



## AT A GLANCE

**550  
ACRES**

TOTAL PARKLAND  
(INCLUDES GOLF COURSE)

**6  
TYPES**

OF PARKS, RECREATION,  
OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

**4.69  
ACRES**

PARKLAND PER 1,000  
RESIDENTS (2017)

**10.10  
ACRES**

PARKLAND PER 1,000  
RESIDENTS ACRES  
RECOMMENDED (2027)

**649  
ACRES**

NEEDED TO KEEP UP  
WITH GROWTH



# PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

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# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## PARKS AND RECREATION

In any community with a large population of families, parks and recreation is important to quality of life. New Braunfels Parks and Recreation Department facilitates the City's recreation, aquatic and nature programs and athletic leagues, along with maintaining 39 parks, greenbelt/conservation areas, special use facilities, cemeteries and sports facilities comprising over 550 acres (includes golf course).

Per a parks survey conducted by PROS Consulting in 2016, many people expressed a desire to develop more parks, green space and recreational opportunities for residents. Residents expressed a desire for more community parks, athletic fields and bike paths. Within new developments, participants cited that they felt that newly built neighborhoods should include parks developed up front with new subdivisions, while others cited a shortfall in being visionary in identifying locations for new signature parks.

The current quality and quantity of existing parks and facilities is underserved. However, many survey respondents expressed appreciation for the recent additions of Fischer Park, a new dog park and recreation center. In addition, many upcoming projects are underway as the City of New Braunfels is currently working on or recently completed master plans for Landa Park, Mission Hill Park, Callen's Castle All Abilities Park, a Veterans Memorial, as well as a Guadalupe Rivers Park. The City of New Braunfels is also proposing a new sports complex at the corner of Klein Road and FM 1044, next to New Braunfels Middle School.

Many of these same people also recognized the role of economic development in the creation of new parks in that only by expanding development and diversifying the tax base can the city afford to pay for such amenities. The Parkland Dedication Ordinance in New Braunfels contributes to meeting the parkland needs of residents by requiring dedication of suitable land for parks and recreation purposes or by payment of a fee in-lieu of land.



