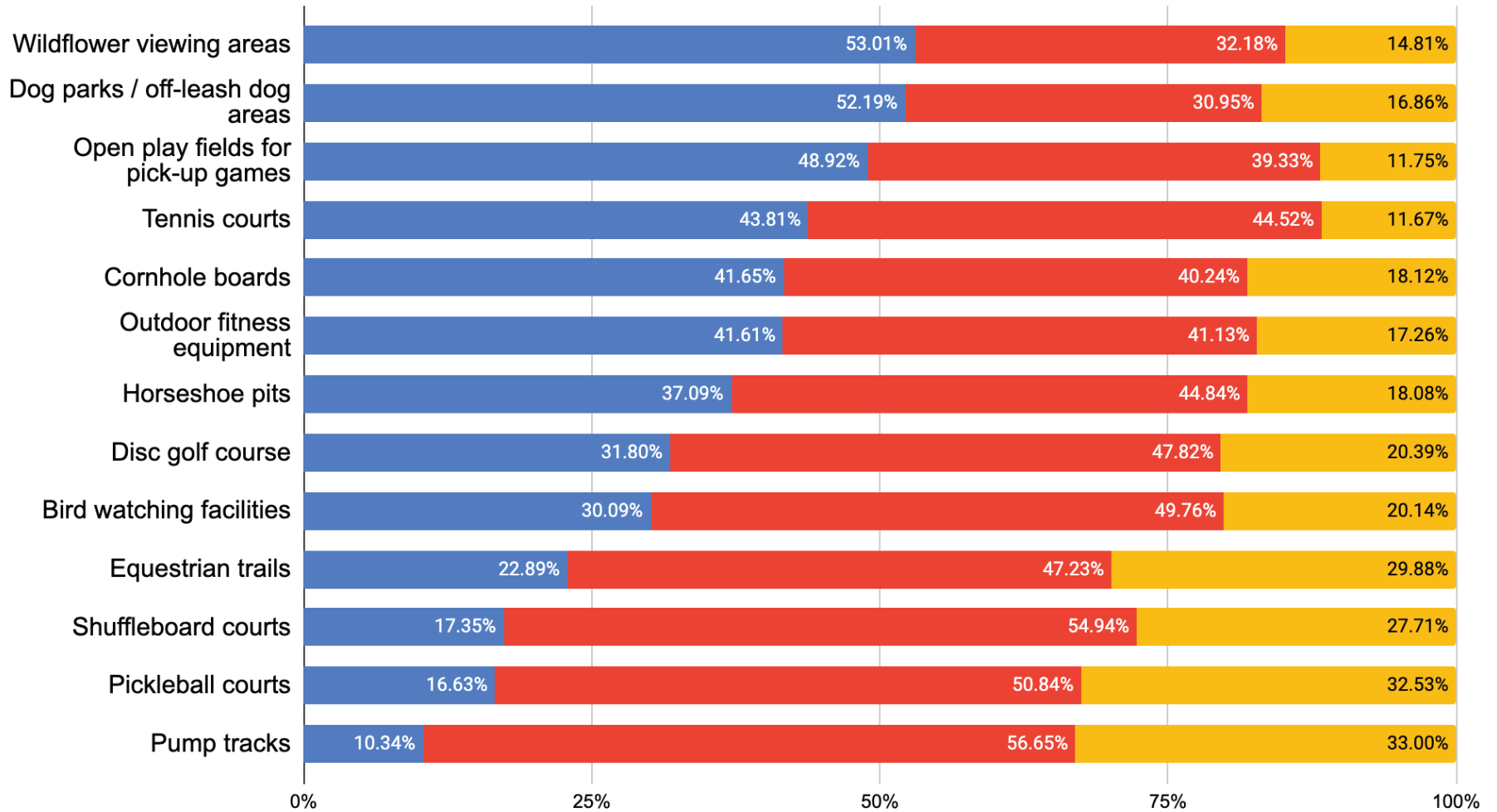
Q20 - For organized sports and athletic facilities, how important or unimportant do you think it would be to provide the following new or additional facilities in Ennis?



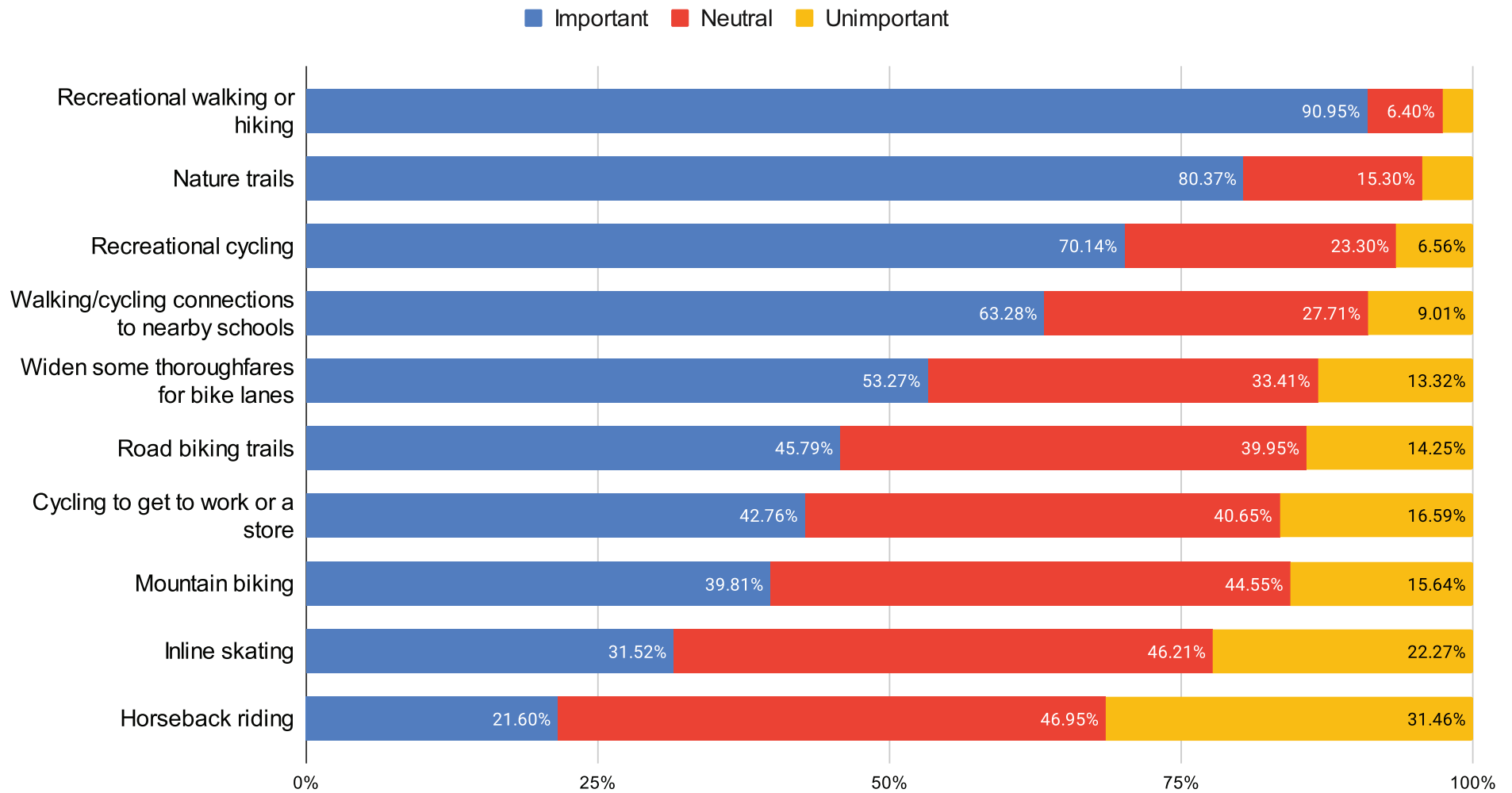
Q21 - For unorganized recreation activities how important or unimportant do you think it would be to provide the following new or additional facilities in Ennis?



