

SAN MARCOS

EASTSIDE REGIONAL PARK VISION PLAN



INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The City of San Marcos, Parks and Recreation Department has engaged Halff to provide vision planning and design services for Eastside Regional Park, a new community park at the former Quail Creek Golf Course. The primary goal of the planning project is to develop a visionary framework to guide the future development of the park, its programming, facilities, features, general layout, funding requirements and potential implementation strategy through a study site and area context analysis and a robust public engagement process. Community engagement included two touchpoints, or rounds of engagement, including the introduction of the project and then presentation of design concept options. The results from these engagement efforts will be used to prepare a final concept and roadmap for the future park development, park programming, business operations and management. The vision plan will also be used as a promotional tool to generate public interest, support and funding for future parkland development and partnerships.

PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

The Preliminary Design Report (PDR) includes the following:

- On-site drainage analysis and conveyance, including evaluation of flood risk (riverine and onsite)
- Public utility main and utility service capacities/availabilities
- City utility research and inventorying via GIS and records drawings.
- On-site roadway improvements and parking
- On-site Erosion and Sedimentation Control design
- Evaluation of relevant codes and permitting required by the City and relevant state agencies
- Provision of preliminary opinion of probable construction costs
- Coordination for low impact design solutions
- Coordination with relevant local agency for public transit

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ROUND 1 - SPRING 2025

The first round of community engagement began in February 2025 with 8 open houses and an online survey that closed in March 2025, after which the Design Team prepared two concepts.

KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAYS:

The survey and activity boards gathered input on various aspects, including proximity to the park, duration of residence in San Marcos, preferred activities, and specific amenities desired by the community. 512 responses were received.

- **Proximity and Residency:** Most respondents live more than 2 miles from the park. For respondents that identified as living in San Marcos, their length of residency is spread relatively evenly amongst the options with the smallest group (13%) identifying as having lived in San Marcos between 21 and 30 years, and the largest group (21%) identifying as having lived in San Marcos less than 5 years.
- **Preferred Activity Type:** Respondents ranked passive, active, and natural/environmental activities/programming closely – weighted responses value each category at 2.85, 2.67, and 2.88, respectively. While not remarkably low, arts/culture was the lowest ranked category at 2.30.
- **Concerns and Hopes:** Community members expressed hopes for a balanced mix of activities and amenities that cater to all ages while preserving natural areas. Concerns included potential overdevelopment, environmental impact, and the need for adequate parking and safety measures.
- **Name:** Respondents prefer to name the park “Quail Creek Park” over other alternatives presented.



Caption

PRIORITIES FOR EASTSIDE REGIONAL PARK:

Respondents were presented with items in each activity type category (passive, active, natural/environmental) and asked to select which items they would prefer to see in the park. The results of these questions, when paired with the weighted response values for preferred activity types, create a priority list for items to be included in the master plan. The items to be included in the park in order from most important to least important include:

- **(1.93)** Restoration and Protection of Natural Areas: Efforts should be made to restore native vegetation, protect wildlife habitats, and implement sustainable practices.
- **(1.84)** Demonstration Garden: Include plots for individual use, as well as communal areas for workshops and events.
- **(1.80)** Open Space: These areas should be flexible and multi-use, allowing activities such as frisbee, soccer, and casual sports.
- **(1.68)** Birding/Nature Viewing Areas: Designated areas with bird blinds and interpretive signage to enhance nature-viewing experience.
- **(1.65)** Pavilions and Picnic Areas: Include covered pavilions, picnic tables, and BBQ grills,

with some spaces available for reservation.

- **(1.64)** Natural/Environmental/Geological Interpretive Exhibits: Placement of interpretive signage should be considered relative to activities, areas/items of interest, shade and access.
- **(1.58)** Playgrounds: Playgrounds should cater to different age groups and abilities, with features that encourage imaginative and physical play.
- **(1.56)** Rain Collection: Rain collection to emphasize the significance of sustainability, while being an interactive educational experience.
- **(1.25)** Fishing: Designated fishing areas with proper access and safety measures.
- **(1.23)** Mountain Bike Trails: Facilities designed to cater to different skill levels and include features such as jumps and technical sections.
- **(1.14)** Disc Golf: Disc golf was heavily mentioned in the open comments. A full 18-hole golf course would blend well with the favored natural/environmental activities and elements.
- **(1.09)** Outdoor Classroom: Programmed to cater to different age groups and interests, with a focus on environmental education.
- **(1.05)** Social Games: Opportunities for social



Caption

games like horseshoes, washers, table tennis, etc.