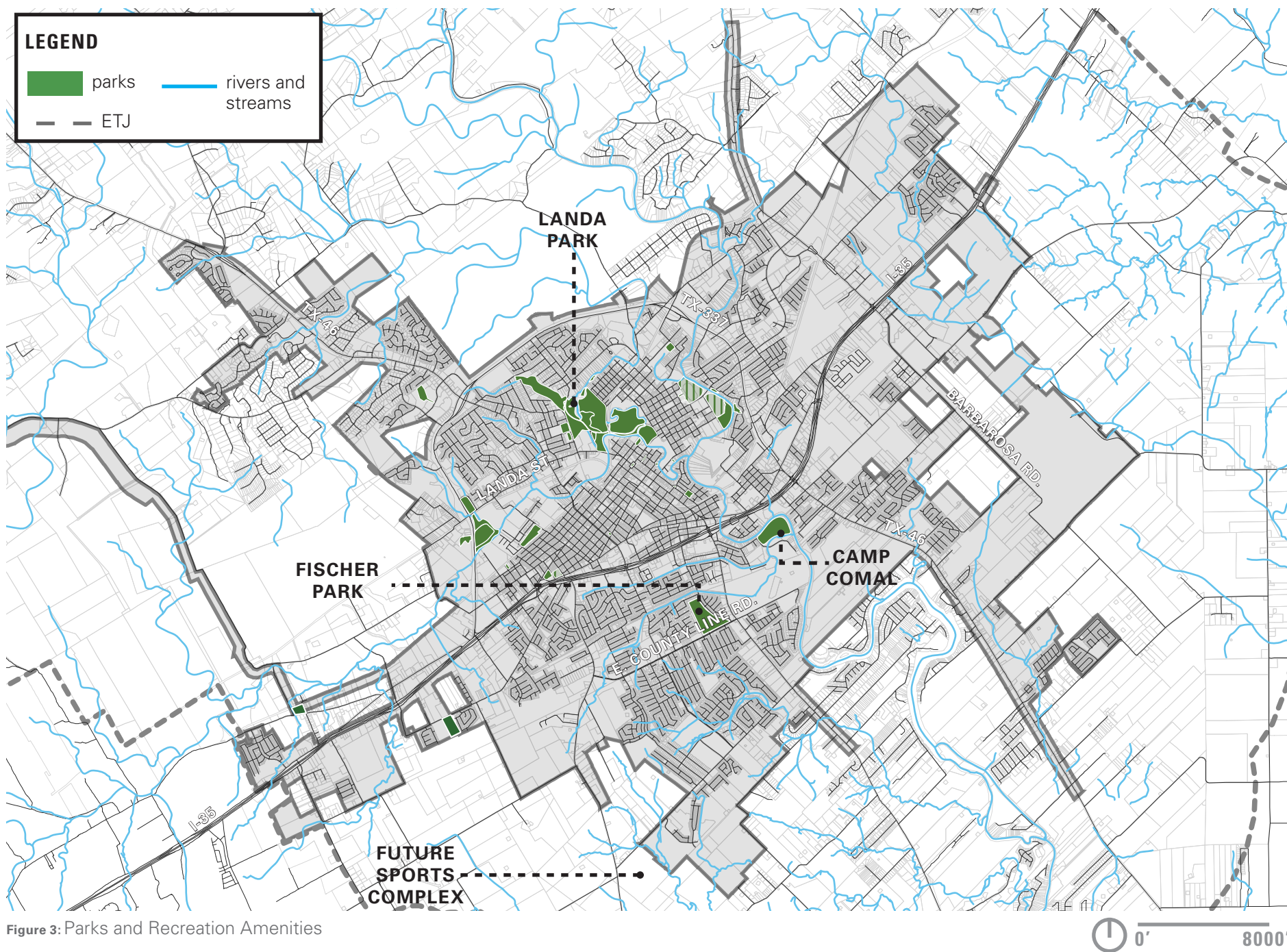


Figure 3: Parks and Recreation Amenities



## PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

A park-and-facility classification system ideally should utilize key characteristics of each site. These include:

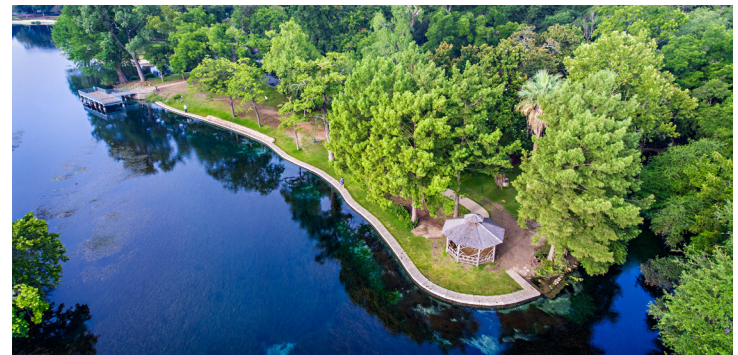
- The intent and/or mission of the site;
- The predominant types of site usage; and
- Appropriate performance measures for each park classification.

Proper integration of the system can guide the City in the years to come. The following factors are utilized to distinguish between City parks and recreation sites:

- Park size: Defines the relative size of the park in acres, including the ratio of land to per-capita population.
- Service area: Details the service area of the park as defined by its size and amenities.
- Maintenance standards: Details the expected standard of maintenance at the park depending on usage levels and the extent of facility development.
- Amenities: Describes the present level of facility and/or amenity development.
- Performance: Establishes performance expectations of parks as reflected in annual operational-cost recovery (revenue generation) and the annual use of major facilities within the park.

There are 6 types of parks and facilities either owned and/or maintained by the City of New Braunfels that serve the varied and diverse needs of the community. Using the criteria listed above, classification of New Braunfels sites are:

- Pocket Parks;
- Neighborhood Parks;
- Community Parks;
- Regional/Specialty Parks;
- Greenbelt/Conservation Parks; and
- Recreation and Special-Use Facilities.