Q21 Continued

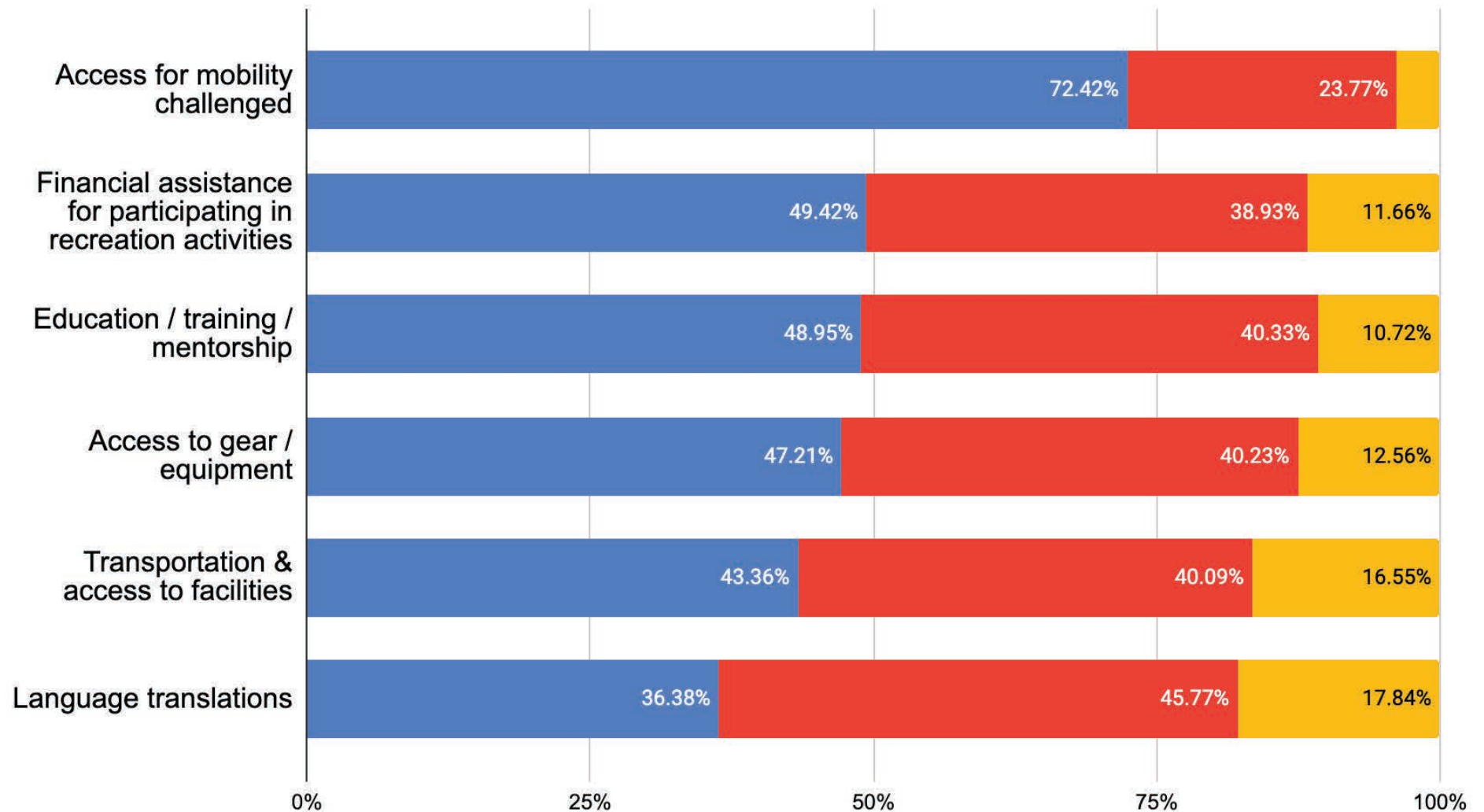


Q22 - Specific to trails, how important is it to consider the following items as part of a city-wide trail system in Ennis?



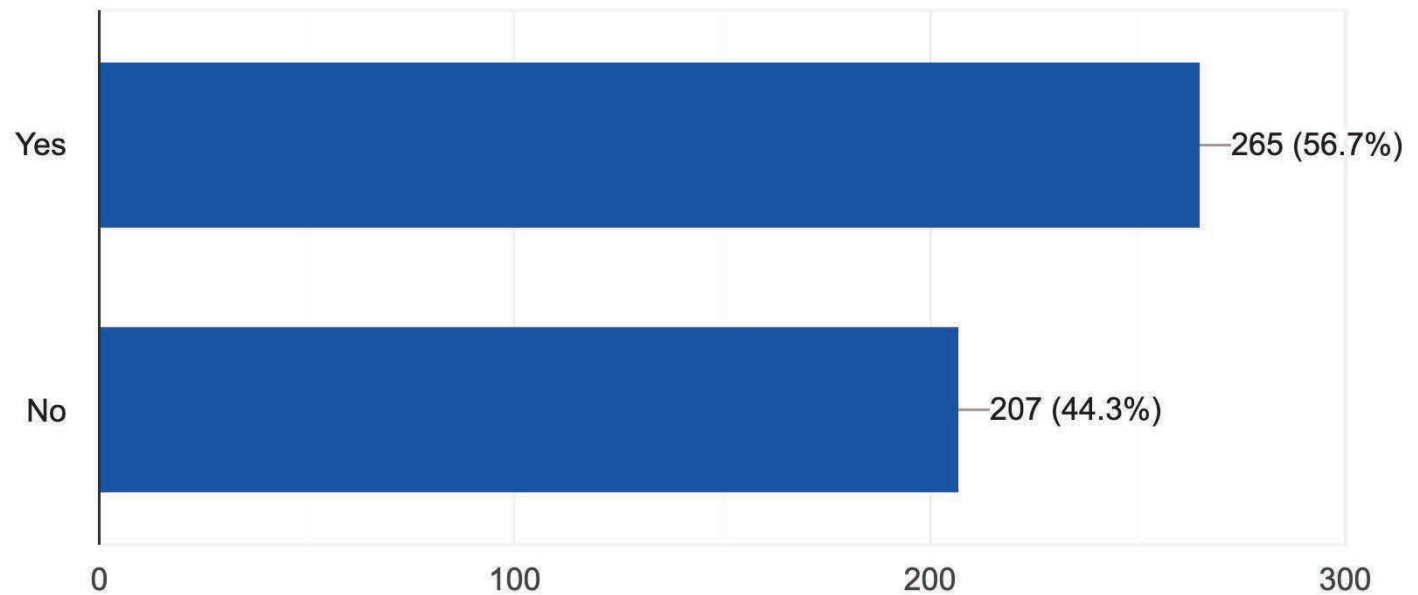
Q23 - How important do you think it is that the City of Ennis invest resources in improving inclusivity and accessibility to Parks & Rec?

■ Important ■ Neutral ■ Unimportant



Q24 - Do you currently visit any parks in neighboring cities such as Waxahachie or Corsicana?

467 responses

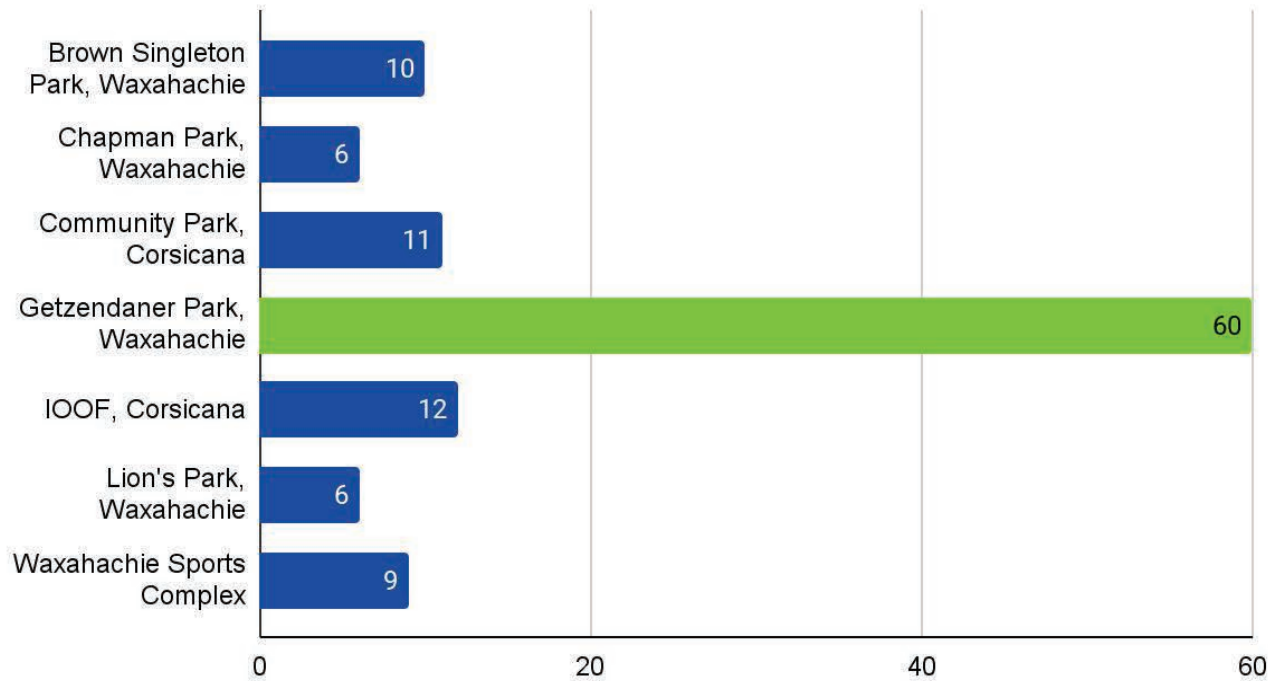


Q25 - If you answered yes to the previous question, what are the names of the parks and what city are they in?