- **(1.04)** Splash Pad: A splash pad should be designed with safety features and ample seating and shade for supervising adults.
- **(1.01)** Mixed-use Fields: Multi-use sports fields designed to accommodate different sports (soccer, football, baseball) and age groups.
- **(0.80)** Personal Water Sports: Designated areas for launching kayaks and canoes with proper safety measures.
- **(0.72)** Pickleball Courts: Multiple pickleball courts, some of which should be covered to allow for year-round play.
- **(0.64)** Other – Active: 10% or more of respondents who selected “Other” in the Active category mentioned Trails, Golf, and Event/Activity/Meeting Space.
- **(0.54)** Other – Passive: 10% or more of

respondents who selected “Other” in the Passive category mentioned Trails and Skatepark.

- **(0.51)** Volleyball: Sand volleyball courts with covered pavilions for players to rest before and after games.
- **(0.48)** Soccer fields: Fields for game or practice play. Tournament facility may not be necessary due to proximity to Five Mile Dam Park.
- **(0.40)** Baseball fields: Refer item 2 below.
- **(0.24)** Outdoor racquetball: Racquetball, if included, should be paired with other sport courts like pickleball and tennis.
- **(0.20)** Other – Environmental: 10% or more of respondents who selected “Other” in the Natural/Environmental category mentioned Stewardship of Natural Resources, Native Plants, and Community Garden.



Caption

SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES

These prioritized amenities and improvements reflect the community's desires and concerns, and should help Quail Creek Park be a well-rounded and inclusive space. This list should be considered a guide, and not a specific recipe to be followed, as the inclusion of certain elements and their relation to one another may change how items are approached. Several items of importance are worth noting:

- Respondents were provided with the opportunity to write in recreational items not presented in the questions. The one item of significant value that was written multiple times by respondents but not included as a multiple-choice option in any of the activity questions was "trails." While the design team is unable to prepare a ranking number, it will be critical to include trails in the master plan. The remaining

responses were already covered by different questions, rendering the rest of the write in items ineffectual.

- Feedback provided on the Riverfront Parks Survey indicated that elements currently in the riverfront parks system should be relocated to land outside of that system. Due to those recreational activities being removed from the riverfront parks, these items should be high on the priority list at Quail Creek Park. Those recreational elements include:

- Tennis and pickleball courts
- Baseball fields
- Swimming pool



Caption

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ROUND 2 - SUMMER 2025

The second round of community engagement began in May 2025 and presented concepts to the public for feedback at three open houses and an online survey that ended in June.

Open houses were open to all and conducted in a come and go format with no formal presentation. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Inform the community about the project, tentative schedule, and engagement efforts;
- Share existing conditions, opportunities and challenges;
- Share preliminary concepts of the master plan;
- Invite feedback on the concepts;
- Encourage participation in the online survey; and
- Share information about next steps.

During the meeting, the project team shared details about the project. Interactive boards were used to determine what participants liked about each concept or what each concept was missing by leaving comments on boards via sticky notes. Participants were provided a link to an online survey and were encouraged to complete the survey and share it with others in the community.

The second online project survey was launched on May 8, 2025 and closed the morning of May 16, 2025. It included 15 questions which asked for feedback regarding which items should be prioritized from each concept, how important it is for certain facilities to be included, and then broad demographic questions to help identify whether outreach efforts were connecting with the community effectively.

PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

The table below includes the times, dates, locations and summary of number of participants at the various engagement opportunities.

Event / Activity Type	Date & Time	Location	Number of Participant
Open House	May 8, 2025 5:30-7:00 p.m.	Activity Center	N/A
Online Survey	May 8, 2025 to June 16, 2025	Online	397

INPUT SUMMARY

The online survey asked respondents to provide input on a range of questions and received input from 655 participants who left 611 comments to open ended questions (excluding “How did you hear about this project?”). The charts and tables below represent the input received from all respondents to the survey. Full details including all written comments are provided separately to this document.

