

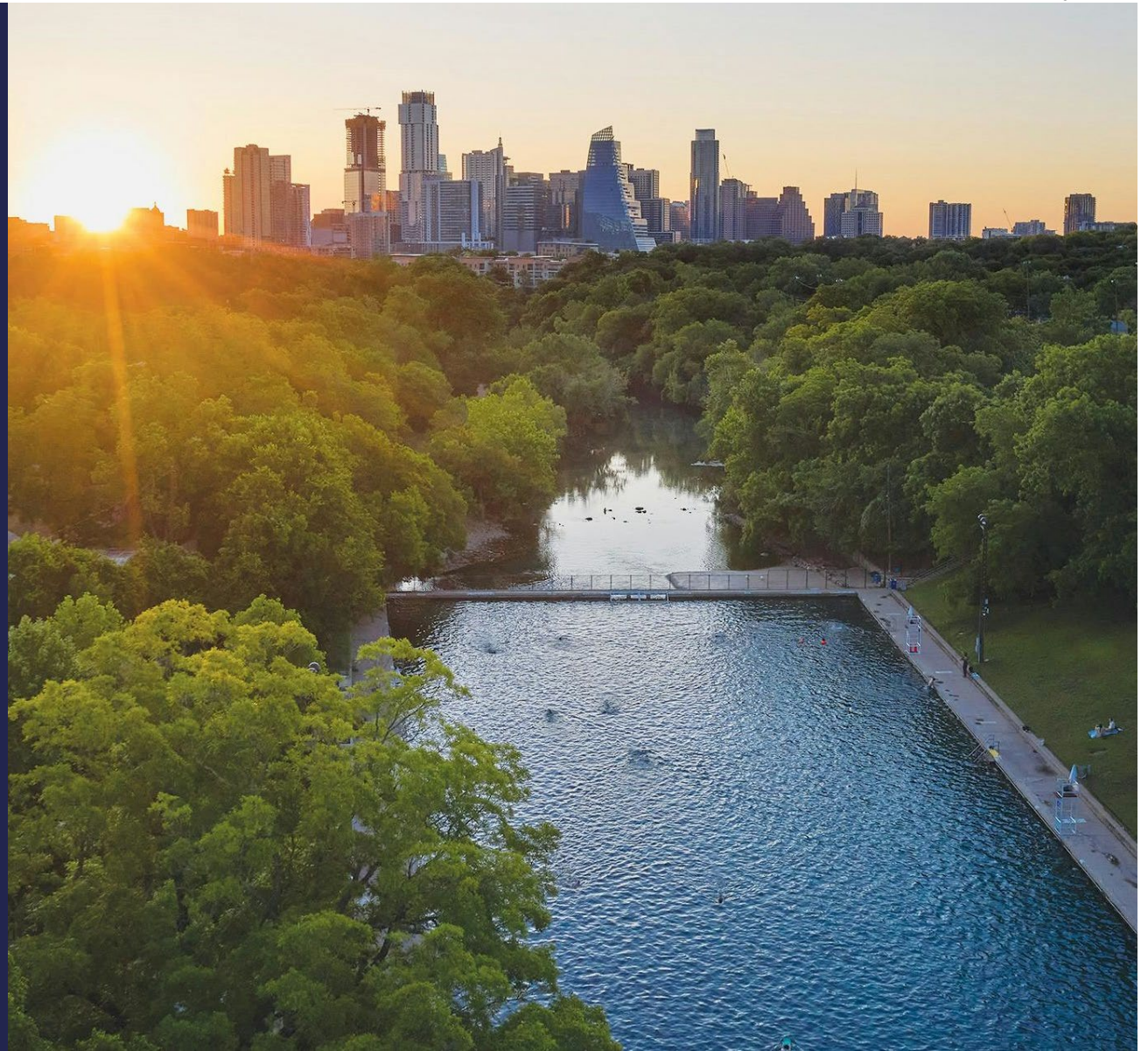


Parkland Acquisition Program

Austin Parks and Recreation | July 15, 2026

Agenda

- Parkland Acquisition Goals
- Challenges for Parkland Acquisition
- Opening Parkland / Passive Parks
- Certificates of Obligation Update



Parkland Acquisition Goals



Infill Parks

Acquire parkland in park deficient areas throughout the city.



Greenbelts and Greenway Gaps

Identify gaps in trails, greenbelts and greenways; e.g. Onion Creek, Williamson Creek, South Boggy Creek, Rinard Creek, Little Walnut Creek, etc.



Recreation Center

Identify property for a district park and recreation center to serve a deficient area in Southeast Austin.



Colorado River

Acquisition of land, including publicly owned land, to dedicate as parkland to fulfill the Colorado River Corridor Vision Plan with a shared use trail.

