

WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING OPEN HOUSE #1 SUMMARY

April 4, 2018, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

The first public meeting open house for the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Master Plan was held on April 4, 2018 at Decker Middle School. Over 50 people from throughout the region attended to provide input on future planning for the park. The majority of attendees (2/3) lived east of Interstate 35 (I-35) and south of US-290, though some attendees lived west of I-35 and even outside of the City limits.

A brief presentation and overview of the master planning process and progress to date was provided. Attendees then circulated throughout the room to review a series of informational boards, provide input on participatory boards, and engage in discussion. 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 were asked to place stickers to indicate their top choices for types of improvements to the park. The topics they were asked about included Plan Goals, Active Recreation, Passive Recreation, Environmental/Natural Recreation, Arts & Cultural Recreation, Revenue Generation, General Park Design, and the overall Park Vision.

Results from each board are tabulated on the following pages.



GOALS OF THE WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK MASTER PLAN

Place one (1) sticky dot next to each of the master plan goals that you support.

Potential Master Plan Goals	Support	% Of Responses
Goal D: Design a high-quality park which strives to preserve the property's unique natural assets.	19	18%
Goal K: Provide a balance of active and passive recreational opportunities to serve users of all ages.	17	16%
Goal E: Provide a diversified offering of amenities to serve local residents and attract regional users and visitors.	14	13%
Goal A: Support economic development in the area through programming and design elements.	12	11%
Goal I: Provide strong local access to the park.	11	10%
Goal C: Ensure equitable access to the park amenities.	10	9%
Goal F: Pursue opportunities to provide environmental education within the park.	7	7%
Goal B: Provide an emphasis on job creation and/or employment opportunities.	5	5%
Goal G: Showcase sustainability features (e.g., solar panels, rainwater storage and reuse, etc.) within the park.	3	3%
Goal H: Celebrate eastern Austin's culture and heritage.	3	3%
Goal J: Provide strong regional access to the park.	3	3%
Other Written Comments:		
Preserve biological diversity and practice land stewardship.	1	1%
Avoid duplicating unique amenities featured elsewhere.	1	1%
Focus on land stewardship but compliment that with water sports/recreation amenities and promotion.	1	1%
Total Responses	107	

ACTIVE RECREATION

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Swimming	18	17%
Rowing	12	11%
All Abilities Playground	11	10%
Adventure Playground	8	8%
Disc Golf	7	7%
Basketball	5	5%
Mountain Bike	5	5%
Splash Pad	4	4%
Motorized Boating	3	3%
Veloway	3	3%
Volleyball	2	2%
Rock Wall	2	2%
Other Written Comments:		
Horseback riding	12	11%
Golf Course	4	4%
Running trail w/access to water and facilities (e.g., Lady Bird Lake)	3	3%
Fishing Piers	1	1%
Non-motor boats section	1	1%
Athletic Complex/Baseball/Softball	1	1%
Free entry	1	1%
Disc Golf: 2-3 top level and intro level course	1	1%
Enhance boat ramp area with amenities/shops to support water sports	1	1%
Total Responses	105	

PASSIVE RECREATION

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Equestrian Trail	18	20%
Multi-use Trail	12	14%
Enhanced Beach Area	12	14%
Fishing Pier	8	9%
Tent Camping	8	9%
Boardwalk	6	7%
Dog Park	6	7%
Picnic Pavilion	5	6%
Overnight Cabin	5	6%
Open Lawn	4	5%
RV Camping	2	2%
Other Written Comments:		
Horseback riding	1	1%
Free entry, fee - horse back riding - canoe - boat - etc	1	1%
Total Responses	88	

ENVIRONMENTAL/NATURAL RECREATION

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Nature Trails	22	20%
Wetland Restoration	14	13%
Bird Watching	11	10%
Star Gazing	11	10%
Nature Center	9	8%
Pedestrian Bridge Over Roadway	8	7%
Nature Play	6	6%
Sensory Garden	5	5%
Park Greenhouse	4	4%
Green Roofs	2	2%
Renewable Energy Power	2	2%
Other Written Comments:		
Horse trails	9	8%
Utilize bison as an ecological energy/soil recycling and wildland research program	2	2%
This is not west Austin - let's have something different!	1	1%
Please consider positive impact on East Austin neighborhood of low development green space - positive for young people and environment	1	1%
High school, university, and graduate (masters/PhD) research as a door to professional careers	1	1%
Area lights with shades to direct light down to where it's needed and minimize light pollution - see the stars!	1	1%
Total Responses	109	

ARTS AND CULTURAL RECREATION

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Demonstration Garden	11	18%
Outdoor Classroom	9	15%
Children's Garden	8	13%
Community Cultural Center	7	11%
Food Trucks	7	11%
Interpretive Signage	7	11%
Graffiti Wall	3	5%
Sculpture Garden	3	5%
Iconic Art Piece	2	3%
Phone Application	1	2%
Summer Camp	0	0%
Other Written Comments:		
Restaurant on the lake	2	3%
Hotels	2	3%
Total Responses	62	

REVENUE GENERATION

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Golf Course	23	23%
Kayak Rental	10	10%
Lakeside Restaurant	9	9%
Zipline/Challenge Course	9	9%
Camping	8	8%
Nature Center	6	6%
Festivals	5	5%
Park Entrance Fees	3	3%
Bike Rentals	2	2%
Boat Marina	2	2%
Day Camps	2	2%
Parking Fees	0	0%
Other Written Comments:		
Equestrian trails	5	5%
Trails	3	3%
Mini Golf Course	3	3%
Dog park	3	3%
Free entry - fee for services such as boat, bike, camping, etc.	2	2%
Grow the Austin Trap & Skeet Club	2	2%
Utilize public park as opportunities for academic and professional wildlife research - leads to professional careers \$	2	2%
Rental Cabins	1	1%
Disc golf complex/tournaments - local/regional/national; can be in different parts of the park	1	1%
Not a zero sum game. Many ideas are compatible	1	1%
Total Responses	102	

GENERAL PARK DESIGN

Place up to three (3) sticky dots next to items you think are the most important or should be prioritized by the City for Walter E. Long Park.

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Variety of water-based recreation (e.g., kayaking, fishing)	15	14%
Open and functioning restrooms	15	14%
Unique natural areas	14	13%
Variety of land-based recreation (e.g., picnicking, basketball)	10	9%
Easy walking and biking access to the site	9	8%
Well maintained amenities	9	8%
Events and/or festivals	8	7%
Convenient parking facilities	5	5%
Lighting	1	1%
Other Written Comments:		
Equestrian use	10	9%
Non-motorized boat areas	4	4%
Multi-purpose center @ Expo Center	4	4%
Dedicated fishing piers	1	1%
Perimeter ROAs around lake	1	1%
No entry fee	1	1%
Rental Cabins	1	1%
Types of lighting for dark skies - minimize light pollution	1	1%
Total Responses	109	

PARK VISION

Consider the overall design of the park and potential elements shown on the previous boards. Place up to two (2) sticky dots next to general types of programming that you think should be prioritized in the park. (You can place two dots on one category if you think the park should only include that type of programming)

Features	Support	% Of Responses
Active	25	42%
Natural/Environmental	16	27%
Passive	14	23%
Arts & Cultural	5	8%
Total Responses	60	
Other Written Comments:		Support Included in the Numbers Above
Active: Horseback riding	9	
Active: Golf	4	
Active: Disc Golf	1	
Passive: Horse/multi-use trails (no bikes!)	1	
Arts & Cultural: Hotel	1	
Arts & Cultural: Concerts	1	
Arts & Cultural: Events	1	

FINAL THOUGHTS

If you have any additional comments, please write them here.

Comments	Support
Please do not lock out Equestrian members - Look at McKinney Roughs for low impact uses of land (minus golf course)	3
Please remember golfers! We are a minority group but with possible loss of Lions, we need more golf courses. Not necessarily a tax payer burden, with golfers paying a fee to play!	2
Please remember that surrounding communities support a golf course that has never been voted on by city council. Austin country club is benefiting from a planned economic event that would bring needed money into this community.	2
Please add a disc golf course complex with 2-4 courses with proshop/concessions. 2-3 top level 18-hole courses, plus 1 beginner course that would be perfect for kids and families and beginning players. Could hold local and regional tournaments and would be excellent for national and world championship events - would be big for tourism economy. Courses could be spread out through the park - they would not need to be all in one area.	2
Please consider that nature is fragile and develop accordingly to not destroy the biodiversity.	2
Redevelop the expo center with Rodeo Austin and UT graduate programs for multi-purpose facility	2
Emphasize passive water-based sports + recreation coupled with land conservation.	2
Provide public access through sidewalks/bike lanes that allow expansion of Southern Walnut Creek trail. Provide veloway type/run paths for residents. The east Austin area is void of safe places to run and ride as the public roads are not supportive of sidewalks or shoulders.	1
Equestrian trails (maybe plus hiking) are an excellent option for low development areas. Low cost of construction with environmentally sensitive materials. Low environmental impact because very little clearing required. Thank you!	1
Thank you!	1

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

The project team received additional feedback from attendees at the open house. As seen above and on previous pages, general comments included requests to keep equestrian interests, hikers, golfers, disc golf players, and water sports enthusiasts in mind when upgrading trails, open spaces, and areas surrounding the lake. Attendees also wanted safety to be a priority, including safe places to run, bike, or walk. Preservation specialists understand the need for development, but have concerns about impacting the biodiversity of the land.

Community members from surrounding neighborhoods advised that they were in favor of a golf course, based on their understanding that it would bring much needed revenue to the area. Disc golf enthusiasts remarked on how cost effective, environmentally friendly, and profitable building a disc golf course would be. Lastly, some attendees expressed interest in expanding the Expo Center to accommodate larger events. A larger multi-purpose facility could encourage collaboration between Rodeo Austin, nearby businesses, and higher education (e.g., University of Texas sports program).