248 responses



What parks do you visit in neighboring cities?

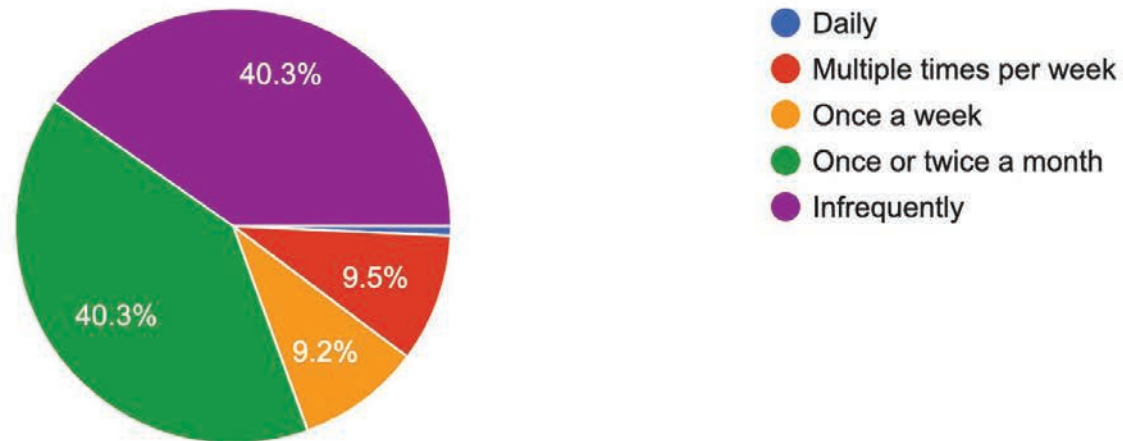


56.7% OF RESPONDENTS VISIT PARKS IN OTHER CITIES

RESPONDENTS ALSO MENTIONED VISITING UNNAMED PARKS IN THE CITIES OF CORSICANA, MIDLOTHIAN, AND WAXAHACHIE

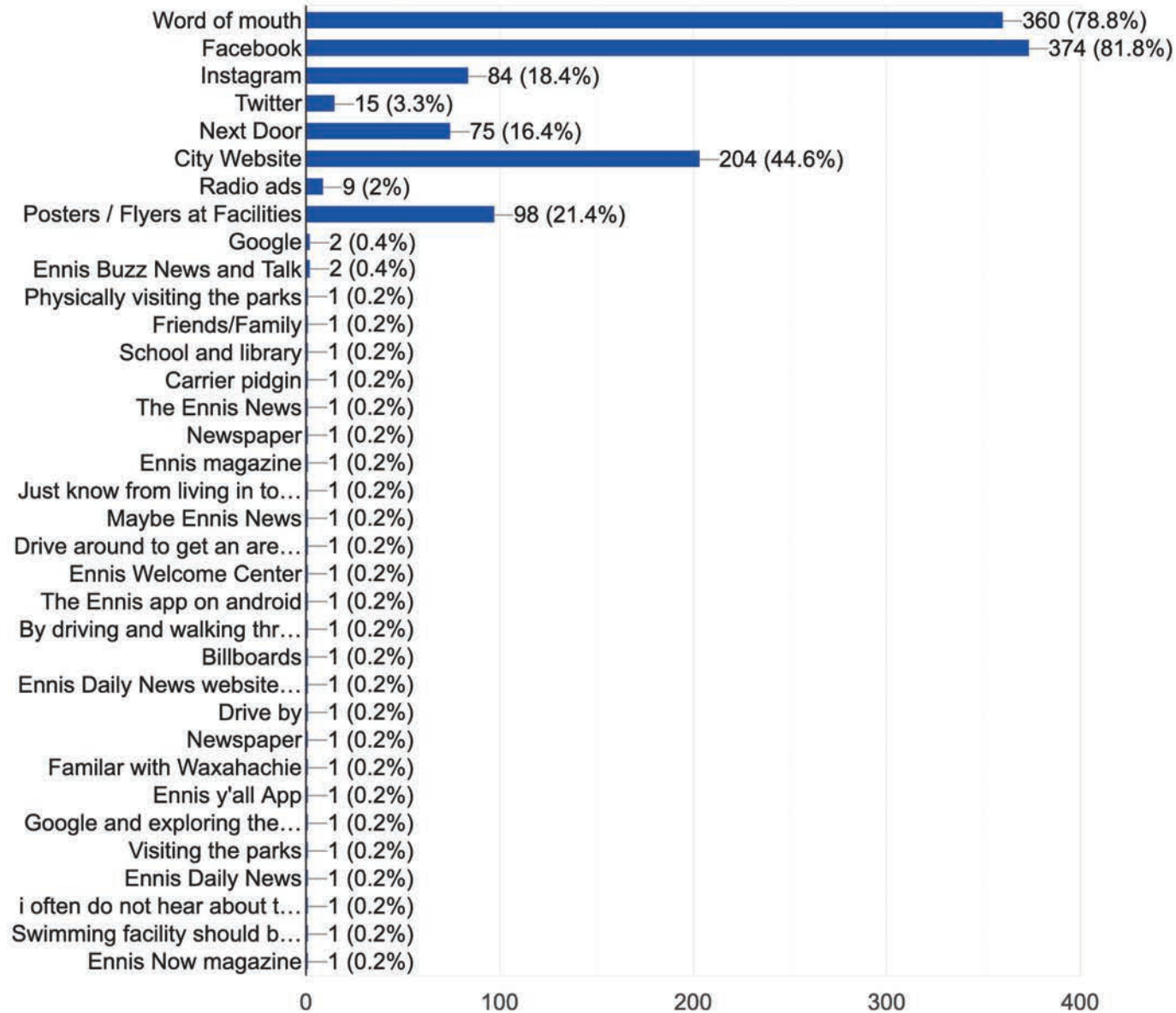
Q26 - If you answered yes to the previous question, how frequently do you visit these parks in another city?

283 responses



Q27 - Please CHECK ALL the ways that you learn about parks and recreation events and activities

457 responses



PARK EVENT 05/21

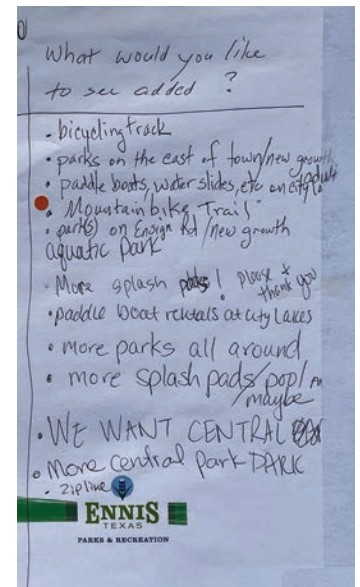


DEMOGRAPHICS

Date: May 21, 2022
 Group: General public
 Primary Language: English
 City: Ennis, TX

WHAT WE DID

Set up a table on the season's opening day of the splash pad and encouraged people to take survey 2, participate in our mapping exercises, and have conversations with staff and the consultant team.