New Braunfels' current parks and recreation portfolio ranges in scale from neighborhood parks like Solms Park, to community parks like Fischer Park, to regional attractions like Landa Park.



## POCKET PARKS

According to the NRPA, a pocket park is a small outdoor space, usually less than 0.25 acres up to 1 acre, most often located in an urban area surrounded by commercial buildings or houses. Pocket parks are small, urban open spaces that serve a variety of functions, such as: small event space, play areas for children, spaces for relaxing and socializing, taking lunch breaks, etc. Successful pocket parks have four key qualities: they are accessible; allow people to engage in activities; are comfortable spaces that are inviting; and are sociable places. In general, pocket parks offer minimal amenities on-site and are not designed to support programmed activities. The service area for pocket parks is usually less than a quarter-mile and they are intended for users within close walking distance of the park.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are intended to be easily accessible to adjacent neighborhoods and should focus on meeting neighborhood recreational needs as well as preserving small, open spaces in residential or commercial areas. Neighborhood parks are smaller than community or regional parks and are designed typically for residents who live within a one-mile radius. Neighborhood parks that provide recreational opportunities for the entire family typically involve a mix of passive and active recreation activities. Neighborhood parks are typically three to 10 acres.

- Typical length of stay: One-hour experience or less
- Amenities: Three signature amenities (e.g. playground, spray ground park, sport court, gazebo); no restrooms unless necessary for signature amenity; may include one non-programmed sports field; loop trails; benches, small picnic shelters next to play areas.
- Revenue-producing facilities: None.
- Programming: 85 percent active/15 percent passive.
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience.
- Landscaping: Landscaping throughout the park.
- Parking: Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide 5-10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming encouraged next to park.
- Other goals: Refer to Parks and Open Space Strategic Master Plan (2017).

# 2

## POCKET PARKS IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Lindheimer Plaza
- Neighborhood Park

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## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Ernst Eikel Field Park
- Jesse Garcia Park
- Haymarket Park
- Kerlick Avenue Park
- Market Plaza
- Torrey Park
- Hoffmann Park
- Kraft Park
- River Acres Park



## COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks are intended to be accessible to multiple neighborhoods and beyond, and to meet a broader base of community recreational needs, as well as preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. Community parks are generally larger (10 to 75 acres) in scale than neighborhood parks but smaller than regional parks and are designed typically for residents who live within a three-to-five-mile radius; or a short distance on bike or by car. Where possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school or an existing trail system. Community parks often contain facilities for specific recreational purposes: athletic fields, tennis courts, picnic areas, reservable picnic shelters, sports courts, permanent restrooms, large turfed and landscaped areas, and playgrounds. A mixture of passive and active outdoor-recreation activities often take place at community parks.

