

**A BIG Thank you to our
wonderful designers!**

**Kristy Street
Neal Charles
Kim Gilbertson**

**Without their help this
project would not be
happening!**



Thank you!

Charles Mabry, PARD
Council Member Pool

Michael Gaudini

Janae Ryan, NPP

Ladye Anne Wofford, Bill Stout, & John Rooney, APF

Four Seasons Community School

Erik Harris, MNA

Bethany Metzger, Johanna Hedges, Dean Woodley, John
Marostica, Carolyn Scherrer, Kiran Mohanraj, & so many more
in the neighborhood!

Milwood Baptist Church



Thank you to our donors!

We had over 300 residents donate to our
park which gave us the prove we needed
that our park is loved and needed
some attention!!



Powered by  SurveyMonkey

Thanks to our Supporters who donated \$500+:



The Foreman Family
The Allen Family
The Hedges Family
The Lafferty Family

**Please note that the following are
Concept Plans therefore while we
hope to decide on a specific location
all the other elements (ie playground
equipment, layout, etc) are subject to
change as the final design is
determined.**

Outcome from Balcones Park Community Input Survey

Friday, January 13, 2017

448 Total Responses

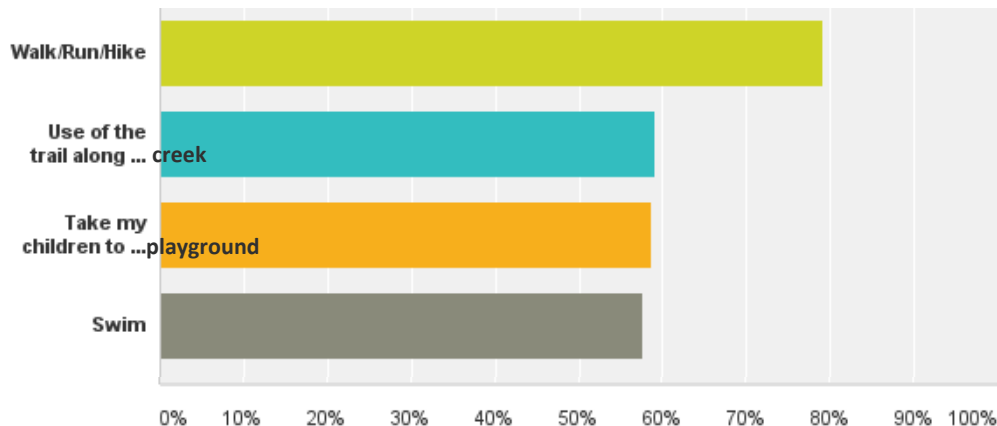
Complete Responses: 372

Date Created: Thursday, August 18, 2016

Q4: In the last year, which of the following activities did you engage in at Balcones Park? (Please check ALL that apply.)

Answered: 422

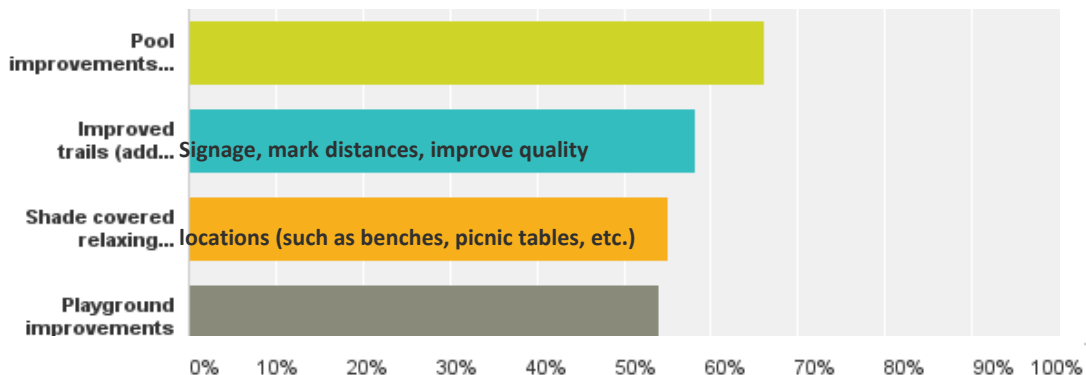
Skipped: 26



Q5: What amenities would bring you to Balcones Park more often? (Please select your top six choices.)