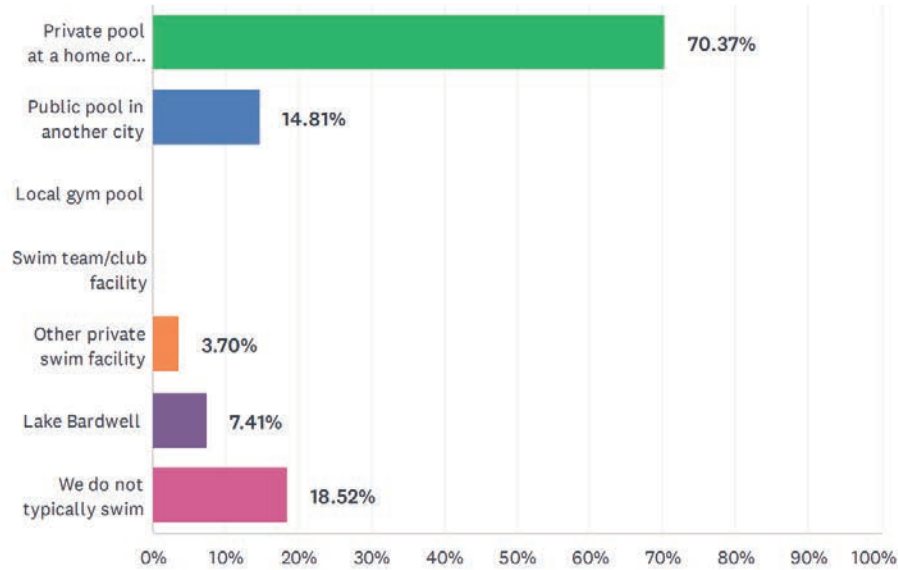


SURVEY 2 RESULTS

27 total respondents
Open April through June 2022

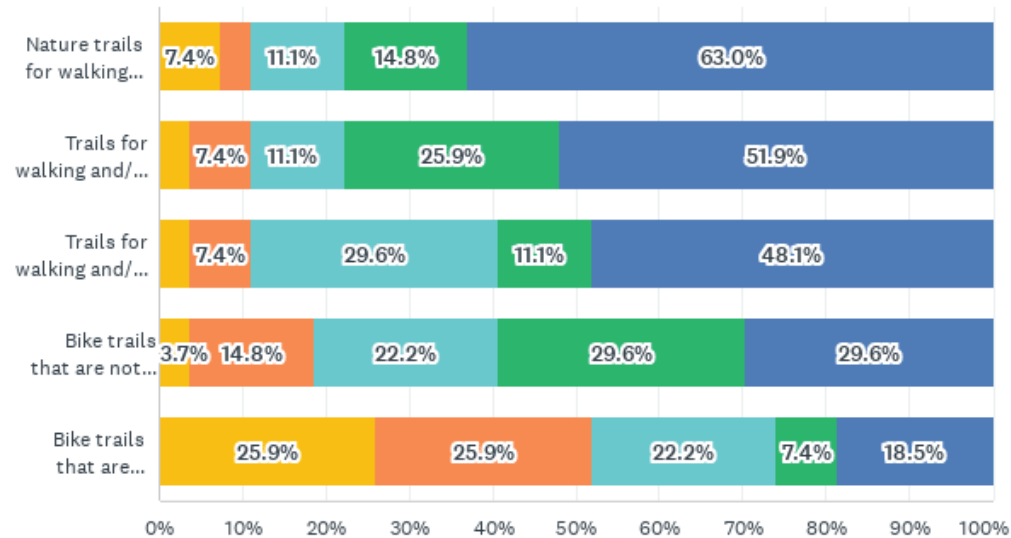
Q1 Where do you or your family typically swim? Check all that apply.

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| Private pool at a home or apartment | 70.37% | 19 |
| Public pool in another city | 14.81% | 4 |
| Local gym pool | 0.00% | 0 |
| Swim team/club facility | 0.00% | 0 |
| Other private swim facility | 3.70% | 1 |
| Lake Bardwell | 7.41% | 2 |
| We do not typically swim | 18.52% | 5 |
| Total Respondents: 27 | | |

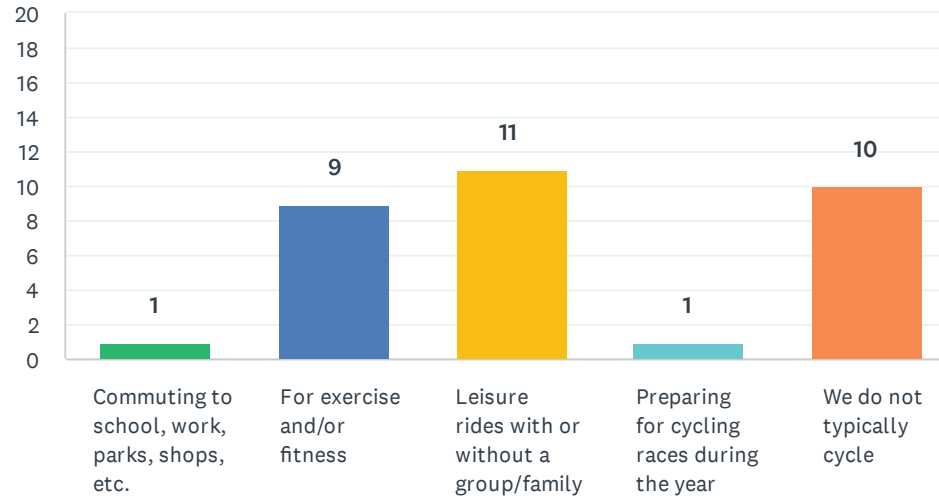
Q2 On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest priority and 5 being the highest priority, what is your preference for the following:



| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|
| ▼ Nature trails for walking and/or biking in natural areas | 7.4% 2 | 3.7% 1 | 11.1% 3 | 14.8% 4 | 63.0% 17 | 27 | 4.22 |
| ▼ Trails for walking and/or biking that form a loop | 3.7% 1 | 7.4% 2 | 11.1% 3 | 25.9% 7 | 51.9% 14 | 27 | 4.15 |
| ▼ Trails for walking and/or biking that connect from one place to another (e.g. between your home, work, church, and/or school) | 3.7% 1 | 7.4% 2 | 29.6% 8 | 11.1% 3 | 48.1% 13 | 27 | 3.93 |
| ▼ Bike trails that are not on a road, but off-street instead | 3.7% 1 | 14.8% 4 | 22.2% 6 | 29.6% 8 | 29.6% 8 | 27 | 3.67 |
| ▼ Bike trails that are provided as a dedicated lane on a road | 25.9% 7 | 25.9% 7 | 22.2% 6 | 7.4% 2 | 18.5% 5 | 27 | 2.67 |

Q3 How do you or your family typically cycle? Check all that apply.

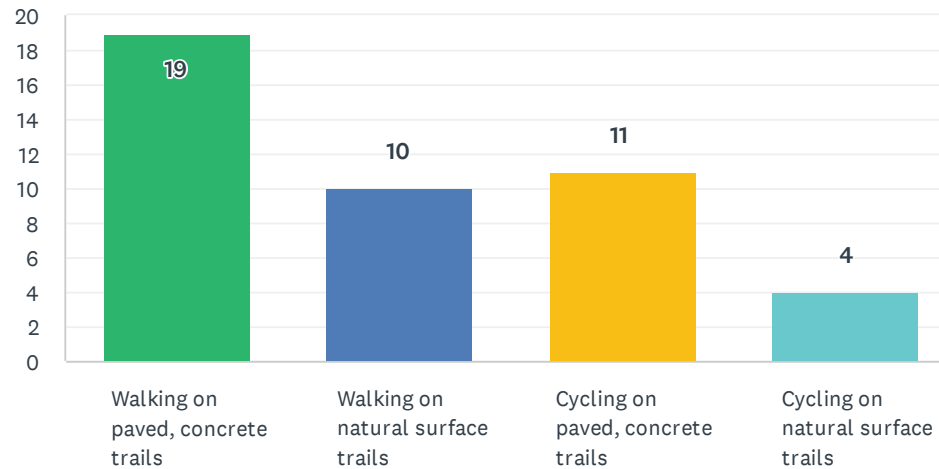
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|----|
| Commuting to school, work, parks, shops, etc. | 3.70% | 1 |
| For exercise and/or fitness | 33.33% | 9 |
| Leisure rides with or without a group/family | 40.74% | 11 |
| Preparing for cycling races during the year | 3.70% | 1 |
| We do not typically cycle | 37.04% | 10 |
| Total Respondents: 27 | | |

Q4 What is your or your family members' preference when walking or biking? Check all that apply.

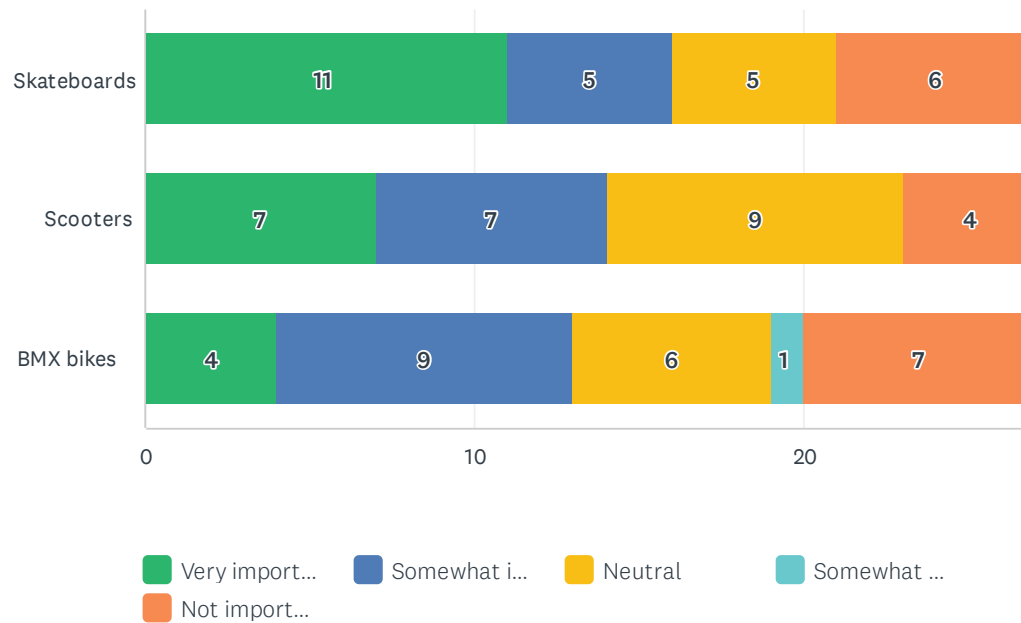
Answered: 26 Skipped: 1



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Walking on paved, concrete trails | 73.08% 19 |
| Walking on natural surface trails | 38.46% 10 |
| Cycling on paved, concrete trails | 42.31% 11 |
| Cycling on natural surface trails | 15.38% 4 |
| Total Respondents: 26 | |