One City Approach

Partner with other City departments such as Transportation and Public Works, Austin Public Library, Austin Housing, Austin Public Health, Watershed Protection, Austin Water and others to remedy deficiencies and achieve multiple City goals when feasible.

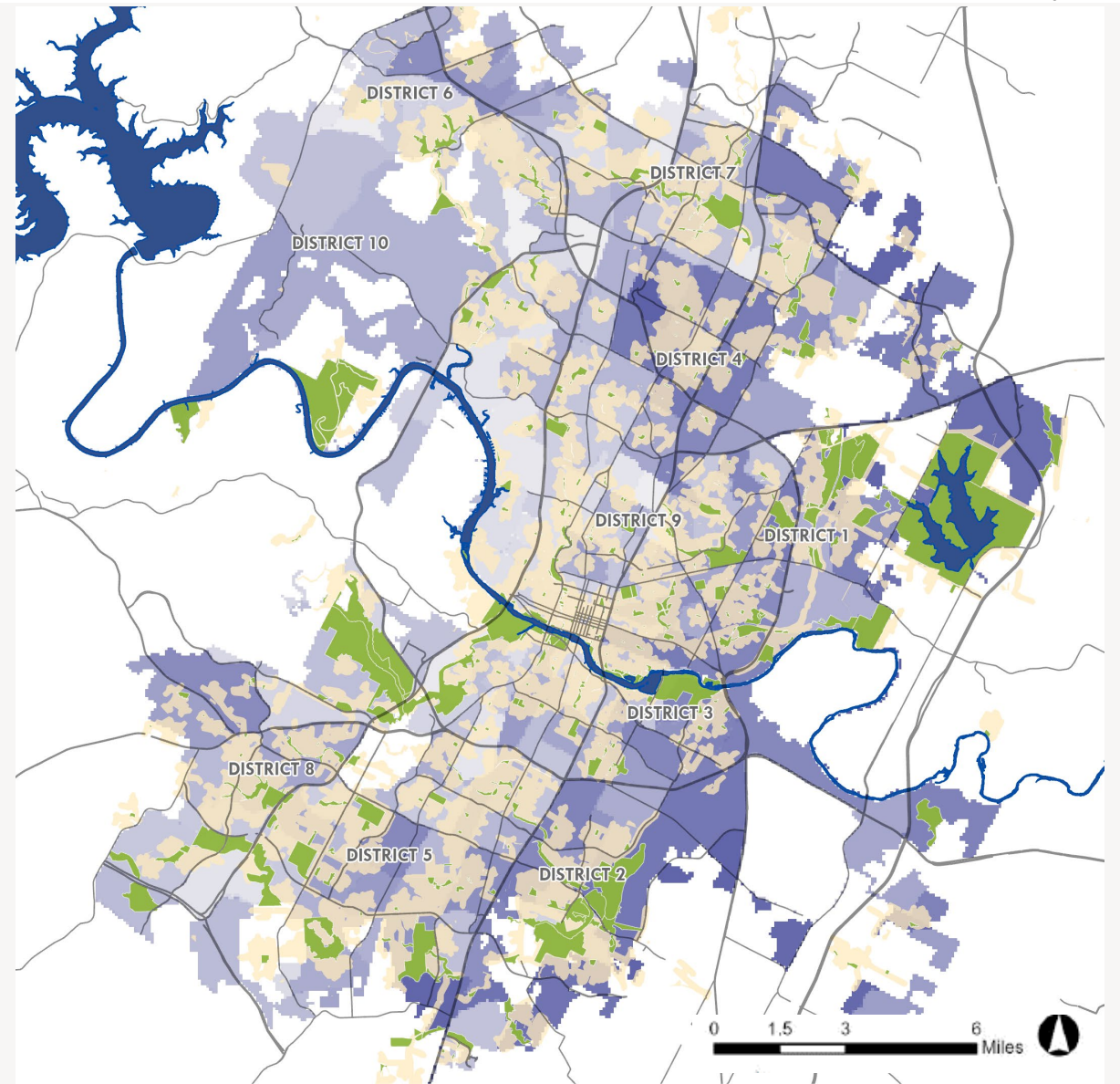
Contribute to Climate Equity Plan Goals

Acquire parkland in high-priority areas identified for environmental value and areas of historically low park service.