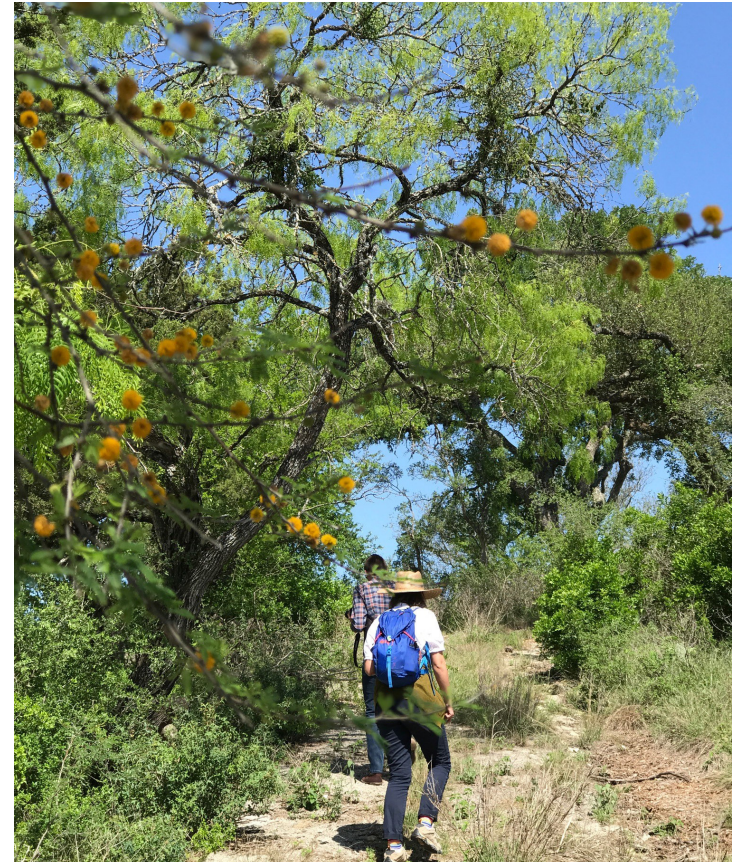
- Typical length of stay: Two to three hours experience.
- Amenities: Four signature amenities at a minimum: (e.g., trails, sports fields, large shelters/ pavilions, community playground for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements, recreation center, pool or family aquatic center, sports courts, water feature); public restrooms with drinking fountains, ample parking, and security lighting. Amenities are ADA compliant.
- Revenue-producing facilities: One or more (e.g. pool, sports fields, pavilion).
- Programming: 65 percent active and 35 percent passive.
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility.
- Landscaping: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park.
- Parking: Sufficient to support the amenities; occupies no more than 10 percent of the park. Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. Traffic calming encouraged within and next to the park.
- Other goals: Refer to Parks and Open Space Strategic Master Plan (2017).



# 5

## COMMUNITY PARKS IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Cypress Bend Park
- Fischer Park
- Mission Hill Park (future)
- Morningside Park
- Solms Park



## REGIONAL PARKS

A regional park serves a large area of several communities, residents within a City, county, or across multiple counties. Depending on activities within a regional park, users may travel as many as 60 miles for a visit. Regional parks include recreational opportunities such as soccer, softball, golf, boating, camping, conservation-wildlife viewing and fishing. Regional parks usually have a combination of passive areas and active facilities.

A common size for a regional park is 75 to 1,000 acres but some parks can be 2,000 to 5,000 acres in size. A regional park focuses on activities and natural features not included in most types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity. Facilities could include those found in a Community Park and have specialized amenities such as an art center, amphitheater, boating facility, golf course, or natural area with interpretive trails. Regional parks can and should promote tourism and economic development. Regional parks can enhance the economic vitality and identity of the entire region.

- Typical length of stay: All or multiple day experience.
- Amenities: 10 to 12 amenities to create a signature facility (e.g. golf course, tennis complex, sports complex, lake, regional playground, 3+ reservable picnic shelters, camping, outdoor recreation/extreme sports, recreation center, pool, gardens, trails, zoo, specialty facilities); restrooms with drinking fountains, concessions, restaurant, ample parking, special event site. Sport Fields and Sport Complexes are typical at this park.
- Revenue-producing facilities: Typically, park designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs.
- Programming: Up to 50 percent active/50 percent passive.
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience, may include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility.
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park.
- Parking: Sufficient for all amenities. Traffic calming encouraged within and next to park.
- Other goals: Refer to Parks and Open Space Strategic Master Plan (2017).

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## REGIONAL/ SPECIALTY PARKS IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Hinman Island Park
- Prince Solms Park
- Landa Park/  
Panther Canyon
- City Tube Chute





## GREENBELTS AND CONSERVATION PARKS

Greenbelts and Conservation Parks are recognized for their ability to connect people and place and often include either paved or natural trails. Trails can also be loop trails in parks. Linking neighborhoods, parks, recreation facilities, attractions, and natural areas with a multi-use trail fulfills two guiding principles simultaneously: protecting natural areas along river and open space areas and providing people with a way to access and enjoy them. Multi-use trails also offer a safe, alternative form of transportation; provide substantial health benefits, habitat enhancements for plants and wildlife, and unique opportunities for outdoor education and cultural interpretation. Size will vary, but typically at least 30 feet width of unencumbered land for a greenbelt. May include a trail to support walk, bike, run, equestrian type activities. Urban trails should be 8-10 feet wide to support pedestrians and bicycles. Trails incorporate signage to designate where a user is located and where the trails connect in the City.

