

City of Schertz

Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2014: Live and Play!

Chapter 8

Plan Summary

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**Diversity
Accommodation
Conservation
Opportunity
Connectivity**



This section of the Strategic Master Plan is intended to summarize the whole document. It is laid out into three areas that have been previously discussed in detail: (1) Citizen Input; (2) Current Inventory, Our Desired State and Identified Gaps, and; (3) Goals & Objectives.

Summary of Citizen Input

Schertz is a community with young, active families that have clearly expressed the need for a well-planned, robust Parks and Recreation program. They have continually displayed strong support for our existing facilities and programs. Survey data and public input indicate that there appears to be a strong desire to continue devoting adequate resources to parks and recreation in order to maintain and improve the quality of life for our residents.

Seventy three percent of survey respondents were between the ages of 25 and 54. Over 67% of those participating in the Parks and Recreation Survey identified themselves as families with 3 or more persons residing in their household and 31% indicated they had 2 or more children in their residence. Sixty five percent indicated that they have lived in Schertz for more than 6 years.

Sixty six percent of survey respondents indicated that they use our parks one or more times a month. Additionally, 94% of respondents identified an important need for establishing greenways and trails to connect our parks and facilities and 67% felt that the city should acquire additional land for parks. When asked to rank their priorities, survey respondents indicated that the highest need was for more hike and bike trails, followed by additional natural or open spaces. The recreational activities that scored the highest interest include hiking (89.9%), biking (87.5%) and health/wellness programs (86.0%).

Approximately 59% of respondents gave the physical condition of our parks a favorable rating and 55% gave our parks in general an overall favorable rating.



Summary of Current Inventory, Desired State & Identified Gaps & Recommendations

Current Inventory

Schertz has dedicated significant resources to building a quality Parks and Recreation program. Presently, the city maintains 13 developed city parks, covering more than 340 acres. The city has also identified an additional 8 park locations, covering more than 33 acres that are undeveloped or are in the initial stages of development. New projects on the horizon include the development of a dedicated dog park, a skate park, renovation of the Schertz Ballpark Complex, renovation of the Schertz Soccer Complex, addition of a city natatorium, and a park plaza dedicated as a veterans memorial.

Supplementing the city parks system is a network of parks owned and maintained by various homeowners' associations in the city. HOA parks and dedicated open space reserves provide an additional 18 locations, covering more than 41 acres. Furthermore, three additional developments are currently platted with over 87 acres of land tentatively identified as a mix of dedicated city park space and undeveloped open space. Finally, several facilities owned by the Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City Independent School District (SCUCISD), provide additional opportunities for recreation within the city. SCUCISD facilities include 8 schools and 1 athletic complex, which are available to some degree for utilization by the residents when not directly required for school activities.

For community and recreational activities, the city provides and maintains a civic center, two community centers, a library, a senior center, a city recreation center and two outdoor swimming pools.

Throughout the city, a network of approximately 18 miles of trails and paths are available for use, as well as several marked bicycle lanes on city streets and roadways. Finally, the city has two natural drainage systems, Cibolo and Dietz creeks, that can serve to provide additional natural open spaces and connectivity paths.

The city has extensive “partnerships” to augment its recreation program and provide services to its residents, including agreements with the Buffalo Valley Youth Association (BVYA), the Schertz Youth Soccer Alliance (SYSA) and the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA).



Desired State

The desired state for the city’s parks and recreation program in this plan was developed after a complete inventory of existing facilities was conducted. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board then examined the results of the citizen survey, reviewed on- going projects, and compared Schertz and its parks system to other Texas cities of comparable size and to national parks standard and recommendations. Finally, the board reviewed growth projections for the city to identify projected shortfalls in the system, identify existing gaps in service and provide recommendations for future parks development and projects.

Identified Gaps & Recommendations

Although the city has initiated numerous improvements to its parks and recreation system in recent years, the Advisory Board identified several areas that should be addressed in the upcoming years as the city grows. Complete analysis is included in Chapter 6 of this plan, but highlighted areas include:

- Identification of a significant shortfall in the number and quality of dedicated practice locations for baseball, softball and soccer throughout the city.
- Need to develop plans for the effective utilization of land currently designated for parkland but undeveloped
- Identification of potential land to be used for additional community park space in the southern sector.
- Need for review and expansion of existing agreements with outside service providers
- Increased support for resourcing the parks and recreation department in both staffing and funding for maintenance and repair.



Summary of Goals, Objectives and Specific Actions

The goals, objectives and actions in the original Comprehensive Land Use Plan were reviewed and continue to be relevant based on the current status and needs of the city's parks and recreation system, with only minor updates offered by the Parks Advisory Board. Specific Goals and Objectives for Parks and Recreation are outlined in detail in Chapter 7. Specific action items that should be addressed to achieve the city's goals and objectives include:

Administrative Actions

1. Review the staffing and budgeting process for the parks department in order to mitigate ongoing maintenance concerns, upgrade and maintain installed amenities and establish goals to monitor and achieve city standards.
2. Develop cost recovery standards and models for parks and recreation programs.
3. Develop plans to identify and pursue multiple funding sources for parks and recreation.
4. Formally adopt standards for park facilities and installed amenities.
5. Develop specific plans for the development of existing park locations that are currently undeveloped.
6. Develop plans for additional sport practice fields to accommodate youth programs and reduce impact on tournament quality fields.
7. Develop specific plans to provide better connection between existing trails and pathways, and to link city parks, facilities, schools and greenbelts wherever practical.
8. Develop plans or recommendations for the addition of outdoor volleyball courts to parks where practical.
9. Develop a stronger partnership with SCUCISD for expanded joint-use of playgrounds, practice facilities and indoor gymnasiums during non-school hours and on weekends.
10. Provide recommendations for the identification and design of potential park lands in southern Schertz to facilitate future growth in that area and ensure adequate service coverage.
11. Review, update and expand existing partnership agreements to increase and enhance services, reduce gaps in service areas, and clarify funding and maintenance responsibilities.
12. Identify possible locations better suited to accommodate festivals and events as city growth exceeds the capacity of current locations.
13. Develop a program for the installation of art in public places, parks and along trails.

Priority Capital Improvement Actions

1. Build & Connect trails to support connectivity throughout the city.
2. Construct soccer practice locations.
3. Construct baseball practice locations.
4. Construct new and renovate existing outdoor basketball courts.
5. Construct outdoor volleyball courts.
6. Obtain additional dedicated open space.
7. Build Phase II and Phase III of the Schertz Skate Park.
8. Construct an additional Splash Pad.
9. Construct a Disc Golf Course in the city.
10. Improve fishing access at Cibolo Creek & Crescent Bend Nature Park.

Specific cost estimates for these recommendations were not developed or explored by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. It is recommended that the city develop cost estimates for the recommendations presented in this plan in order to adequately address parks and recreations requirements in the city budget, capitalize on funding opportunities as they present themselves, and aid in developing priorities for future parks and recreation facilities.