Infill Parks

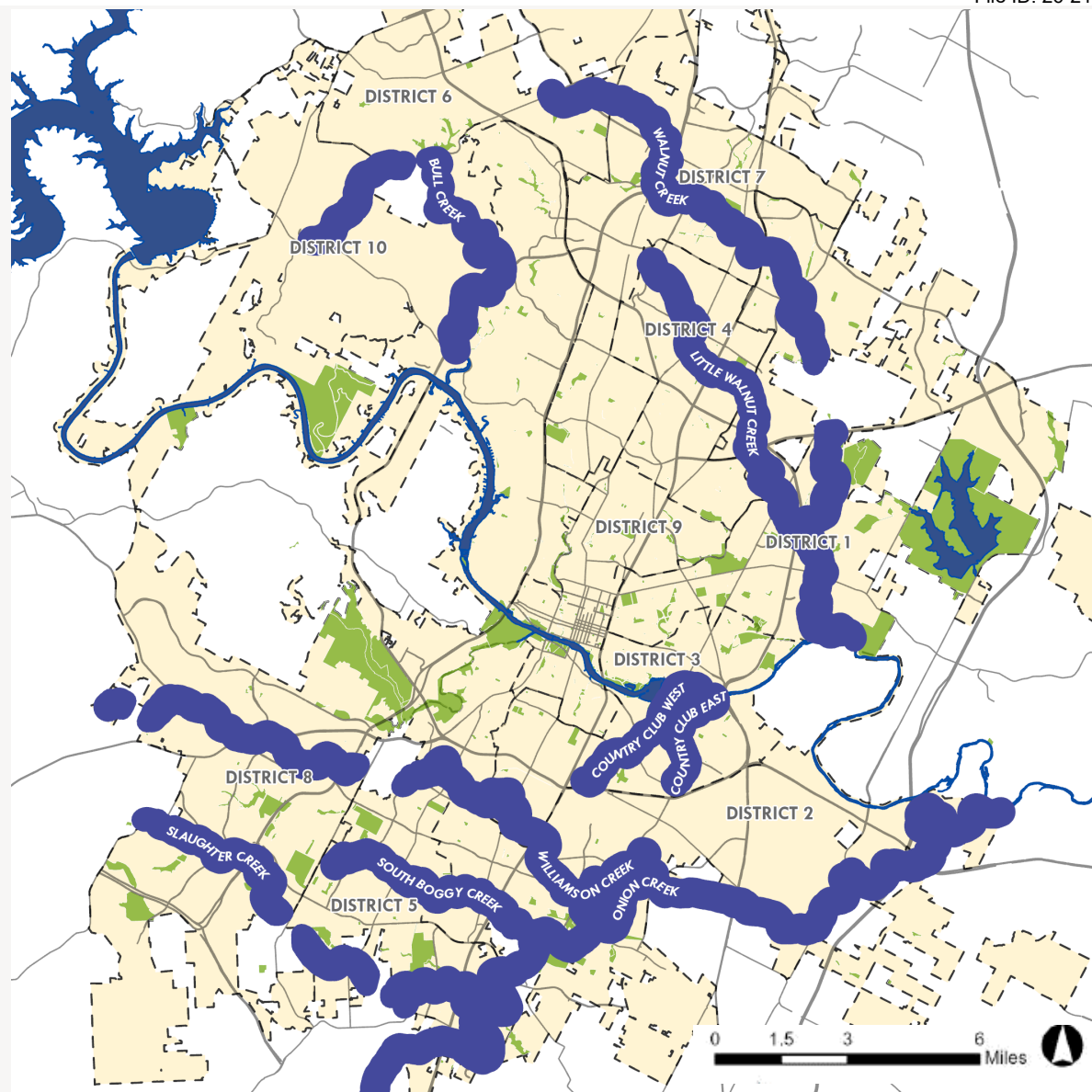
- Deficiency: Areas outside of a 5 to 10 minute walk from a park
- Prioritize Equity: Demographic and environmental factors

Technical Criteria	Percentage
Population of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)	24%
Prevalence of negative health outcomes such as asthma, obesity, physical inactivity, and diabetes	24%
Population ages 18 or below	20%
Forecasted population growth	16%
Population below 40% median household income	16%



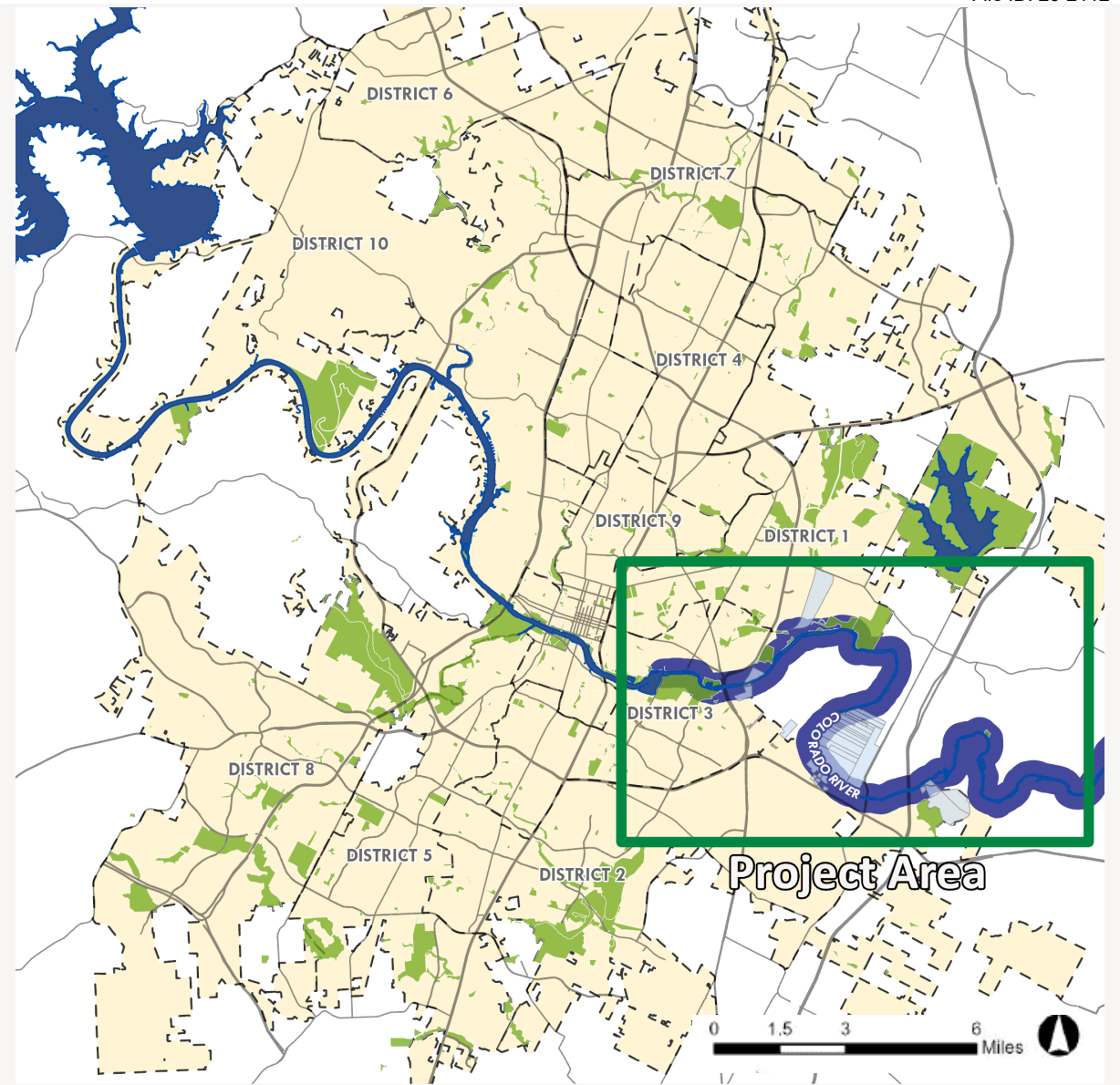
Greenbelt Gaps

- Greenbelt and trail corridors are a linear open space with multiple functions including water quality protection, wildlife habitat, and micromobility routes
- Greenbelt corridors link together parks, neighborhoods, and community spaces
- Park trail-related activities such as walking, biking, and running remain the most popular activities



Colorado River Trail

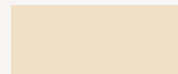
- Acquisition of land, including publicly owned land, to dedicate as parkland to fulfill the Colorado River Corridor Vision Plan with a shared use trail
- Colorado River Corridor Vision Plan is a collaboration between Travis County and the City of Austin to coordinate regional and local planning efforts



Recreation Center

- Identify land for development of a Recreation Center in Southeast Austin
- Gap Analysis and Facility Assessment
 - 2024 assessment found that expanding recreation facilities into Southeast Austin would help fill a key gap in service and better meet the community's recreational and programmatic needs

