

# WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN

## PUBLIC MEETING OPEN HOUSE #2 SUMMARY

June 6, 2018, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

The second public meeting open house for the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was held on June 6, 2018 at Decker Middle School. Over 70 people from throughout the region attended to provide input on future planning for the park. While a majority of attendees lived east of Interstate 35 (I-35) and south of US-290, a fairly balanced proportion of attendees lived throughout the City and metropolitan region.

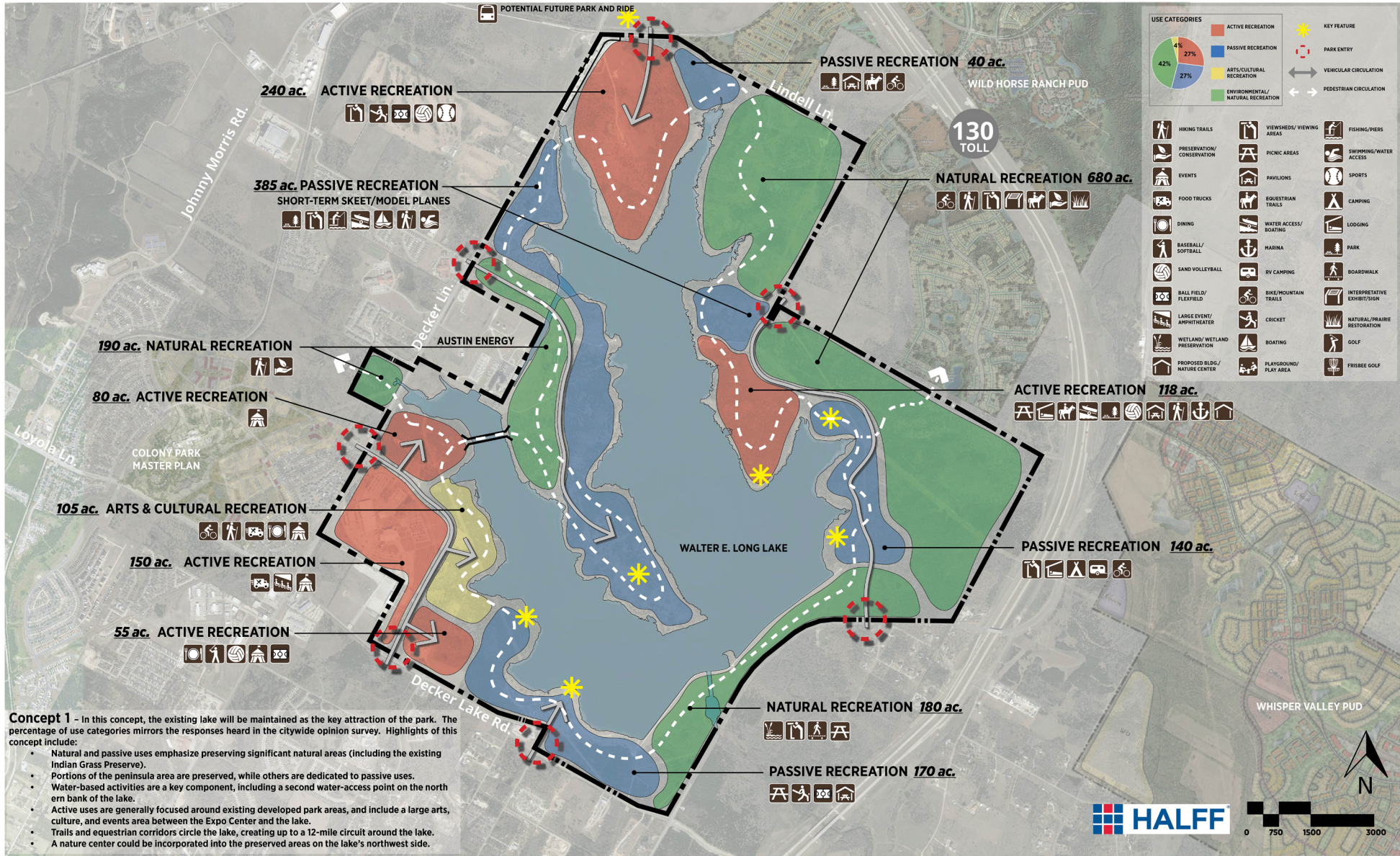
A brief presentation which included an overview of the master planning process, what the public has voiced thus far, and an introduction to the framework concepts was provided to the public. Attendees then circulated throughout the room to review a series of informational boards and engage in discussion with City staff and consultants about the framework concepts. The open house was advertised through email and social media blasts, yard signs in surrounding neighborhoods and in other City parks, distribution of fliers, and phone calls. There were also many attendees who were invited by friends.