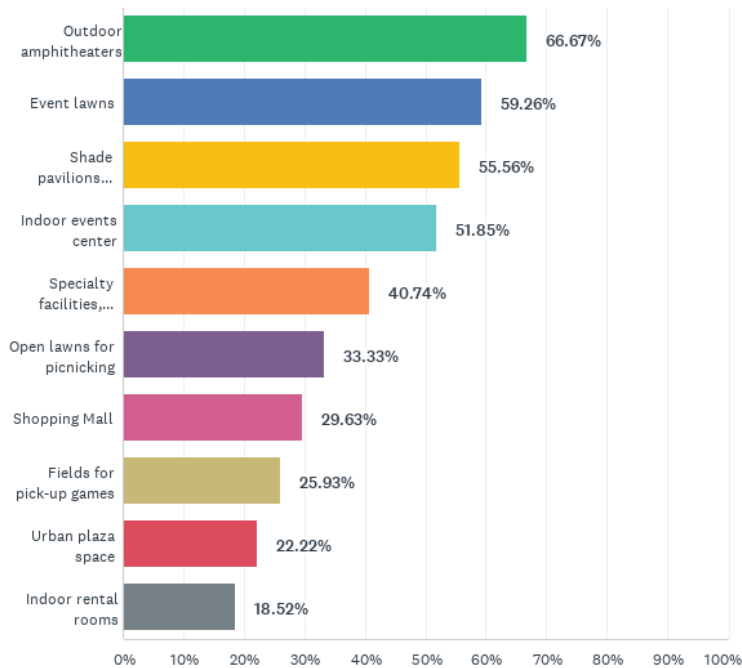
Q5 For children and young adults that live in Ennis, how important do you think it is to provide a special park that allows the following:

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



| | VERY IMPORTANT | SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT | NEUTRAL | SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT | NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL | TOTAL |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Skateboards | 40.74% 11 | 18.52% 5 | 18.52% 5 | 0.00% 0 | 22.22% 6 | 27 |
| Scooters | 25.93% 7 | 25.93% 7 | 33.33% 9 | 0.00% 0 | 14.81% 4 | 27 |
| BMX bikes | 14.81% 4 | 33.33% 9 | 22.22% 6 | 3.70% 1 | 25.93% 7 | 27 |

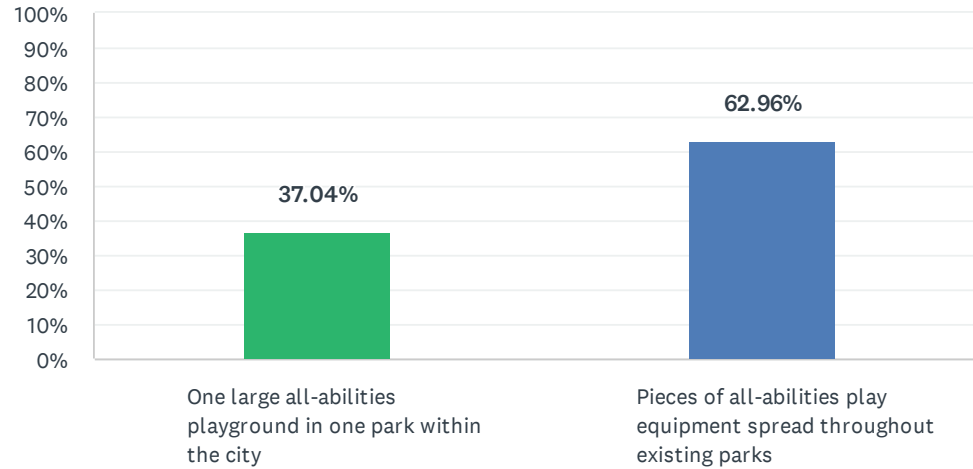
Q6 A clear need for “community gathering spaces” was expressed by the public. In your opinion, what types of gathering spaces are most needed? Check all that apply.



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|--|-----------|
| Outdoor amphitheaters | 66.67% 18 |
| Event lawns | 59.26% 16 |
| Shade pavilions available for rent | 55.56% 15 |
| Indoor events center | 51.85% 14 |
| Specialty facilities, e.g. to play Cornhole similar to the existing private facility | 40.74% 11 |
| Open lawns for picnicking | 33.33% 9 |
| Shopping Mall | 29.63% 8 |
| Fields for pick-up games | 25.93% 7 |
| Urban plaza space | 22.22% 6 |
| Indoor rental rooms | 18.52% 5 |
| Total Respondents: 27 | |

Q7 What is your preference in terms of all-abilities playgrounds?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| One large all-abilities playground in one park within the city | 37.04% | 10 |
| Pieces of all-abilities play equipment spread throughout existing parks | 62.96% | 17 |
| TOTAL | | 27 |

Appendices C: Community Development and Parks

Appendix C1: Development Review Guidelines

Appendix C2: Creeks and Streams

Appendix C3: Alternative Development Strategies

Appendix C1: Development Review Guidelines

The following is a set of guidelines for parks, trails, and open space considerations during the review of proposed residential and non-residential developments in the City of Ennis by PARD, the Parks Board, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Planning Department.

Background

Informed by the public participation process, the vision for the future of Ennis is to protect and maintain the City's rural character with ample open space. The best manner to achieve this is by protecting the entire creek system including the 100 year floodplain with no creek or wetland reclamation as an option; a riparian buffer to provide additional protection to the creek environment; single loaded roads that make all parks and open space visually accessible and provide for long and wide vistas along the creeks.

Other considerations are to support a City wide network of trails that bring the Ennis residents in close contact with Ennis's unique natural areas, rural character and open space; appropriate park land dedication; creek road crossings that allow for trail underpasses; the visibility of parks and open space; pavilions that allow for air flow; and on-site detention ponds that are aesthetically pleasing and acceptable.

Guidelines

The following is a set of guidelines for future residential and non-residential developments in the City of Ennis

1. Protection of the 100 year floodplain of creeks and streams at built out conditions

The creek corridor is extremely important as a flood control measure, recreational opportunity, wildlife habitat, and establishing a sense of open space and rural character (see Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan Appendix: Creeks and Streams).

2. Preference for no reclamation of the 100 year floodplain of creeks and streams established at built out conditions

Such a measure prevents undesirable narrowing of the creek corridor, potential erosion of the creek banks and potential flood damage; and supports water quality and the ecological integrity of the floodplain.

3. Protection of a riparian buffer along creeks and other water bodies (see Ennis Parks and Recreation Master Plan Appendix: Creeks and Streams).

The health of a creek is directly linked to the quality of inflow. The vegetation in the riparian buffer serves as habitat and pollutant interceptor.

4. Single loaded roads

a. Fundamental to park and open space planning

The use of single loaded roads is a fundamentally important requirement for the successful use and enjoyment of all parks and protected open space including creek corridors.

b. Accessibility to everyone in the community

Single loaded roads allow for parks and open space to be accessible to everyone in the community, whether enjoyed by means of a vehicle, bicycle, or on foot.

c. Pleasant driving experience

People will often choose to drive along a road with pleasing views, even if the route is longer than a direct, less interesting road.

d. Sense of safety

Visibility along the single loaded road as well as from the surrounding structures, adds to the sense of safety of the park and open space users.

e. Property values

Single loaded roads adjacent to parks and open space have no effect on the value of the "prime location" of creek and park side properties. In addition, the park and open space accessible to the entire community through single loaded roads, results in a sustained property value increase for a distance further away from the park/open

space compared to a community where such direct and open access is not provided.

f. Minimum requirement

A compromise to the requirement of single loaded roads along all parks, creeks, and open space is to demand it along a 75% minimum boundary of the adjacent park, creek and open space.