Answered: 429

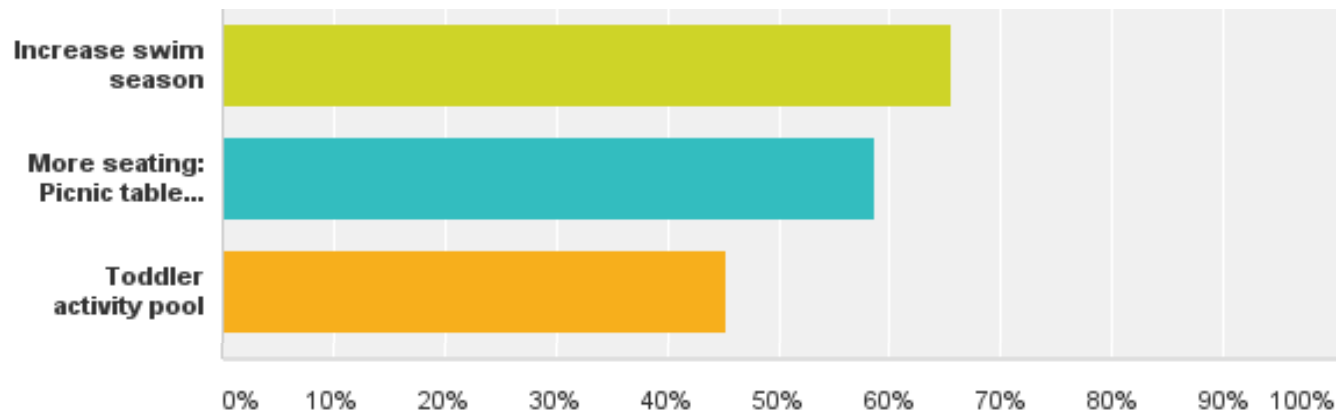
Skipped: 19



Q6: What other improvements would you like to see at the pool?

(Check ALL that apply.)

Answered: 396 Skipped: 52



Pool Shade Update

Construction should begin in February or March and be completed in plenty of time to be ready for the first day of the 2017 Swim Season.

The size of the shade will be 20x30ft with a 24x34ft concrete pad beneath.

6 square picnic tables will be added under the shade.



The color of the steel is blueberry blue

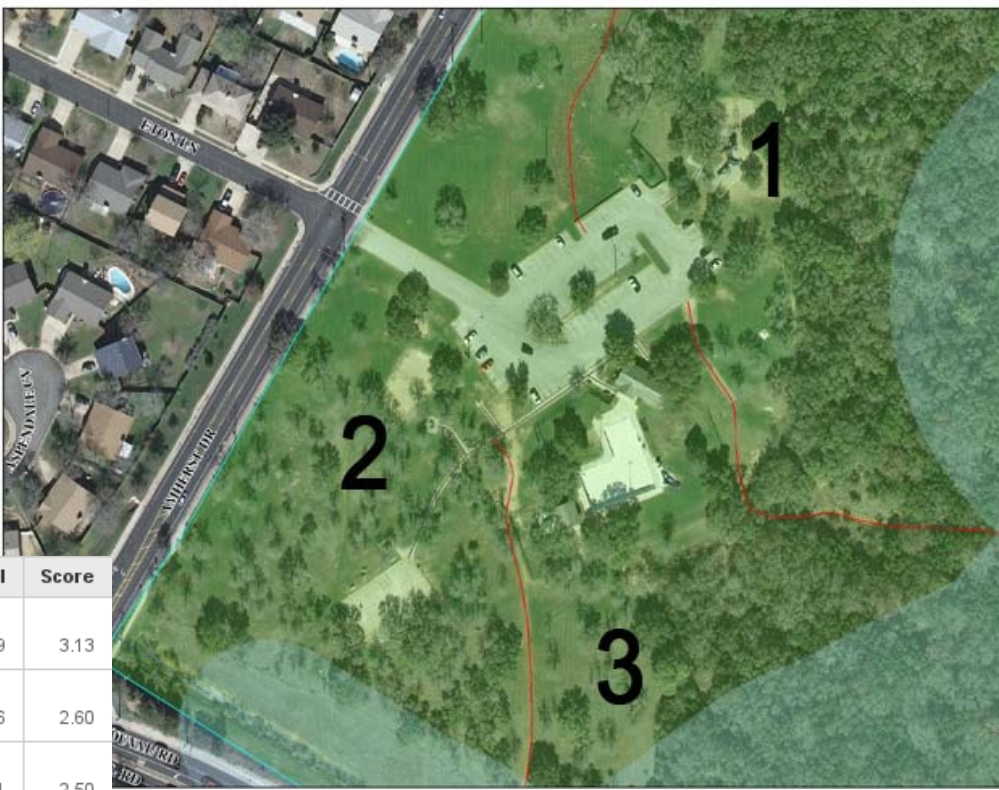
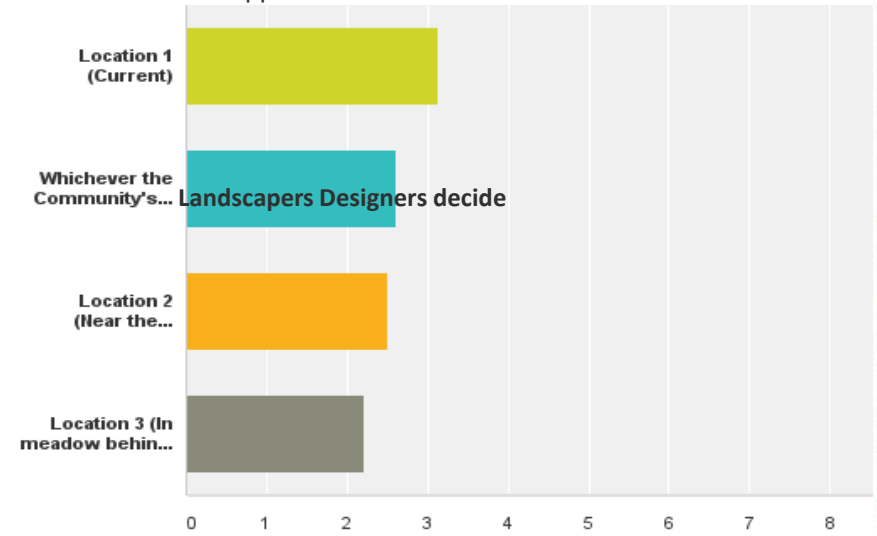


The fabric is navy blue.