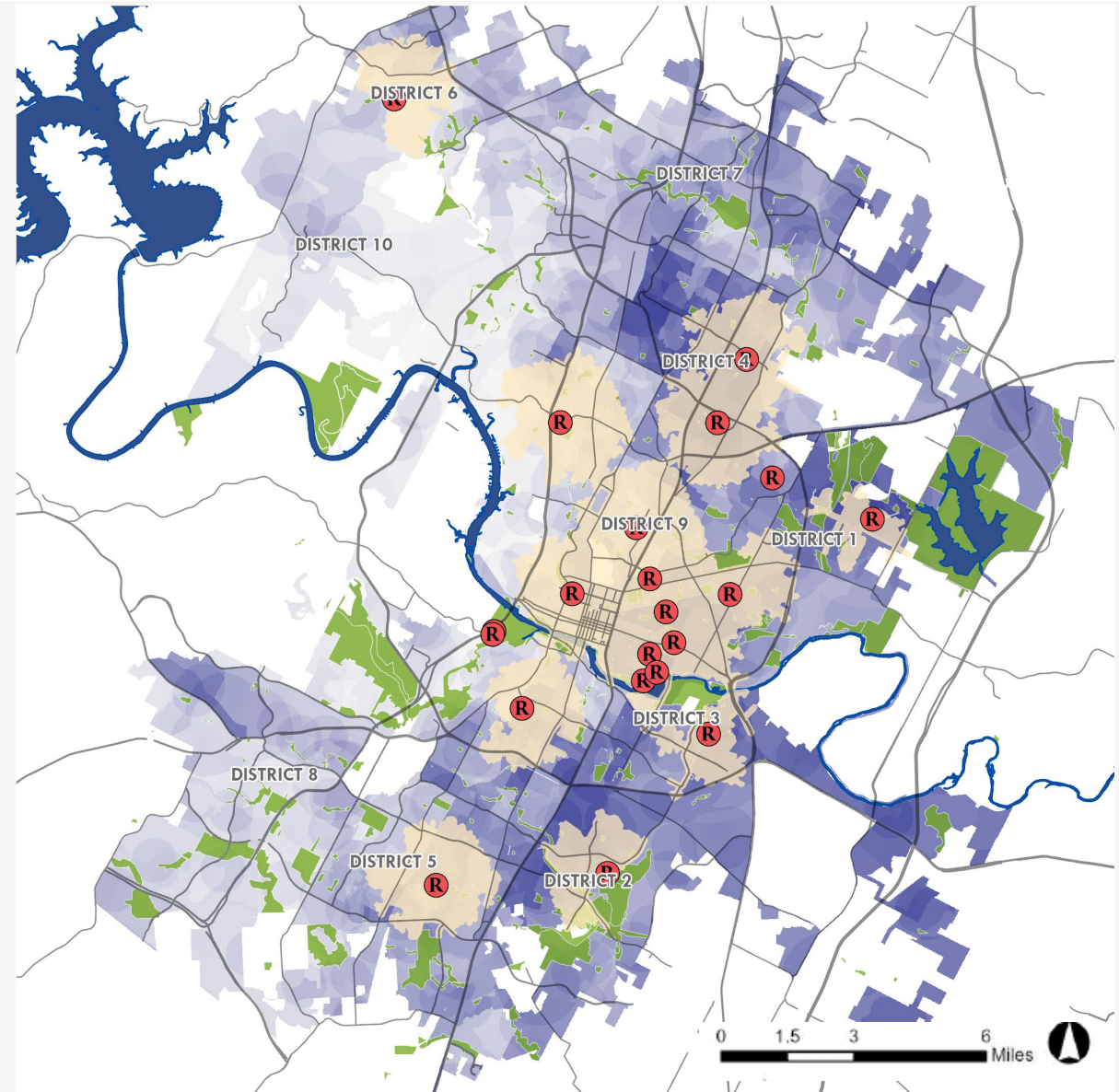
Recreation Center
Service Area



Equity Priority
Area



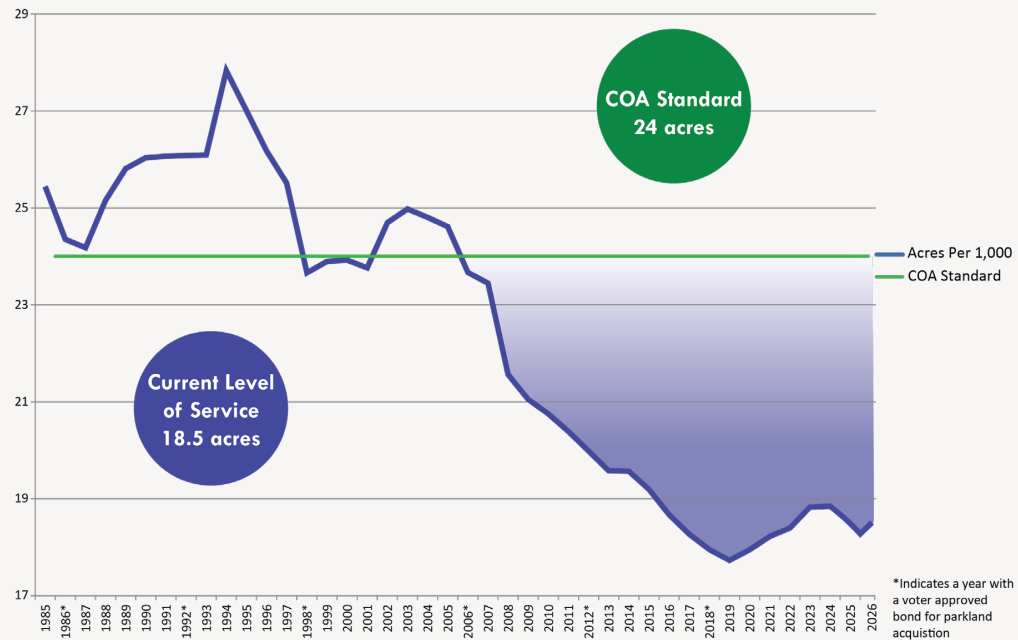
Existing Rec
Center



Long-term Goal Progress



18.5 Acres of Parkland per 1,000
People



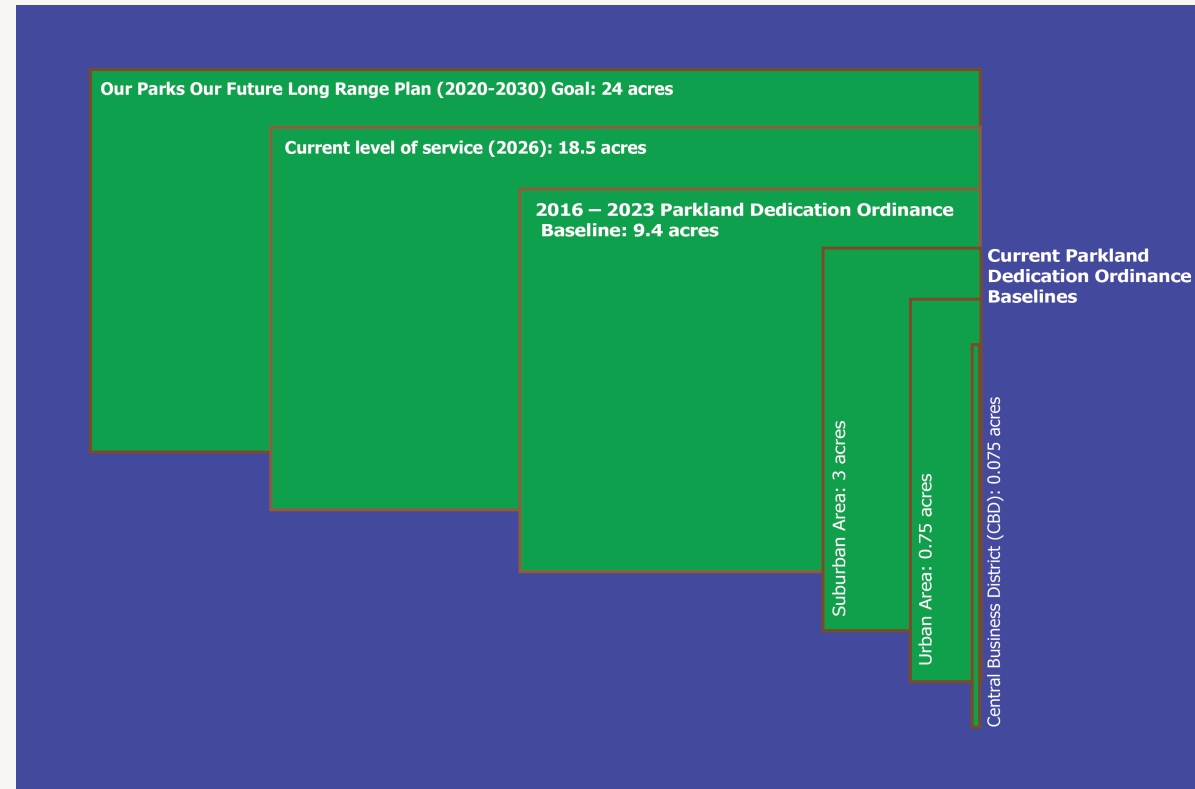
65% of Austinites within a Five to
Ten-Minute Walk of a Park



Challenges for Parkland Acquisition – HB 1526



- APR Long-Range Plan goal: **24 acres / 1,000 residents**
- Current citywide level of service: **18.5 acres / 1,000 residents**
- **2016 PLD ordinance: ~9.4 acres / 1,000** (≈40% of goal)
- **Current PLD ordinance: 0.075–3 acres / 1,000** (<12% of goal)
- Remaining park needs funded through bonds, taxpayers, grants, and other City funding