5. Visually transparent wrought iron fences along parks, trails and/or open space

Parks, trails, and open space bordered by solid fences create a sense of claustrophobia as well as a sense of being unsafe. It is when eyes and ears are open to such areas that users feel safe and comfortable to relax and recreate. For this reason, it is necessary that visually transparent wrought iron fences be erected between all developments and parks, trails and/or open space.

6. Appropriate park land dedication

The aim with park land dedication is to provide park areas large enough where multiple amenities can be provided including a playground, pavilion, picnic facilities, one or two basketball goals, a multi-purpose practice field for activities like ball play and kite flying, and a trail that provides a walking/jogging loop and connections with the surrounding community. Together these facilities encourage social interaction and, therefore, community building. The best example is areas where children play ball while parents use a trail for exercise, or where children enjoy a playground while parents sit and socialize in the shade of an adjacent pavilion.

7. Minimization of Pocket parks

- a. Park land needs to be contiguous to have value as park land. Small parcels of land should as a rule, not be accepted as park land. Developers will often call such areas "pocket parks" which refer to parks typically smaller than 2 acres. Although such pocket parks have a role in build-out areas where open space is at a premium, new developments typically do not benefit by such pocket parks.
- b. Pocket parks are typically applicable when

a landmark, gateway or landscape feature/s needs to be protected and/or celebrated. Even so, the need to include the context of such features often requires the dedication of more land than that on which the feature stands alone.

8. Easements

- a. Easements versus dedicated parkland
Utility and drainage easements including a maintenance easement along creeks, should not account for dedicated parkland. The requirement by park ordinance should be that all utility easements as indicated on the Parks Master Plan, drainage and/or maintenance easements, or future appropriate easements that support the City wide trail system, be made available for the establishment of a trail whereby the City may or may not accept responsibility for the maintenance of the easement corridor.
- b. Maintenance of easements
Once a trail is developed, the maintenance of easements is often best achieved by the adjacent HOA especially if they have use of the easements by means of the trails. The City may choose to compensate the HOA for taking charge of such maintenance.

9. Unique features

All proposed development sites must be evaluated for the presence of any unique features that may include: wetlands and their buffers; moderate and steep slopes; groundwater resources recharge areas; woodlands; representative stands of native vegetation including blackland prairie; the blooming of Blue Bonnets and other wildflowers during spring; productive farmland; significant wildlife habitat; historic, archaeological, and cultural features; cultural landscapes; scenic features; and viewsheds from public roads.

Every effort possible should be made to incorporate such features as places of special interest in the parks and open space system. The City may or may not choose to account such land, partially, or all inclusive, as part of the park land dedication, which should be considered on an individual basis. Potential criteria for such decision include public access and connection to other parks or open space.

10. Multi-tier roof pavilions

The standard design of all pavilions should include openings in the roof that allows for hot air captured under the roof to escape. Multi-tier roofs make this possible and should be required as a standard throughout the City.

11. Creek road crossings with a trail underpass

The use of creek corridors as trail connections is enhanced when the trail can follow a creek under a road crossing. However, this is typically only possible where the topography allows for a trail with a head clearance of 10 feet minimum after construction of a trail. This should always be considered as a matter of principle before being disregarded as being impossible.

12. Physically and aesthetically accessible detention ponds

Where detention ponds are provided on development sites, it is vitally important that such facilities be incorporated as a visually attractive and physically accessible feature within the development. Whether it contains water at a constant level or not, it is suggested that no more than 60% of the side slopes are steeper than 6:1 (horizontal: vertical) and easily accessible for either play when dry or water side enjoyment when operated at a constant water level.

13. Visit all proposed developments

Important decisions about the use of the land are often made on paper, in an office distant from the site, and with no clear insight as to the true potential and value of the site and its features. It is recommended that all sites be visited by the relevant staff, P&Z, Parks Board and even members of the City Commission. In fact, Randall Arendt (Conservation Development) regards this as a crucial requirement for all land development projects.

Appendix C2: Creeks and Streams

The Value of Creeks and Streams in the Urban and Semi-Urban Environments

Water availability for domestic, industrial, agriculture, as well as ecological use is important from a quantity and quality point of view. In fact, water has become a scarce commodity which has far-reaching impacts on the future of all communities, especially in Texas. Uncontrolled land development, water overuse, and pollution continue to impact this precious and primary life supporting element. Planning on all levels should be cognizant of the effects of our actions on the future of water availability.

Communities need to realize that good stewardship of water is crucial to ensure sustainable economic growth including safety, health, and welfare to everyone. Ideally, state, county, and municipal planning should take place on a watershed scale where the source, use, and disposal of water are all integrated. The goal of such an approach is sustained availability of good quality water, effective flood management, and ecologically healthy environments, with tremendous recreational opportunities.

Specific tools to achieve effective watershed management include the protection of riparian/ creek buffers and integrated storm water management.

Buffers Along Creeks and Drainage Ways

References:

- *Riparian Buffer Strategies for Urban Watersheds: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; 1995.*
- *Stream Corridor Restoration: The Federal Interagency Stream Restoration Working Group.*

The Ennis Park and Recreation Master Plan recommends that riparian buffers be established along all creeks and drainage ways in the City of Ennis and its ETJ as a measure to protect the fully developed 100 year flood area and an additional three-zone buffer system as an important resource for the City. The value of such corridors is manifold and includes the following:

Flood Conveyance and Management

- Natural streams have developed over time to absorb flood waters and to release them gradually once the flood has subsided. In fact, wetlands and riparian vegetation act as “sponges” that take up the water, hold it and release it slowly as it drains through the vegetation. Maintaining the natural vegetation within creek corridors contributes to less intense floods, less erosion, and more stable stream banks.

Creek Morphology

- Creeks and drainage ways are by nature dynamic which means that they change course over time as the rushing water of large floods carves its way through the landscape. A proper riparian buffer allows for this dynamic change without impacting property and structures.
- Upstream development typically leads to higher intensity floods that increase the 100 year floodline over time. A wide riparian and creek buffer take into account the future elevated 100 year floodline based on fully developed and built-out land use conditions in the watershed.

Safety

- Structures within creek corridors including buildings, bridges, and dams are all potentially in danger of being damaged or destroyed during floods, depending on the size of the particular flood event. Where bridges and dams by their very nature are built within corridors, habitable structures should be located outside the built-out 100 year floodline as a safety precaution.
- Wide riparian corridors have a definite positive effect on dam safety - well established riparian corridors upstream of a dam decrease the chance of dam failure: Should a dam failure occur the resultant downstream damage will be reduced with the floodwater absorbed by the wide riparian corridor.

Economy

- Protecting the fully developed 100 year flood area is an important economic consideration.
- Having structures constructed outside the 100 year floodline based on built-out conditions, ensures their protection during flood conditions.
- Stable stream banks preclude expensive measures to prevent or fix failing stream banks.
- Reduced flood damage means fewer costs.
- Property facing or adjacent to open space is more desirable and expensive which leads to increased tax income.

Health and Water quality

- Water quality in streams and creeks is typically a factor of the quality of water entering the system and the manner in which vegetation in the watershed "cleans" the runoff before it enters the creek. The excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides within a watershed, leads to low water quality entering the streams and creeks. In an intact system, vegetation, especially native grasses, filtrate the runoff prior to entering the creek and stream. However, it is crucial that the riparian buffer is in place to ensure such filtration.

- Riparian buffers lead to reduced nutrient load of streams which effects water quality. This, in turn, prevents the development of algae blooms in lakes.
- Riparian buffers prevent excessive sediment loads in streams which, in turn, decrease the possibility of sedimentation of lakes.
- An ecologically intact creek and drainage way system has a natural predator and prey system in place whereby insects like mosquitoes are preyed upon by reptiles, birds and bats. However, habitat disturbance through excessive erosion and concrete lined channels causes a loss in the predator species which leads to excessive insect populations. Considering the West Nile virus, it is thus important to keep the creek corridors healthy by encouraging the protection of the riparian vegetation.



Ponds and lakes have tremendous recreational, ecological and aesthetic value as seen by this image of Old City Lake.

Ecology and habitat preservation

- Riparian buffers typically preserve some of the natural breeding, foraging, and resting areas of native animals and bird species.
- Riparian vegetation adds to the diversity of life within streams, wetlands, and lakes.
- The edges where two ecological zones meet are extremely important from a vegetation and wildlife dynamic point of view. Animals from the one zone may forage in the one while resting in the other, and plants are often adapted to that specific edge zone. The edges of creeks and other water bodies are thus important where the water and land ecosystems are supportive, enriching, and dependent on each other.
- The variety of habitats within creek corridors leads to greater diversity of wildlife.
- Riparian vegetation typically includes multi-layered habitats including trees, shrubs, grass, and herbaceous plant material.
- Riparian vegetation provides a variety of functions related to aquatic habitat including:
 - Providing food source for species of the aquatic food chain;
 - Regulating light and temperature entering the water body. Many species have a low tolerance for temperature or light change beyond the normal range;
 - Maintaining oxygen concentrations in water through temperature regulation;
 - Preventing sediment from inundating water bodies, which interferes with fish behavior and destroys benthic habitat.

Recreation

- Creek corridors provide visually appealing environments.
- The linear nature of creeks and drainage ways render them ideal for hike and bike trails.
- Linear creek corridors with an associated trail system link various destinations within the City with better interaction between neighborhoods, schools, and parks.
- The variety of wildlife found within creek corridors leads to the opportunity for wildlife viewing, including birding.

Education

- A myriad of natural processes is very visible along creeks and creek banks, all of which is ideal for educational purposes.
- Students and the public may learn about the vegetation and wildlife of both terrestrial and aquatic environments, the process of natural erosion and deposition, stream morphology, and water quality.

Utilities

- Areas that parallel creek corridors provide the opportunity for utility corridors with permeable surfaces including water, sewer, overhead power, and telephone lines.
- Ideally, such utilities should be located outside the 100 floodline at built-out conditions to prevent future damage that may result from floods.
- Measures must be taken to prevent impacts on the recreation and habitat integrity within the creek corridors. Disturbance of vegetation must be minimized during the construction phase of placing the utilities.

Riparian Buffer Criteria

The ability of a riparian/creek buffer to realize its many benefits depends on how well it is planned, designed, and maintained. As development is considered for properties, the following provide some criteria in this regard.

Riparian Buffer Dimension

For creek corridors, a wide riparian buffer is an essential component of any protection strategy. A network of buffers acts as the right-of-way for a creek and functions as an integral part of the creek ecosystem. The primary criteria for buffer sizing should be ecological but may also include economic and legal factors. However, the danger is that economic and legal considerations may compromise the very essence of what constitutes a healthy ecological creek corridor. With creek corridors in the City of Ennis considered a crucial natural resource all factors should be considered when establishing the riparian buffer dimension, including habitat integrity, ecological services, recreation, and aesthetics including views and vistas. Due to unique local conditions, the riparian buffer may vary as deemed appropriate.

Three-Zone Buffer System

The primary aim of the buffer system is to protect the core of creek corridors including the stream channel, its banks, the 100 year flood area with vegetation adapted to flood conditions, as well as an upland buffer area that is crucial for the health of creek systems. Protecting the entire area below the 100 year floodline together with an upland buffer, ensures the protection of current creek conditions, as well as the anticipated changed conditions in the future. The upland buffer outside the 100 year floodline is divided into 3 lateral zones: stream side, middle zone and outer zone. Each zone performs a different function, with a different vegetative target and management scheme.

1. The stream side zone has the function to protect the physical and ecological integrity of the stream associated ecosystem. It adds visual and ecological protection through preservation of views, wildlife habitat, and noise abatement. The vegetation target is the pre-development natural condition including range land with low key recreational development including hike, bike, and equestrian trails.
2. The middle zone provides additional distance between upland development and the stream ecosystem and is available for utilities with no impervious surfaces, open space development including ball fields and golf courses, and storm water management including retention/ detention basins. The vegetative target is natural pre-development conditions or unfertilized dry land cultivation and range land.
3. The outer zone is available for a parkway collector street system. Such a parkway has four major functions. First, it will serve as a buffer between development with potentially manicured landscapes and the natural creek corridor environment. Secondly, it will provide easy access for maintenance. Thirdly, the parkway will improve local traffic circulation. Fourthly, the parkway will provide a leisurely route connecting the parks, schools and neighborhoods along the creek corridor. The pleasing vistas along the creek corridor allow for scenic drives and improved neighborhoods. In fact, similar projects in other cities have enhanced property values along the route.

Drainage area

It is recommended that creek corridors and riparian buffers are applied to all creeks and streams from a point at which the creek or stream drains a surface area of 100 acres or greater. For any drainage area smaller than 100 acres, it is recommended that the practices as defined in the iSWM (Integrated Stormwater Management) design manuals for construction and for site development as prepared by NCTCOG (North Central Council of Governments) should be applied.

Buffer crossings

Major objectives for riparian buffers are to maintain an unbroken corridor of riparian habitat and to allow for upstream and downstream movement of both aquatic (including a fish passage) and terrestrial wildlife along the creek corridor. Where linear forms of development such as roads, bridges, underground utilities, enclosed storm drains, or outfall channels must cross the stream or the buffer, measures must be put in place to minimize blocking the aquatic and terrestrial wildlife passageway including extended bridge spans.

Buffer management

The general vegetation target for the land that involves the 100 year flood plain and upland buffer is pre-agricultural development/modifications. Treated correctly, such vegetation cover requires the minimum management effort. In order for the burden to not fall on the City or individual landowner, it is recommended that management be done by one of the many Texas Land Trusts that will have an interest in such land. (See www.texaslandtrusts.org)

No Rise in Base Flood Elevation

It is recommended that the reclamation of the 100 year floodplain at fully developed conditions should be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that there will be no rise in the base flood elevation of fully developed watershed conditions. The FEMA "floodway" concept contained in the National Flood Insurance Program allows up to a one foot rise in flood elevations assuming current development conditions only. However, reclamation which allows a rise in the flood elevation could predictably create adverse impacts either upstream or downstream. Also, without due consideration of future upstream build-out conditions, which imply increased impervious surfaces with higher volumes surface runoff over shorter periods of time, areas that appear adequately protected with the "No Rise in Base Flood Elevation" may be compromised in the future.

Creek Confluences

Creek confluences typically have unique natural and visual qualities due to the increased channel length per surface areas, widened floodplain, the potential occurrence of wetlands, dense stands of trees, and increased wildlife. Such areas, also referred to as "ecological nodes", call for their special protection in the form of nature parks and nature preserves.

Watershed Management Plan

As much as it is important to ensure the protection of the creek and drainage way corridors and nodes, it is also vitally important to follow a watershed wide approach to stormwater management and landuse planning. Watershed management suggests measures in place that aim to decrease the amount of hard and impervious surfaces which result in higher frequency and intensity of runoff, as well as water detention that absorbs the runoff peaks allowing it to drain slowly and over time into the creek system. Together with watershed wide measures, proper site design of each and every development is essential to obtain the best results.

The manner in which development occurs in the watershed is crucial. Due consideration should be given to every component that may contribute to increased runoff volumes and intensity. Two complimentary tools that are effective to achieve watershed management are Integrated Stormwater Management and Conservation Development.

Integrated Stormwater Management

Recognizing the importance of water quantity and quality, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, developed iSWM (Integrated Stormwater Management) design manuals for construction and for site development that assist cities and counties to achieve their goals of water quality protection, streambank protection, and flood control. They also help communities meet their construction and post-construction obligations under state storm water permits, current and emerging. (see <http://iswm.nctcog.org/>)

The Integrated Storm Water Management (iSWM™) Approach

Source: <http://iswm.nctcog.org/index.asp>

Development and redevelopment by their nature increase the amount of imperviousness in our surrounding environment. This increased imperviousness translates into loss of natural areas, more sources for pollution in runoff, and heightened flooding risks. To help mitigate these impacts, more than 60 local governments are cooperating to proactively create sound storm water management guidance for the region through the integrated Storm Water Management (iSWM)™ program.

The iSWM™ design manuals for construction and for site development are cooperative initiatives that assist cities and counties to achieve their goals of water quality protection, streambank protection, and flood control by managing stormwater on a site-by-site basis throughout all phases of development.. They also help communities meet their construction and

post-construction obligations under state storm water permits, current and emerging.

Design Manual for Construction

The iSWM™ Design Manual for Construction contains a systematic methodology for creating an effective storm water pollution prevention plan for construction sites and detailed information for the design, installation, and maintenance of practices to reduce the release of sediment and other pollutants resulting from construction activities. The Design Manual for construction is also intended to assist public and private entities in compliance with the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, TXR 150000, issued by the Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Cities in the region are encouraged to officially adopt the Design Manual for Construction and require compliance with the provisions of the Design Manual within their jurisdictions. Adoption of the Design Manual for Construction will fulfill the major requirements of the "Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control" Minimum Measure of TPDES General Permit TXR040000 for Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems.

Manual for Site Development

The iSWM™ Design Manual for Site Development is a step-by-step detailed instructional document to guide developers and government agencies on the control and management of storm water quality and quantity. It is a practical manual oriented to implementation in everyday practice.

It calls for the consideration of storm water issues at the conceptual stages of projects and provides tools to achieve the goals of water quality protection, streambank protection, and flood control. Its adoption in the region will simplify engineering designs, minimize local government plan review efforts, facilitate multi-jurisdictional drainage analysis, and enable regional training opportunities.

Appendix C3: Alternative Development Strategies

Typical suburban development is not a sustainable model for Ennis. By that, it is meant that it is not environmentally, economically, or socially sustainable over the long run for the community because it does not make efficient use of the land, does not create unique places, and does not stand the test of time (buildings are not designed to last 100 years). With typical subdivisions and shopping centers come high rates of vehicular travel, expanded carbon footprints, inefficient use of land, decreased mental and physical health, and the plague of “sameness”; that is, a loss of uniqueness within the City.

Alternative development strategies are available to the City to ensure that Ennis remains unique and retains its cultural landscapes, small-town feel, and attractiveness to new residents. While there are many factors that determine the quality and suitability for varying development strategies, the two main factors for determining good development strategies are walkability and context sensitivity. That is, that a development strategy focuses on the needs of people rather than cars and is sensitive to the landscape in which it is being applied. There are many tools by which to achieve good development, but a few of them, namely Conservation Planning and Design, New Urbanism, and Cultural Landscape Preservation are discussed in the following pages.

References:

1. Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities by Howard Frumkin, Lawrence Frank, and Richard Joseph Jackson
2. Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, by Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck

Conservation Planning & Design

A Case for Conservation Planning and Design
With extracts from: Arendt, R.; Growing Greener, Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances; Island Press; 1999 and <http://www.greenerprospects.com/growinggreener.pdf>

The Conservation Planning and Design Concept

Each time a property is developed into a residential subdivision, an opportunity exists for adding land to a community-wide network of open space. Although such opportunities are seldom taken in many municipalities, this situation could be reversed fairly easily by making several small but significant changes to three basic local land-use documents - the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance and the subdivision and land development ordinance.

Simply stated, Conservation Design rearranges the development on each parcel as it is being planned so that half (or more) of the buildable land is set aside as open space. Without controversial “down zoning,” the same number of homes can be built in a less land-consumptive manner, allowing the balance of the property to be permanently protected and added to an interconnected network of community green spaces. This “density-neutral” approach provides a fair and equitable way to balance conservation and development objectives.

Conservation Planning and Design are attractive to cities since they are relatively easy to implement, do not involve public costs, do not diminish landowner equity, and are not onerous to developers.

Why change from conventional subdivision planning and design?

Conventional Subdivision Planning and Design as applied in most of the USA, generally refers to residential development in which all the developable land is divided into house lots or streets. The only open space is typically undevelopable wetlands, steep

slopes, and storm water management areas. There are no amenable places to walk, open meadows for wildlife, or playing fields for children. Furthermore, almost all of the land has been cleared, graded, and converted into lawns or private back yards. As a result, residents of conventional subdivisions depend upon their cars even more to bring them social and recreational opportunities.

Conservation Planning and Design offers social and recreational advantages over conventional layouts in several distinct ways.

Benefits of Conservation Planning and Design

The benefits of Conservation Planning and Design is threefold:

- Environmental and ecological benefits
- Social and recreational benefits
- Economic Benefits

Environmental and ecological benefits

In addition to preventing intrusions into inherently unbuildable locations such as wetland and floodplains, conservation subdivision design also protects terrestrial habitats and upland buffers alongside wetlands, water bodies, and watercourses, areas that would ordinarily be cleared, graded, and covered with houses, lawns, and driveways in a conventional development.

The environmental and ecological benefits to employing conservation subdivision design instead of conventional layouts include wildlife management, water quality protection, greater aquifer recharge, and environmentally sensitive sewage treatment and disposal.

Social and recreational benefits

Conservation Planning and Design offer social and recreational advantages over conventional layouts in several distinct ways.

- Pedestrian friendly neighborhoods,
- Community-wide greenways and trails,
- Increased interaction within the community due to the footpath system that connects the homes with interesting places to visit.

Economic Benefits

- Lower costs including reduced infrastructure engineering and construction costs, for example shorter roads, less wetland/creek crossings, less stormwater management facilities and less wood clearing.
- Value appreciation; it has been proven that properties within Conservation Planned and Designed communities appreciate markedly more than their counterparts in conventional communities.
- Reduced Demand for New Public Parkland; The natural areas that are preserved and the recreational amenities that are provided in Conservation Planned and Designed communities help to reduce the demand for public open space, parkland, playing fields, and other areas for active and passive recreation. Current deficiencies with regard to such public amenities will inevitable grow larger as population continues to rise. To the extent that each new development meets some of its own local needs, pressure on local governments will be lessened in this regard, a factor that may make such designs more attractive to local reviewing bodies.

New Urbanism

New urbanism refers to a movement dedicated to improving the human experience of the urban fabric and functionality of our cities. It addresses manifold problems relative to the way typical cities function in the United States of America.

The problems that our cities face include tremendous waste and misdirection of resources. Firstly, our most precious resource, time; secondly, the costs and loss of productivity from time spent in auto traffic; thirdly, there are social and spiritual impoverishment in isolation and alienation contributing to social diseases; fourthly, lack of easy access to nature areas and open space, unhealthy air and an urban environment that thwarts our fundamental need for the most basic exercise, walking.

The underpinnings of a healthier, more effective and efficient urban arrangement require citizens, planners and developers to strive for development that provides characteristics such as: Walkability, Connectivity, Mixed-Use and Diversity, Quality Architecture and Urban Design, Smart Transportation, Sustainability, and Quality of Life.

Essentially, New Urbanist principles benefit every sector of a city, from residents to businesses, developers to municipal governments. The benefits to each group are summarized below:

Residents who in Ennis are avid park users, enjoy easy access and proximity to a high quality public realm of open space, parks, civic uses and retail with a local focus. A diverse mix of housing and pedestrian oriented development provides more walking, exercise and economic savings. Density also means utilities and roads are more efficient and tax dollars more effectively spent.

Businesses may expect increased sales resulting from pedestrian volume and increased discretionary spending available for residents; more profit results in live-work units, without a stressful and costly commute. There is also benefit in more community involvement

and knowing customers who are residents: businesses tend to be more successful and the experience more pleasurable for customers when personal relationships are forged between business owners and their clientele. Economies of scale in marketing are possible due to proximity and cooperation with other local businesses.

Developers benefit from more income potential from higher density mixed-use projects due to more leasable square footage, more sales per square foot and higher property values and selling prices. There is faster sell out due to greater appeal and to wider market share. Other benefits include lower utilities costs resulting from the compact nature of New Urbanist design, less need for parking facilities and faster approvals in communities which have adopted new urbanist and "smart growth" principles.

Source:

<http://www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism/principles.html>

References:

Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, by Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck

Links:

1. Congress for the New Urbanism is an organization dedicated to providing the tools to put into practice the principles of New Urbanism and revitalizing communities. <http://www.cnu.org/>
2. New Urban News, <http://www.newurbannews.com>
3. Smithsonian, <http://www.smithsonianmagazine.com/issues/2006/august/newurbanism.php>
4. Smart Growth Online <http://www.smartgrowth.org/>

Cultural Landscape Preservation

The Cultural Landscape Foundation

A cultural landscape, to paraphrase the Cultural Landscape Foundation, is an artform as a place which natural and cultural resources associated with an historic event, activity, person, or group of people expresses regional identity. Their size in area may vary from a particular homestead with a small front yard to thousands of rural acres. Some of these sites include designed landscapes, expressing visual and spatial relationships as in estates, farmlands, public gardens and parks, cemeteries, scenic roadways as well as in industrial sites.

Preserved cultural landscapes provide a legacy that benefits current and future generations. These special places give insights into the history of an area's origins and development. Through their form, features and uses, our experience of such places reveals our evolving relationship to nature. Cultural landscapes serve to provide scenic, economic, ecological, social, recreational and educational opportunities which foster greater understanding for individuals, communities, states and countries.

Protection of cultural landscapes ensures that such places are not harmed or destroyed by neglect or inappropriate development. The ongoing effort to preserve cultural landscapes promotes the value of this legacy in enriching the quality of life.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that has as its mission to increase the public awareness of the importance and irreplaceable legacy inherent in cultural landscapes. Educational programs, technical assistance and public outreach are a few of the ways that the organization works to achieve a broader understanding and cultivating greater appreciation.

Certification of cultural landscapes does not obviate this organization's relevance to the goal of a community. Essentially, understanding the concepts presented by the Foundation assists in identifying the City of Ennis's unique environmental context and cultural heritage. The identification of cultural landscapes provides a way of understanding and appreciating this community. Moreover, developing relationships with key people within the Foundation will assist in understanding the opportunities that exist in Ennis and in strategizing ways to preserve such features. In these ways, it is entirely possible to develop a way of thinking and approach to preserving cultural landscapes independently from the Foundation, albeit with their help.

Source:

The Cultural Landscape Foundation
<http://www.tclf.org>

Links:

1. Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Cultural Landscapes, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/setlhome.html>
2. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Protecting Cultural Landscapes, 36 Preservation Briefs, <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>