- Amenities: Parking and restrooms at major trailheads. May include small parks and restrooms along the trail.
- Signage: Mileage markers at quarter-mile intervals. Interpretive kiosks at all trailheads and where deemed necessary.
- Landscape Design: Coordinated planting scheme in urban areas. Limited or no planting in open space areas.
- Other goals: Refer to Parks and Open Space Strategic Master Plan (2017).

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## GREENBELT AND CONSERVATION PARKS IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Sunbelt Park
- County Line Memorial Trail
- Crest Lane Greenbelt
- Dry Comal Trail
- Alves Lane Park
- Walnut Avenue Parks



## RECREATION AND SPECIAL-USE FACILITIES

Recreation and Special-Use areas are those spaces that don't fall within a typical park classification. A major difference between a Special- Use facility and other parks is that they usually serve a single purpose, whereas other park classifications are designed to offer multiple recreation opportunities. It is possible for a Special-Use facility to be located inside another park. Special-Use facilities generally fall into the categories below.

- Cemeteries - burial-ground that is generally viewed as a large public park or ground laid out expressly for the interment of the dead, and not being the 'yard' of any church. Cemeteries are normally distinct from churchyards, which are typically consecrated according to one denomination and are attached directly to a single place of worship. Cemeteries can be viewed as historic sites.
  - Historic/cultural/social sites – historic downtown areas, commercial zones, plaza parks, performing arts parks, arboretums, display gardens, performing arts facilities, indoor theaters, churches, and amphitheaters. Frequently these are located in Community or Regional Parks.
  - Golf courses – nine and 18-hole complexes with ancillary club houses, driving ranges, program space and learning centers. These facilities are highly maintained and support broad ages and types of athletes through daily play, season passes, concession stands, and driving ranges. Programs are targeted for daily use play, tournaments, leagues, clinics and special events.
  - Indoor recreation facilities – specialized or single purpose facilities. Examples include community centers, senior centers and community theaters. Frequently these are located in Community or Regional Parks.
  - Outdoor recreation facilities – examples include aquatic parks, disc golf, skateboard, BMX, and dog parks, which may be located in a park.
- 
- Typical length of stay: Two to four hours, or all day.
  - Amenities: Varies by facility.
  - Revenue-producing facilities: Due to nature of certain facilities, revenue may be required for construction and/or annual maintenance. This should be determined at a policy level before the facility is planned and constructed.
  - Programming: Varies by facility.
  - Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience.
  - Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience.
  - Parking: On-street or off-street parking is provided as appropriate. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide a minimum of five to 10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming encouraged next to park.
  - Other goals: Refer to Parks and Open Space Strategic Master Plan (2017).

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## RECREATION AND SPECIAL- USE FACILITIES IN NEW BRAUNFELS

- Landa Recreation Center
- Civic/Convention Center
- Puppy Playland
- Faust Street Bridge
- Garden Street Tubers Exit
- Lincoln Street Tubers Exit
- Main Plaza
- Comal Cemetery
- New Braunfels Cemetery
- Camp Comal
- Fredericksburg Fields
- HEB Soccer
- Landa Park Golf Course
- Das Rec





## DETERMINING PARK NEEDS

Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support investment decisions related to parks, facilities and amenities. LOS standards can and will change over time as the program lifecycles change and demographics of a community change.

Park facility standards were evaluated using a combination of resources. These resources included: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines; recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2016 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and the New Braunfels area; community and stakeholder input; and general observations. This information allowed standards to be customized to the New Braunfels Parks and Recreation Department.

These LOS standards should be viewed as a guide. The standards are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community. By applying these standards to the population of New Braunfels, gaps and surpluses in park and facility/amenity types are revealed. These standards should be used to inform decisions when planning to develop new parks, facilities and amenities.