Q1. Refer Concept A. Out of the list below, which should be prioritized? You may select up to 6. (397 Responses/0 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Pavilions and picnic areas	32.66
Open lawn/open play space	27.85
All-abilities playground	31.65
Nature play	19.24
Social games (table tennis, horseshoes, washers, etc.)	11.14
Pickleball facility	29.87
Baseball fields	21.01
Splash park	27.59
Stabilized riverbank/beach for fishing and water recreation	40.25
Personal water sports access (canoe, kayak, SUP)	32.15
Fishing	17.72
Restoration and protection of natural areas	43.54
Demonstration garden	6.08
Nature center	14.94
Birding/nature viewing areas	19.24
Natural/historical/cultural interpretive exhibits	9.11
Environmental learning and outdoor classroom	10.13
Multi-use trails for walking/jogging/running/cycling	57.72
Mountain bike trails	13.67
Disc golf	23.54
Other (please specify)*	12.41
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf (13) • Putting course (6) • Sports fields (5) • Dog park (4) • Pickleball (2) • Pool (2) • Racquetball/handball/paddleball (2) • Tennis (2) • Covered skating areas (2) 	

*Not all open-ended responses are included in the list above. Some responses duplicated existing multiple-choice options, while others—such as park furnishings, restrooms, or parking—are already considered as part of detailed park design.

Q2. Refer Concept B. Out of the list below, which should be prioritized? You may select up to 6.
 (397 Responses/0 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Pavilions and picnic areas	35.95
Open lawn/open play space	31.90
All-abilities playground	33.16
Nature play	29.11
Multi-use courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, soccer mini-pitch)	35.70
Baseball fields	18.73
Multi-use fields (soccer, football, lacrosse, kickball)	25.06
Sand volleyball	13.42
Swimming poole	31.65
Restoration and protection of natural areas	45.82
Multi-use trails for walking/jogging/running/cycling	57.22
Mountain bike trails	16.71
Pump/jump track	10.13
Skatepark	14.43
Dog park	25.32
Other (please specify)*	20.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickleball (22) • Golf (13) • Disc golf (8) • River access (4) • Splash pad (2) • Community garden (2) • Racquetball/handball/paddleball (2) 	
<p>*Not all open-ended responses are included in the list above. Some responses duplicated existing multiple-choice options, while others—such as park furnishings, restrooms, or parking—are already considered as part of detailed park design.</p>	

Q3. How important is it for the following facilities to be included in the future eastside regional park? (394 Responses/3 Skipped)

Response	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Somewhat Unimportant	Not Important at all
Pavilions and picnic areas	37.87	37.60	15.80	4.09	5.45
Open lawn/open play space	39.27	34.46	18.36	4.52	3.95
All-abilities playground	38.94	30.53	20.73	5.60	4.76
Nature play	29.58	36.62	23.66	7.32	3.94
Social games (table tennis, etc.)	8.55	24.22	31.62	15.67	20.80
Event/activity space	22.97	34.73	23.53	7.56	11.76
Multi-use courts	29.09	24.65	22.16	9.70	14.68
Basketball courts	10.45	25.71	28.81	12.99	22.03
Tennis courts	8.17	23.38	28.73	12.39	27.32
Pickleball courts	25.00	19.35	25.81	12.10	18.55
Outdoor racquetball courts	6.23	10.48	32.86	17.56	33.99
Baseball fields	20.78	17.17	21.33	12.19	29.09
Multi-purpose fields	22.69	27.45	18.77	10.92	20.17
Sand volleyball	8.43	19.66	29.21	14.61	28.37
Swimming pool	23.74	22.07	19.55	9.22	26.26
Splash park	32.59	24.51	16.99	6.96	20.06
Stabilized riverbank/beach	52.05	25.21	13.15	4.38	5.75
Personal watersports access	39.94	31.13	16.25	5.51	7.71
Fishing	23.74	29.05	24.86	8.94	13.41
Restoration/protection of nature	66.12	18.43	7.86	4.34	3.25
Demonstration garden	12.61	30.95	32.95	11.46	12.32
Community garden	21.47	26.27	30.51	10.73	11.30
Nature center	23.45	33.33	25.71	10.17	7.63
Birding/nature viewing areas	25.99	33.90	22.32	9.60	8.19
Nature/history/culture exhibits	18.87	28.73	28.17	11.83	13.52
Environmental learning	21.81	29.75	27.20	11.05	10.76
Multi-use trails	57.53	32.88	6.58	1.92	1.64
Mountain bike trails	17.18	29.01	29.01	12.39	13.52
Pump/jump track	11.27	12.14	34.10	13.87	28.90
Skatepark	11.30	18.64	24.01	15.54	30.79
Disc golf	21.41	14.93	25.07	15.21	23.38
Dog park	15.45	26.69	23.88	11.52	23.03

Notes:

- Green text indicates that 50% more respondents agreed that an item was important than respondents who agreed it was unimportant.
- Red text indicates that 50% more respondents agreed that an item was unimportant than respondents who agreed that the same item was important.
- Yellow highlighted boxes indicate that one end of the spectrum (important vs. unimportant) received more votes, but not as high as 50% more than the other end of the spectrum.

Q4. Rank in order of preference the following types of trails:

(339 Responses/18 Skipped)

	1	2	3	Score
Maintained gravel trails	28.91%	58.09%	13.00%	2.16
Paved surface hike/bike trail	23.08%	21.49%	55.44%	1.68
Natural earth hiking trail	48.01%	20.42%	31.56%	2.16

Q5. What types of social games would you like to see at the future eastside regional park? Select all that apply.

(302 Responses/95 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Table tennis	31.67
Cornhole	47.67
Washers	29.67
Horseshoes	38.33
Gaga ball	20.00
Tether ball	27.33
Bocce	26.67
Foursquare	23.33
Other (please specify)	19.00

Q6. This future eastside regional park has been commonly known as Quail Creek. As a new park, it will need an official name and we would like your input on possible names that were ranked previously in our initial survey and additional suggestions submitted for consideration. Please rank in order of preference: (638 Responses/17 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Camino del Blanco Park	5.12
Encanto Park	5.35
Quail Creek Park	6.51
Rio Blanco Park	5.57
Clovis Point Park	3.96
Fauna Park	3.36
Traverse Park	2.65
Legacy Park	3.48

Q7. Is there anything the planning team should keep in mind while finalizing the park concept? (196 Responses/201 Skipped)

Due to the large number of responses (275), a summary is provided below. Full responses can be found on the project website, where a link to the report of comments received to the open comment questions is posted.

- **Noise and Light Pollution:** Minimize noise and light disturbances to adjacent residents.
- **Flood Management:** Ensure improvements do not exacerbate flooding issues.
- **Natural Preservation:** Prioritize maintaining natural areas and minimizing urbanization to protect wildlife and the ecosystem.
- **Pickleball Courts:** There is a strong demand for dedicated and possibly covered pickleball courts due to the sports growing popularity.
- **Community Needs:** Consider the needs of all community members, including families, seniors, and people with disabilities.
- **Water Quality and Management:** Focus on water quality and sustainable management practices to ensure the parks long-term viability.
- **Recreational Variety:** Include a diverse range of recreational options.
- **Accessibility and Safety:** Ensure safe pedestrian access from neighboring areas.
- **Facilities and Amenities:** Provide ample clean bathrooms, water fountains, and shaded areas to enhance the park experience.
- **Community Input:** Continuously engage with the community to gather feedback and ensure the park meets their needs and preferences.

Q8. How close do you live to the future park? (387 Responses/10 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Less than ¼ mile	5.97
Between ¼ to ½ mile	3.90
Between ½ mile to 1 mile	4.68
Between 1 to 2 miles	14.81
More than 2 miles	70.65

Q9. How long have you lived in San Marcos? (367 Responses/11 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Less than 5 years	18.49
5-10 years	22.66
11-20 years	23.44
21-30 years	13.28
More than 30 years	16.15
I do not live in San Marcos	5.99

Q10. How did you hear about this project?

(383 Responses/14 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Social Media (X, Facebook, Etc.)	32.55
Friend, family or neighbor	32.02
Email from the City of San Marcos	29.13
City of San Marcos website	16.54
Flyer	1.31
Neighborhood meeting	1.84
Other (please specify)*	10.24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Marcos River Foundation (3) • Pickleball group (2) • Activity Center (2) • News (3) • City employee/ official (7) • SMYBSA (3) • Yoga instructor (2) • Work/coworker (4) • Meadows Center (3) • Live adjacent to project site (2) 	

Q11. In which category is your age?

(387 Responses/10 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Under 18	0.26
18-24	4.68
25-34	21.82
35-44	29.61
45-54	18.96
55-64	10.65
65-74	11.69
75+	2.34

Q12. What is your gender?

(382 Responses/15 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Under 18	0.26
18-24	4.68
25-34	21.82

Q13. Do any children 17 or under live in your household? (381 Responses/16 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
Yes	45.12
No	54.88

Q14. What is your race and/or ethnicity?

(373 Responses/24 Skipped)

Response	Percent of Responses
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.62
Asian or Asian American	1.35
Black or African American	1.62
Hispanic or Latino	25.61
Middle Eastern or North African	0.00
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.27
White	67.12
Another Race	2.43