Q9: Please rank your playground location preference, with 1 being the highest.

(The pavilion will be installed in the same proximity.)

Answered: 379 Skipped: 69

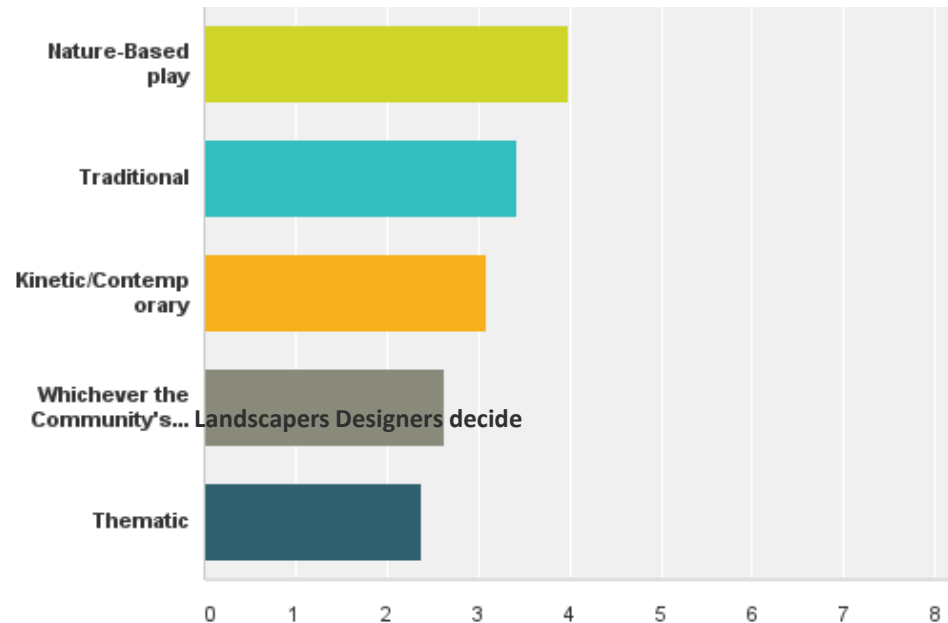


	1	2	3	4	Total	Score
Location 1 (Current)	43.27% 151	33.81% 118	15.19% 53	7.74% 27	349	3.13
Whichever the Community's Designers decide is most appropriate and cost efficient.	35.95% 110	16.99% 52	18.30% 56	28.76% 88	306	2.60
Location 2 (Near the volleyball & basketball courts)	23.26% 77	25.08% 83	30.51% 101	21.15% 70	331	2.50
Location 3 (In meadow behind the pool)	11.14% 37	25.90% 86	36.14% 120	26.81% 89	332	2.21

District Park

Q10: Please RANK the playground themes with 1 being your first preference.