For the participatory portion of the meeting, attendees reviewed the feedback provided during the first open house and engaged the consultants and City staff in discussion. Attendees had the opportunity to provide feedback on the framework concepts, identify their preferred concepts, and provide any final comments.

Results from each board are tabulated on the following pages.



# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 1



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

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 1

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT CONCEPT 1?

I like the amount of natural space left in environmental/natural recreation

I like that the lake stays as a recreational feature

Active recreation stays in impacted areas

Active areas

No golf or disc golf

Disc golf is very different from golf - no destructive, no chemicals, doesn't use much land

Keep the water! Best fishing lake in Central Texas

Retain grass land areas

Lots of wildlife viewing/birding

I like that this causes the least damage/impact to the environment and established ecosystems

Optimizes riparian areas (especially with lake level maintained)

Please keep the park the way it is for as long as you possibly can. Stop trying to monetize our resources. 1. No Golf course. 2. No residential development. 3. Keep the water level where it is.

I like that it has no golf course (pesticides/herbicides on a wetlands? No way)

I like the equestrian trails

Only if the city/county adhere to U.S. versus Gettysburg, US Supreme Court

I like the natural grasslands and preserves

No golf course - more activity that all the public can use

Not enough thought has been done to take advantage of this unique body of water and without the water it is just a large semi-arid 3600 acres

Need to present the potential/actual cost of keeping the lake filled when the power station is decommissioned or no longer needs water from the lake

Keep the lake - east Austin lacks large body of water for water recreation, rental kayaks/canoes can help pay

Equestrian trails ... compatible with walkers - especially with Onion Creek trails reduced by almost half

Trails could keep triathlon/marathon off 973/969 Decker Road to keep out of traffic areas - safe events

Love our lake

No golf

Love the trails and maintaining the natural areas

Maximize the natural & passive uses. No need to monetize this natural resource, except to provide a way to keep the water flowing

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 1

### WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR REPLACE IN CONCEPT 1?

Add golf course to this concept

Please accommodate areas for multiple disc golf courses

Fewer park entrances - Hard to manage with so many points of entry

Limit parking/paved areas

Remove bridge close to power station as it would eliminate or interfere with staging a 2k long regatta

More active in NE area of the park

Add a golf area

Not enough active area (golf/hiking)

Add shorter walking trails

Expand special event space

Need special event space to accommodate trade shows/bike trails/motorcycle stunts/running events

Needs more active area

Accessibility for individuals w/ disabilities needs to be an integral part of the concept from inception - needs to be obviously present in plan

Add shorter trails

Increase central area to provide alternate for downtown events venues - Auditorium Shores/Town Lake/Zilker Park

Provide jobs for community youth

Change 'natural' areas on east side to 'passive recreation'

As a disc golfer, we like natural areas however being classified as passive or active we would prefer the E/NE area to be zoned as such. Having trees and slopes is a huge bonus for us.

Yes, ditto! ^^

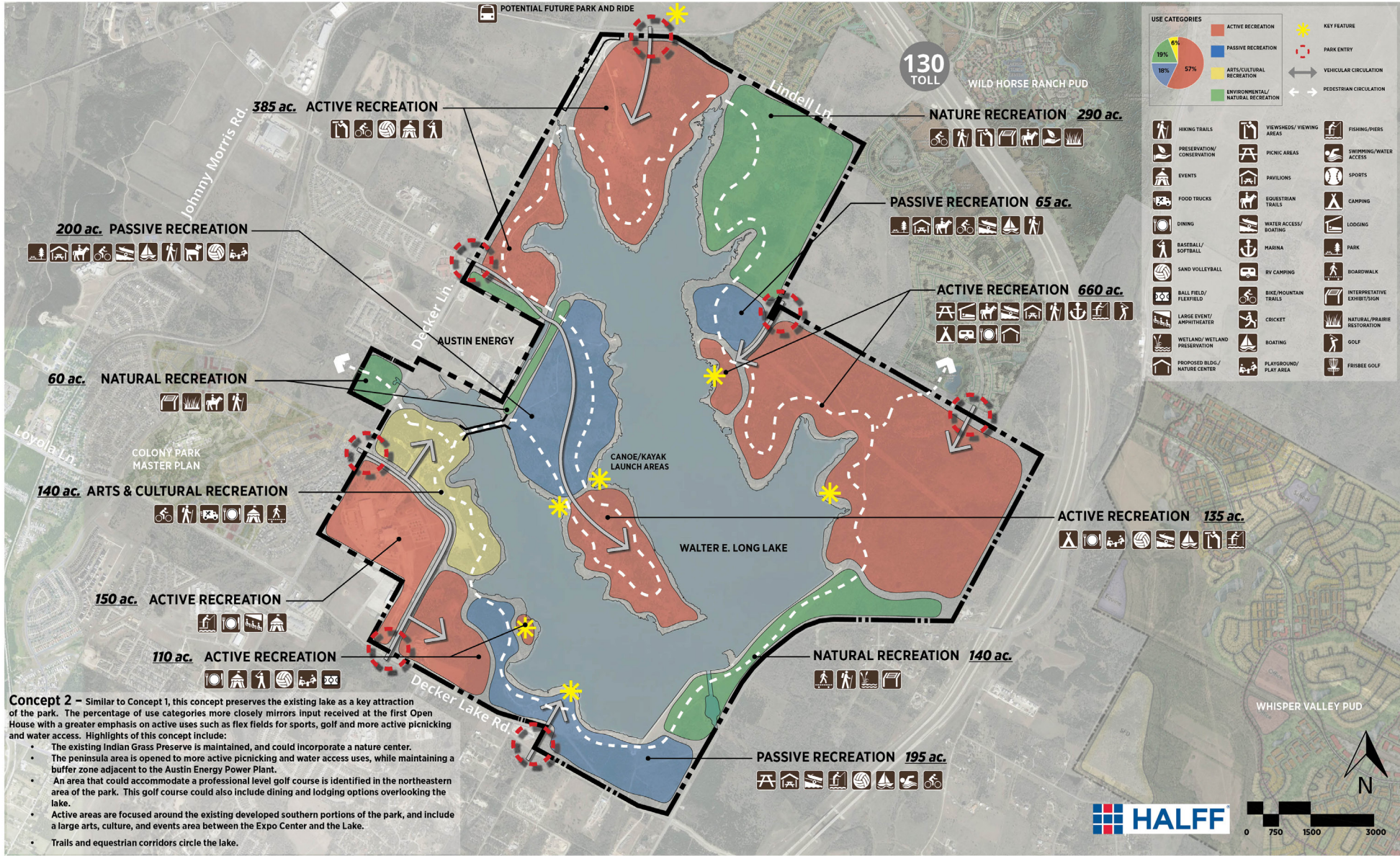
Prioritize keeping the water levels stable, undeveloped areas that promote great fishing - fishermen mean \$\$\$ for the park and the area

Add golf, use power lines area for additional parking

Add an RV park around the existing usable park area to help pay for the additional improvements.

The plan needs an economic estimate. The public should be informed about Austin Energy's ability to shut off the water supply when they decommission the power plant. What is the required water flow to maintain the lake? How much water loss is the natural evaporation vs. steam loss from the plant? What is the estimated cost to keep the lake full?

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 2



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

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 2

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT CONCEPT 2?

Make golf courses a focal point and initial phase to spark area improvements and bring citizens to area while park develops in phases

Like the long trail - maybe add a short nature trail

Hope play areas can be "natural play areas"

Love the golf area

Equestrians

Equine trails

Shorter trail loop also

Explain active/passive by color on legend. Unsure what the categories are.

Like the active areas for multiple disc golf courses

This lake is big enough for all of the ideas. With all sharing in maintaining the specific areas this facility (asset) could be amazing

As I see it, concept 1 and 2 are loosely the same, it preserves all the water!!

Great Plan - Please consider plans that include ways to make revenue so our community can keep its lake access after the power plant is shut down

Keeps the lake!

Good multiuse plan - be careful not to obstruct a potential race course by building bridges

Equestrian trails - could be multi-use w/ hikers or separate - need more to replace reduction of riding trails at Onion Creek

Like the increased lake access

Enjoy active play access - golf will fund some of the other programs

I like the greater areas of passive and active areas (as opposed to concept 1)

The lake is full

The NE/E portion would be great for some disc golf courses. Trees, slopes, creeks and water are all huge benefits to disc golf courses. However even having some open areas is a great thing.

^^ Yes

Love golf, have all activities!!! Bring this lake to life!

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 2

### WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR REPLACE IN CONCEPT 2?

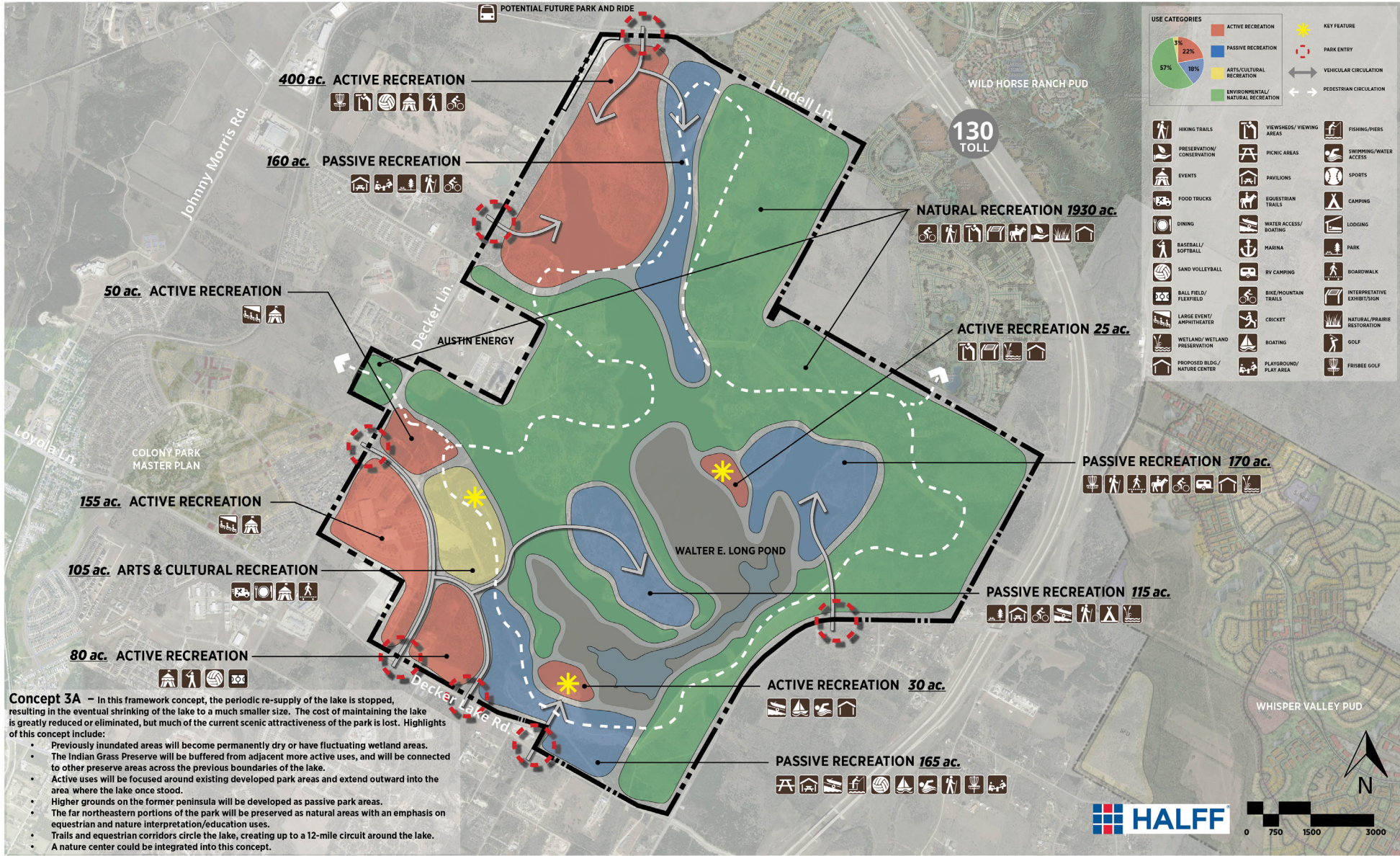
Need multiple disc golf courses in good natural areas, slopes, trees, creeks, etc.
The folks against golf are not aware of the benefits to the park and lake! The golf trails can be used for walking, etc.!
If the lake were developed as a business and managed properly it could be Austin's crown jewel.
Love this concept
Against the golf area
Against the golf area
Would not add dining into the mix if that means working with vendors
Natural area is too small find better balance between active/natural
Keep the golf course out
Keep the golf course out - There is one on Decker and 1 on MLK & Springdale
No golf course - but yes to disc golf; very different
Against the golf area
Expand special event space (also oppose golf)
Ditch the golf course - There are enough area golf courses already
Adhere to the US Supreme Court in US vs. Gettysburg
No Golf Course (pesticides/herbicides will end up in groundwater, in surface water, downstream, in livestock's & native animals' bodies)
Needs more natural space
Less active recreation - more natural spaces
Against golf area
More disc golf - low impact on environment and generate some revenue
Eager to see how the golf would be set up
More land designated for disc golf courses. Low cost and low environmental impact
Natural area too small
Include a event center overlooking the lake to host water events like the UT Regattas
I would remove the golf course
Add facility as option to move downtown events (Zilker, Town Lake)

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

Use trails to take marathon/triathlon events off 973/969/Decker/Blue Bluff
Don't put more of what is already here
Give the community/residents opportunity to disapprove of certain events and businesses
No more additional congested traffic
No golf. Enough animal parks
This seems like the most expensive option
I would remove the golf course
More active uses
We have a golf course already, adjacent to the park. Don't need another
Disc golf would work great here - need full complex of courses - could add 'proshop' for economic benefit



# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3A



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

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 3A

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT CONCEPT 3A?

Love the long equine trails
Like the increase at natural area
Adhere to the US Supreme Court in US vs. Gettysburg
Like limiting recreation to already impacted areas
Could use the electrical plant as an event place
Increased natural areas good - Birding continues to be the #2 nature tourism activity of TX. The area has excellent birding like the long trail.
Increased natural areas
Keeps active recreation in areas that are already impacted
No Golf
No Golf
Birding
If the water levels of the lake drastically decrease, I like that this maintains as much of the natural ecosystems as possible
Equine
Long trail to possibly take triathlon/marathon events off 973/969/Blue Bluff
No golf
Equestrian trails - could be combined and are compatible with hikers but not bicycles
No golf - It's a wasteful and inefficient use of water
No golf - It's a wasteful and inefficient use of water
Increased natural / conservation area
Absolutely nothing - concept 1 or 2
Concept 3a and 3b are dead in the water "no pun intended". The downstream people legally will have water into perpetuity, "or" they will own the creek where the lake exists now
This is not an option. Please consider possible ways we can offset the cost to keep the lake & amenities in the park space
No golf course
No golf course
Use park
Nothing, Keep our lake!
Yay - lots of disc golf

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 3A

### WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR REPLACE IN CONCEPT 3A?

Do not drain the lake

Fewer park entrances - hard to manage

If lake goes away - add a water recreation area - pool for swimming

This plan should be rebranded as 1B, as it is similar to plan 1, but shows the 'what if' of LCRA no longer pumping into the lake

Keep water/lake

Water level being reduced is an abomination

Keep lake - east Austin does not have a large water recreation area

Keep lake

Leave Expo land alone

Expand the special event space

Disc golf - we only need 50-60 acres to make 3 courses happen - low impact on environment

Adhere to the US Supreme Court in US vs. Gettysburg

Look into the document created when the lake was created, which guarantees a 500 gpm release rate from Decker Lake (aka Walter Long) for all the land owners/ranchers downstream. Very important issue.

No golf!

Keep lake

Use park as alternative to downtown venues (Auditorium Shores/Town Lake). Keep triathlon/marathon events of 969/973 Decker /Blue Bluff - safety issues and neighborhood issues

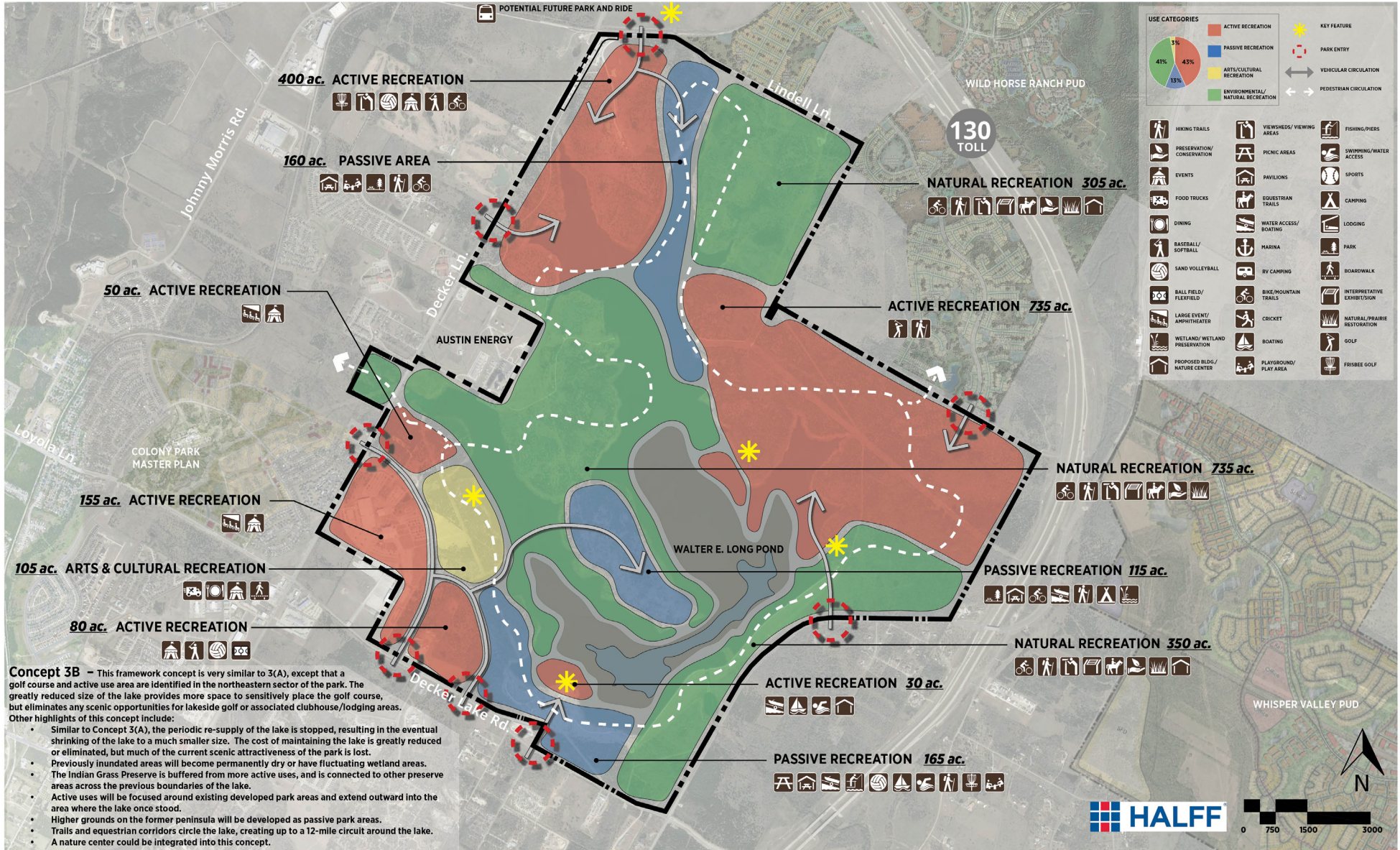
Clearly consider and estimate costs of remediation of the drained lake site. Its going to be a big mud pit with stagnant water and mosquitoes.

Change "natural area" on east side to "passive or active recreation" - probably the best area for disc golf with slopes, trees and natural features

Keep the lake full

Disc golf courses can work well in natural areas as well. NE/E area is perfect

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT 3B



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# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 3B

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT CONCEPT 3B?

Like the equestrian trails

Love the golf area

Golf is important concept

NE/E area great for disc golf complex

Love the equestrian trails

Like the grasslands area - check grants

Yay! - Lots of disc golf icons

3B is a disaster!! It borders on incredulous that the lake will go away. I expect LCRA has a long term commitment to this lake

Collect money back from LCRA when overflows back into Colorado River

The golf would bring people from over the especially if PGA approved which in turn bring \$\$ which are much needed in this area

Golf is on the upswing. Eager to see how golf will fit into the total picture

Equine trails

Golf course will pay for the other amenities

Golf, rowing, horse equestrian, hiking, this land is big enough for all ideas. Public private

No Golf!

Disc golf is much different than golf - we want & need trees, natural features, we don't use fertilizer or chemicals. We like "parks", not manicured lawns

Golf, rowing, horse equestrian, hiking, this land is big enough for all ideas. Public private

Keep our lake! Take water from ladybird and lake Austin

RV park

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

## CONCEPT 3B

### WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR REPLACE IN CONCEPT 3B?

\*Do not drain Decker Lake\*

Against the golf area

Against the equestrian trails

More natural area

Against golf area

Keep water /lake

Against the City docs to not have the Lake - it must provide 500k gal/day downstream

No golf please

Nothing

No golf course

Must keep lake

No golf!

Nothing at all

Keep lake

Expand special event space - lose the golf course

Keep the lake full

Please consider ways to keep the lake before we consider not being there. The community would strongly support ways the park can make money to off-set the cost after the power-plant leaves

No golf

Increased park entrances and amenities will increase need and \$ for park staff

Please rebrand this as plan 2B. This is essentially the same option, but without a full lake

Golf

# FRAMEWORK CONCEPT FEEDBACK

WHICH CONCEPT DO YOU PREFER?		
THIS IS MY FIRST OPTION	Support	% Of Responses
Framework Concept 1	27	20%
Framework Concept 2	16	12%
Framework Concept 3A	1	1%
Framework Concept 3B	6	4%
THIS IS MY SECOND OPTION		
Framework Concept 1	11	8%
Framework Concept 2	16	12%
Framework Concept 3A	9	7%
Framework Concept 3B	9	7%
THIS IS MY LEAST PREFERRED OPTION		
Framework Concept 1	5	4%
Framework Concept 2	4	3%
Framework Concept 3A	10	7%
Framework Concept 3B	20	15%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100%</b>

# FINAL COMMENTS

**IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, PLEASE WRITE THEM IN THE COMMENT BOX BELOW.**

To have positive comments also, please add disc golf courses. We work well in active, passive and natural areas

Several issues were not vetted (cost of water at lake & date of LCRA facility changing/terminating). Interactive website as an option to keep more folks informed. Look at alternates to big events to eastside communities

There are enough golf courses. We need equestrian trails/facilities.

Do not close lake for a golf course.

This presentation was disappointing since it does not allow for a discussion among citizens in attendance. Next time have a time for general discussion among attendees.

Keep plenty of fishing area

Drain the lake is not an option!

Keep lake as is for nor gain money for water flow back

Adhere to the US Supreme court in the Gettysburg Park Decision. Neither of the 3 projects do what the justices set forth

Golf is a dying sport for elites who can afford 4.5 hours, green and cart fees, etc. Will generate few jobs but ample pollution and demand for water.

To avoid as many emotional blowups as possible, rebrand 3A as 1B and 3B as 2B. These are similar, but with the 'what if' of the change in water level

Lake should not go away - proposal should be comparably. If lake should either be on the proposals or off community till wants the PGA golf course

A study of subsistence fisherman needs to be conducted

Please let people know lake will not close because of golf course but because of Austin Energy

In order to plan, I think we need a clear presentation of water issues, including: 1. AE plans, contingencies. 2. Downstream water rights. 3. Cost of maintaining lake level. 4. Timeline going forward. 5. Historical Water flows.

Horse trails can also generate revenue if you set it up well. I'd be interested in seeing competitive trail/endurance rides as well as like Susan G. Comen ride for the cure.

Request records of what AE pays LCRA. This should be public record.

Quality of life chaos this is/continue to create for home owners in the area. Is there any plans for jobs the community what about safety?

The ecological impacts of golf far out weigh any fantasy of economic gain

Do not drain the lake. Bring golf as an anchor use to earn revenue and fund operations & future park improvements.

Don't drain the lake, please. Make WEL a nationally known disc golf complex capable of hosting world championships

Regret this survey does not follow scientific standards and ethical principles required by scientists



# FINAL THOUGHTS

## ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

The project team received additional feedback from attendees at the open house before and after the formal presentation. Primary comments included concern about the future of the lake and feedback about the golf course. The golf course is generally supported by those interested in recreational opportunities and/or revenue generation, and opposed by those who see it as a threat to the ecosystem and/or general public use of the park.

This meeting brought to light some of the principle concerns and issues, namely the future of Lake Walter E. Long and the planning of a golf course. Important feedback was provided to the City and consultants and allows the consultant to continue moving forward.