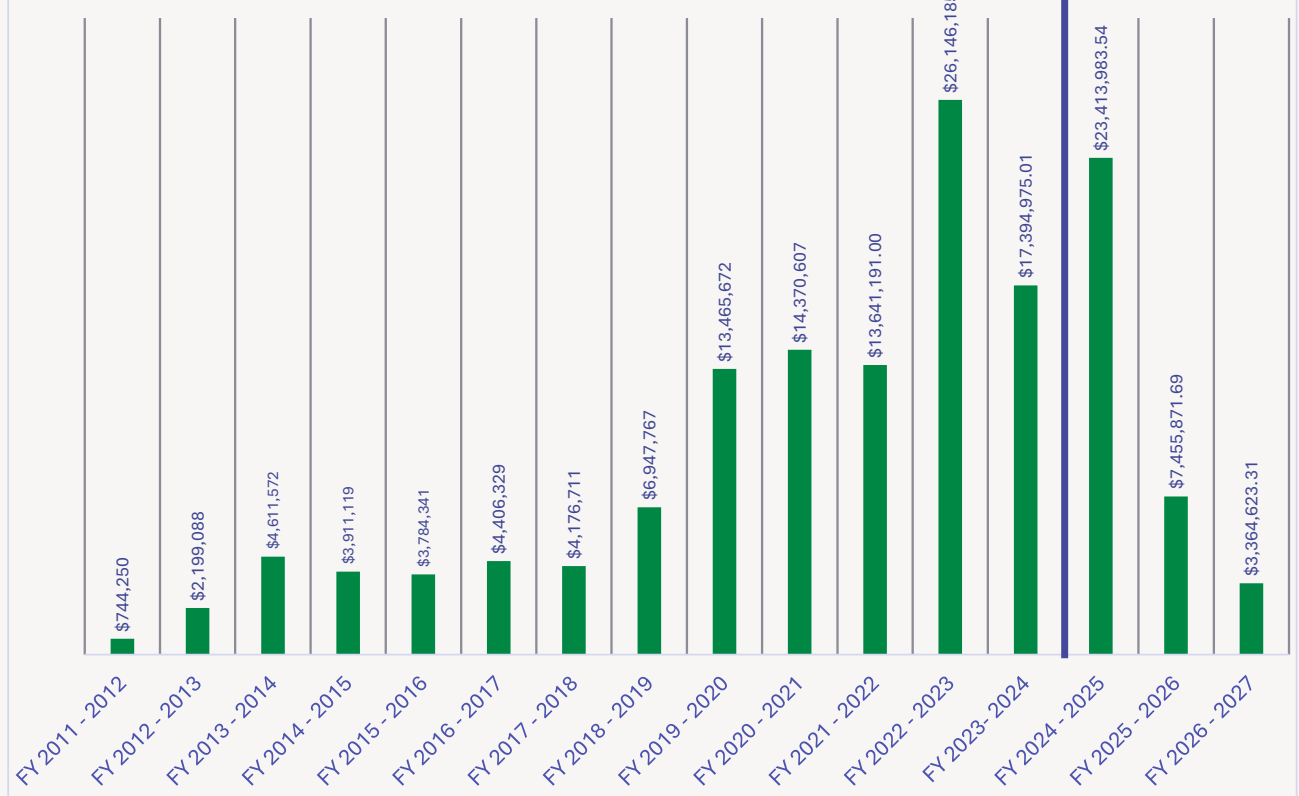
Challenges for Parkland Acquisition – HB 1526



Effective
Fiscal Year

- **Previous ordinance:** Up to **\$26 million/year** invested in park acquisition and development
- **\$1.00 in bond funding matched by \$0.33 in PLD funding**
- **HB 1526:** PLD payment delayed ~**5 years** after permit issuance
- Estimated **\$15–20 million/year** funding gap for up to **5 years**
- Delayed park acquisition and park delivery for new residents

Parkland Dedication Fees Appropriated Annually



Opening of Parkland / Passive Parks



- Minimal development: **nature trails, signage, natural landscapes**
- Includes **greenbelts, preserves, and newly acquired parkland**
- Provides public access while preserving natural character
- Supports recreation, wildlife habitat, and connection to nature
- Complements fully developed parks as part of a balanced park system