Currently, there are multiple needs to be met in New Braunfels to properly serve the community now and in the future. As can be seen on the following page, the City of New Braunfels currently provides a total LOS of 4.69 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (2017) recommends increasing this LOS standard to 10.10 acres per 1,000 population to keep up with projected population growth. This means that as of today, the City is deficient by 496 acres. To keep up with the projected population growth, the City would need to add 649 acres to the parks and recreation system by the year 2027 to achieve the recommended standard.



2017 Inventory		Service Levels						2017 Standards			2027 Standards		
	Total Inventory	Current Service Level based upon City + ETJ population (91,611)			Recommended Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area			Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed		Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	
Pocket Parks	0.70	0.01	acres per	1,000	0.10	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	8	Acre(s)	Need Exists	10	Acre(s)
Neighborhood Parks	24.93	0.27	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	158	Acre(s)	Need Exists	189	Acre(s)
Community Parks	110.80	1.21	acres per	1,000	2.50	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	118	Acre(s)	Need Exists	156	Acre(s)
Regional Parks	130.00	1.42	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	53	Acre(s)	Need Exists	84	Acre(s)
Sports Complex	64.40	0.70	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	119	Acre(s)	Need Exists	149	Acre(s)
Speciality Use Areas (including Cemeteries)	43.90	0.48	acres per	1,000	0.50	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	2	Acre(s)	Need Exists	9	Acre(s)
Greenbelt and Conservation Parks	54.52	0.60	acres per	1,000	1.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	37	Acre(s)	Need Exists	52	Acre(s)
<b>Total Park Acres</b>	<b>429.25</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>acres per</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>10.10</b>	<b>acres per</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>Need Exists</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>Acre(s)</b>	<b>Need Exists</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>Acre(s)</b>

Figure 4: New Braunfels Level of Service Standards



# PLAN ELEMENT ADVISORY GROUP RECAP

## STRENGTHS

- The excellent climate in central Texas enables year-round use of New Braunfels' parks and recreation facilities.
- Accessing the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers through public recreation areas is central to life in New Braunfels.
- New Braunfels residents are physically active, and frequently use the community's indoor and outdoor recreation spaces.
- A diverse and engaging schedule of events and programs consistently activates New Braunfels' parks and recreation areas.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Using the rivers and watersheds to link the New Braunfels' parks facilities could promote community connectivity and further increase usership.
- Increased parking at popular destinations will facilitate convenient usage by residents and visitors.

## PRIOR GOALS (2016)

The Plan Element Advisory Group conducted an inventory of the 2006 Comprehensive plan goals and determined which ones were and were not achieved and identified the gaps that Envision New Braunfels could work to complete. Refer to the [Technical Report Appendix](#) for a matrix of the reviewed goals.



# PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE GOALS

1. Increase the proportion of park acres per population through a variety of park type amenities and open space options.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

2. Continue to plan, develop and operate a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities that support multiple activities; grow recreation facilities, programs, activities and services in the areas of highest community need.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

3. Pursue adequate funding to support existing parks, new parks, and other park types.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

4. Provide a park system offering the community a variety of services that integrate environmental design, safety, emerging trends and local culture and history.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

5. Invest in infrastructure and services along the Guadalupe and Comal Rivers to ensure safety and guest comfort, as well as to expand activities.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. Establish connectivity between parks, facilities and greenways so that they are accessible by pedestrians, bicycles and a large majority of neighborhoods. safety and guest comfort, as well as to expand activities.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

INDICATES A STRATEGY THAT SUPPORTS THE PLAN ELEMENT GOAL

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES  
REFER TO PAGE 178

1  SUPPORT VIBRANT CENTERS

2  ACTIVATE NEIGHBORHOODS

3  BALANCE JOBS AND HOUSING CHOICES

4  INNOVATE IN PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

5  BOLSTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

6  COORDINATE CITY INVESTMENTS

7  CONNECT ALL

8  CULTIVATE LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS