



City of San Marcos

City Council Workshop

January 6, 2026



Presentation

Item #2

Receive a staff presentation and hold discussion regarding Managed Access in Rio Vista Park, including fencing options, layout considerations, and potential fees, and provide direction to the City Manager.



Purpose

Provide the City Council with an update regarding Managed Access plans in Rio Vista:

- Review Community Survey Outcomes;
- Provide Brief Background of Managed Access;
- Discuss Managed Access Fencing and Layout; and
- Receive Direction on Non-Resident Fee and Exemption Area.

Community Survey Outcomes



Facets of Community Livability: **Quality**



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Community Survey Outcomes



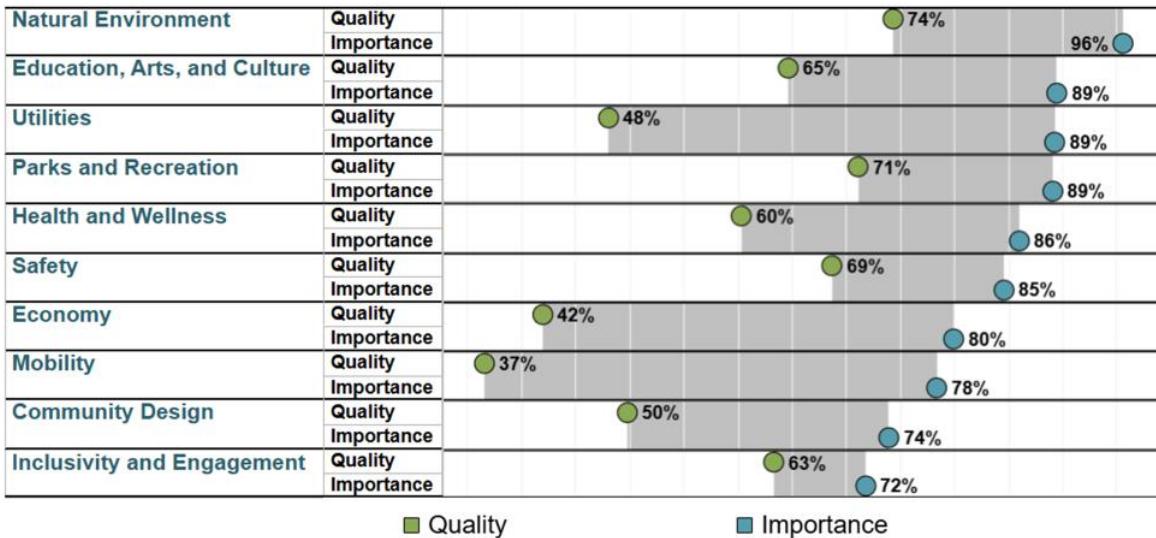
Facets of Community Livability: **Importance**



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Community Survey Outcomes

Balancing Quality and Importance



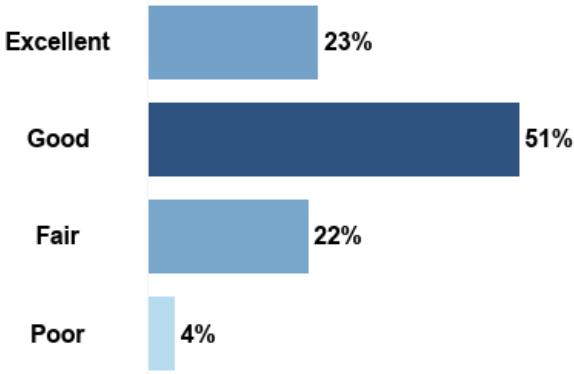
Community Survey Outcomes



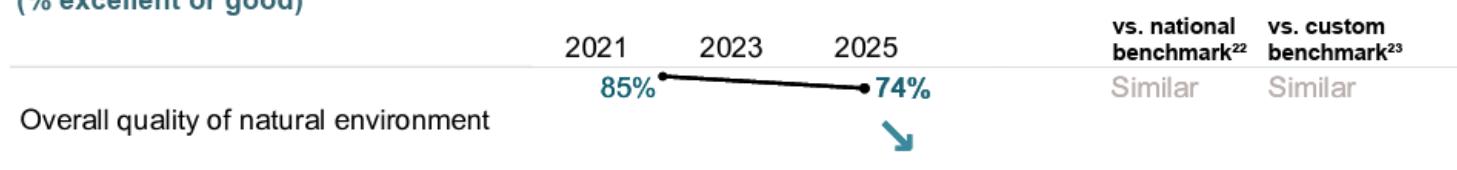
Natural Environment

The natural spaces in which residents live and experience their communities has a direct and profound effect on quality of life. The natural environment plays a vital role in the health and well-being of residents.

Overall quality of natural environment in San Marcos, 2025



Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to San Marcos as a whole.
(% excellent or good)





Background Review

- **May 21, 2019**- Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was adopted by City Council.
 - Goal FF.1: “Provide adequate funding to allow for a well-maintained parks and trail system; Action Item FF-1.2 under that goal is “Pursue additional potential funding sources.”
- **November 6, 2019** – Proposed cost recovery analysis and implementation for Parks and Recreation Programs and Services was provided to the City Council. Council provided direction to proceed with proposed assumptions and seek recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Board.



Background Review

- **January 13, 2020** - the Parks and Recreation Board adopted two Recommendation Resolutions:
 - Recommendation Resolution 2019-02RR recommending City Council approve the FY2020 proposed fees for memberships, day passes, programs and activities derived from the Cost Recovery Study
 - Recommendation Resolution 2020-01RR recommending the implementation of paid parking within riverfront parks system better recover operational and maintenance costs.
- **April 7, 2020** - City Council approved Ordinance 2020-14 for various Parks & Recreation facilities.
- A fee study is currently underway to review Parks & Recreation fees.

Background Review



- **February 2024** - Single-Use Beverage Container Ordinance adopted and effective May 1, 2024. Year one education period expired April 30, 2025.
- **September 17, 2024** - City Council provided consensus to explore measures to generate new revenue to offset the costs for operations and maintenance in the riverfront parks.
 - Support of staff researching the installation of aesthetically-pleasing perimeter fencing along our riverfront parks and creating specific managed access points.
 - Support charging non-residents to enter through the managed access points.
 - Support of permits for picnic spots.



Background Review

- **May 20, 2025** - City Council authorized implementation of the Managed Access Test Plan on weekends and holidays from Memorial Day-Labor Day for a total of 50 days.
- End of summer feedback - Residents and volunteers reported visible reduction in litter and better compliance with park rules.
- **October 8, 2025** -Discussion Items at City Council
 - Consensus to continue managed access in Rio Vista Park with aesthetic temporary fencing. Expressed desire to review the fencing prior to procurement and placement.
 - Discussion of possible implementation of a fee for non-resident visitors. Desire to ensure those within the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District are exempt.

Managed Access Fencing

- **Oct 8, 2025:** Council gave direction to continue Managed Access and to install aesthetically pleasing temporary fencing.
- Pictured is the temporary fencing to be acquired.
- Managed Access in 2026 – 36 Days*



**Closed to Traffic
Holiday Weekends/Holidays**

Children's Park

Managed Access Entry Point

**Staff/Emergency Access-
Closed every weekend**

Rio Vista Park

Managed Access Entry Point

**ADA Parking only-
Every weekend**

San Marcos River

**Double Gate Open Outside of
Managed Access Times**

Managed Access Entry Point

**Double Gate Open Outside of
Managed Access Times**

Managed Access Entry Point

Why a Fee? Currently Funded Efforts



- Park Ambassador Personnel: \$136,303
- Park Ambassador Uniforms/Supplies: \$10,336.83
- Parks Maintenance Holiday Weekend Crews: \$21,960.59
- Public Works Holiday Street Closures: \$38,728.80 (Overtime)
- Contract Deputy Marshals: \$81,454.40
- Police Officers & Fire Marshals (Overtime): \$37,557.04
- Signage (FY25 One-Time): \$3,493.33



Why a Fee? Currently Funded Efforts

- In-Stream litter removal contractor (Headwaters to Stokes Park): \$19,800
- EPSI weekend/holiday litter removal: \$117,736.96
- Portable Toilet Rental: \$30,018.00
- Fencing Rental: \$11,179.77

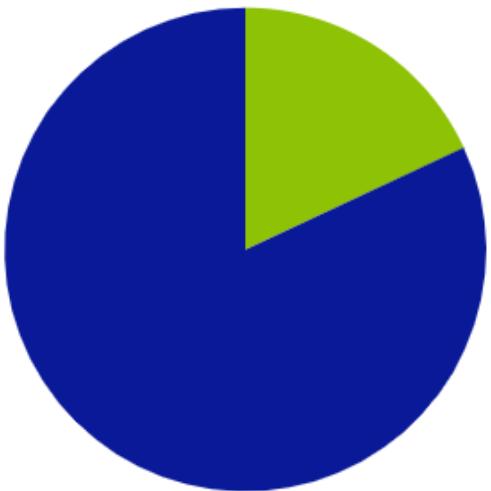
Total General Fund Cost: \$508,568.72



Park Operations Annual Budget

Summer Operating vs. All Other Operating Costs

Summer Operating - \$172,764.89
18.1%



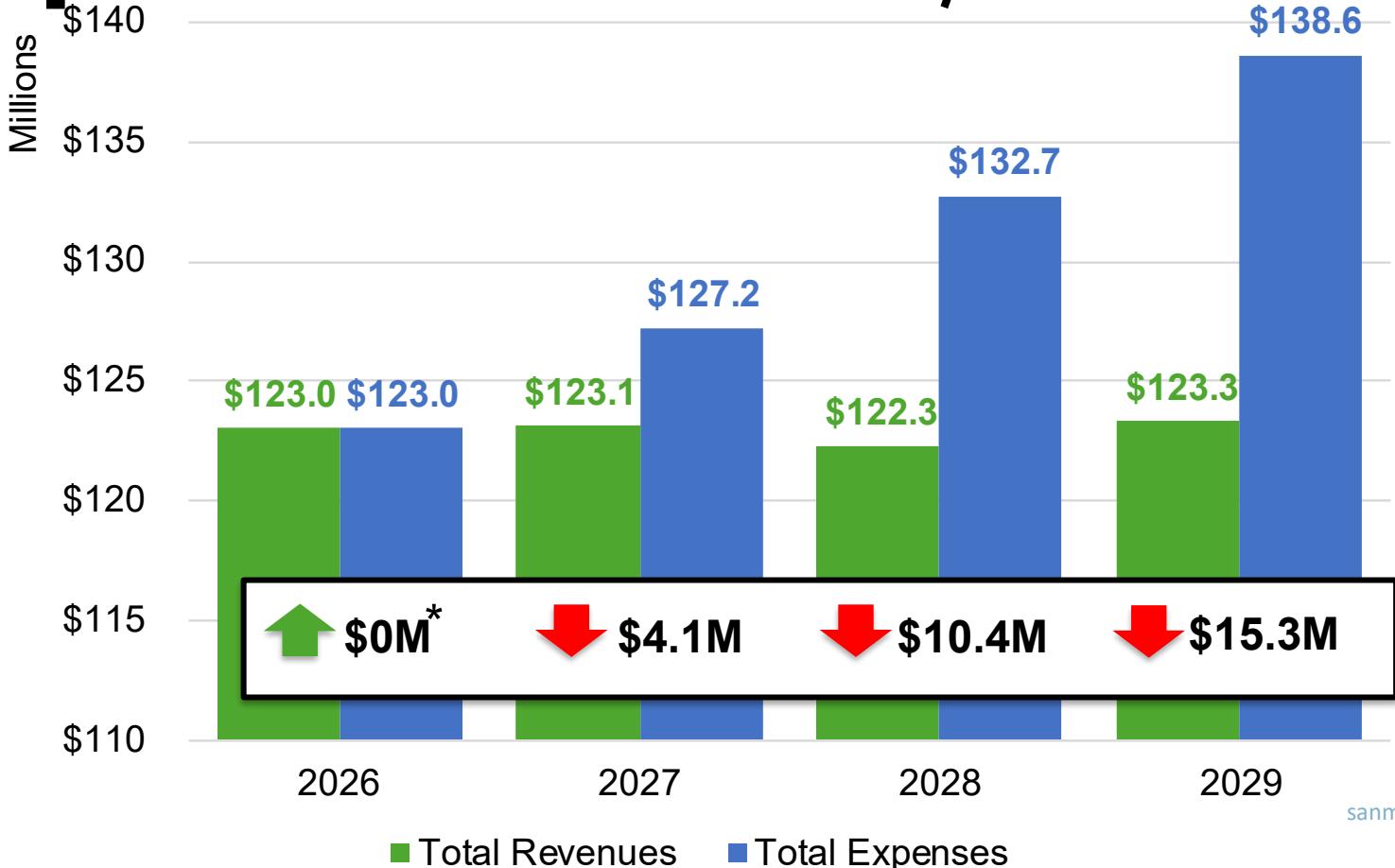
Total Park Operations Budget:
\$955,875*

**Does not include personnel costs*

All other Park Operations - \$783,110.11
81.9%

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Adopted Tax Rate 65.15¢





Access Fee for Out-of-Town Visitors

- City of New Braunfels:
 - \$2 per non-resident user River Management Fee
 - 2023 Revenue \$509,938
 - 2024 Revenue \$438,348
 - October 2024 discussed increase to \$3, but increased parking rates instead.



Access Fee for Out-of-Town Visitors

- Proposed fee previously presented:
 - \$25 per group (up to 10 people of any age)
 - \$5 per individual (age 6 and older)
 - *Only for Sat/Sun, Holiday Weekends and Holidays.*
- Ticketing Software: \$30,000 upfront and continuous annual cost to make it as easy as possible for visitors and staff.



Fee Exemption

- **October 8, 2025**- City Council expressed the desire to expand the permit eligibility to either those with a 78666 zip code or San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District (SMCISD) boundary.
- Staff recommendation: To streamline permit approvals, staff recommends City Council include 78666 (San Marcos area) and 78655 (Martindale) zip codes.

Direction



- Is City Council comfortable with moving forward with the fencing layout as proposed by staff?
- Does City Council want to implement the proposed fee on weekends and holidays for visitors to help offset increased service costs?
- If so, does City Council agree with exempting households within the 78666 and 78655 zip codes, or broader to include anyone within SMCISD boundary, and issue them Resident River Passes?



Questions?