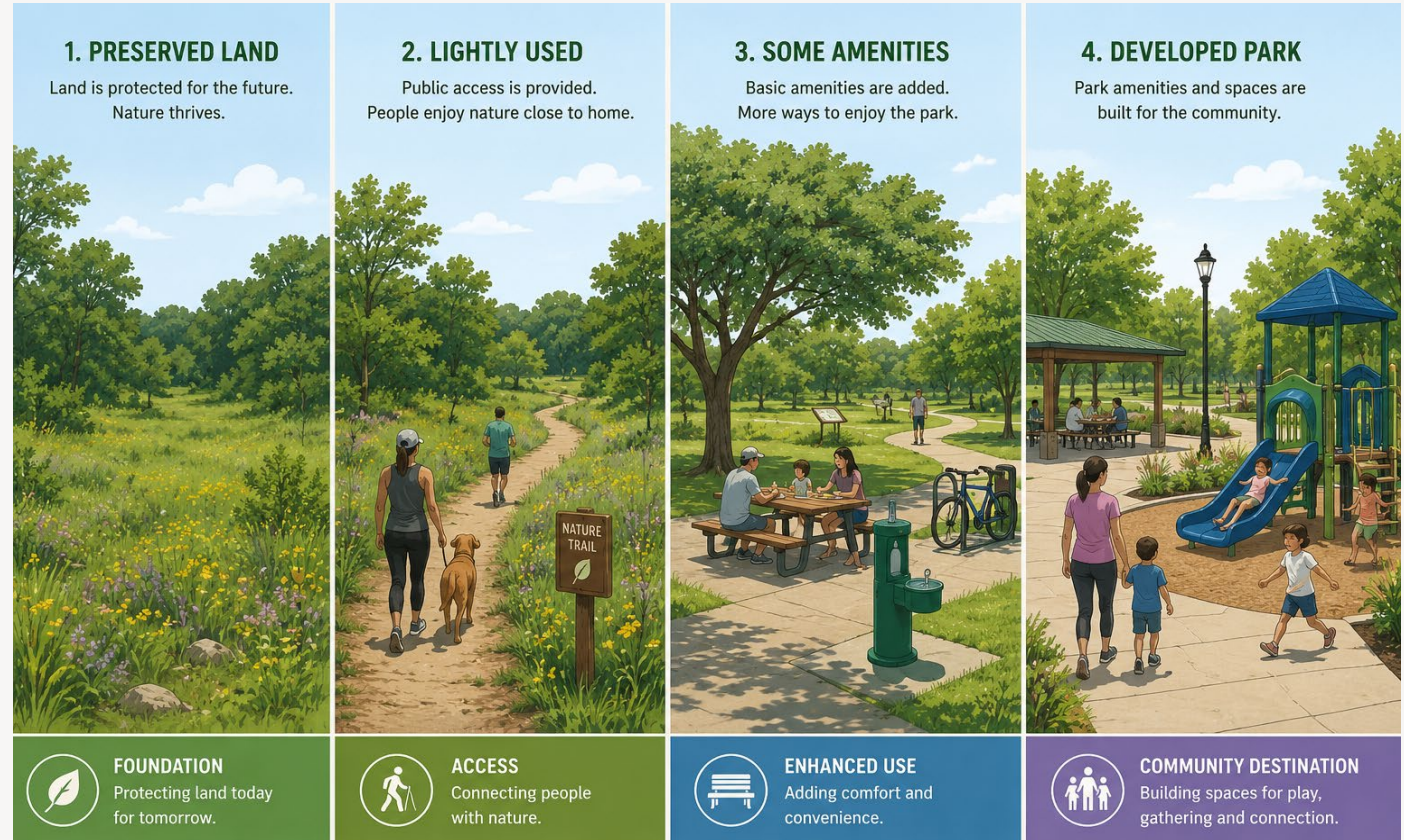


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Passive Parks Timeline

- **0–12 months:** land acquired; any needed demo, hazards removed, signage; **Park is then open for safe public access**
- **1–2 years:** Light improvements (nature trails, vegetation management)
- **2+ years:** Managed for passive recreation until development funding is available
- Ongoing maintenance includes **mowing, tree care, and natural area management**
- Estimated annual maintenance costs:
 - Infill Parks: ~ \$2,500/acre
 - Destination Parks: ~ \$130/acre
 - Greenbelts: ~ \$75/acre



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Land Banking Case Study: John Treviño Park

- Acquiring land ahead of development pressure preserves future park opportunities at lower costs.
- Land banked properties provide **passive public access today** while allowing time to secure future development funding.
- **John Treviño Jr. Metro Park example:** Purchased in 2003 for **\$8M (~\$26K/acre)**; vision plan adopted 2020, phase 1 construction starting in 2026.
- Estimated 2026 acquisition cost: **\$33M to \$100M** — demonstrating significant long-term taxpayer savings.





Certificates of Obligation Update

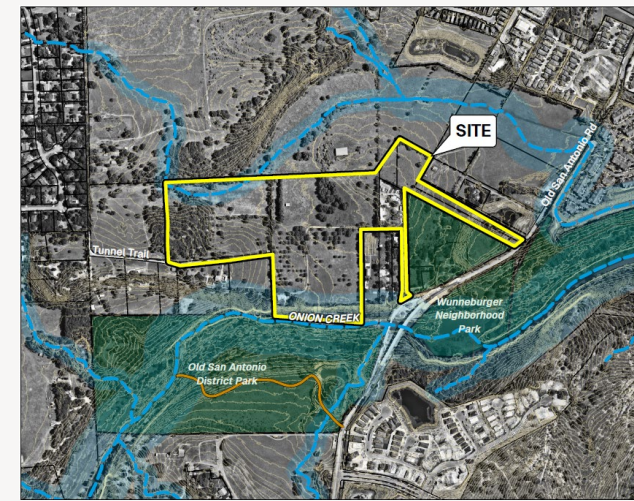
- Council established a **dedicated Land Acquisition Fund of \$50M** to accelerate acquisition of parkland and open space.
- The program advances multiple City priorities – **parks, water quality, drainage, and flood resilience**.
- A **cross-departmental team** developed a scoring matrix to consistently prioritize acquisition opportunities.
- Staff uses framework to identify and advance the **highest-priority properties** as funding becomes available.



Certificates of Obligation Update



- Approximately 50-acre property along Onion Creek at Old San Antonio Road closed in May 2026.
- One acquisition property nearing contract stage.
- Ten potential acquisition properties are under negotiation.





Thank You!