LITTLE WALNUT CREEK GREENBELT
Community Master Plan

The Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt Community Master Plan Initiative aims to develop a park plan for the 206-acre greenbelt to guide future improvements and operations. This document presents a needs assessment of the park, feedback gathered through the survey, public meetings, and neighborhood volunteers, and a concept design for the future of Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt.

Community Engagement
Two public meetings were held to gain feedback from current and future trail users. Attendance at the meetings ranged from 25 to 40 people. Each workshop included a brief presentation about the planning process, followed by an open house with a number of activities that sought input on participant's current perception of and future visions for the park.

Site Assets
1. Four mile trail network
2. Outstanding views
3. Proximity to East Austin
4. Potential creek access

Site Constraints
5. Poor trail conditions
6. Homeless encampment
7. Poorly draining soils
8. Limited access points
1. Create Active Edge and Entrances

One of the most significant obstacles to use of the greenbelt is that it does not present itself as public space on its edges along Springdale Road and E. 51st Street. To combat the perception that the greenbelt is not open for the use of the public and to increase visibility of the trail system and other programming, an “active” edge and clearly marked greenbelt entrances should be developed along these two streets.

Active Edge
The active edge is the most activated greenbelt zone and will contain most of the programming projects identified in Concept 4.

Passive Edge
The passive area offers a transition to the environmentally sensitive areas to the center of the park. It will include unpaved trail systems and light amenities.

2. Organize Trails by Use and Develop Internal Wayfinding

- **Cycle Track**: These trails would be exclusively for bicyclist use and should be 12-16 feet in standard width.
- **Shared-use Path**: These trails would serve dual use for walking and bicycling and should be a standard 6’-12’ in width.
- **Recreation Path**: These paths should be installed only in relatively flat areas and would be used for walking, jogging, running, and bicycling.
- **Nature Paths**: Areas of limited foot traffic, particularly in steep slope areas, would be characterized as nature trails.

3. Concept Three: Create Forest Stewardship Plan for Sensitive Areas

- **Prickly Pear Cactus**: Prickly Pear Cactus should be selectively removed from the site where it has become invasive.
- **Ligustrum**: Ligustrum or Privet, should be eliminated from the site via cutting and the application of herbicide.
- **Volunteer Stewardship**: Volunteers can play an integral part of forest stewardship by helping to remove invasive species and planting native plants throughout the greenbelt.
4. **Incorporate Programming for Community Use**

- **Amphitheater**: An amphitheater in Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt would provide an opportunity for programmatic integration of parks and the arts. Popular events could include “Shakespeare in the Park” and outdoor movie screenings.

- **Trail Amenities**: The integration of trash cans, benches, and water fountains within the park ensure that visitors to Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt will be comfortable and have places to rest along the trail during their visit.

- **Dog Park**: Designated dog parks separate trails and areas for human use from areas for dogs to safely experience off-leash play and exploration.

- **Picnic Area Pavilion**: In our community outreach, visitors to the park expressed a desire to use the park as a gathering space. A covered picnic area pavilion would serve this purpose and provide shade for visitors during Austin’s hot summers.

- **Outdoor Classrooms**: Outdoor classrooms provide the opportunity for science field trips from local schools to educate students about Austin’s wildlife and ecology.

- **Nature Play**: Nature-based playgrounds give children the opportunity to play in informal outdoor settings. Playgrounds that integrate natural elements, such as logs and vegetation, connect children to their environment, and encourages physical and social development.

5. **Formalize Parking and Active Transportation**

- **Bike Parking**: Covered Bike Areas
- **Green Infrastructure in Parking Lots**: Amenities at Trailheads