Answered: 374 Skipped: 74



Sanchez

Barrington Elementary

Little Zilker

Dino Dig - Austin Nature and Science Center

Davis White NE District Park Tot Area

Colorado River Park - Equinox Turtles

Gus Garcia

Davis White NE District Park Youth Area

Palm Park

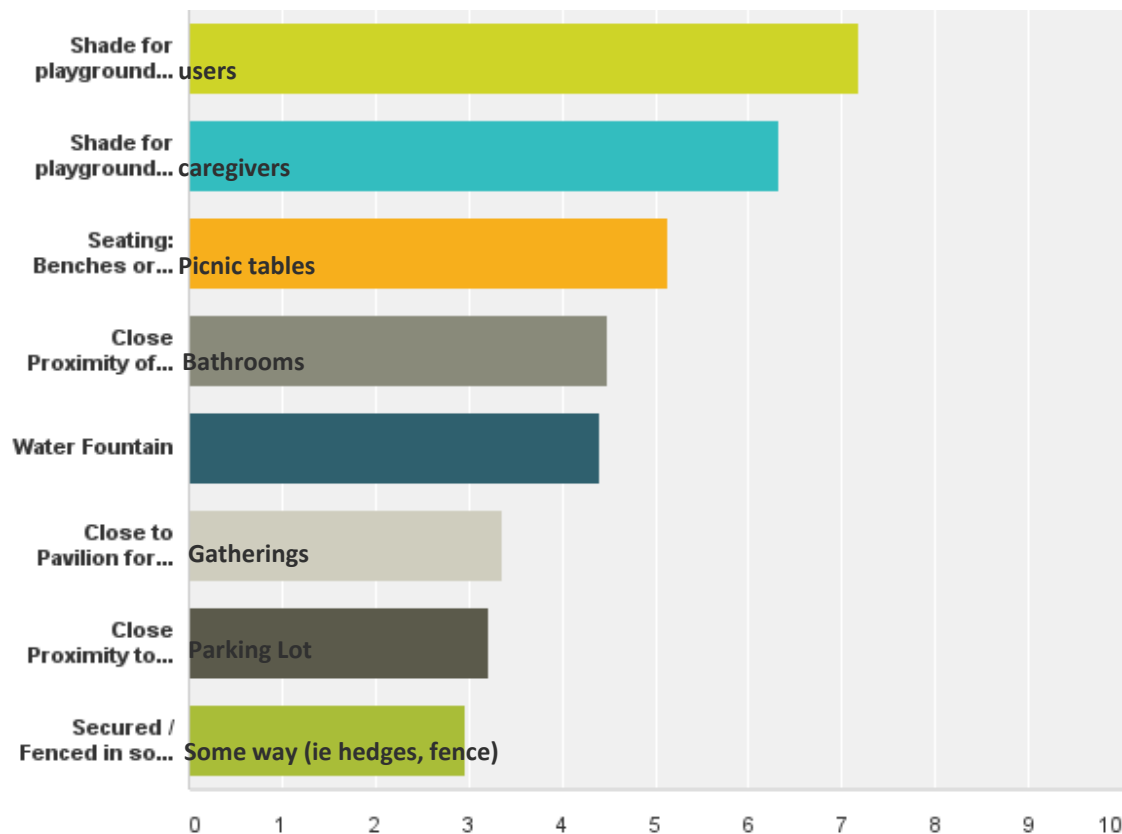
Dove Springs District Park

Del Curto Neighborhood Park

Colorado River Park

Q13: Which amenities do you feel are most important to have for the Playground: (RANK with 1 being your highest priority)

Answered: 352 Skipped: 96



The Vision for Balcones District Park

VISION

Balcones District Park is an uncommonly beautiful but underutilized green space here in the heart of North Austin. Our vision is to create a beloved park that is embraced by the surrounding neighborhoods. An oasis that improves the quality of life and that will offer enriching and captivating experiences that draw people together and strengthen our community.



A word cloud featuring various outdoor activities and nature elements. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape, with some words being larger and more prominent than others. The colors used include shades of blue, green, orange, pink, and purple. The words are written in a casual, handwritten-style font.

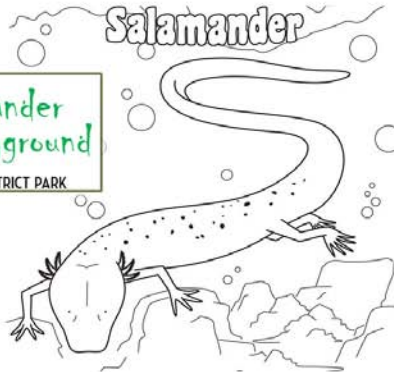
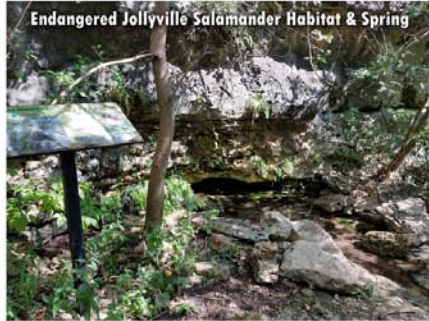
water
wildflowers
fitness
creek
swim
shade
trees
basketball
kids
run
pool
pavilion
trails
dog
July 4th
playground
yoga
walk
salamander
volleyball
bike
hike
meditation

Park Theme Idea:

Endangered Jollyville Plateau Salamander

Along with the creek, beautiful “sometimes” waterfall, wildflowers and bluffs, the existence of an Endangered Jollyville Plateau Salamander Habitat within the park is the single most defining element of Balcones District Park.

Therefore a Salamander and Climbing Theme seems the most appropriate to set Balcones Park apart.



Theme Element Ideas:

- Painted or tiled Salamander inset on pavilion floor
- Salamander imprints or tiles on the primary paths
- Salamander accents on the playground pieces
- Salamander sculpture or play piece
- Salamander incorporated on signage and trail markings

The 2 Potential Location Schemes

Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme using current funds

Location #1



Location #2



Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme using current funds

Location #1

February 9, 2017



Existing areas screened

Location #1 Pros

Great shade from existing trees

Closer to parking than Location #2 (though once open Trail Parking might increase competition for close-in spots)

Incorporate hill into play

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

Closer to the bathrooms

Location #1 Cons

No playground available during construction (6-9 months)

Overhanging branches limit options for playground design & space though would still be bigger than current playground

Steeper Grades (7-9%). Relatively more funds will be spent on constructing terraces in this scheme than at Location #2 so playground elements may be fewer in number

Drainage / Watershed Concerns

Possible competition for parking with trail users

Proposed scheme potentially removes 1-2 mature trees; new trees will be planted per city code



February 9, 2017

Great shade from existing trees

Closer to parking than Location #2 (though once open Trail Parking might increase competition for close-in spots)

Incorporate hill into play

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

Closer to the bathrooms

No playground available during construction (6-9 months)

Overhanging branches limit options for playground design & space though would still be bigger than current playground

Steeper Grades (7-9%). Relatively more funds will be spent on constructing terraces in this scheme than at Location #2 so playground elements may be fewer in number

Drainage / Watershed Concerns

Possible competition for parking with trail users

Proposed scheme potentially removes 1-2 mature trees; new trees will be planted per city code



Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme using current funds

Location #2

February 9, 2017



New areas in color

Existing areas screened

Location #2 Pros

Limited shade with existing trees

Parking 125' further than Location #1 scheme

Existing playground available during construction (converted or dismantled after new playground opens)

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

More space available for larger playground

Gentle grades

Utility/Electricity & Water Fountain Access already established

Location #2 Cons

Closer to the street: noise & safety concerns

Further from bathrooms than Location #1 scheme by 80'

Proposed scheme potentially removes tree regrowth from stumps and relocates newly planted trees



1- Sitting rock in shade



2- Plateau Live Oak focal point



3- Approach from parking lot



4- View at proposed south entry

February 9, 2017

Location #2 Pros

Few overhanging tree branches to affect playground layout.

Parking 125' further than Location #1 scheme

Existing playground available during construction (converted or dismantled after new playground opens)

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

More space available for larger playground

Gentle grades

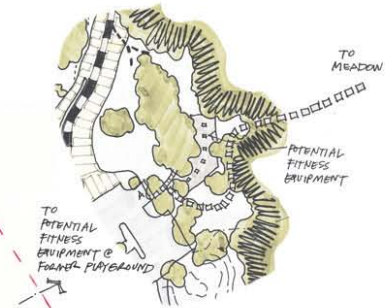
Utility/Electricity & Water Fountain Access
already established

Location #2 Cons

Closer to the street: noise & safety concerns

Further from bathrooms than Location #1
scheme by 80'

Proposed scheme potentially removes tree regrowth from stumps and relocates newly planted trees



The area to the right of the Red Line will most likely require additional funding and need to be implemented later.



Potential Playground Equipment for either Location

Potential Playground Equipment

Representative images

2-5 years



5-12 years



Earth tones of brown and green reinforce the Nature theme

Climbing



All ages or can be tailored to both age groups



Tire, bucket, and belt swings



Merry Musical



Spiral Game

Potential Playground Equipment

Representative images

Balancing logs



<http://www.naturalplaygrounds.com>

Stone circle



scenethroughmyeyes.blogspot.com/2014/05/more-on-guemes-island.html

Robinia log play elements



<http://www.earthscapeplay.com/project/huron-natural-area-playground-kitchener/>

Dry Creek with log balance beams



Dove Springs District Park

Adult fitness equipment



Dove Springs District Park

Robinia log play elements



<http://www.earthscapeplay.com/project/huron-natural-area-playground-kitchener/>

Shade structure



Dick Nichols District Park

Shade structure



<http://www.cre8fx.co.za/gallery/>

Potential Playground Equipment for Hill Play

Representative images

Embankment equipment



Embankment scramble net



<https://www.playdale.co.uk/>

**Embankment climb
for younger kids**



<http://www.play-scapes.com/play-design/contemporary-design/battery-park-playscape-asplan-viak-trondheim-norway/>

Embankment climb



<https://www.naturalplaygrounds.com>

Embankment climb



<http://freshouse.de/abenteuerspielplatz-fuer-kinder-zum-spielen-im-freien/>

Embankment slide



http://naturalplaygrounds.com/photo_gallery/#/Bentonville%20AR/399.jpg

**All Abilities sensory
roller slide**



Rolling



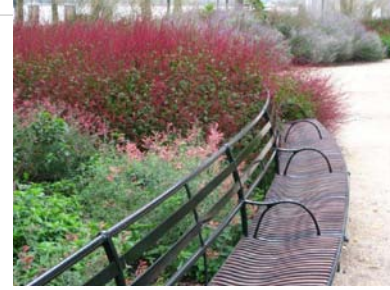
<https://www.naturalplaygrounds.com>

Stump Scramble



<https://www.naturalplaygroundstore.com/images/tscip-sts2.jpg>

Potential Pavilions and other park amenities



Budget and Timeline for Playground

Budget through City Funds & Grants

\$150,000 = NPP Grant (for pavilion and pool shade)

~~**\$50,000 = APF Grant (for pavilion and pool shade)**~~

\$300,000 = PARD Funds committed to the park as a result need based on age & size

\$500,000 = TOTAL **Funds will provide Pool Shade, Pavilion and Playground

~~**\$26,400 = Pool Shade Costs (equipment, concrete, labor & 6 picnic tables)**~~

~~**\$473,600 = TOTAL remaining to be spent on Pavilion and Playground**~~

\$450,000

Estimated Timeline for Project

Feb 11 – Feb 25 (2 weeks)

Gather Feedback through Meetings, Library Survey, and hopefully Online Survey

Feb 25 – March 16 (2 weeks)

Compile & Consider Feedback

A Final Redesign based on Feedback presented to PARD

March 17 – April 30 (6 weeks)

Procure Surveyor & Survey Project Area

May 1 – Aug 1 (12 weeks)

Permitting

Purchase equipment for playground and pavilion

Aug 1 – Sept 1 (4 weeks)

Contractor Procurement (4 weeks if able to use Master Agreement, 12 weeks if not)

Sept 1 – March/June 2018 (6-9 months)

Construction

Side by Side Review of Location Schemes

Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme

using current funds

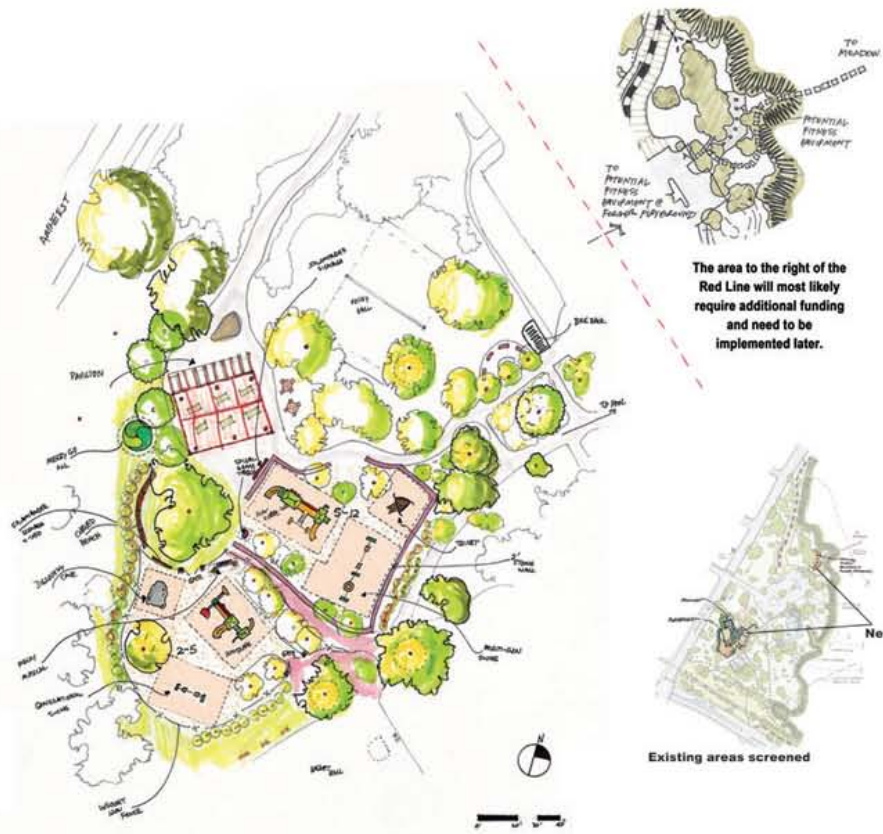
Location #1



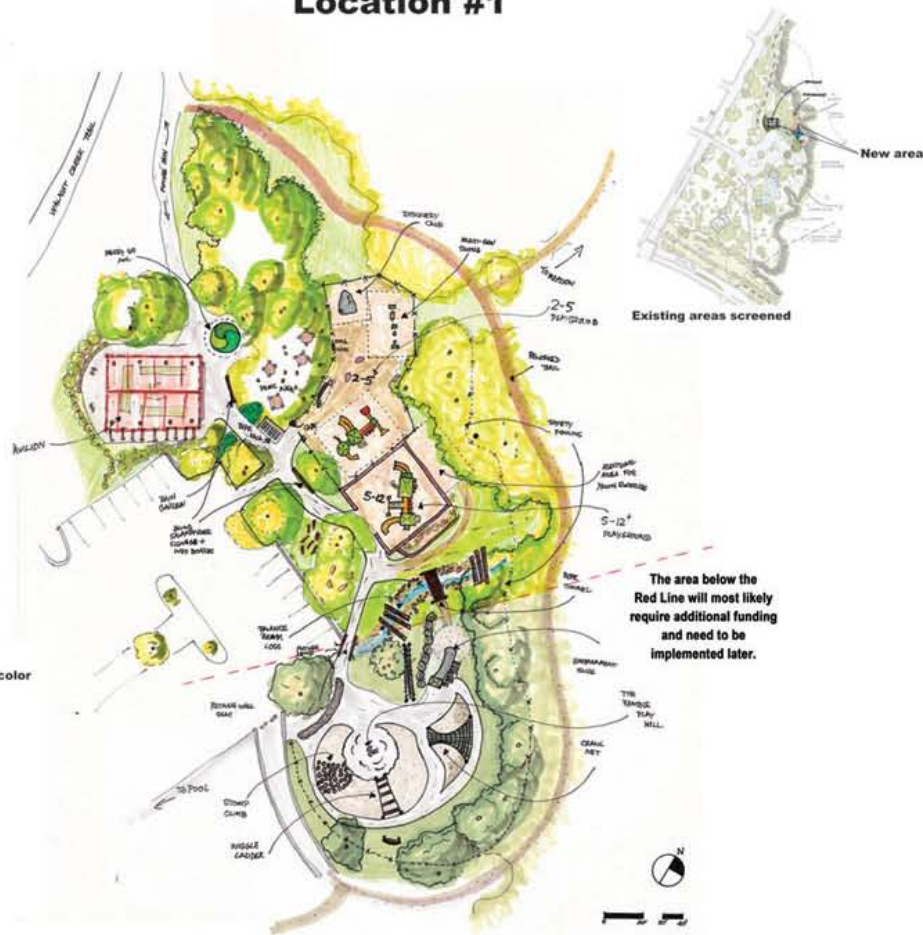
Location #2



Location #2



Location #1



February 9, 2017

Great shade from existing trees

Closer to parking than Location #2 (though once open Trail Parking might increase competition for close-in spots)

Incorporate hill into play

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

Closer to the bathrooms

No playground available during construction (6-9 months)

Overhanging branches limit options for playground design & space though would still be bigger than current playground

Steeper Grades (7-9%). Relatively more funds will be spent on constructing terraces in this scheme than at Location #2 so playground elements may be fewer in number

Drainage / Watershed Concerns

Possible competition for parking with trail users

Proposed scheme potentially removes 1-2 mature trees; new trees will be planted per city code



The area below the Red Line will most likely require additional funding and need to be implemented later.

February 9, 2017

Location #2 Pros

Few overhanging tree branches to affect playground layout.

Parking 125' further than Location #1 scheme

Existing playground available during construction (converted or dismantled after new playground opens)

Good visibility of amenity from Amherst Road

More space available for larger playground

Gentle grades

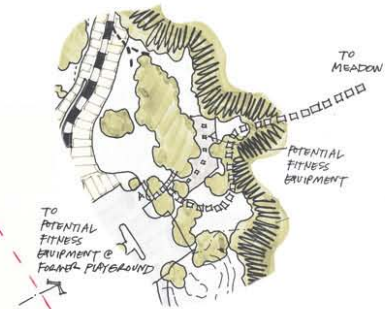
Utility/Electricity & Water Fountain Access
already established

Location #2 Cons

Closer to the street: noise & safety concerns

Further from bathrooms than Location #1
scheme by 80'

Proposed scheme potentially removes tree regrowth from stumps and relocates newly planted trees



The area to the right of the Red Line will most likely require additional funding and need to be implemented later.



Suggested Feedback for Future Park Development

Please note if these were to occur they would require the park to go through the Master Planning Process and acquire additional funds. Therefore these are to be treated as an exercise created by the landscape designers to make sure that placeholders are given to item that the community inputted heavily upon in the first survey.

The Consistent Goal that was strived for in both Schemes was to strengthen connections between the different areas of the park.

Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme Location #1 Suggested Feedback for Future Park Development

February 9, 2017

Would require going through the Master Planning Process which takes 1 to 2 years and costs approx. \$250,000

Would then also require additional funds to achieve



Potential Playground and Pavilion scheme Location #2 Suggested Feedback for Future Park Development

February 9, 2017

Would require going through the Master Planning Process which takes 1 to 2 years and costs approx. \$250,000+

Would then also require additional funds to achieve



Long Term Suggested Park Vision:

Our "Future Park" Concept Schemes are illustrative of feedback that the designers received from the previous two community meetings held in 2016 and the follow up online survey. These boards represent *potential* future design only. A master planning process would be required to develop a formal long-term vision for the park and will need to be done by Austin Parks & Rec Dept (PARD) with future funding.

The designers feel that the existing park has beautiful bones. As such, we chose to base our design on the expansion and capitalization of existing park features. Both concepts are very similar; differences vary slightly and are directly related to the future location of the playground/pavilion project.

For both concepts it is the designers intent to increase the number of areas where park visitors can sit on a bench in the shade and relax, eat their lunch, read a book, or listen to the sounds of nature and children enjoying their time in the park. As such, increased numbers of benches and picnic tables are a priority.

We chose to embrace the existing plant language by keeping and even expanding the wildflower garden. In both concepts, we have continued the wildflower garden so that it wraps around the corner of Duval/Amherst and extends up the the park's formal entrance on Amherst. Concepts 1 and 2 also include large swaths dedicated to native plantings. This could be as simple as mass plantings of native grasses or more involved, formal planting beds that are populated by native Central Texas vegetation.

We suggest enhancing the park's main entrance off Amherst. This can include improved signage and even a landing pad that serves as an entrance node, as well as a connecting point for those wishing to access the park's trail system. To enhance safety, we propose a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, so that when park visitors wish to cross Amherst into the park they have the ability to stop traffic and arrive safely. An entrance node has also been added at the corner of Duval Road and Amherst to strengthen the park's presence in the community by again creating a formalized entrance that also connects to the park's trail system.

Long Term Suggested Park Vision (cont):

One of the biggest features of our future concepts is the strengthening of the path system within the park. Currently, the park is a series of informal paths that are frequently not accessible for many park visitors and that "fizzle out" into dead ends. Our design includes creating more of a "looped" system so that those who wish to use the park for walking exercise have legitimate paths where distance can be measured. As such, we have created a primary path that connects from the trail head of the Northern Walnut Creek Trail and crosses diagonally through the park to Duval Road. Off of this primary path are numerous secondary paths that allow park visitors to be more directed in their movement through the park. By walking parts of the primary path and parts of the secondary path, park visitors can ultimately connect a single loop around the park. Other improved pathing allows people to be able to safely, conveniently, and accessibly arrive at the meadow, which brings this underutilized space back into the park fold and strengthens the broader park connectivity.

In both concepts within the pool's proximity, we have dedicated space for a potential water feature. This can be anything from water fountains where park visitors can refill their water bottles to a splash pad for the children but will ultimately be up to the discretion of PARD.

Rain gardens have been strategically placed along the secondary path that travels along the existing thicket behind the pool area. As this stretch is a low-point in the park and, consequently, informal drainage for running water, we are suggesting gardens that purposefully capture the run off. This not only helps mitigate an existing erosion and water flow problem during wet weather, it can also be an educational piece with signage that explains the "green" technology at work in the park.

Long Term Suggested Park Vision (cont):

The ability to use the park for exercise is important for many residents. As such, we have added workout equipment in both concepts. In Concept 1, there is a secondary path that includes a fitness circuit. As one traverses the path, they will be able to stop at each workout station to complete the physical task. These stations will be placed periodically along the path. In Concept 2, we have placed all work out equipment in the existing playground area. We have observed yoga and other work out groups gathering at this end of the park, so we have chosen to create a central workout area. The existing playground pad could be re-purposed so that all work out stations would be centrally located.

In both concepts, we have designed a central space within proximity to the pool. It will be space where people can gather or orient themselves within the park. We envision this space to be more formally designed and planted with native Central Texas vegetation. This area can potentially serve as the heart of the park, as well as a connecting piece between the northern and southern sides of the park. Currently, the park does not have any formal "place" that grounds the park and speaks to its overall unity.

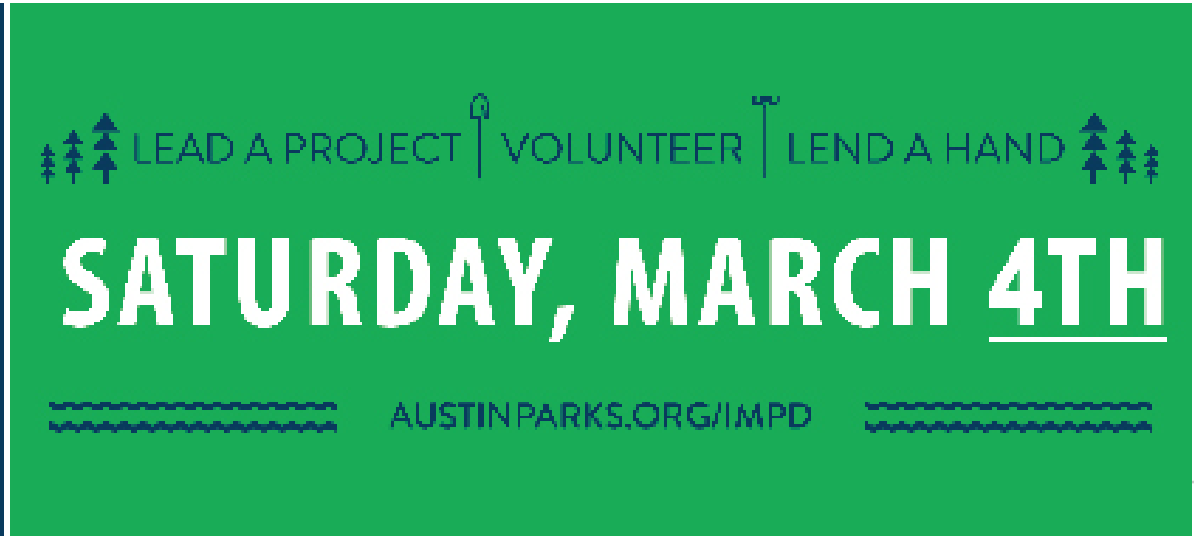
When entering the park from the southern Duval Road path, park visitors will come upon an open turfed area. In both concepts, it is our intent to leave a large space that invites many different uses. Throughout the year, it may be a space for a pick up game of soccer or flag football. Or during the community's annual 4th of July event, it may be the area that picnickers spread out their blankets and enjoy their lunch. Additionally, it is a large, open space where the community might host art events or movies in the park throughout the year.

Other Park News & Events

It's My Park Day! Sat. March 4th

Grab your spot early to get a free shirt and swag!
Make sure you register with our group at Balcones District Park!
We have some big projects planned and we could use your help!

Sign up at www.milwoodna.com or www.balconespark.org



Creekside Trail Repairs Grant

We submitted a NPP Grant Application requesting \$100,000 - \$150,000 to get key trail repairs done along the Creekside Trail in Balcones Park!

We should hear if we were accepted by the end of March or early April!

