



KENDALL COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

2023



RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT OF KENDALL COUNTY, TEXAS ADOPTING THE 2023-2033 COMPREHENSIVE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN, AND FINDING AND DETERMINING THAT THE MEETING AT WHICH THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AS REQUIRED BY LAW.

WHEREAS, the Kendall County Commissioners' Court recognizes the need for a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (the "Plan") to provide goals, assessments, standards, recommendations, and strategies for implementation over a ten-year period in an effort to provide for and continually improve park and recreational facilities, provide trail opportunities, preserve open space, and rehabilitate existing county parks; and

WHEREAS, the primary objective of the "Plan" is to provide parks and recreational services desired by the citizens of Kendall County, acquire needed open spaces, and preserve natural resources; and

WHEREAS, in order to address recreational needs in the future, Kendall County has sought input from the citizens of Kendall County through a survey, public input meetings, and county staff, and that input has been incorporated into the "Plan"; and

WHEREAS, the "Plan" complies with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department master plan guidelines which require parks and recreation needs to be prioritized and addressed in an action plan format; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners' Court determines that the "Plan" is reasonable;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT OF KENDALL COUNTY, TEXAS:

SECTION I.

That the 2023-2033 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan for Kendall County is officially adopted, as attached hereto, and incorporated herein for all intents and purposes.

SECTION II.

That a ten-year Action Plan has been developed to prioritize implementation of the 2023-2033 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, guide the rehabilitation of existing parks, provide guidance in the application of funding, and suggest alternative funding mechanisms.

SECTION III.

That adoption of the 2022-2032 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan shall not commit Kendall County to specific amounts of funding levels or implementation strategies, but shall provide guidance to the Commissioners' Court for future consideration of indoor and outdoor recreational services for its citizens.

PRESENTED AND APPROVED ON THIS THE 28 day of November, 2022, by a vote of 4 ayes, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions at a regular meeting of the Commissioners' Court of Kendall County, Texas.

APPROVED:



Darrel Lux, County Judge

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Bill Ballard, General Counsel

ATTEST:



Darlene Herrin, County Clerk



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kendall County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan was prepared by Kendall County Parks Staff. A special thanks to the Parks Advisory Board members, residents, and community leaders for their insight and support throughout the duration of this master planning process.

The following individuals are recognized for their significant contributions to the preparation of the Parks Master Plan.

COMMISSIONERS COURT

The Honorable Darrel Lux, County Judge
The Honorable Christina Bergmann, Commissioner Precinct One
The Honorable Richard Elkins, Commissioner Precinct Two
The Honorable Richard Chapman, Commissioner Precinct Three
The Honorable Don Durden, Commissioner Precinct Four

LEGAL COUNSEL

Bill Ballard, General Counsel

COUNTY STAFF

Joe Reissig, Parks Director
Daniel Vetter, Former Parks Director

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

Brent Evans	Frederick Cook
Jonathan Piper	Dale Bransford
Jed Mazour	Andrew Robinson
Patricia Ptak	Maritza Gonzalez-Cooper
Brad Gessner	



Table of Contents

Resolution	I
Acknowledgments	III
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Framework	2
History	2
Geology	3
Community Profile	4
Department Overview	7
Benefits of Parks, Recreation, & Open Spaces	10
Chapter 2. Existing Park System	12
Purpose of Existing Inventory	13
Park Classification Types	13
Components of Park Descriptions	14
Condition Scale	15
Park Description	16
Aquifer Zones	36
Endangered/Threatened Species	37
Chapter 3. Planning Process	38
Purpose of the Comprehensive Master Plan	39
Plan Timeframe and Updating	39
Jurisdiction and Planning Areas	40
Needs Assessment and Identification	40
▪ <i>Demand-Based Assessment</i>	41
▪ <i>Resource-Based Assessment</i>	49
▪ <i>Standard-Based Assessment</i>	50
Chapter 4. Recommendations	53
Vision Statement	54
Mission statement	54
Goals, Objectives, and Action Plans	54

Chapter 5. Implementation Plan	78
Implementation Plan Development	79
Funding Issues and Opportunities	84
Appendices	89
A. Kendall County	90
B. Park Locations	91
C. Parks Inventory	92
D. Precinct Map	93
E. References	94

Tables

Chapter 1. Introduction

Table 1.1. Parks and Recreation Budget	9
Table 1.2. Fees and Charges	9

Chapter 2. Existing Park System

Table 2.1. Condition Scale	15
Table 2.2. Comfort Park Inventory	18
Table 2.3. James Kiehl River Bend Park Inventory	21
Table 2.4. Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area Inventory	24
Table 2.5. Joshua Springs Park and Preserve Inventory	27
Table 2.6. Youth Agricultural and Equestrian Center Inventory	30
Table 2.7. Ring Mountain Event Center Inventory	32
Table 2.8. Kendalia Public Library Inventory	34

Chapter 3. Planning Process

Table 3.1. Park Acreage Standard	
Table 3.2. Trail Classification Standard	

Figures

Chapter 1. Introduction

Figure 1.1. Population Growth	4
Figure 1.2. Ethnicity	5
Figure 1.3. Income	6
Figure 1.4. Age Distribution	6
Figure 1.5. Education Attainment	7
Figure 1.6. Organizational Chart	8

Chapter 2. Existing Park System

Figure 2.1. Aquifer Zones	36
Figure 2.2. Endangered Species	37
Figure 2.3. Threatened Species	37

Chapter 3. Planning Process

Figure 3.1. Question 1	41
Figure 3.2. Question 2	42
Figure 3.3. Question 3	42
Figure 3.4. Question 4	43
Figure 3.5. Question 5	43
Figure 3.6. Question 6	44
Figure 3.7. Question 7	44
Figure 3.8. Question 8	45
Figure 3.9. Question 9	46
Figure 3.10. Question 10	47
Figure 3.11. Question 11	47
Figure 3.12. Question 12	48
Figure 3.13. Question 13	48
Figure 3.14. Question 14	49

Chapter 5. Implementation Plan

Figure 5.1. Priority Action Time Frame	80
Figure 5.2. Prioritized Implementation Action Plan	81

INTRODUCTION

1



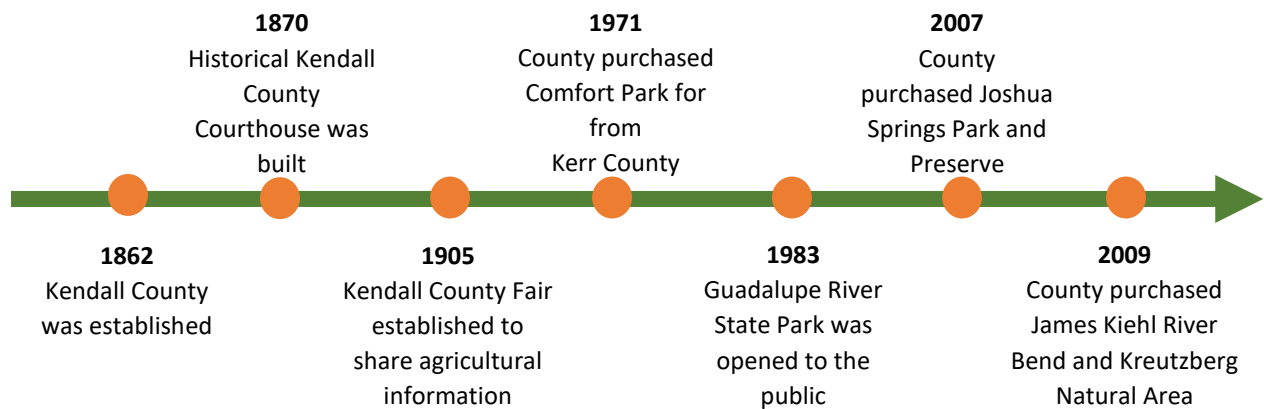
I. Introduction

Framework

The Kendall County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (Master Plan) was created for Kendall County to pave a road map and construct the framework for the County’s involvement in providing parks, recreation, and open space for the residents. With additional public input and direction from the court, this 2023 plan provides guidance to the county judge, commissioners, and parks department staff as they continue to design, construct, and maintain parks and recreational resources. With such a fast-growing population comes the rapid disappearance of suitable land available for recreational purposes. This is a direct threat to ensuring quality of life for all residents, protection of water resources, wildlife, and habitats. Critical steps must be taken before development pressures eradicate these opportunities.

History

Kendall County, Texas established in 1862, was formed and organized during the Civil War under the Confederate State of Texas. Named after George Wilkins Kendall, a journalist and pioneer Texas sheepman, Kendall County is a vibrant community with roughly 663 square miles nestled in the western Hill Country of south central Texas, just 30 miles northwest of San Antonio. The county seat is the City of Boerne, the largest city in the county. Interstate 10 crosses the county from northwest to southeast on its way from El Paso to San Antonio. State Highway 46 runs east-west across the county, intersecting Interstate 10 and U.S. Highway 87 in Boerne. Neighboring counties include Bandera, Bexar, Blanco, Comal, Gillespie, and Kerr. A county location map is included as [\(Appendix A\)](#). Known for its scenic views of the Texas Hill Country, Kendall County ranges in elevation from 1,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level.



Geology

Kendall County is blessed with a wide range of geologic features, from the plains of the great Guadalupe River, to the rocky cliffs jutting from the forested rolling countryside, to the “wedding cake” shaped limestone hills. These wonderful features provide an abundance of opportunities to escape the urban feel of the county’s towns and surrounding metropolitan centers and get lost among in Kendall county’s natural areas.

Geologically, Kendall County has a typical karst topography- hills, caves, and sinkholes created by the action of water on the soft, water soluble, calcareous rocks left by the receding Cretaceous seas. Underground, between the porous surface and underlying ancient igneous and sandstone rock layers lie aquifers created by water filtering from the surface through the karst layers. These aquifers provide Kendall County and surrounding areas with water for habitations, agricultural use and recreation.

Within the Kendall County parks, landforms and soils consist mainly of five calcareous types: Loamy Bottomland, Clay Loam, Low Stony Hill, Steep Adobe and Steep Rocky. Other types of calcareous soils intermix within these five major types. Most soils, unless bought in, derive from the physical and chemical reaction of water and erosion on the region’s Cretaceous formations.

Soils tend to be poor in upland portions of the county parks (Steep Rocky, Steep Adobe and Low Rocky Hill). There, a continuous drought/flood cycle of weather contributes to a breakdown of landforms with downpours with the resulting flooding carrying soils and rocks to lower levels, leaving dry and dusty eroding soils exposed for the next wet cycle.

Lower portions of Kendall County parks have a greater percentage of hydric, or water retaining soils because of their flat landscape. Pooling water, caused by runoff from higher elevations and deposits of silt by the rivers’ and creeks’ seasonal flooding, have resulted in a range of loamy soils in the lowlands. This soil supports farming, ranching, and other human activity, as well as a greater diversity of grasses, woody plants, shrubs, trees and fauna than in the dry upper portions.

In the millennia since the oceans of the Cretaceous era, flora and fauna have evolved in the Kendall County area to form a stable symbiotic community. Periodic disturbances - such as flood, fire, and previous heavy grazing from herds of bison maintained a stable environment for the flora and fauna.

Tall bunchgrasses have adapted to life on higher, rocky landforms, and moderating the effects of erosion by maintaining appropriate soil and water levels. Likewise, at the lower levels, the hydric soils foster hardwood-grass savannahs with deep-roots which maintain the integrity of the riparian and river steppe areas, while providing support for abundant wildlife.

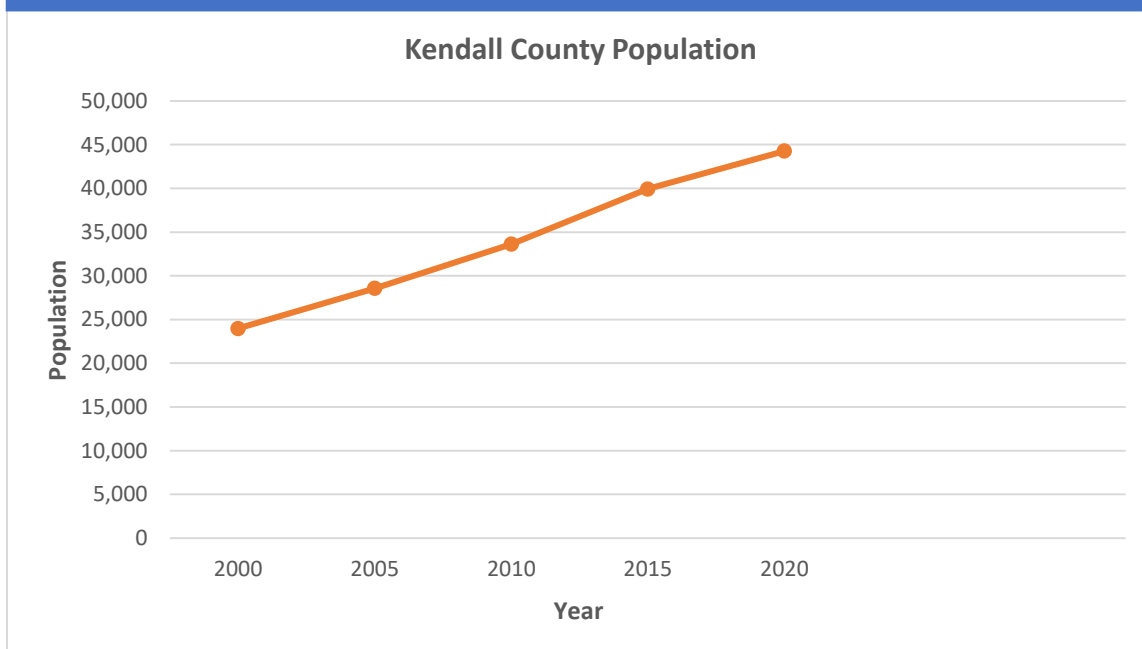
Community Profile

Population

As Texas experiences exponential growth, communities such as Kendall County, the 7th fastest growing county in the nation (O’Hare, 2019) and home to 49,027 residents as of 2021, begin to feel the impact of urbanization. Since 2000 Kendall County has experienced a population growth increase of 37%, presented in **Figure 1.1: Population Growth**.



Figure 1.1: Population Growth



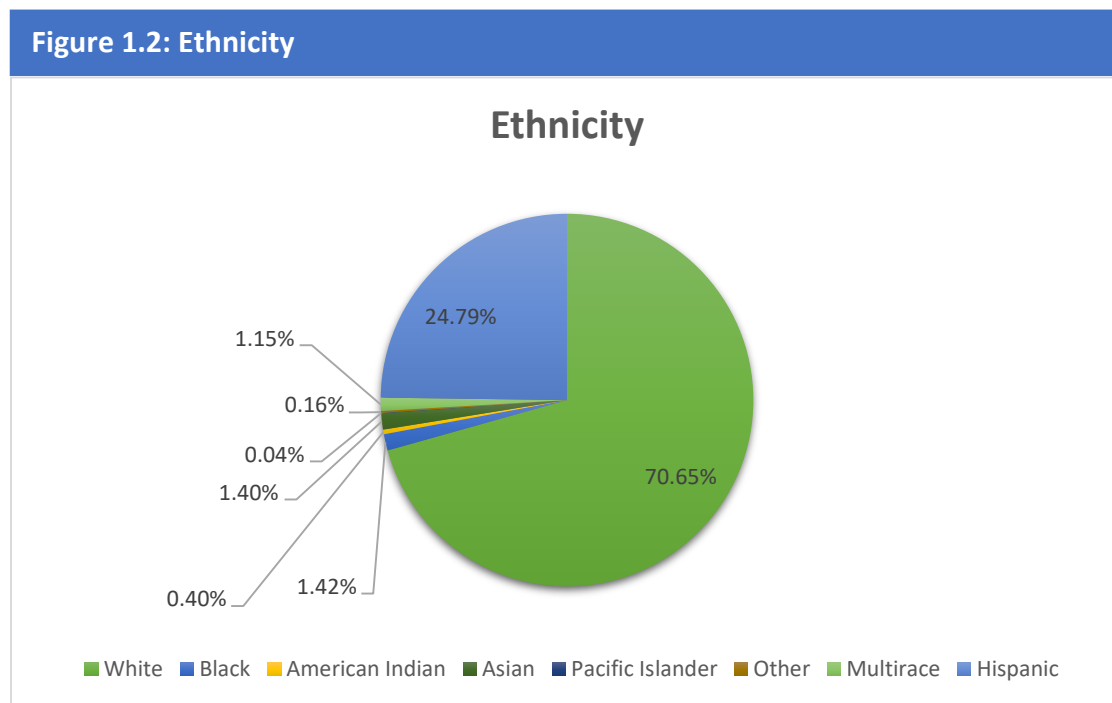
*Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation

This rapid increase is fueled by a thriving economy and environmental benefits of a strong park system. With such rapid growth comes a continuous demand for parks, recreation and open space opportunities.

Population density in Kendall County is roughly two-thirds of the national average, at 66.8 people per square mile whereas the national average is 92.6 people per square mile. Driven by continuous growth in the Austin/San Antonio corridor, Kendall County continues to see new roads, businesses and housing development. The majority of this growth is in the southern portion of the county, home to over 75% of the population.

Ethnicity

Figure 1.2: Ethnicity exhibits the ethnic characteristics of Kendall County. County residents are predominately white/Caucasian at 70.65% The Hispanic and Latino percentage of the population is 24.79%, which is significantly lower than the overall Texas over at 40%.

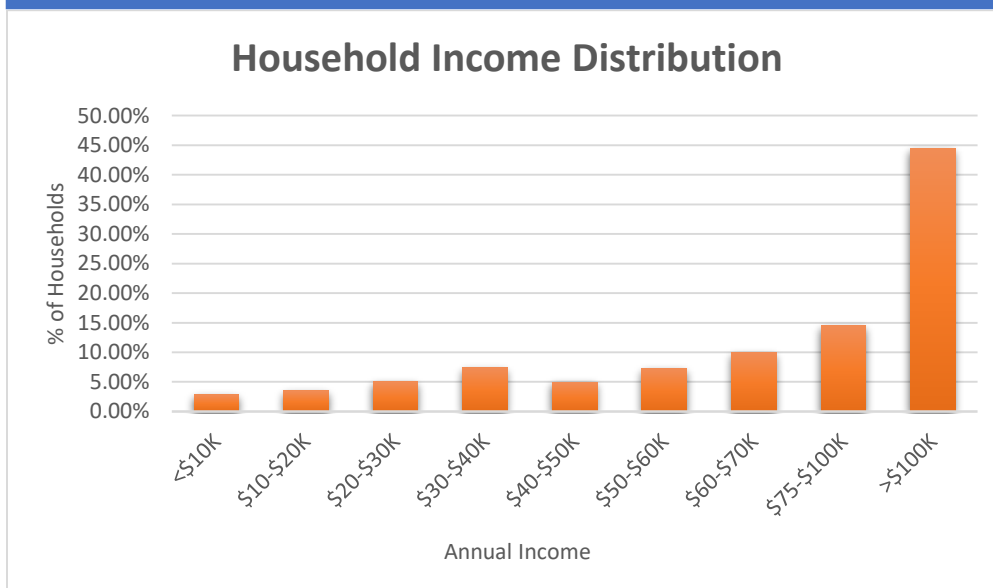


*Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation

Income

According to the Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation, **Figure 1.3: Income** indicates the average household income of Kendall County to be \$119,214. This is significantly higher than the overall Texas average household of \$61, 847.

Figure 1.3: Income

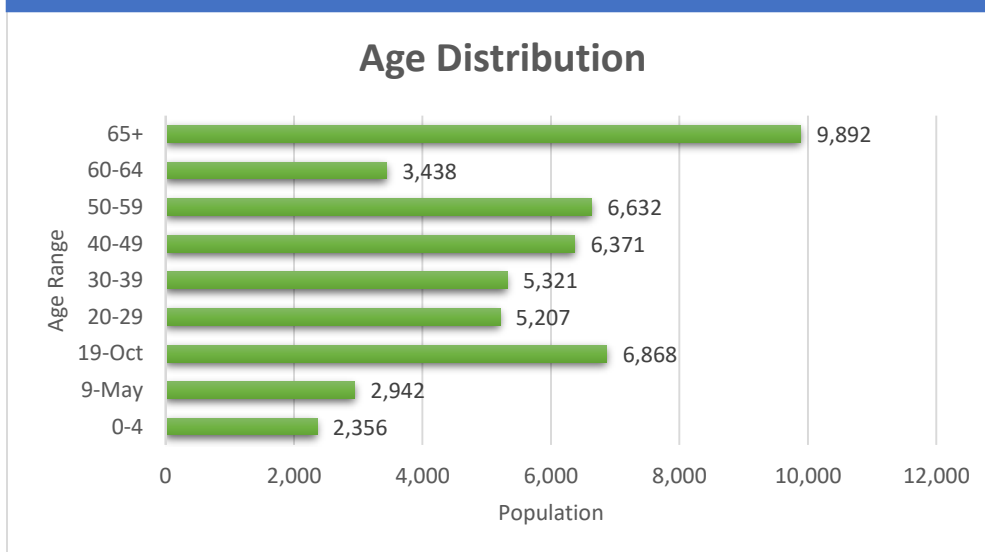


*Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation

Age

Evaluating community population by age helps determine the needs of the residents to be served by park facilities and recreational programs. **Figure 1.4: Age Distribution** suggests that more than half of the population is comprised of young families with seniors representing a large portion of the remaining population. The average median age is 42.

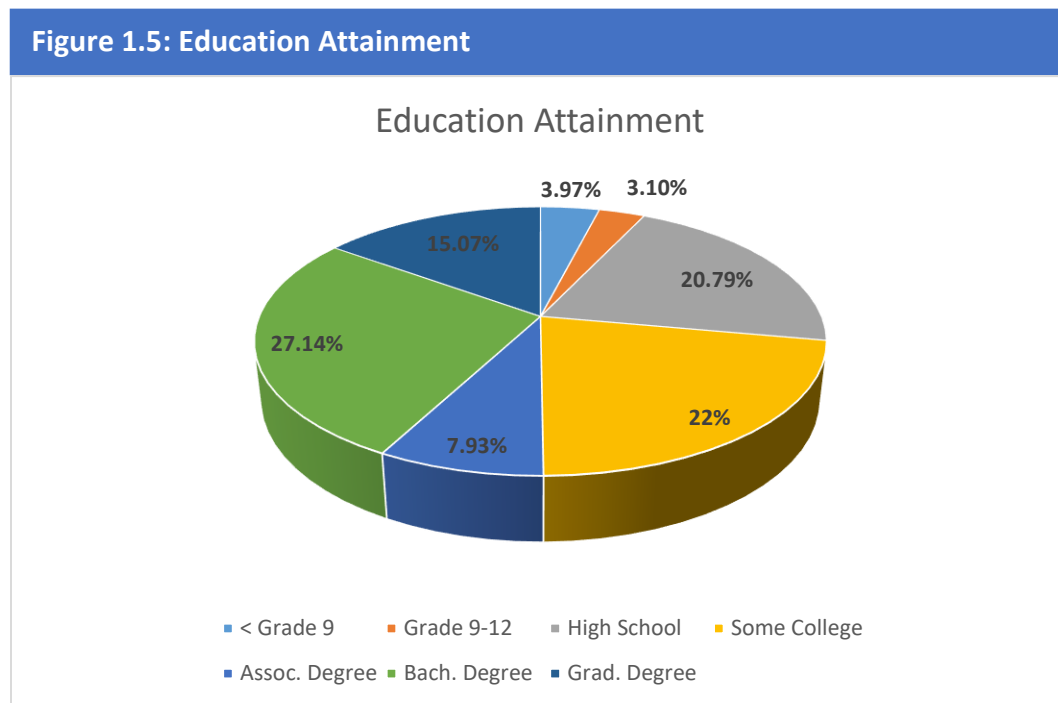
Figure 1.4: Age Distribution



*Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation

Education

Figure 1.5: Education Attainment (below), indicates the percentage of educational attainment for Kendall County residents. The portion of the population with a high school diploma or higher stands at 92.93%, whereas the State of Texas lands at 83.7%. Furthermore, the percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher is 42.21 % for Kendall County, compared to 29.9% of Texas residents (United States Department of Agriculture, 2021).



*Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation

Department Overview

Administrative Structure

County-owned land and recreational services are managed and maintained by the Kendall County Parks Department. Developed in 2006, the Kendall County Parks Department was established to conserve natural resources and provide recreational opportunities to the residents of Kendall County. The parks department operates under the direction of the Kendall County Commissioners Court, led by the county judge and a commissioner from each of the four precincts. The Parks Director oversees the planning, administration, and implementation of park acquisition, development, and capital improvement projects for the department. Additional full time employees assist in park and facility maintenance, programming, and office operations. The Kendall County Parks Advisory Board (Parks Advisory Board) is a voluntary and advisory group established in 2021 to provide support and guidance to the parks department on matters

pertaining to the Master Plan, policies and procedures, and any other items determined by the Parks Director. The Parks Advisory Board is responsible for identifying current recreational and facility needs, securing land for recreation, and protecting natural resources to align with residents’ needs. The number of employees in each position is shown in **Figure 1.6: Organizational Chart** below.

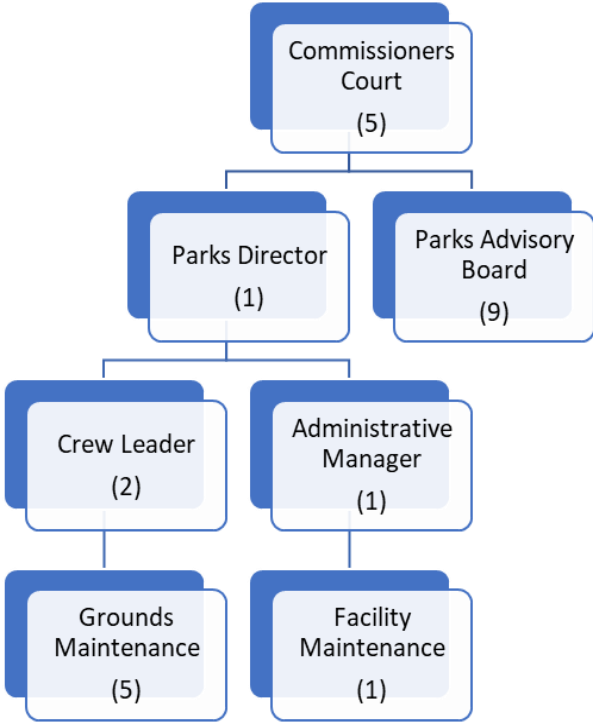


Figure 1.6: Organizational Chart

Funding and Budget

The Parks Department is funded through the Kendall County general fund. A proposed budget is prepared annually and presented to the Commissioners Court for review and adoption. Funding is also generated through facility rentals, recreation programs, and various fundraising activities. **Table 1: Parks and Recreation Budget** provides an account of budgets since fiscal year 2013 to current fiscal year, 2022. The Kendall County Parks Department will have a \$977,611 budget for fiscal year 2023.

Table 1.1: Parks and Recreation Budget

Fiscal Year	Budget	Expenses	Revenue	Total Expenses
2013	\$554,485	\$458,769	\$34,020	\$424,749
2014	\$495,537	\$479,375	\$32,815	\$446,560
2015	\$585,250	\$488,831	\$31,980	\$456,851
2016	\$542,160	\$475,651	\$29,990	\$445,661
2017	\$508,998	\$480,483	\$24,950	\$455,533
2018	\$681,357	\$658,943	\$34,900	\$624,043
2019	\$629,329	\$602,234	\$42,852	\$559,382
2020	\$665,893	\$634,453	\$21,136	\$613,317
2021	\$719,768	\$636,258	\$25,450	\$610,808
2022	\$822,798	Current	Fiscal	Year

Fees and Charges

Kendall County has numerous opportunities to generate revenue. Facility rentals, special event permits, and recreational rentals are a few examples. The revenue from rental fees help to offset maintenance costs and supplement overall budget. The fees and charges are listed in **Table 2: Fees and Charges**.

Table 1.2: Fees and Charges

Location	Description	# of People	Electricity	Cost
Joshua Springs	Site 1- Pavilion	40	Yes	\$24-\$30
	Site 2- Pavilion	40	Yes	\$24-\$30
	Site 3- Pavilion	225	Yes	\$160-\$200
Park & Preserve	Event Center	150-200	Yes	\$800-\$2000
	Camp Sites		No	\$10
	Disc Golf Set		No	\$10
All Parks	Special Event Permit		Yes	\$25-\$200

Benefits of Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces

Access to parks, recreation, and open spaces is a vital resource local governments offer to improve the health and overall quality of life for the community. A well-planned parks and recreation system positively impacts several aspects of a community, including the economy, environment, and the health and socialization of its residents. This Master Plan has been constructed to convey the important public benefits derived from access to these incredible resources.

I. Parks Provide Health & Social Related Benefits

Regular physical activity is an important part of maintaining good health. Physical activity promotes brain health by increasing cognitive and motor skills, while reducing the risk of depression and anxiety. Weight management, decreased risk of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, bone and improved muscle strength are direct results of regular physical activity. According to the American Heart Association, at least 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic activity is recommended (2018). The most common chronic health conditions that Texans face include cardiovascular disease, obesity, and diabetes. From 1990-2019, Texas consistently had a higher obesity rate when compared to the U.S. overall. In 2019, 34.8% of Texans were diagnosed with obesity compared to 30.9% of Americans (TxOHC, 2020). Not everyone has access to gyms or expensive exercise equipment, but parks can promote health equity by offering all these benefits for little to no cost. Health equity is defined as “the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain their full health potential and no one is disadvantaged because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance” (Sciences et al., 2017). Parks and open spaces provide numerous opportunities for communities throughout the country to engage in physical activity, whether they’re hitting the trail, climbing on playground structures, or simply looking to physically connect with nature. Parks can also serve as a place of refuge, where people of different cultures interact, acting as a catalyst for social interaction. The casual interactions that occur among park users from a simple hand wave gesture to a smile are important factors to fostering a healthy sense of community and inclusion.

II. Parks Promote Economic Growth & Impact

Parks, - including open space, nature preserves, hiking and biking trails, lakes, river access, etc., - enhance the quality of life for residents as well as attract new residents desiring to be part of a community. Communities that provide opportunities to be surrounded by nature and enjoy recreational activities, and community events often increase property values. Additionally, positive economic impact may increase due to more residents paying taxes, shopping, and other increased spending within the county. Parks and related recreational opportunities also attract people that reside outside of the county who may be looking for lodging as well as other goods

and services (restaurants, gasoline, etc.). This helps drive consumer spending in the area, thus generating a positive economic impact.

III. Parks Provide Environmental Benefits

Parks and open spaces serve multiple functions for a community including conservation efforts that are crucial to wildlife habitats, recreational use, and water and air quality protection. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, one acre of tree canopy removes 80 pounds of air pollution (NRPA, 2010). To help reduce overdevelopment of a community's natural resources, parks and open spaces ensure proper land stewardship and proper management of the precious raw materials vital to a thriving community.

"A nation behaves well if it treats its natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value."

~ Theodore Roosevelt

EXISTING PARK SYSTEM

2



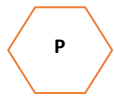
II. Existing Park System

Purpose of Existing Inventory

Key elements of the park planning process include understanding what park and open space facilities are currently available to county residents, evaluating the condition and spatial location of those facilities and open space areas ([Appendix B](#)), and determining whether or the facilities and open space areas address the current recreational needs of the county. Comparison of similar recreation facilities and open space areas will shed light on the need for new or improved locations, facilities, and services. For a comprehensive parks/facility inventory see ([Appendix C](#)).

Park Classification Types

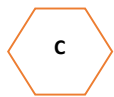
Development of spatial and facility standards must include consideration of park classification types. Generally recognized classifications include:



Pocket (or Mini-) Park – Pocket/mini parks are small gathering spaces ranging from 1/8 acre to 1 acre. These are generally accessed by pedestrian and/or bicycle means, as parking is typically not provided. Benches, fountains, landscaping, and other focal features are commonly found within a pocket park.



Neighborhood Park – Neighborhood parks range from 1 acre to 10 acres and are developed primarily for day use. They serve as the recreational and social focus area of the neighborhood. A neighborhood park is essential for promoting a healthy, interactive neighborhood and should serve as an extension to existing residential activities.



Community Park – Community parks serve a group of neighborhoods or a portion of the county. They are intended to meet community-based recreational needs (active and passive), preserve unique and localized cultural features, and accommodate community based social events. A typical community park should also have room for expansion and varies in size from 10 acres to over 50 acres.



Regional Park – Regional parks serve multiple communities or an entire region, and are typically over 75 acres. These parks are often dual purpose, designed to preserve natural

resources while providing numerous recreational opportunities such as boating, camping, fishing, hiking, swimming, and other nature-based recreational activities.



Linear/Greenbelt Park – Linear/greenbelt parks vary in size and generally follow a natural or man-made feature such as a creek, abandoned railroad right-of-way, or utility corridors. They may connect to other parks, schools, neighborhoods, or public facilities, or help to preserve open space. These are typically maintained as natural areas and have well developed trail systems.



Special Use Park – Special use parks range in size with no specific acreage standard. They are made to accommodate specialized recreational activities such as golf courses, athletic complexes, nature centers or preserves, or aquatic centers.



Natural Resource Area – Natural resource areas are managed primarily for resource conservation. Often protected for their scenic, wildlife, cultural, or hydrologic values with recreation as a secondary objective.



Event Space – Event spaces vary in size and are intended to provide a rental space to host events such as weddings, meetings, exercise classes, etc.

The Kendall County park system does not include examples of each of the above park classifications. Some classifications, such as pocket park and neighborhood park, are more appropriate to a municipal park system such as the City of Boerne. Explanation of each category is included in this plan to analyze recreation demand and supply for the entire county.

Components of Park Descriptions

Classification: The purpose of the space, such as a pocket park, neighborhood park, community park, regional park, linear park, linkage park, special purpose park, natural resource area, or other classification specific to Kendall County.

Location: Concerns the location of the park in relation to the population it serves, as well as its accessibility and amount of use.

Park size: If there's enough acreage to accomplish its intended purposes.

Facilities: Type of facilities and their appropriateness to park classification.

Condition Scale

A condition scale was formulated to evaluate the current condition of park and recreation facilities within each park. A description for each condition is provided to assist the parks department with improvements regarding park infrastructure.

Table 2.1: Condition Scale

Condition	Description
Excellent	New asset or recently upgraded to new condition.
Good	Some superficial deterioration evident.
Fair	Obvious deterioration. Maintenance costs increasing over time.
Poor	Heavily affected by deterioration. Major maintenance costs, requires replacement or reconstruction.

Park Descriptions



Comfort Park (*Community Park*)

430 Broadway, Comfort, TX 78013



5 Acres

Description

Comfort Park encompasses 5 acres in a residential area located in the center of Comfort and includes a playground, basketball court, picnic areas, BBQ grills, restrooms, and benches. The park also includes a covered pavilion, gazebo and a community center. Comfort Park is often used to host community events, including Christmas in Comfort and the annual 4th of July celebration.



Gazebo

Table 2.2: Comfort Park Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Basketball Court	1	Good
Benches	13	Excellent
Community Center	1	Fair
Covered Pavilion	1	Good
Gazebo	1	Fair
Grills	1	Fair
Parking	1	Poor
Paved Trail	0.1 mi	Good
Picnic Tables	7	Excellent
Playground	1	Excellent
Restroom	1	Good



Park entrance sign

Park Improvements Needed:

- Install a shade structure over the playground
- Improve park accessibility to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.
- Construct a natural surface walking trail
- Remodel existing restrooms
- Install grills at picnic tables



Playground

Comfort Park



James Kiehl River Bend Park (*Natural Resource Area*)

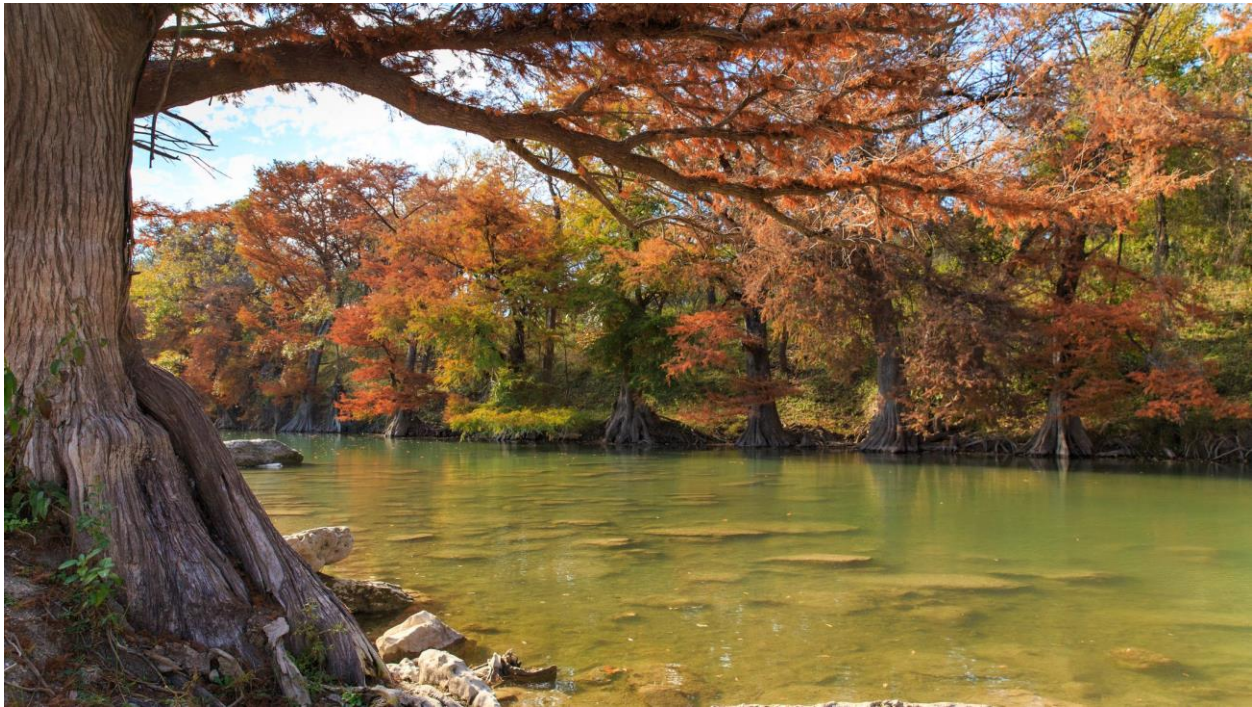
118 River Bend Rd. Comfort, TX 78013



25 Acres

Description

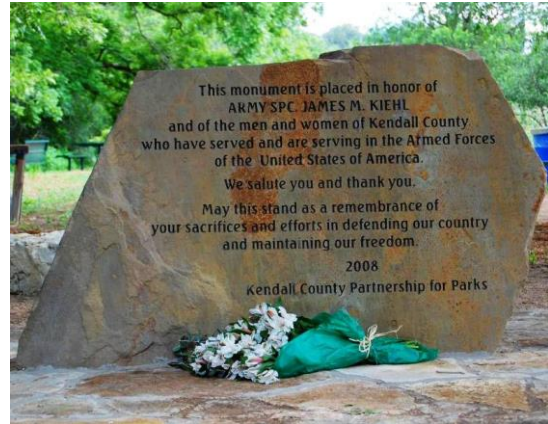
James Kiehl River Bend Park encompasses 25 acres along the Guadalupe River and includes picnic areas, grills, benches, a wildlife observation blind, 1.5 miles of multi-use trails, and multiple river access points. The park is a memorial park honoring local army veteran, James Kiehl, who passed away during the Iraq War in 2003.



Guadalupe River

Table 2.3: James Kiehl River Bend Park Inventory

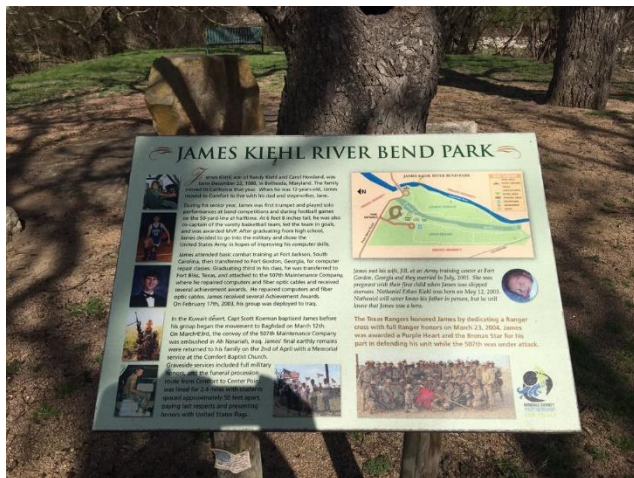
Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Benches	8	Good
Chimney Swift Tower	2	Good
Informational Kiosk	2	Good
Interpretive Signs	13	Fair
Kayak/Canoe Launch	1	Good
Natural Surface Trail	1.2 mi	Fair
Parking	1	Good
Picnic Tables	5	Good
Portable Restrooms	2	Good
Wildlife Blind	1	Good



James Kiehl Monument

Park Improvements Needed:

- Establish additional river access points
- Improve trail accessibility
- Improve park accessibility to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations
- Install grills at picnic areas
- Replace deteriorated signage
- Install an electric-powered gate at the park entrance
- Install a permanent restroom facility
- Install nature-based or traditional playground equipment



Interpretive Signage about James Kiehl



King Fisher

James Kiehl River Bend Park



Kreutzburg Canyon Natural Area (Natural Resource Area)

143 Mark Twain Rd. Boerne, TX 78006



117 Acres

Description

Kreutzburg Canyon Natural Area encompasses 117 acres along the Guadalupe River and includes picnic areas, grills, benches, wildlife observation blinds, 3 miles of multi-use trails, and multiple river access points. Substantial in size with close proximity to a prominent water resource, Kreutzburg Canyon Natural Area is a popular location for birding, wildlife observation, and photography.



Wildlife Observation Blind

Table 2.4: Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Benches	5	Good
Chimney Swift Tower	2	Good
Informational Kiosk	2	Good
Interpretive Signs	12	Good
Kayak/Canoe Launch	1	Good
Natural Surface Trail		Good
Office Space	1	Good
Parking	3	Fair
Paved Trail	0.6 mi	Good
Picnic Tables	10	Fair
Portable Restrooms	1	Good
Wildlife Blinds	3	Good



Wildflowers

Park Improvements Needed:

- Add and improve signage throughout the park
- Establish connectivity between river access points
- Upgrade picnic tables and install grills
- Improve lower parking lot with pavement
- Improve park accessibility to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations
- Install an electrically-powered gate at the park entrance
- Repurpose office space

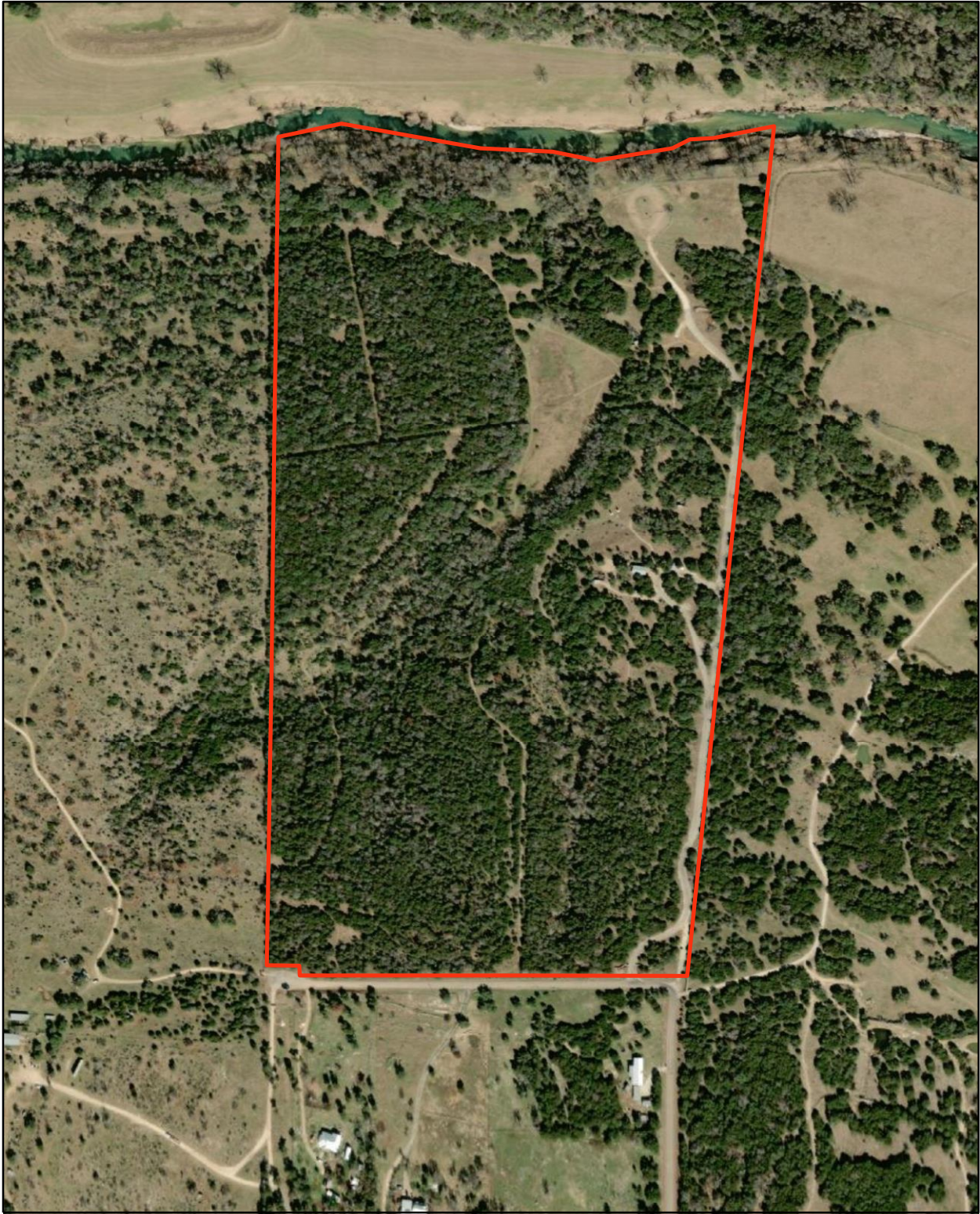


Picnic Area



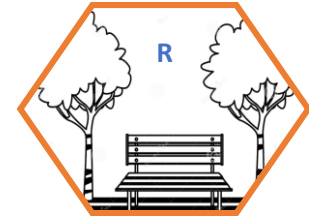
River Access Point (Guadalupe River)

Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area



Joshua Springs Park and Preserve (Regional Park)

716 FM 289 Comfort, TX 78013



365 Acres

Description

Joshua Springs Park & Preserve encompasses 365 acres of rich Texas hill country terrain. The park currently includes a playground, numerous covered pavilions and picnic areas, grills, restrooms and water fountains. The park also includes a 9-hole disc golf course, 3 wildlife observation blinds, a 2-acre off-leash dog park and 9 miles of multi-use trails. Additionally, an office building located near the park entrance serves as headquarters for the Kendall County Parks Department. A 9-acre lake fed by Little Joshua Creek serves as the park's main source for water recreation and a prime fishing destination. The lake includes 2 fishing piers, a floating dock and kayak/canoe launching points. Joshua Springs Park & Preserve also serves as the home of the Ring Mountain Event Center, which is located on the back portion of the park.



Waterfall at lower lake

Table 2.5: Joshua Springs Park & Preserve Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Basketball Court	1	Excellent
Benches	19	Excellent
Chimney Swift Tower	2	Good
Covered Pavilion	7	Excellent
Disc Golf Course	1	Excellent
Dog Park	1	Good
Fishing Pier	3	Excellent
Grills	13	Excellent
Headquarters	1	Good
Informational Kiosk	2	Good
Interpretive Signs	12	Good
Kayak/Canoe Launch	1	Good
Natural Surface Trail	6 mi	Good
Parking	4	Good
Paved Trail	1.9 mi	Good
Picnic Tables	31	Excellent
Playground	1	Fair
Restrooms	2	Excellent
Water Fountain	4	Excellent
Wildlife Blinds	4	Fair



Park Entrance Sign



Large Pavilion

Park Improvements Needed:

- Remodel office space for more suitable Parks Office
- Improve park accessibility to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations
- Improve kayak/canoe launch
- Expand disc golf course.
- Install permanent cornhole boards
- Design a mountain biking trail
- Install outdoor exercise equipment

Joshua Springs Park and Preserve



Kendall County Youth Agriculture and Equestrian Center *(Special-Use Park)*

648 FM 289 Comfort, TX 78013



33 Acres

Description

The Kendall County Youth Agriculture and Equestrian Center (YAEC) is the largest outdoor, weatherproof venue in Kendall County with more than 72,000 square feet. The Kendall County Youth Agriculture & Equestrian Center is home to more than 400 Junior Livestock, 4-H, and Future Farmers of America (FFA) members who participate in agriculture and equestrian activities, competitions, and educational enterprises.



Equestrian Center



Image Source: Kendall County Youth Agriculture & Equestrian Center – Home | Facebook

Table 2.6: Youth Agricultural & Equestrian Center Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Arena	1	Excellent
Bleachers	7	Excellent
Covered Pavilion	1	Excellent
Grills	5	Good
Office Space	1	Good
Parking	1	Fair
Paved Trail	0.6 mi	Good
Picnic Tables	2	Fair
Restroom	2	Good
Water Fountain	2	Excellent

Park Improvements Needed:

- Improve parking lot
- Install a 100 horse stall barn
- Install 100 RV hook-ups with electricity and water



Image Source: kcyaec.org

Ring Mountain Event Center (*Event Space*)

716 FM 289 Comfort, TX 78013



Description

The Ring Mountain Event Center is a 4,500 square foot multi-use facility in Joshua Springs Park and Preserve available to rent for events and gatherings such as weddings, reunions, business dinners, baby showers and more. The event center sits on top of Ring Mountain at 1,756 feet elevation with beautiful 360-degree views of the Texas Hill Country and comes equipped with a kitchen, restrooms, a grand room, patios and an outdoor bar.

4500 Sq. Ft.



Event Center Overhead

Table 2.7: Ring Mountain Event Center Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Chairs	305	Excellent
Garages	2	Good
Grand Room	1	Excellent
Kitchen	1	Excellent
Meeting Rooms	2	Excellent
Outdoor Bar	1	Excellent
Parking	1	Good
Patio	2	Good
Restroom	2	Excellent
Tables	45	Good



Event Center Interior

Facility Improvements Needed:

- Replace wooden patio with concrete
- Improve accessibility to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations
- Redesign landscape areas
- Replace sliding glass doors throughout the facility
- Upgrade indoor sound system



Outdoor Bar

Kendalia Public Library (Community Park)

2610 Ranch Rd 473, Kendalia, TX 78027



Description

The Kendalia Public Library, built in the early 1920s, provides books for the community. Throughout the county-owned property, historic live oak trees surround the library as well as a playground structure with numerous pieces of play equipment for children, pavilions, tables, benches, and a GaGa Ball Pit.

2 Acres



Playground

Table 2.8: Kendalia Public Library Inventory

Park & Recreation Facilities		
Type	Quantity	Condition
Basketball Hoops	2	Fair
Benches	4	Good
Covered Pavilion	2	Good
GaGa Ball Pit	1	Excellent
Grills	1	Fair
Parking	1	Good
Merry-Go-Round	1	Fair
Picnic Tables	4	Poor
Playground	1	Fair
Restroom	2	Good
Seesaw	2	Poor



GaGa Ball Pit

Park Improvements Needed:

- Replace picnic tables
- Update and repair all small independent play equipment
- Install a concrete slab for basketball court
- Replace playground structure and install approved playground surface material
- Landscape area with native species to encourage beautification



Pavilion



Library

Kendalia Public Library



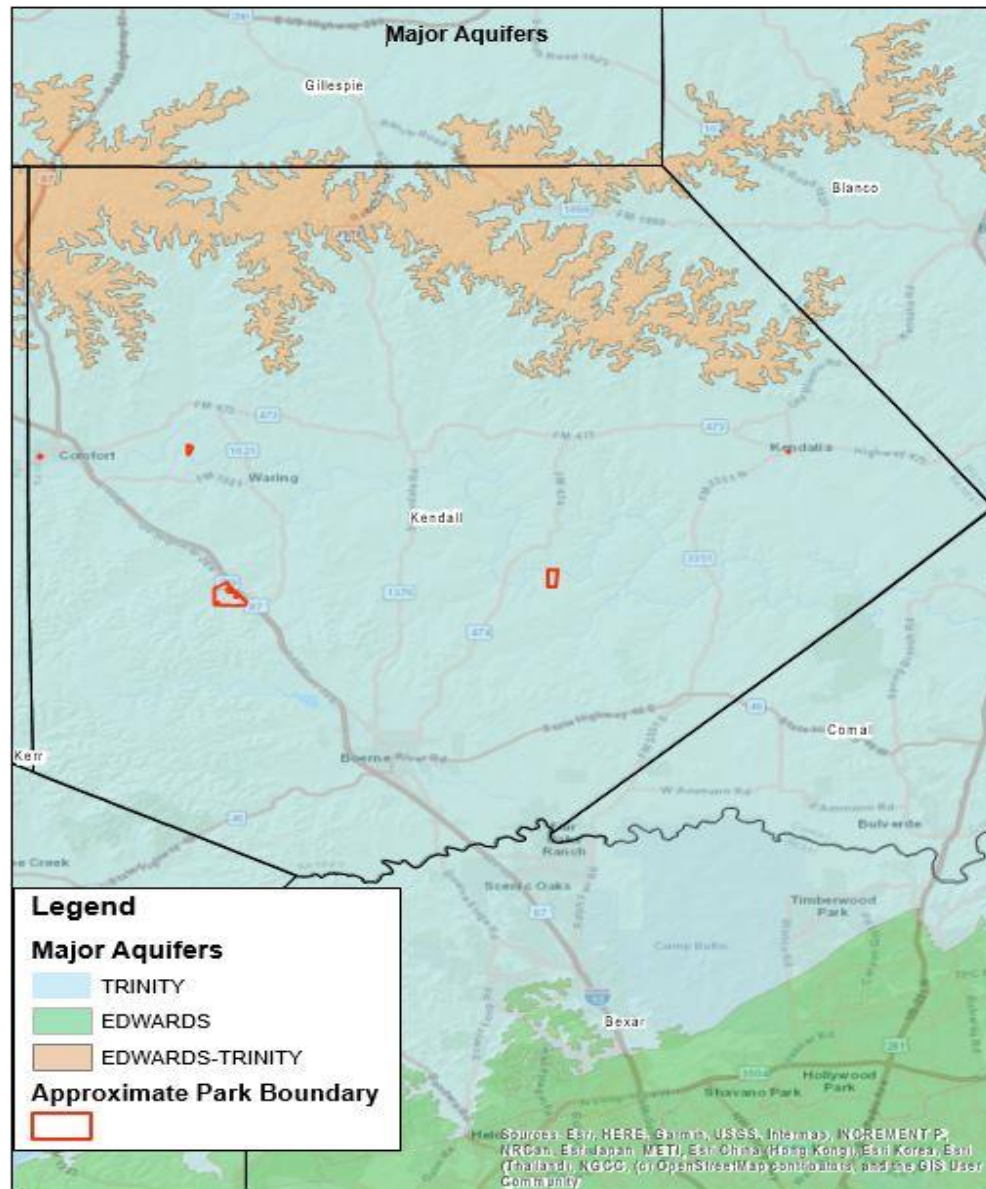
Aquifer Zones

Kendall County includes the following aquifer zones:

- Trinity Aquifer
- Edwards-Trinity Aquifer

Figure 2.1: Aquifer Zones shows the locations of these aquifers within the county. The aquifers are a significant feature of the landscape because their existence is integral to the landscape above and the type of development that can occur in the region. The aquifers are a source of clean water and also home to a variety of species, some of which have been designated as threatened or endangered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

Figure 2.1: Aquifer Zones



Endangered/Threatened Species

According to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), there are two bird species listed as federally endangered in Kendall County.

The endangered birds in Kendall County include the following:

- Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*)
- Golden-cheeked Warbler (*Setophaga chrysoparia*)

Figure 2.2: Endangered Species



Image Source: wideopenspaces.com



Image Source: edf.org

According to the Edwards Aquifer Research & Data Center (EARDC), there is one karst invertebrate species listed as threatened by the State of Texas in Kendall County.

The threatened karst invertebrate in Kendall County include the following:

- Cascade Caverns Salamander (*Eurycea latitans*)

Figure 2.3: Threatened Species



Image Source: cascadecaverns.com

PLANNING PROCESS

3



III. Planning Process

Purpose of the Comprehensive Master Plan

A Comprehensive Master Plan assesses local needs for parks, recreation, and open spaces. It outlines implementation strategies based on current and future population conditions and trends of the community to guide decisions and recommendations for the future of parks and recreation in Kendall County.

The purpose of this Kendall County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is to provide county leadership with a road map for present and future recreational programs, land acquisition, and facilities development. This master plan provides direction regarding parks, recreation, and open spaces in the following ways:

- Encouraging proper use of local and non-local financial resources
- Ensuring orderly acquisition and development of parks, recreation, and open spaces
- Guiding revitalization of existing recreational lands and facilities
- Preserving natural resources
- Attracting appropriate development by enhancing quality of life
- Contributing to economic development within the county by enhancing the quality and availability of recreational facilities to serve new and existing residents

Additionally, this Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan, the county is eligible to receive grants through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and other related organizations to assist with the financial resources required for improvements.

This plan takes into account the goals and priorities previously identified in the 2009-2019 master plan, while also identifying new challenges, opportunities, needs of the community, to make recommendations for the county park system's next ten years.

Plan Timeframe and Updating

This master plan was prepared in 2022 and covers the ten-year period from 2023 to 2033. The plan will be updated every five years to remain in compliance with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) master plan guidelines, remain relevant to current community needs, identify projects where grants funding is required, and stay current of trends throughout the parks and recreation industry. Such updates will include, at a minimum, a summary of accomplishments, recent public input, changes in inventory, revised needs and priorities, and implementation strategies. An annual review workshop by the Kendall County Parks Advisory Board and county staff should be conducted to review progress and annual accomplishments.

Any updates/recommendations by the advisory board and county staff will be prepared for review and adoption by the Commissioner's Court.

Jurisdiction and Planning Areas

Kendall County is divided into 4 precincts ([Appendix D](#)). Although the scope of this master plan covers the entire county, the precincts may be considered as separate planning areas for purposes of recreational development and grant applications.

There are numerous outdoor recreation, leisure, and tourism opportunities throughout the county. To ensure public access to these resources, the county purchased three tracts of land which offer numerous diverse landscapes. James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area both run along the Guadalupe River. The county's largest park, Joshua Springs Park and Preserve has a 9-acre lake fed by Little Joshua Creek. The Kendall County Youth Agriculture and Equestrian Center leases 33 acres of uplands from Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.

Other population centers besides the incorporated cities of Boerne and Fair Oaks Ranch include the unincorporated communities of Bergheim, Comfort, Kendalia, Sisterdale, and Waring. Since these communities depend on the county for most services, they may also be considered planning jurisdictions for recreational purposes. Any recreational facilities located in these communities are enumerated in the Inventory section of this plan.

Needs Assessment and Identification

The needs assessment is a critical component of a park and recreation planning process. A needs assessment is a comprehensive analysis of the existing parks and recreation system, outlining community needs to meet the county's goals and objectives while providing an equitable and diverse parks system that serves all ages and abilities. Demand, resource and standard are three types of assessments that are accepted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for local parks master plans. Three types of needs assessments support this plan.

- **Demand-Based Assessment:** Citizen input of gathered information from participation rates, surveys and other information indicate the types of activities and/or facilities they would like to see in the park system.
- **Resource-Based Assessment:** Examines the assets and resources of the area for open space, parks and recreation facilities, and defines how these resources can be utilized.
- **Standard-Based Assessment:** Uses standards established by the local jurisdiction (Kendall County) to determine the quantity of parks facilities required to meet the county's needs at a given population. Standards are usually expressed as park acreage needed to adequately serve every 1,000 residents of the county.

Demand-Based Assessment

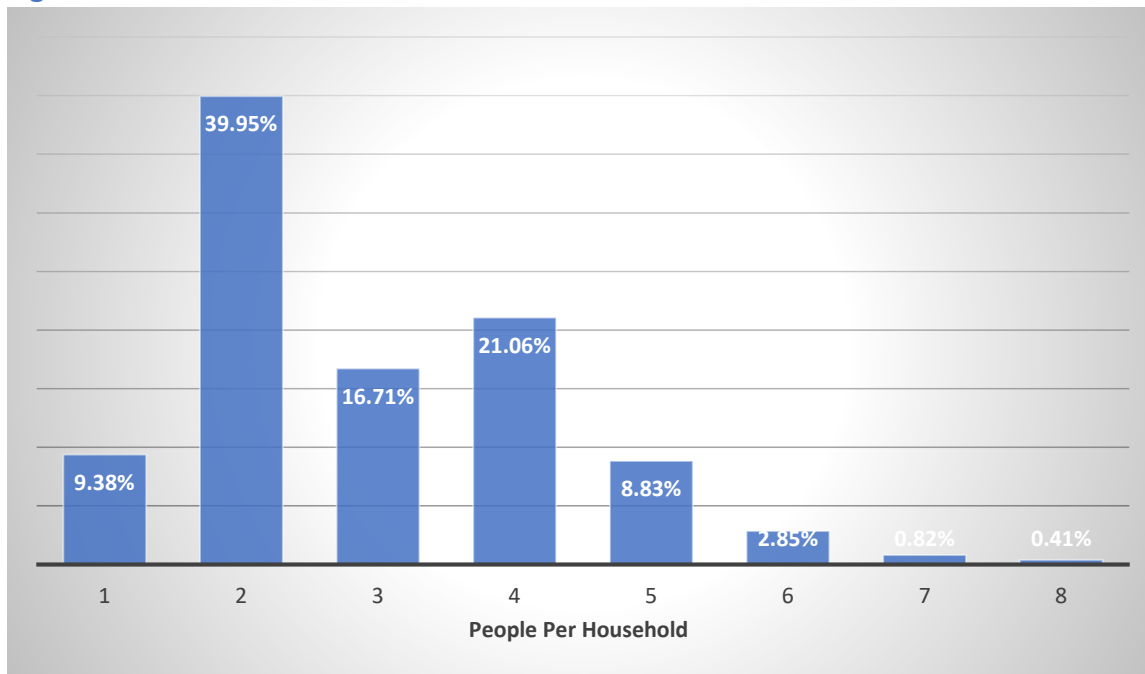
Community engagement is another key component to the planning process. In 2021 the Kendall County Parks Department opted to create and distribute an in-person and online survey for county residents and park users to provide feedback regarding needs of the community as it relates to the county's parks and recreation facilities and amenities. The community also had the opportunity to evaluate current park and recreational opportunities offered by the county. The survey was available from October 2021 through the end of March 2022 and received a total of 971 survey responses after publication on the county's website, social media, word-of-mouth and signs throughout the county parks.

The survey allowed county residents and visitors to provide feedback about the park and recreation system. The community response to the survey is listed below highlighting their priorities for parks and recreation amenities and services over the next ten years.

Question 1

How many people live in your household?

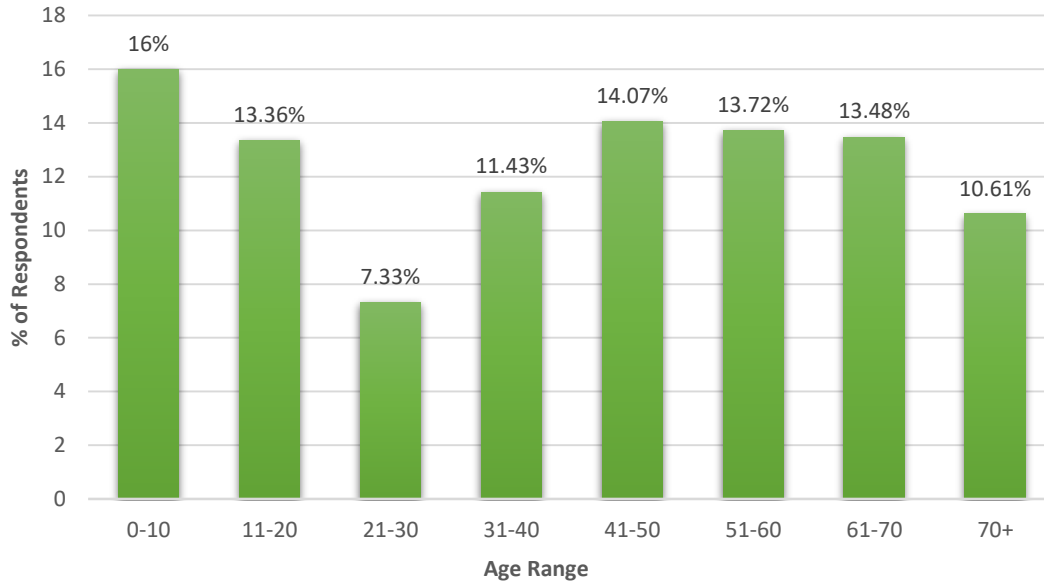
Figure 3.1: Question 1



Question 2

Which age groups are represented in your household?

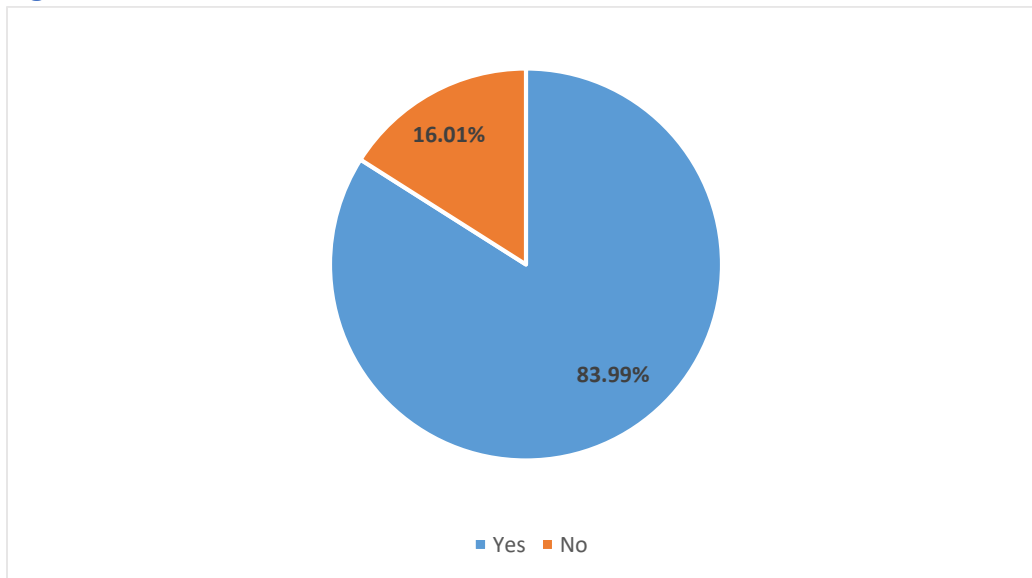
Figure 3.2: Question 2



Question 3

Are you a resident of Kendall County?

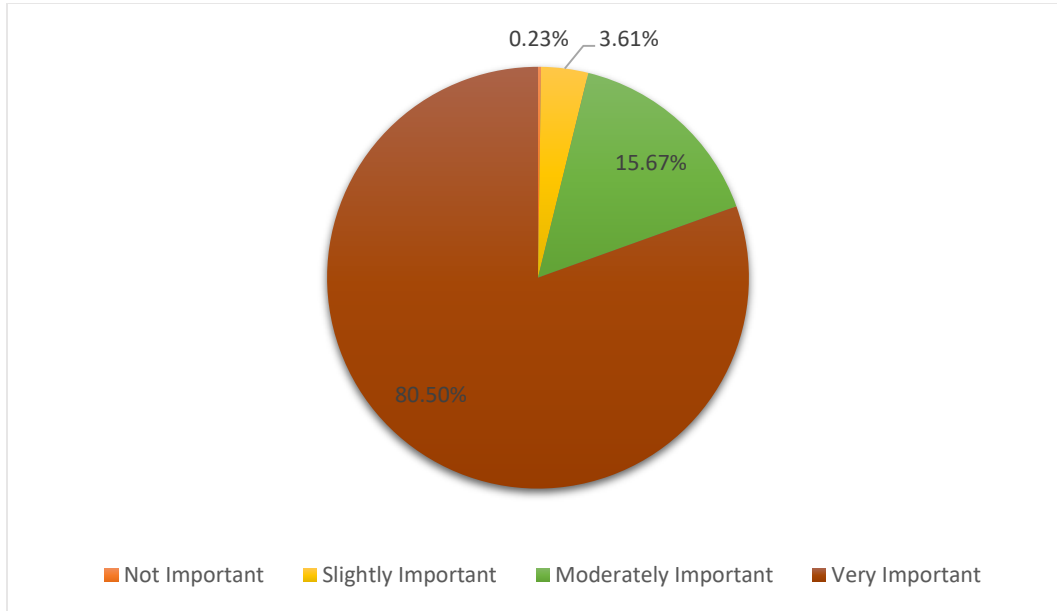
Figure 3.3: Question 3



Question 4

How important is recreation/leisure time to you?

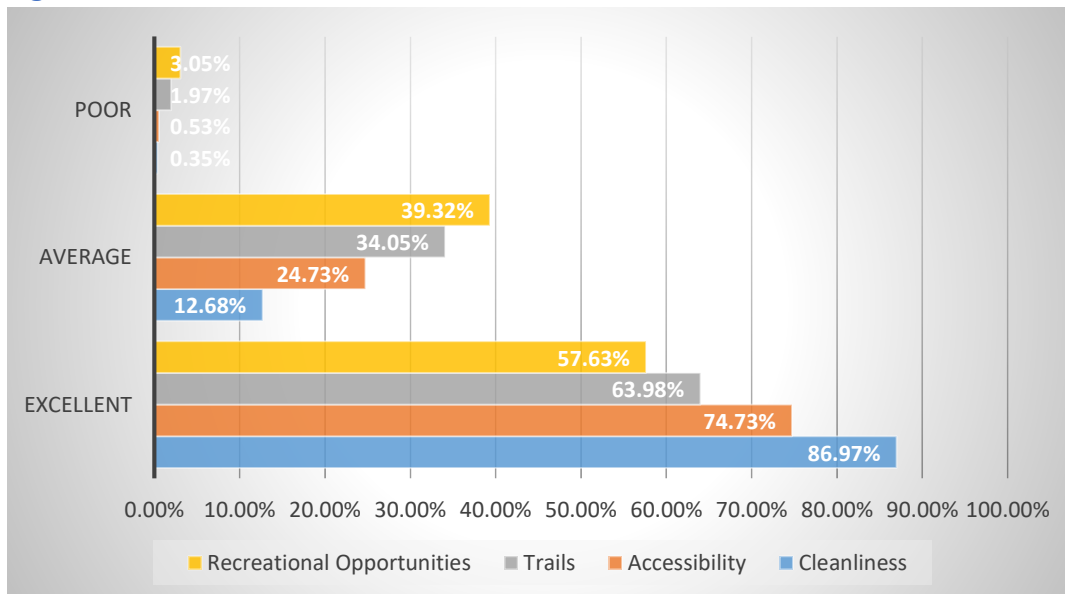
Figure 3.4: Question 4



Question 5

Rate Joshua Springs Park & Preserve

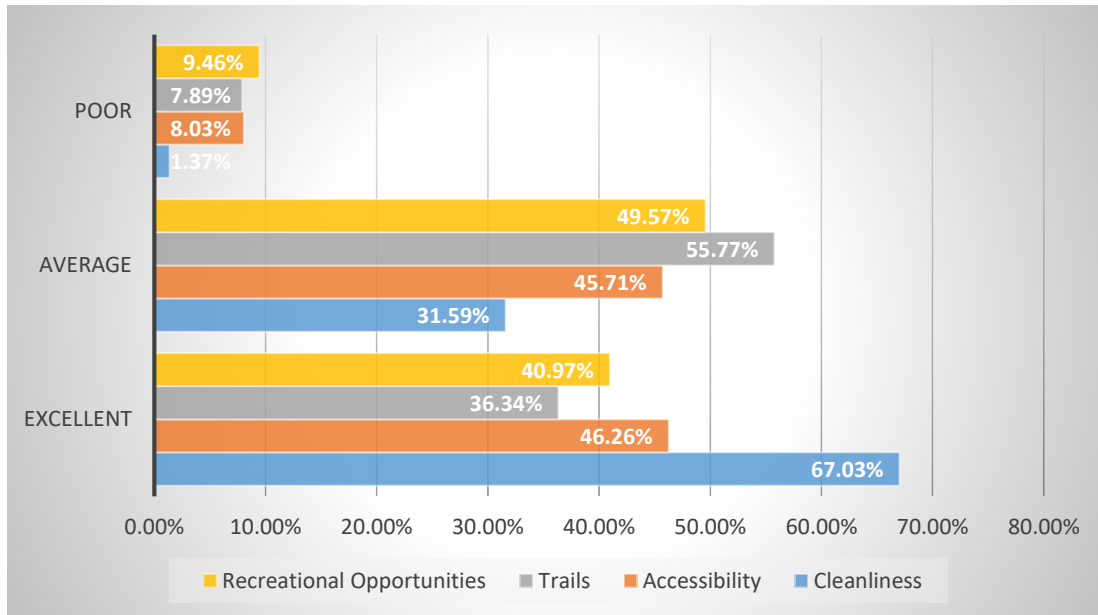
Figure 3.5: Question 5



Question 6

Rate James Kiehl River Bend Park.

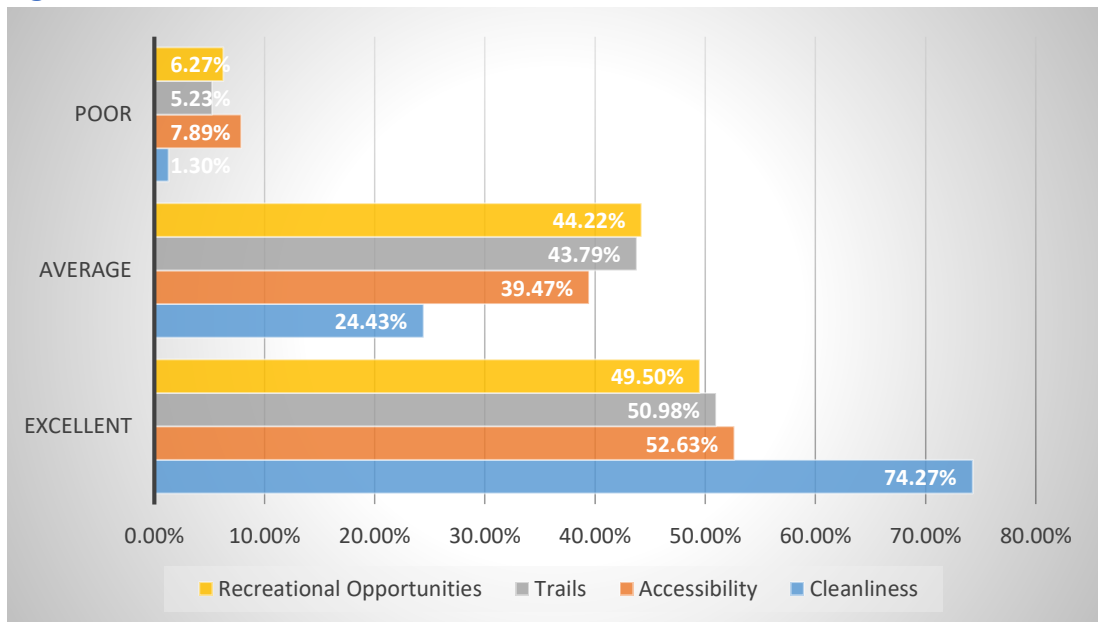
Figure 3.6: Question 6



Question 7

Rate Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.

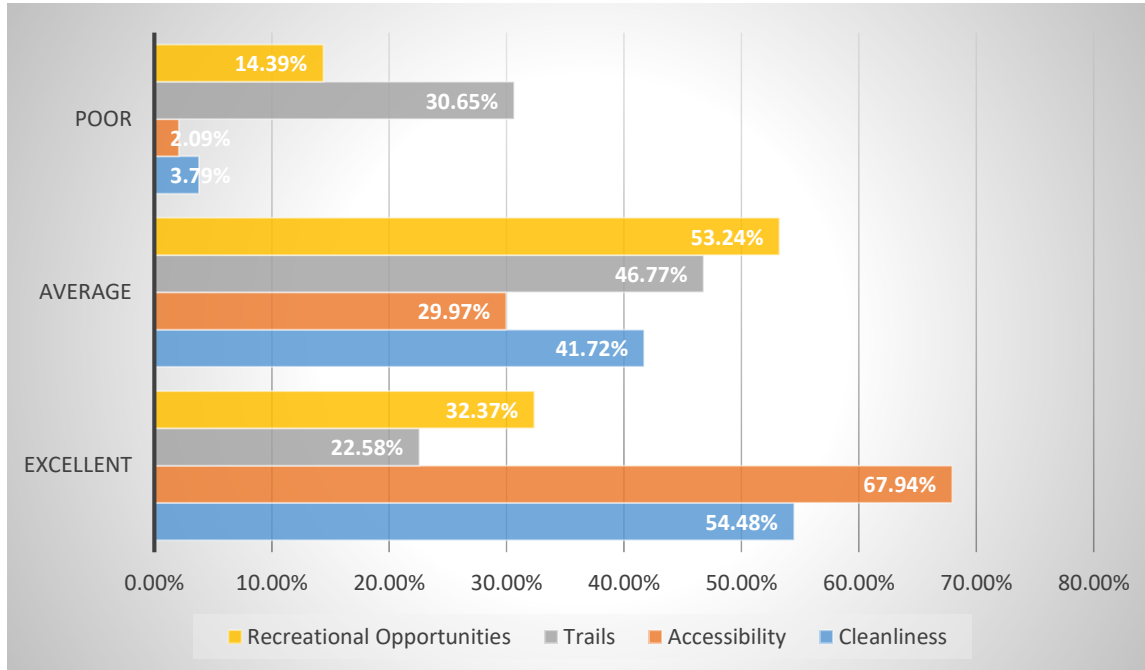
Figure 3.7: Question 7



Question 8

Rate Comfort Park.

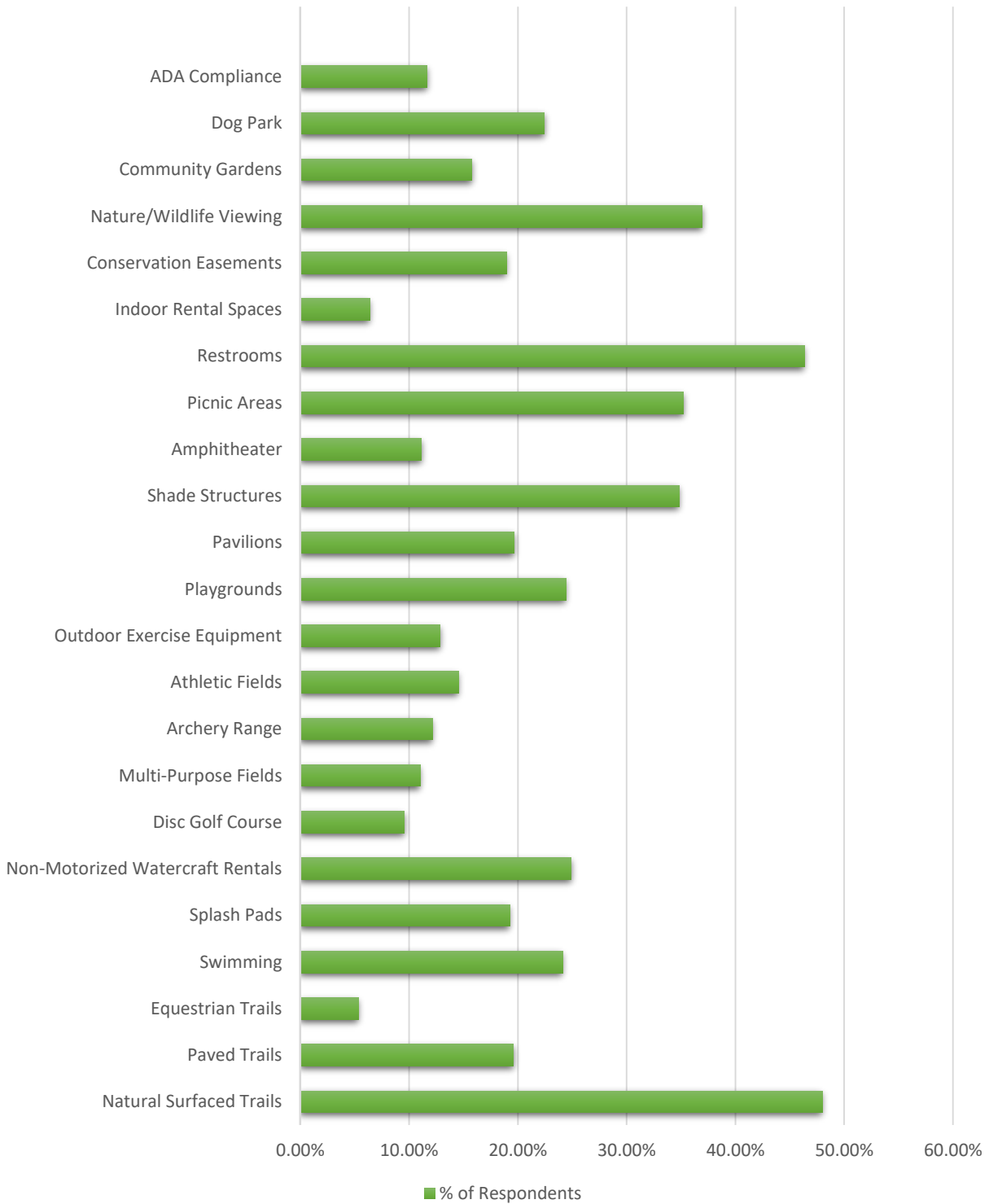
Figure 3.8: Question 8



Question 9

What amenities/facilities would you like to see more of in the parks? *(select all that apply)*

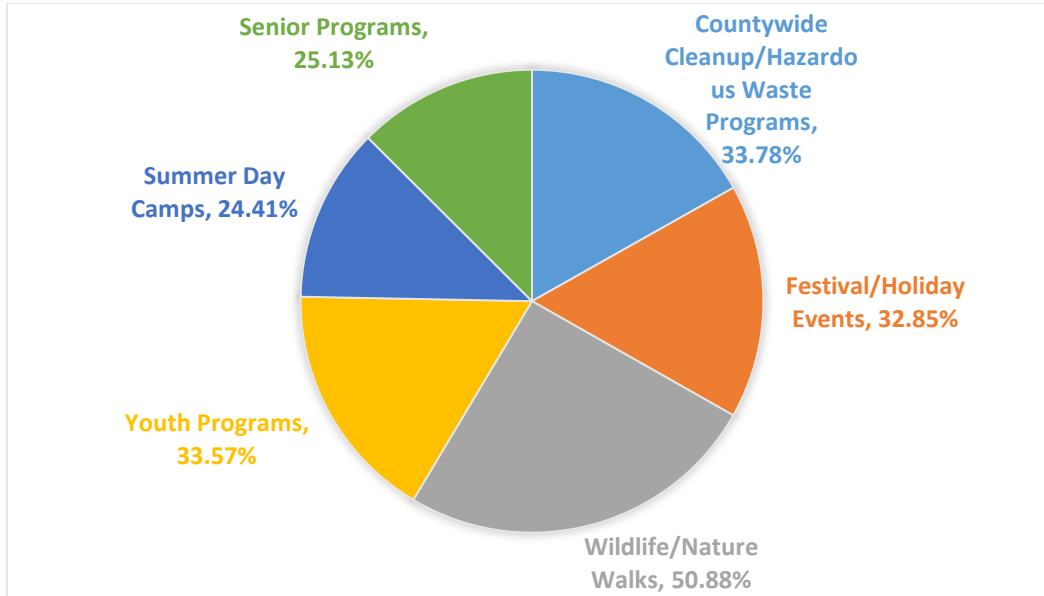
Figure 3.9: Question 9



Question 10

What type of programs/events would you like to see available? *(Select all that apply)*

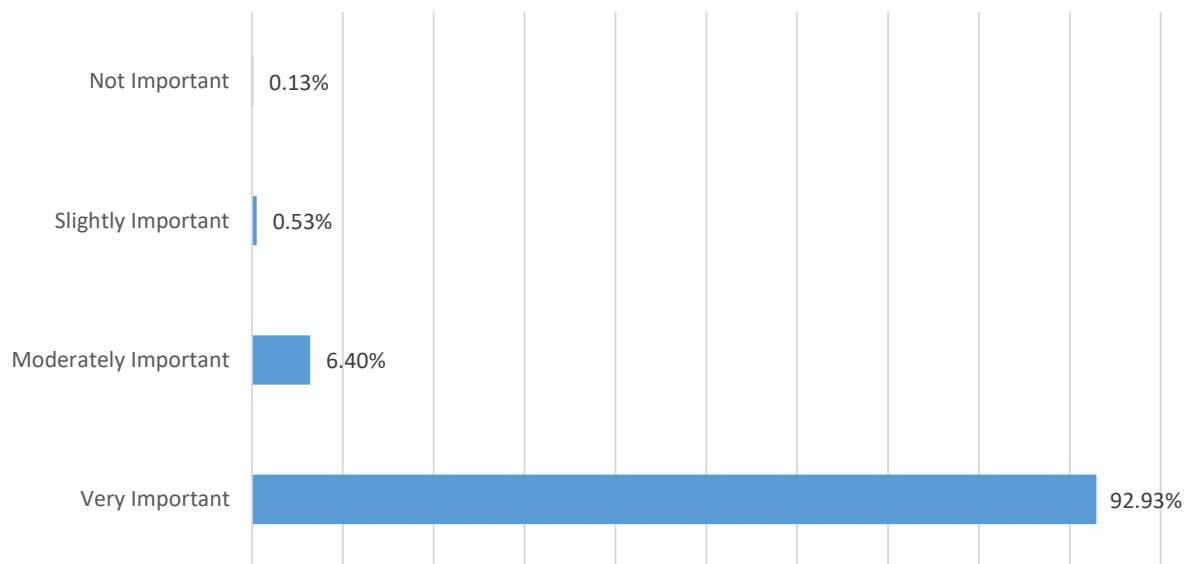
Figure 3.10: Question 10



Question 11

How important is protecting Kendall County's natural resources to you? *(preserving wildlife, clean air and water, etc.)*

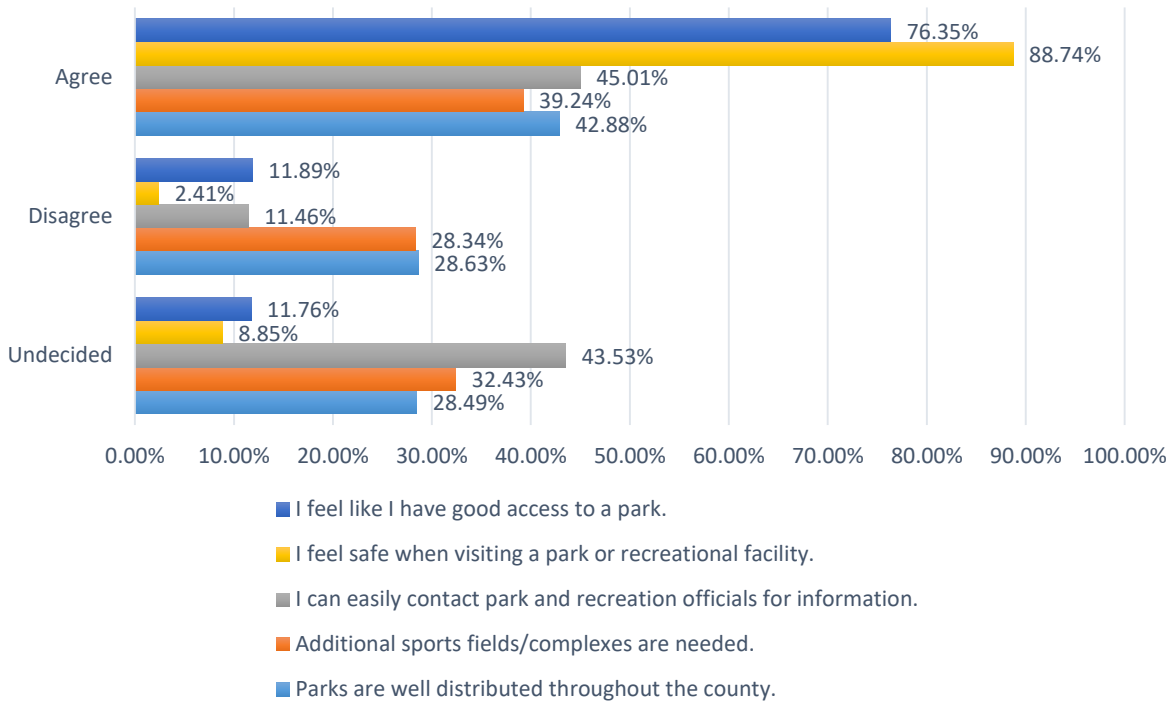
Figure 3.11: Question 11



Question 12

Do you agree, disagree, or undecided with the following statements?

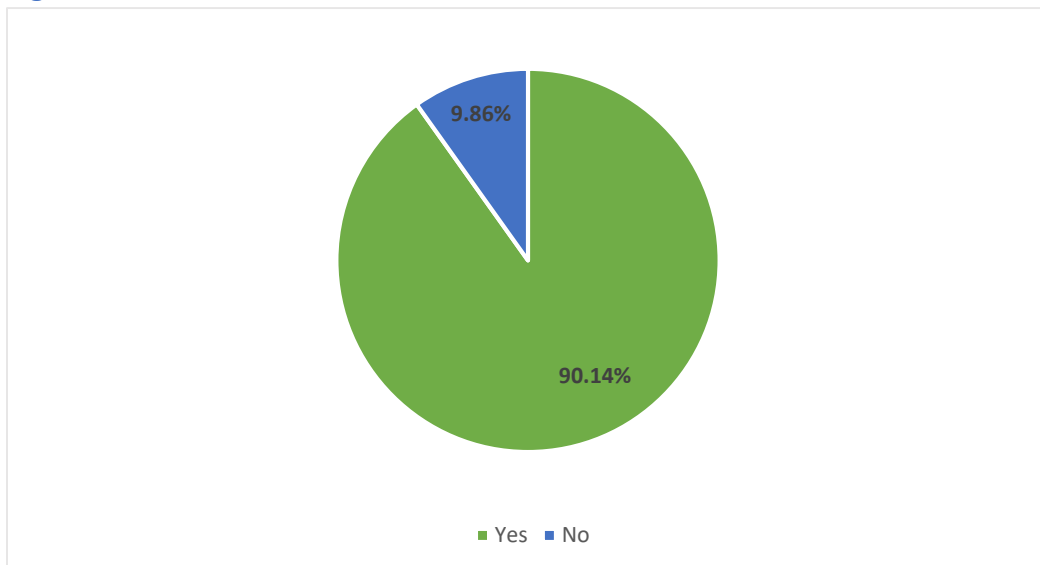
Figure 3.12: Question 12



Question 13

Would you support additional funding for parks and recreation expenditures for acquisition of park land?

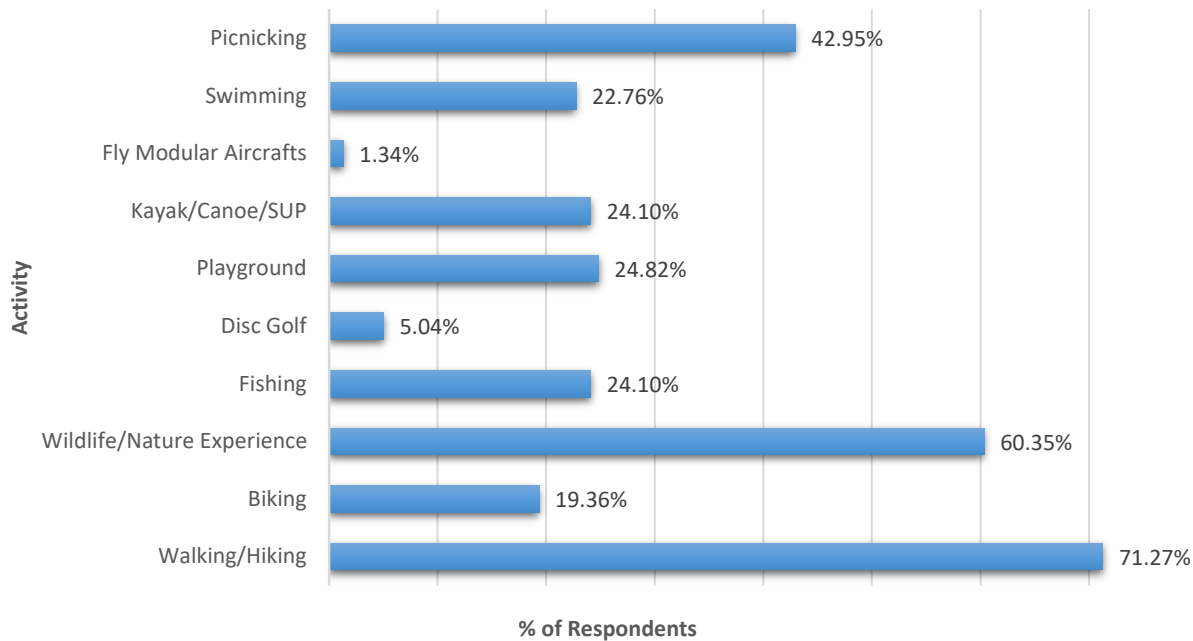
Figure 3.13: Question 13



Question 14

What activities do you participate in while visiting the parks? *(select all that apply)*

Figure 3.14: Question 14



Resource-Based Assessment

Key physical features within Kendall County are identified in the resources-based assessment. Over time, these features will serve as multi-purpose amenities to the community by protecting and conserving Kendall County natural resources while providing water-based recreation opportunities.

Due to the rapid increase in development encroaching on critical wildlife habitat and the importance of protecting the community's natural resources and environment, emphasis in this plan has been placed on a natural resource-based assessment. The overall intent is to identify those areas that will provide water-based recreation while designating areas that need to be preserved and protected.

The resource-based needs assessment strategy used to develop this plan is focused on systematic identification of a specific kind of natural resource referred to as a critical wildlife habitat resource. A habitat resource is a natural resource that directly supports a healthy wildlife population in terms of numbers, range, and diversity. Examples of habitat resource services include food and water, shelter environments, and crucial relationships with interdependent species. A critical habitat is a necessary condition for the continuation of the native population system.

Standard-Based Assessment

Definition and Use of Standards

Allocation of space according to type of use is one of the primary decisions with which communities are continually faced. Such decisions are usually made based upon standards for the residential, commercial, industrial, educational, recreational, and public use development patterns that the community desires to encourage or enforce through zoning regulations or other methods. A standard is a minimum acceptable spatial allocation measure. Recreational standards may be developed for park type, size, location, facility development, people with disabilities, parking, utilities, and other infrastructure, access to natural resources, open space, programming, and other considerations.

Counties are not usually called upon to allocate space in the same way that cities do. However, counties do allocate space for certain purposes, including recreation. Development of recreational standards for the county parks system is an effective way to guide decision making regarding how much acreage to acquire, where it should be located, and what facilities should be included at each site to properly serve the affected population.

Standards Criteria

Criteria for park and recreation standards must: 1) reflect the needs of the people in the service area 2) be realistic and attainable 3) be acceptable and useful to management and policy makers and 4) be based on sound analysis of the best available information. The county will strive to incorporate these criteria in each standard developed for the parks system.

National Versus Local Standards

National recreational standards have been developed through the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and these may be helpful as communities assess their recreational needs and how best to meet them. However, the uniqueness of each community due to geographical, cultural, climatic, and socioeconomic characteristics makes it more likely that each community will need to develop its own standards for recreation, parks, and open space. The Kendall County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan takes the national standards into consideration while applying local standards.

Park Acreage Standard

The acreage standard influences the acquisition and development of park land and is also used as a measure of performance and program effectiveness. Based on observation and measurement over time in communities nationwide, population ratio is the professionally accepted standard for park acreage based on acres of park land per 1,000 residents. This standard

is simple to calculate and is easily updatable during periods of population growth. It is a flexible planning guideline that should be used in conjunction with other factors such as usage rates, park locations, and site carrying capacity.

The national service goal suggested by the NRPA for park acreage is 9.9 acres per 1,000 residents. The 2009 Kendall County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan considered a TPWD standard of 55 acres per 1,000 residents as desirable but designated 40 acres per 1,000 residents as the minimum standard.

Considering county park acreage only, the current level of service is 547 acres for 49,027 residents, or 11.16 acres per 1,000 residents. However, since the City of Boerne is the major recreation provider for county residents, city park acreage must be taken into consideration. When the city’s inventory of 430.7 park acres is added to the county’s 547 acres, the total available public park acreage increases to 977.7 acres. The resulting ratio is 19.94 acres per 1,000 residents, leaving an overall deficit of 983.38 acres below the 40-acre per 1,000 residents minimum standard set by the 2009 Kendall County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

If the roughly 418 acres of the Guadalupe River State Park and 16 acres of Old Tunnel State Park in Kendall County is added, the total park acreage available would increase to approximately 1,411.7 acres, or 28.79 acres per 1,000 residents. However, state parks are intended to provide a different mix of recreational services than those provided by local governments. Therefore, state park acreage will not be considered in determining the county’s acreage standard.

Table 3.1: Park Acreage Standard

Existing Acreage	Current Level of Service	Target Level of Service	Surplus/Deficit Acreage	Percent of Need Met
977.7	19.94 acres/ 1,000 Residents	40 acres/1,000 Residents	20.06 acres/1,000 Residents Deficit	49.85%

Given the additional pressures that projected population increases will put on the environment and existing recreational sites within the county, a revised acreage standard of at least 40 acres per 1,000 residents more accurately reflects current statistics and accommodates future growth. This standard should serve the county until this plan expires in 2033, with the understanding that the City of Boerne will continue to operate and expand its park system which is available to all residents of the county.

Trails Standard

Table 3.2: Trail Classification Standards

Trail Classification	Existing Trails	Target Level of Service	Surplus/Deficit Miles	Percent of Need Met
Natural Surface Trail	16 mi.	1 mi./2,500 Residents	0.17 mi Deficit	83%
Paved Trail	5 mi.	1 mi./7,500 Residents	0.22 mi Deficit	78%

RECOMMENDATIONS

4



IV. Recommendations

Vision Statement

A vision is a unique image of the future that embodies community aspirations for the future of the parks system. The vision must not only be that of the community but a shared understanding among the staff in an organization. It creates a foundation and framework that will guide the department's future.

Based on the analysis of existing park inventory and expressed needs of the community, the Kendall County Parks Department vision is as follows:

By the year 2033, Kendall County will be known for its diverse parks and recreational opportunities for all abilities and its dedication to preserve the community's heritage, wildlife, and natural resources.

Mission Statement

To implement this vision, the following mission statement guides daily decision making of the Kendall County Parks Department:

The Mission of the Kendall County Parks Department is to improve the quality of life for all ages and abilities through well-maintained parks and open spaces, facilities, and recreational services. The preservation of our natural resources, heritage, and wildlife remain at the forefront throughout the park system.

Goals, Objectives, & Action Recommendations

Goals and objectives are included in the recommendations section to provide direction for elected officials, staff, and advisory boards. Previous planning efforts identified goals that focus on the purchase and development of park lands to create a county parks system. These goals have been reviewed and updated for this new master plan, and additional goals have been included based on input from the county's park planning efforts that have occurred since the previous plan was developed in 2009. These goals will be periodically reviewed, discussed and updated as objectives are accomplished and new opportunities and needs arise.

Terminology

Goals: Goals are general statements concerning aspects of the county's desired physical, social, and economic environment.

Objectives: Objectives are the approaches necessary to achieve the stated goals, without assigning responsibility to any specific action. Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely.

Action Recommendations: Actions are the specific steps that take place to achieve an objective.

Action Framework

To ensure the goals, objectives and action recommendations are comprehensive, an action framework has been developed. Accordingly, each goal, objection and action recommendation will be organized using the following five categories:

- Park Renovation & Development
- Recreation Facilities & Programming
- Parkland Planning, Design & Maintenance
- Natural Resource Preservation
- Connectivity

Action Framework

**PARK RENOVATIONS &
DEVELOPMENT**



**RECREATION
FACILITIES &
PROGRAMMING**



**PARKLAND PLANNING,
DESIGN &
MAINTENANCE**



**NATURAL RESOURCE
PRESERVATION**



CONNECTIVITY



Park Renovations & Development

Goal 1



Renovate, develop, and construct a quality network of county parks, facilities, trails, river access points, and open spaces tailored to meet the needs of Kendall County residents and the surrounding area.

The county currently owns and maintains four parks and open spaces. Since improving existing park infrastructure was such a high priority for the community, the following actions outline recommendations to improve, enhance, and expand existing parks and open spaces.

Objective 1.1. *Provide, renovate and enhance all indoor facilities to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.*

-
- **Action 1.1.1. Improve accessibility to the Ring Mountain Event Center to achieve ADA Compliance.**

Over the previous five years the parks department has updated the interior of the Ring Mountain Event Center to meet ADA compliance. As the county grows, it should consider improving the walking areas on the exterior of the event center to meet ADA compliance.

ADA compliance recommendations include:

1. Remove flagstone path and replace with a 4' wide concrete sidewalk.
2. Install a concrete ramp to provide access from the back porch to the ceremony site.



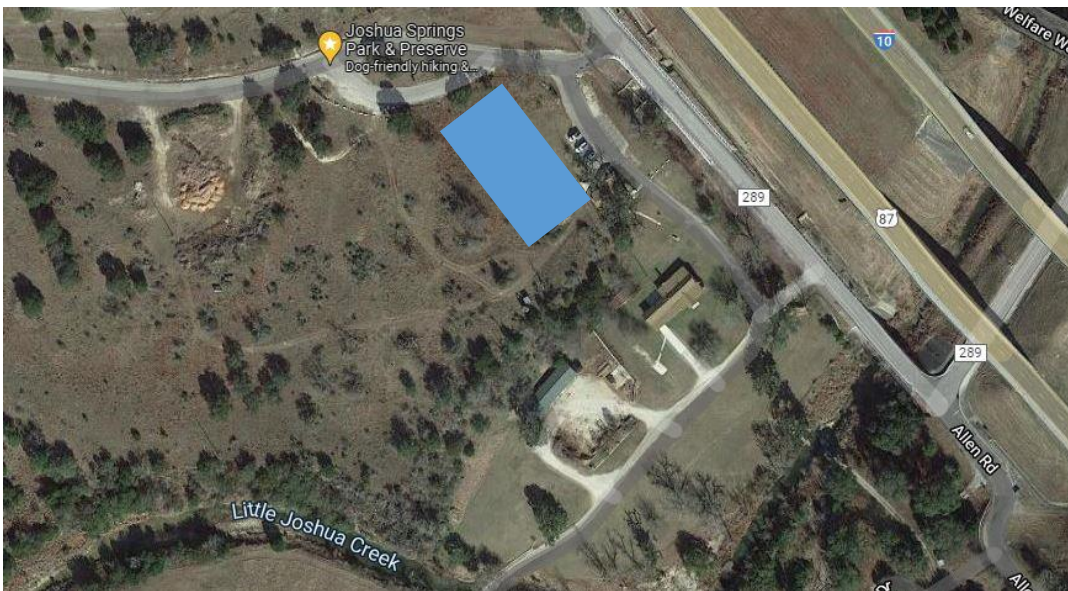
- **Action 1.1.2. Renovate existing house at Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area to serve as a future educational center.**

With the increased use of natural area parks over the past decade and current lack of educational opportunities in the parks system, the county should consider renovating the existing house at Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area to serve as an educational space. Children and adults can learn about the counties natural resources and native plant species. By educating the community on these resources, landscapes around the community can be fortified with a diverse native plant habitat, protection of water quality, and promote an environment where both humans and wildlife can coexist.



- **Action 1.1.3. Construct an indoor recreation center at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.**

Kendall County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, and the needs for recreational opportunities are at an all-time high. People from all over the country have relocated to Texas for its charm, lower cost of living, and increased quality of life. One of the major strategies to increasing a community’s quality of life is to provide numerous recreational opportunities for residents to improve their health and wellbeing. The development of a county recreation center would provide recreational opportunities while bringing an economic boost to development and tourism within Kendall County.



Proposed location for the Kendall County Recreation Center.

- **Action 1.1.4. Construct a restroom facility at Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area.**

Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Areas is one of the most treasured hidden gems in Kendall County. Surrounded by historic live oak trees and the beautiful Guadalupe River, Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area is the place to escape when searching for nature and the pure sound of silence. Within 117 acres of pristine Texas Hill Country there is one restroom available for public use. As the park continues to see more visitors, it is recommended that an additional permanent restroom facility be constructed to meet the needs of the ever-growing number of park users.



Image Source: precastbuildings.com

-
- **Action 1.1.5. Renovate existing house at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve to serve as the future park office.**

Located inside Joshua Springs Park and Preserve is the Kendall County Parks Office. The facility consists of 2 office spaces, a lobby area, restroom, and a kitchen. As the department continues to grow, room for expansion is necessary. The county should consider renovating the existing house located directly behind the current park office. This facility would provide adequate office space for the administrative staff, open meeting/training space for staff and the public, and additional opportunities as the department continues to expand.



Objective 1.2. *Renovate and enhance park amenities to improve accessibility and continue to develop a park system suited for all ages and abilities.*

- **Action 1.2.1.** *Improve parking infrastructure at James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area.*

Both James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area run along the beautiful Guadalupe River. During summer months, people from all over visit these parks for a chance to cool down during the hot Texas summers. These two natural areas are increasing in popularity with local and visiting nature enthusiasts. To keep up with demand, it is recommended that the county consider expanding the parking infrastructure to provide adequate space for park users to park their vehicles in properly-designated areas. Enhancing the parking infrastructure would also minimize maintenance issue for the park staff.

- **Action 1.2.2.** *Install shade structures over all existing and future playgrounds.*

There are currently two playgrounds structures located within the Kendall County parks system. One playground is located at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve and the other at Comfort Park. Unfortunately, neither playground structures are shaded by trees or any other means of shade, so the equipment during the summer becomes very hot. This occasionally discourages families from coming to these parks or forces them to leave early. In order to enhance recreational opportunities for children, it is recommended that the county install shade structures over existing and future playground structures. This will reduce equipment temperature and maintenance issues, while providing a safe and enjoyable space where children can play.



-
- **Action 1.2.3. Construct a fishing pier and watercraft access point on the lower lake at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.**

Joshua Springs Park and Preserve is a prime fishing destination. With over 9 acres of pristine lake access, fishing and water recreation opportunities are endless. Currently there are three fishing piers located on the upper-lake portion of the park. To encourage fishing and water recreation opportunities, it is recommended that the county construct a fishing pier and watercraft access point on the lower lake.



Proposed location for fishing pier and watercraft access.

-
- **Action 1.2.4. Increase and improve signage for all trails throughout the parks system.**

Kendall County natural area parks are large and well known for their diverse terrain. Adequate directional and informational signage is essential to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all park users. It is recommended that the county evaluate existing signage throughout the parks system and implement a robust plan to provide sufficient directional and informational signage in all parks. The county should also consider GPS marking signage along the trails system to provide local emergency services a more accurate location in the event that rescue efforts are needed.

- ***Action 1.2.5. Design and construct a dog park in the southern portion of the county.***

Of all the parks in Kendall County, including the City of Boerne parks, there is only one dog park in the entire county. Located in Joshua Springs Park and Preserve, the 2-acre off-leash dog park provides a safe environment for dog owners to allow their furry companions to run free. Throughout the recent parks survey provided by the Kendall County Parks Department, a common consensus of the community was the desire to have a dog park available to residents in the southern portion of the county. Therefore, it is recommended that the county construct an off-leash dog park within the southern portion of the county to meet residents' needs.

- ***Action 1.2.6. Improve river access at James Kiehl River Bend Park.***

Access to the Guadalupe River is one of the most sought after and requested resources in Kendall County. The current river access point at James Kiehl River Bend Park is inaccessible for many ages and abilities and fails to meet ADA compliance. It is recommended that the county install a permanent pathway from the parking area to the river with a proper grade to improve access for all users.



River Access to the Guadalupe River

- **Action 1.2.7. Develop a new community park on the 5-acre county owned tract at 8th Street and Broadway in downtown Comfort.**

After district lines were changed in 1971, Kerr County sold two 5-acre tracts to Kendall County to be used as parkland. Comfort Park, one of those two tracts, has been a park and community gathering space since the mid-1800s. The other 5-acre tract has remained undeveloped since the land was acquired, with the exception of a community garden onsite. It is recommended that the county develop the 5-acre tract as an additional community park. The park would mitigate flooding with proper native plant life and provide an outdoor space where the community can gather for events. The park would also improve parking opportunities for the rapid growth and development to the downtown area.

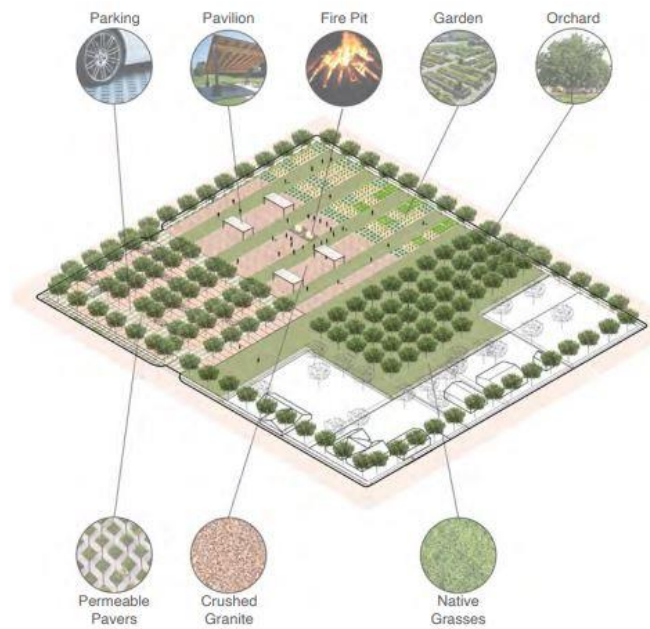


Image Source: Comfort Vision 2050

Recreation Facilities & Programming

Goal 2

Provide a diverse offering of recreational programs, events, and facilities to serve residents and attract regional users.



Recreation programs, amenities and events offered in Kendall County are available to county residents and regional users of all ages. While the majority of programming is offered through City of Boerne services and third-party agencies, the following recommendations are intended to provide a plan of action to offer additional programs, amenities, and events through the county parks system.

Objective 2.1. *Provide programs and events that serve the needs of the community and highlight the benefits of natural resources.*

- **Action 2.1.1.** *Provide multigenerational, nature-based programs and events.*

Partnerships with groups such as Texas Master Naturalists are a vital resource for providing highly-trained and well-educated individuals to help provide knowledge of the natural environment. Since the majority of county parks are natural areas, it is recommended that the county provide nature-based recreation and program opportunities that highlight the community's natural resources. These types of programs and events would provide county residents and regional users with the educational tools necessary to achieve environmental stewardship, while promoting a recreational experience.



Image Source: txmn.org

-
- ***Action 2.1.2. Evaluate opportunities for community gardens throughout the parks system.***

According to the USDA, more than 38 million people in the United States are food insecure (Feeding America, n.d.). Community gardens are a proven path to decreasing those numbers and providing people with more opportunities. Promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing food transportation costs, and increasing biodiversity are some of the numerous benefits derived through community gardens. It is recommended that the county evaluate potential opportunities to establish community gardens throughout the parks system to help fight food insecurity throughout Kendall County and provide healthy living opportunities for its residents.



Image Source: allrecipes.com

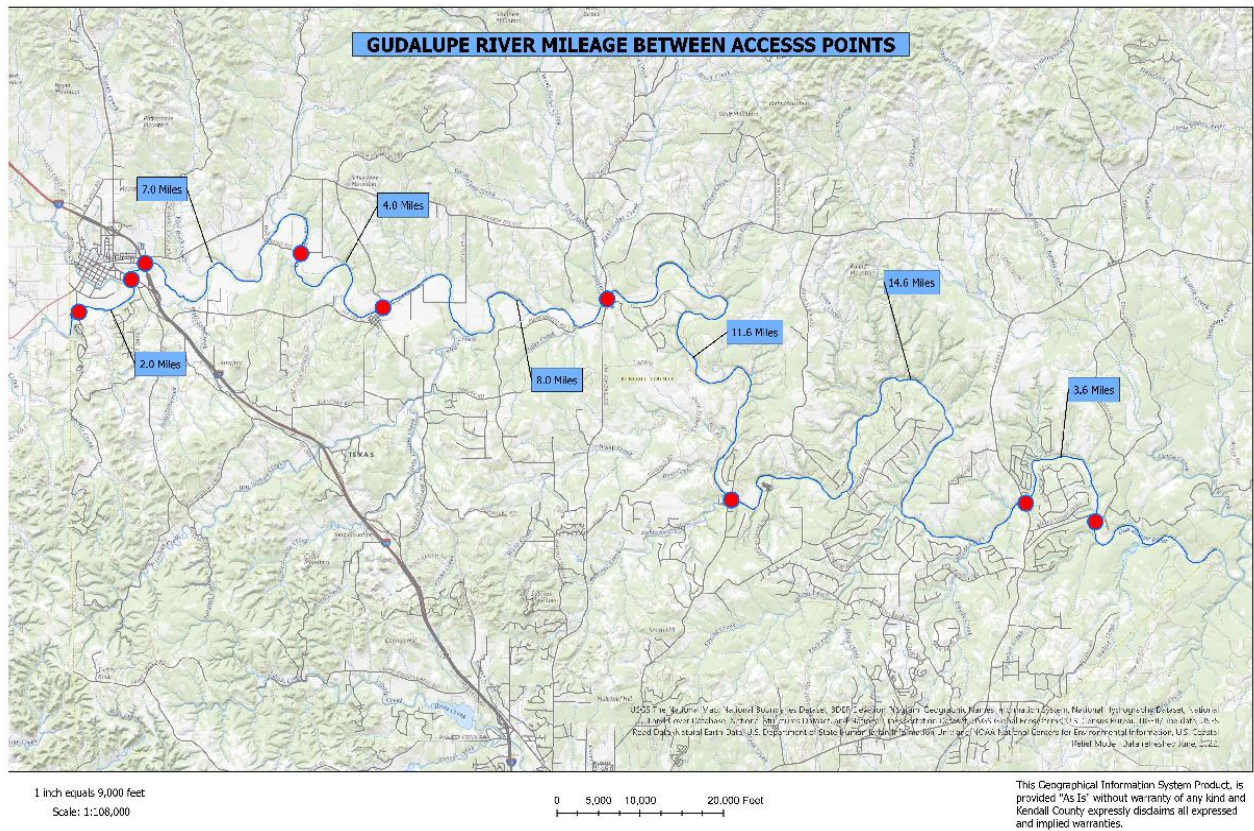
-
- ***Action 2.1.3. Consider partnership opportunities with organizations such as local school districts and Boys & Girls Clubs of America.***

In an effort to provide additional diversified programming, it is recommended that the county pursue local partnerships. Mutually beneficial partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and school districts play a key role in gaining resources and expanding educational/recreational opportunities.

Objective 2.2. Provide and enhance adequate recreational facilities and amenities that meet the needs of the community.

- **Action 2.2.1.** Evaluate opportunities for additional canoe/kayak launch points along the Guadalupe River.

There are 55 miles of the Guadalupe River that run through Kendall County with 10 public access points. To enhance public river access points, it is recommended that the county consider improving the existing river access points with adequate signage and establish better ingress/egress points. By enhancing river access points and providing trash receptacles throughout those areas, the county can provide a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment for all water enthusiasts.



-
- ***Action 2.2.2. Expand passive recreational opportunities at James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area.***

Whether visiting a park with family and friends or flying solo, parks provide an environment where encounters with nature are endless. Passive recreation is one of the most common forms of multigenerational recreation/leisure. Some forms of passive recreation include picnic areas, pavilions, and benches, all of which James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area are lacking. It is recommended that the county consider constructing pavilions at both parks. This will meet the increasing need of shaded gathering areas for park users and provide opportunities to increase revenue. It is also recommended that the county install benches along the trails throughout both parks.



-
- ***Action 2.2.3. Provide an adventure type/natural playground structure at Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area.***



Natural style playgrounds are growing in popularity, especially in natural area parks. A natural playground is a play environment that helps children re-connect with nature through elements and textures from earth, such as tree logs, boulders, and drainage paths. Due to the cost efficiency, reduced maintenance, hands-on learning experience and environmentally friendly nature, it is recommended that the county install an adventure type/natural playground at Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area.

-
- ***Action 2.2.4. Consider developing mountain bike trails at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve and Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.***

Throughout the planning process, it was brought to our attention that a large number of residents would like to have access to trails designed for mountain biking. Due to the diverse landscape throughout these parks, it is recommended that the county consider developing a robust trail system to include mountain biking trails throughout the rugged areas of county parks.



Image Source: biketexas.org

-
- ***Action 2.2.5. Repurpose existing park office building at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve to expand facility rental opportunities.***

Indoor spaces for special events are a highly sought after amenity, especially during the hot summer months. Over the past few years, county residents and regional users have been requesting these types of facilities to host small events at affordable rates. Since the existing park office building located at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve meets the criteria of a small indoor gathering space, it is recommended that the county repurpose the facility to provide additional indoor rental opportunities and expand county revenue.

-
- ***Action 2.2.6. Consider designating a swimming area at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.***

When the summer months strike and the heat intensifies, people in Texas are constantly looking for a place to cool down in a nearby watering hole. The 9-acre lake at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve provides an ideal place where everyone can enjoy some fun in the sun. It is recommended that the county consider designating a swimming area with marker buoys on the upper lake to encourage play and provide additional water-based recreation.

Parkland Planning, Design & Maintenance

Goal 3

Establish standards and practices to reduce maintenance, enhance the park system, and improve the quality of life for all park users.



Objective 3.1. *Develop and implement strategies to provide a safe environment, reduce maintenance, and improve the aesthetics throughout all parks and facilities.*

- **Action 3.1.1.** *Establish a native plant program to promote a healthy and diverse ecology while reducing maintenance.*

Native plants occur naturally within a region and provide numerous benefits to people and wildlife while sustaining the integrity of healthy soils and water resources. It is recommended that the county establish a native plant program. Native plants reduce maintenance expenses, air pollution, and water requirements because of their ability to adapt to local climate and soil conditions. This causes them to thrive within their natural environment. They also provide food and a natural habitat for native wildlife.



Image Source: npsot.org

- **Action 3.1.2.** *Develop and implement park and trail guidelines to establish a minimum base standard for all new and redeveloped trails.*

In order to provide a safe and reliable park environment and deliver direction for the county maintenance and administrative staff, it is important to set standards and guidelines. It is recommended that the county implement a strategic plan that sets standards for current and future developed trails and parking areas.

-
- ***Action 3.1.3. Consider paving key portions of existing trails and parking areas to reduce washout and improve accessibility.***

Since the majority of natural area parks are located within a floodplain, terrain continues to fluctuate, impacting the integrity of trails and parking areas. It is recommended that the county assess existing trails and parking areas that are effected by heavy rainfall and consider implementing a plan to reduce runoff and washouts in those areas.

-
- ***Action 3.1.4. Update parks master plan by 2028.***

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD), an adopted parks master plan is required to be updated every five years in order to be eligible for local park grants. Updating and revising parks master plans is an important practice for meeting the needs of a growing community. It is recommended that the county update the plan every five years in order to remain in compliance with TPWD master plan guidelines. Updates should include at a minimum a summary of accomplishments, recent public input, and changes in inventory, as well as revised needs, priorities, and implementation strategies.

-
- ***Action 3.1.5. Conduct a park accessibility assessment to identify, prioritize, and address accessibility issues throughout the parks system.***

Accessibility suggests that something is made usable or available through some form of alteration for individuals with disabilities. While this is true, the meaning of accessibility goes deeper. Accessibility not only refers to providing access to an individual with disabilities, it also pertains to a community's access to parks, recreation and open space opportunities. When dealing with the development, renovation, or maintenance of parks and facilities, guidelines must be in place to encourage a strong quality of life and provide staff with the necessary tools to achieve an accessible park system. It is recommended that the county conduct an assessment of the county park system and identify, prioritize, and address key solutions and strategies that will improve accessibility. It is also recommended that the county consider utilizing the U.S. Access Board as a guideline to set standards for accessibility throughout the park system.



Image Source: access-board.gov

Natural Resource Preservation

Goal 4

Conserve and protect the natural environment and water resource areas that contribute to water quality, public recreation and native plant and wildlife habitats within the county.



Conservation and protection of the natural environment is vital to establishing a sustainable world for today and future generations. By protecting natural resources, mankind and wildlife can coexist. All living organisms rely on the environment in order to survive. If mankind desires to have a healthy environment where all living organisms can thrive, appropriate actions are necessary to create a sustainable environment for the future.

Objective 4.1. *Establish programs pertaining to land and wildlife conservation to educate the public on proper environmental stewardship.*

- **Action 4.1.1.** *Formulate a natural resource, wildlife and aquatic management plan.*

By identifying clear objectives, forming attainable action recommendations and establishing a long-range plan, the county would fulfill its duty and bridge the gap between the current state of natural resources and where the community wants it to be. It is recommended that the county formulate a plan to provide a sustainable environment for the community's natural resources and wildlife.

- **Action 4.1.2.** *Encourage a Kendall County Friends of the Park 501c3 to provide funding opportunities and community support to enhance the beautification and preservation of Kendall County natural resources.*

Throughout the country, park related 501c3 groups establish a base of community support for the future of parks and recreation infrastructure within their communities. By establishing such a group, the community has the opportunity to provide their input and significantly impact their local parks system. It is recommended that the county encourage a 501c3 Friends of the Kendall County Parks group to provide funding opportunities and community support to enhance the beautification and preservation of Kendall County's natural resources.

-
- *Action 4.1.3. Establish an annual river/waterway cleanup event to encourage natural resource stewardship.*

Annual river cleanups are a great opportunity for local businesses, water recreation enthusiasts, and community residents to volunteer. A river cleanup effort supports a safe and healthier environment where wildlife and people can enjoy the numerous benefits of local waterways. It is recommended that the county establish an annual river/waterway cleanup of local public rivers, lakes, and creeks to encourage natural resource stewardship and provide a safe and enjoyable environment.

Objective 4.2. *Maintain the current standard of 40 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents to encourage land acquisition and preservation of natural resources while providing recreational opportunities.*

- **Action 4.2.1.** *Designate appropriate county owned natural resource areas as parkland.*

Floodplain areas provide a multitude of benefits including space for flood mitigation, habitat for wildlife and native vegetation, and passive recreation. It is recommended that the county support the initiative to acquire and preserve natural resources by designating county owned parcels in the floodplains, where appropriate, as parkland. Designating these parcels of land in the floodplains as parkland can increase publicly-accessible land for recreational purposes while contributing to countywide trail connectivity.

- **Action 4.2.2.** *Leverage federal, state and local grants with county matching funds.*

Federal, state and local nonprofit agencies provide numerous grant opportunities each year, giving financial assistance to parks and recreation related projects and programs. It is recommended that the county seek grant opportunities each fiscal year through federal, state and local agencies that provide matching funds or 100% cost coverage for capital improvements to enhance and improve park and recreation infrastructure. It is also recommended that the county allocate funds each fiscal year towards capital improvements to match grant opportunities.



Image Source: tpwd.texas.gov

- **Action 4.2.3.** *Market and encourage opportunities for property donations that meet established criteria's.*

Throughout the past decade, development pressures are on the rise within Kendall County due to the rapid growth throughout the State of Texas. Developers are erecting subdivisions wherever land is available. While this movement is beneficial for economic growth, Kendall County's natural resources have begun to feel overwhelming strain. Often times, developers will donate portions of land to the local government to provide outdoor recreation and green space for the community. Many times parks in the Texas Hill County have been made possible by generous private land owners with the goal of slowing down overdevelopment and natural resource strains. It is recommended that the county educate the developers and private land owners on the benefits derived

from land donations. It is also recommended that the county establish land acquisition criteria to identify availability of adequate staffing and funding, ensure effective management strategies, and provide parkland that meets the needs of the community.

Connectivity

Goal 5

Plan, construct and promote expansion of trails throughout Kendall County to increase connectivity.



Throughout the survey and through public engagement, the community has shown strong support for increasing trails and connectivity opportunities throughout the county. In order to increase the quality of life throughout Kendall County, residents and visitors must have the opportunity to explore nature throughout the Texas Hill Country. Access to public green spaces have proven to increase this initiative, therefore connectivity must remain at the forefront.

Objective 5.1. *Expand the county's trail system and improve connectivity between current and future parkland by way of blue trails and multi-purpose trails to serve residents and attract regional users.*

- **Action 5.1.1.** *Develop a countywide trails master plan.*

Valid information and resources are necessary to keep a community informed of public access points to encounter nature. Trails are the vessel to achieving the goal of person to nature experience. Therefore, it is recommended that the county work alongside state and city park and recreation agencies as well as transportation committees to develop a comprehensive countywide trails master plan.

- **Action 5.1.2.** *Improve connectivity through blue trails by increasing the number of public river access points.*

The Guadalupe River is Kendall County's main water recreation attraction. The county currently owns and operates James Kiehl River Bend Park in Comfort and Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area in Boerne, located 24 miles downstream. Unfortunately, river access points with adequate parking are limited. It is recommended that the county purchase land along the Guadalupe River between both parks to increase public access or designate parcels of current county right-of-ways for parking opportunities near low water crossings.

-
- ***Action 5.1.3. Connect Comfort Park to the county owned 5-acre tract located on 8th Street with sidewalks.***

Over the years, Comfort Park has seen a significant increase in park attendance due to the community's charm and historical value. Located just a few blocks away from Comfort Park, the county owns a 5-acre parcel near Cypress Creek. To enhance opportunities for public access to green space, it is recommended that the county consider building a pedestrian walkway to connect both county owned parcels.



V. Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan Development

The most critical aspect to an implementation plan is the commitment required from elected and appointed officials, county staff and citizens. The plan must reflect the needs and desires of the community to be considered an accurate tool in directing future decision-making pertaining to the acquisition, development and management of an adequate parks and recreation system. The plan also recognizes the county's responsibility to partner with all local, state and federal entities that can be a valuable asset in diversifying and improving the Kendall County parks and recreation system today and into the future. At a minimum, this includes:

- Kendall County elected and appointed officials
- County Administration and staff
- Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation
- Boerne Independent School District (BISD)
- Comfort Independent School District (CISD)
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Master Naturalists
- Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
- Interested community volunteers and stakeholders and
- Other affected agencies and entities

An important consideration for the success and cost efficiency of implementing the actions proposed in this Plan, is creating interdepartmental communication and coordination. Coordinating improvement plans with projects from other departments, such as Engineering and Development Management, Road and Bridge, and Emergency Management will reduce overall capital costs to the county.

Figure 5.1. Priority Action Time Frame



Figure 5.2. Prioritized Implementation Action Plan

Rank	Action ID	Action	Time Frame			Potential Cost Range
			0-2	3-5	6-10	
Park Renovation & Development						
1	1.2.4	Increase and improve signage for all trails throughout the parks system.	■			\$35,000-\$50,000
2	1.2.2	Install shade structures over all existing and future playgrounds.	■			\$50,000
3	1.1.1	Improve accessibility to the Ring Mountain Event Center to achieve ADA Compliance.	■			\$20,000-\$25,000
4	1.2.1	Improve parking infrastructure at James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.	■			\$75,000-\$125,000
5	1.2.3	Construct a fishing pier and watercraft access point on the lower lake at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.	■			\$20,000-\$25,000
6	1.2.6	Improve river access at James Kiehl River Bend Park.		■		TBD
7	1.1.4	Construct a restroom facility at Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.		■		\$100,000-\$125,000
8	1.2.5	Design and construct a dog park in the southern portion of the county.		■		\$25,000-\$45,000
9	1.1.5	Renovate existing house at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve to serve as the future park office.			■	\$35,000-\$50,000
10	1.2.7	Develop a new community park on the 5-acre county owned tract at 8 th Street and Broadway in downtown Comfort.			■	TBD
11	1.1.3	Construct an indoor recreation center at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.			■	TBD
12	1.1.2	Renovate existing house at Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area to serve as a future educational center.			■	\$50,000-\$100,000

Rank	Action ID	Action	Time Frame			Potential Cost Range
			0-2	3-5	6-10	
Recreation Facilities & Programming						
1	2.2.1	Evaluate opportunities for additional canoe/kayak launch points along the Guadalupe River.	■			TBD
2	2.2.2	Expand passive recreational opportunities at James Kiehl River Bend Park and Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.	■			\$100,000-\$250,000
3	2.1.3	Consider partnership opportunities with organizations such as local school districts and Boys & Girls Clubs of America.	■			By Staff
4	2.2.5	Repurpose existing park office building at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve to expand facility rental opportunities.		■		Policy/ By Staff
5	2.1.1	Provide multigenerational nature-based programs and events.		■		TBD
6	2.2.6	Consider designating a swimming area at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve.		■		Policy/By Staff
7	2.2.4	Consider developing mountain biking trails at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve and Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.			■	Study/By Staff
8	2.2.3	Provide an adventure type/natural playground structure at Kreuzberg Canyon Natural Area.			■	\$75,000-\$100,000
9	2.1.2	Evaluate opportunities for community gardens throughout the parks system.			■	TBD
Rank	Action ID	Action	Time Frame			Potential Cost Range
			0-2	3-5	6-10	
Parkland Planning, Design & Maintenance						
1	3.1.1	Establish a native plant program to promote a healthy and diverse ecology while reducing maintenance.	■			By Staff

2	3.1.2	Develop and implement park and trail guidelines to establish a minimum base standard for all new and redeveloped trails.	■			Policy/By Staff
3	3.1.5	Conduct a park accessibility assessment to identify, prioritize and address accessibility issues throughout the parks system.	■			Study/By Staff
4	3.1.3	Consider paving key portions of existing trails and parking areas to reduce washout and improve accessibility.		■		TBD
5	3.1.4	Update parks master plan by 2027		■		Study/By Staff

Rank	Action ID	Action	Time Frame			Potential Cost Range
			0-2	3-5	6-10	

Natural Resource Preservation

1	4.2.2	Leverage federal, state and local grants with county matching funds.	■			TBD
2	4.1.2	Encourage a Kendall County Friends of the Park 501c3 to provide funding opportunities and community support to enhance the beautification and preservation of Kendall County natural resources.	■			Study
3	4.1.1	Formulate a natural resource, wildlife and aquatic management plan.	■			\$10,000-\$20,000
4	4.1.3	Establish an annual river/waterway cleanup event to encourage natural resource stewardship.	■			By Staff/Volunteer
5	4.2.1	Designate appropriate county owned natural resource areas as parkland.		■		Policy
6	4.2.3	Market and encourage opportunities for property donations that meet established criteria's.		■		Policy/By Staff

Rank	Action ID	Action	Time Frame			Potential Cost Range
			0-2	3-5	6-10	

Connectivity

1	5.1.2	Improve connectivity through blue trails by increasing the number of public river access points.		■		TBD
2	5.1.1	Develop a countywide trails master plan.		■		Study
3	5.1.3	Connect Comfort Park to the county owned 5-acre tract located at 8 th Street and Broadway with sidewalks.			■	TBD

Funding Issues & Opportunities

Funding Issues

Funding for park maintenance, infrastructure improvements, and new park development is becoming difficult for local governments and other recreation providers. Communities throughout the state are often interested in large regional parks that serve multiple purposes, especially in areas likely to experience rapid growth in the coming decades. Efforts to develop such facilities are partly driven by state and federal grant programs that encourage regional solutions to infrastructure-related issues. Development of large parks within a park system is expensive and often requires multiple funding sources. Concurrent with the demand for large regional parks, parks and recreation departments continue to confront requests for well-maintained neighborhood parks that are within easy walking distance of residences and other traditional park infrastructure, such as ball fields and sports courts.

In addition to the demands described above, there is a slight shift in what the public demands of a park system. Parks help determine the nature of a community. While ball fields, playgrounds, and traditional park infrastructure continue to define park systems, communities often want new types of recreational facilities. Within the past decade, new park elements, such as spray parks, dog parks, and large open spaces with wildlife and trails along water courses are beginning to play a prominent role in park development.

Once infrastructure demands have been met, communities are faced with increasing costs of maintenance and policing. Many parks are typically “high-use” facilities. Unfortunately, like most highly-used public infrastructure, park facilities wear out, increasing the cost of maintenance. Communities are recognizing that policing of parks in order to keep them free of vandalism is a cost that strains even well-funded police departments.

This section discusses some possible avenues the county may consider to fund park system enhancements. To fully take advantage of the entire funding quilt often requires the use of consultants or nonprofit organizations well versed in weaving together multiple funding sources to maximize public resources. This is especially important when pursuing funding opportunities that rely on grants for construction of park infrastructure, park programming, such as efforts

that benefit the elderly and youth development, and acquisition of open space with low-impact public use for the benefit of water quality and wildlife.

Local Financing

Local government funds are a common method to finance park development. Typical funding streams include property taxes, sales tax, user fees, and other sources of revenue used for the general operation of the local government. Since a majority of these funds are paid by local residents, and may require increases in taxes and/or fees, public entities must consider the tax burden on local citizens, the value of taxable property, and other considerations, such as property types (residential, commercial, industrial) and community poverty rates.

Most state and federal government grants require some type of local match, often up to 50%. Local government funds frequently serve as a match for these grants.

Types of local funds include:

Sales Taxes:

Cities, counties, and special purpose districts (municipal utility districts, recreation districts, economic development zones) all may impose sales taxes. Kendall County's current tax rate is 0.5%. The county tax is collected in addition to state tax and any other local taxes (city, transit, and special purpose district).

Reserve Funds:

The use of reserve funds is made possible by accumulating funds in advance for capital acquisition or development. The accumulation may result from surplus or earmarked operational revenues, funds in depreciation reserves, or the sale of capital assets.

Enterprise and Revenue Funds:

Many local governmental entities establish accounts which are earmarked for parks and recreation programs. These accounts are used to fund programs as well as acquire, operate, and maintain facilities.

General Obligation Bonds:

This method involves the taxing power of the jurisdiction pledged to pay the interest and principal to retire the debt. General obligation bonds can be sold to finance permanent types of improvements, such as park and recreational areas and facilities. The classic public policy argument for use of bonds to support park acquisition and development is that long-term borrowing or bonding, is justified because the project often has a permanent or near-permanent public benefit. In other words, the life of the project likely meets or exceeds the length of time it takes to pay off the bond obligation.

User Fees:

User fees may be an effective cost recovery technique to recoup a reasonable portion of the funds required to administer, operate, and maintain public parks and open space. Examples of user fees include registration or entry fees for recreational programs, admission to swimming pools, and equipment and facility rental charges.

Other Local Entity Support:

Communities often develop their own private mechanisms to help support parks and park programming. A nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax exempt “friends of the parks” organization is one such entity that can raise private funds and muster volunteers to support park improvements and programming. Other options include engaging businesses or community groups in an Adopt-A-Park program to help maintain park facilities.

Special Fundraisers:

Many parks and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover specific programs and capital projects.

State and Federal Financing

Federal support for local park initiatives is generally limited. In Texas, most state park funds flow through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TPRA). Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grants include:

Outdoor Recreation Grants:

This Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grant program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) and other local units of government to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas. Each year the department conducts two funding cycles. The maximum grant award is \$500,000. Projects must be completed within three years of approval. The deadlines for grant applications are January 31 and July 31 of each year, with master plan submission deadline 60 days prior to application deadline.

Indoor Recreation Grants:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s Indoor Recreation Grant Program provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government to construct recreation centers, community centers, nature centers, and other facilities. The maximum grant is \$750,000. The application deadline is July 31st of each year, with master plan submission deadline 60 days prior to application deadline.

Recreational Trail Grants:

Texas Parks and Wildlife administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally-funded program

receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants. Funds may be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects, such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors. The application deadline is May 1 of each year.

Boating Access Grants:

This Texas Park and Wildlife grant program provides 75% matching grant funds for the construction of public boat ramps. Local government sponsors must submit an application, provide the land and access to the proposed boat ramp, supply 25% of the development costs, and accept operation and maintenance responsibilities for a minimum 25-year period. The funds are allocated annually and are supported by the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Act. The deadline for this program is October 31 of each year.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants:

Texas Parks and Wildlife administers the Texas apportionments of LWCF through the Texas Recreation and Parks Account. TPWD allocates LWCF as part of the awards for its outdoor infrastructure program and does not accept applications specific to the LWCF.

National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA):

This program is available for planning and technical assistance on projects emphasizing environmental protection, open space accessibility, and construction. This program is available to qualified private organizations and local governments, but public involvement is required.

Private Financing

The use of incentives to encourage private financing, public-private partnerships, land dedication, or donation can be an effective strategy to develop a park and recreation system without relying on local funds to fully fund the program.

Land Donation:

Property owners may be willing to donate land to the county for use as a public park. Donations can be encouraged according to established guidelines for the development of park and recreational areas. Considerations include the suitability of the land for park development, conformance with the objectives of the park plan, approval by the Commissioner's Court, and the sentiments and desires of the surrounding communities. Often there is a federal income tax incentive that benefits the individual or organization donating the property. Because of past abuses, the Internal Revenue Service often closely examines the valuation of the donated property when examining the donor's tax returns.

Trust Funds:

Some individuals will endow a trust fund to support a local park or park system. Funds are sometimes established through a gift or series of gifts while the donor is alive or as part of the settlement of an estate. Some trusts are established independently through trust companies and banks, while others become a “fund” that is part of a community foundation.

Mandatory Park Land Dedication or Local Park Fees:

Some local governmental entities charge developers a local park fee based on the amount of land under development or require the dedication of property within a development for the use of parks. Often the developer will be given the option of including and constructing a park within the development or paying a fee into a fund that supports the development of larger park systems.

Community Foundations:

Community foundations are umbrella organizations authorized by the federal tax code and designed to solicit individual contributions in support of community-wide goals. Community foundations are designed to encourage large donors to establish “funds” within the foundation instead of establishing their own foundation. By collectively managing, investing, and granting funds, community foundations reduce the overall cost of foundation giving. Unlike organizations such as United Way, community foundations build an endowment, where often only the interest on the endowment is distributed in the form of grants. Kendall County falls within the giving area of the San Antonio Area Foundation.

Private Foundations:

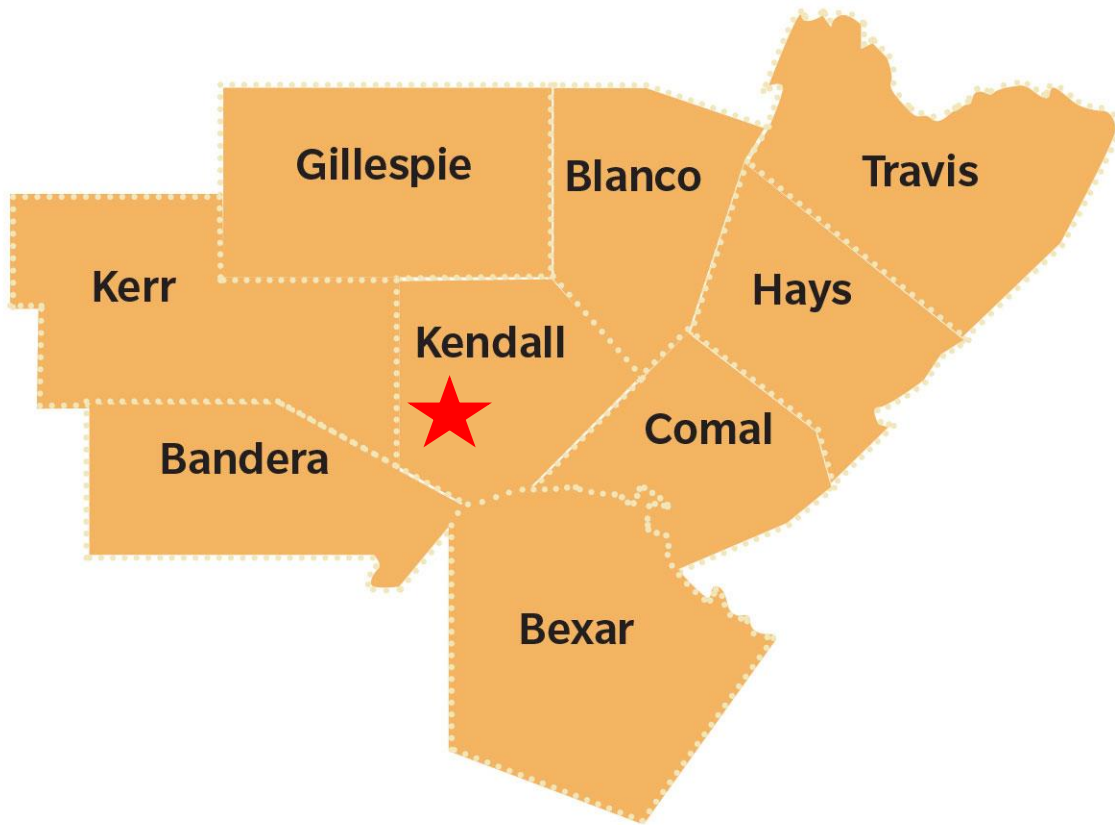
Texas is home to over 3,200 private foundations, and there are 75,000 grant-making foundations nationally. Private foundations come in all sizes and have different giving criteria and interests. Some give locally while others give statewide. Some focus on one or two issues, such as disadvantaged youth and education, while others consider a wider range of issues. In the San Antonio area, perhaps the largest private foundation that consistently gives to parks, recreation, and wildlife organizations is the Albert & Bessie Mae Kronkosky Foundation. This group has provided invaluable assistance to Kendall County for park system planning efforts.

Because of the large number and diversity of foundation-giving opportunities, significant research is often required to identify foundations that fit local parks and recreational needs. Much of this research can be done online through sources such as the Directory of Texas Foundations. An on-line version is hosted by the Nonprofit Resource Center of Texas (www.nprc.org). Texas Nonprofits also offers an online, searchable database that includes corporate giving. The Foundation Center based in New York City provides searchable databases of foundations by location and giving interests. The online database sources are available for a fee. There are also for-profit providers of foundation databases.

Appendices

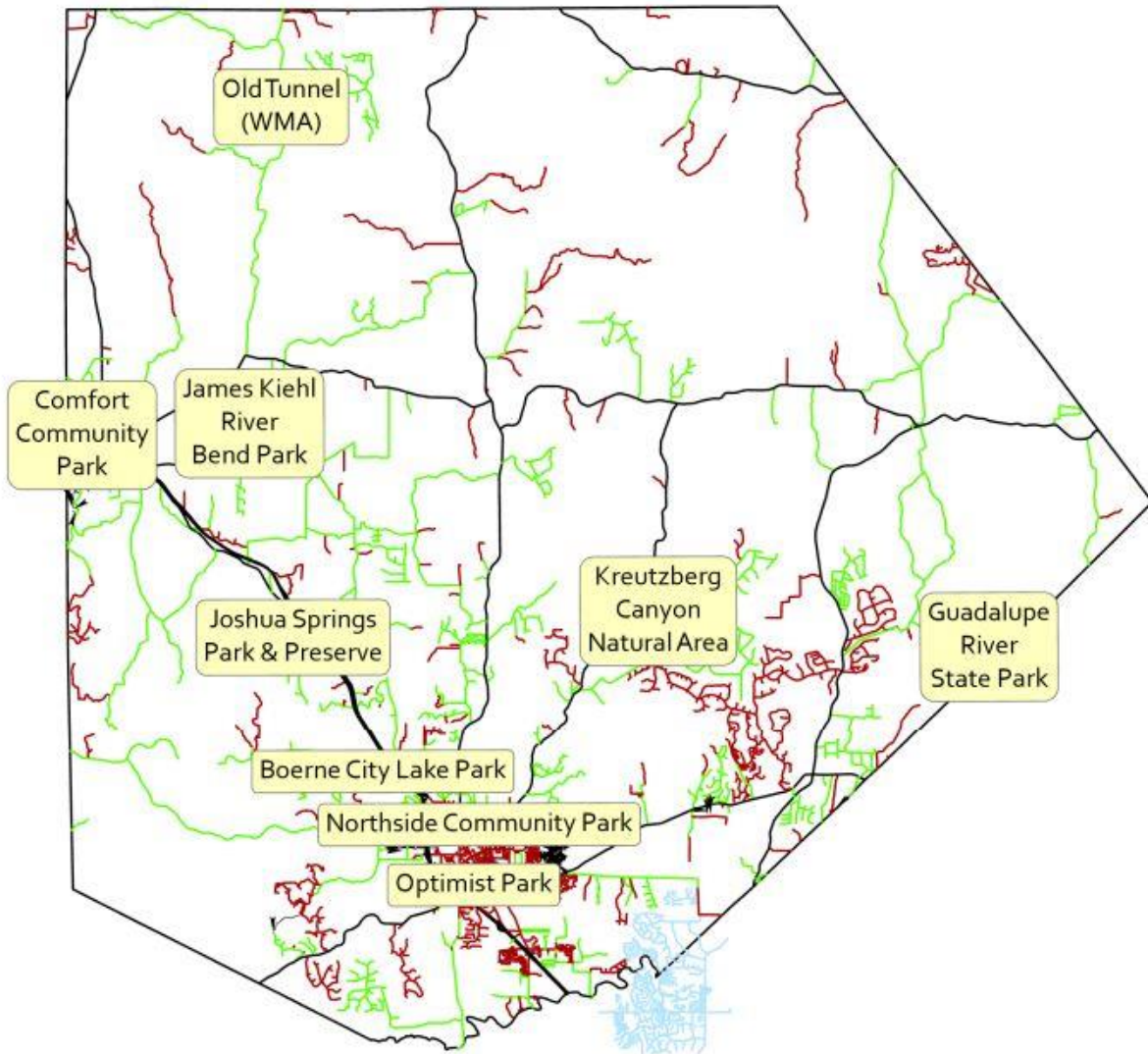
APPENDIX A

Kendall County



APPENDIX B

Park Locations



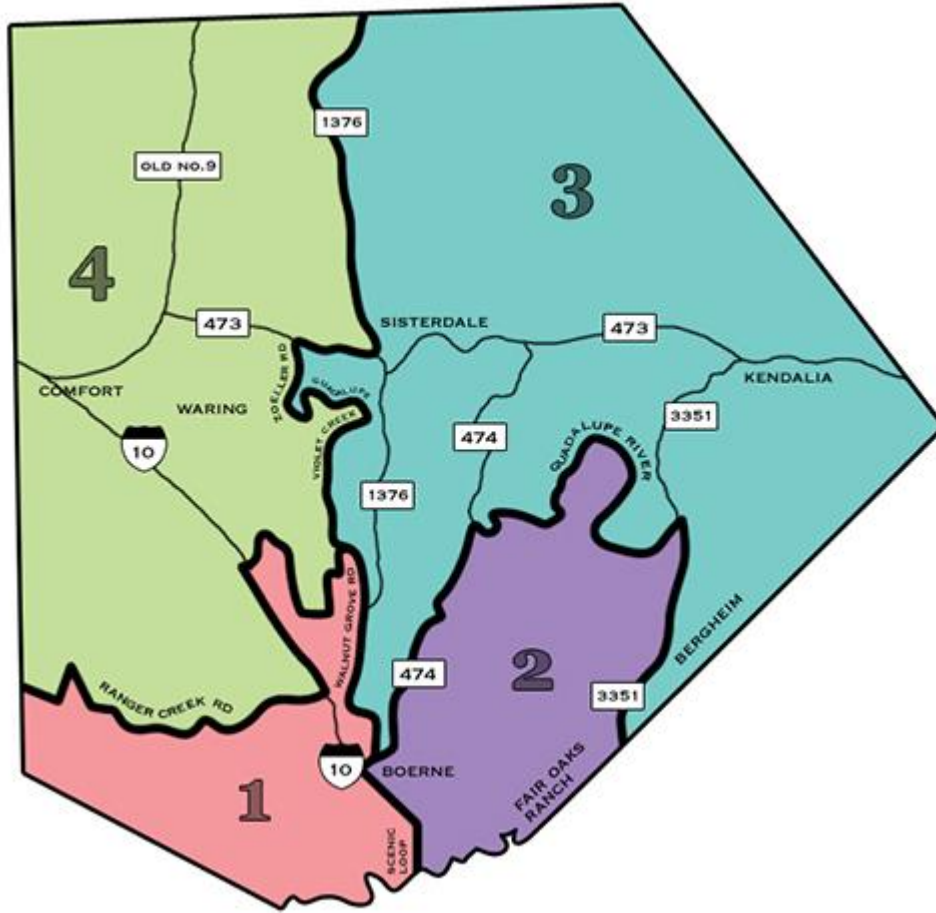
APPENDIX C

Parks Inventory

Inventory ID	Joshua Springs Park & Preserve	James Kiehl River Bend Park	Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area	Comfort Park	Youth Ag. & Equestrian Center	Kendalia Public Library
Acreage	365	25	117	5	33	2
Arena					1	
Basketball Court	1			1		1
Benches	19	8	5	13		4
Bleachers					7	
Chimney Swift Towers	2	2	2			
Community Center	1			1		
Covered Pavilion	7			1	1	2
Disc Golf Course	1					
Dog Park	1					
Fishing Pier	3					
Gazebo				1		
Grills	13			1		1
Headquarters	1					
Informational Kiosk	2	2	2			
Interpretive Signage	12	13	12			
Kayak/Canoe Launch	1	1	1			
Natural Surface Trail	6 mi.	1.2 mi.				
Office Space	1		1		1	
Parking	4	1	3	1	1	1
Paved Trail	1.9 mi.		0.6 mi.	0.1 mi.	0.6 mi.	
Picnic Tables	31	5	10	7	2	4
Playground	1			1		1
Portable Restrooms		2	1			
Restroom	2			1	1	2
Water Fountain	4				2	
Wildlife Blind	5	1	3		1	

APPENDIX D

Precinct Map



Appendix E

References

- American Heart Association recommendations for physical activity in adults and kids.* www.heart.org. (n.d.). Retrieved October 13, 2021, from <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults>.
- Education.* USDA ERS - Data Products. (n.d.). Retrieved March 10, 2022, from <https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?ID=17829>
- Hunger in America.* Feeding America. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2022, from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20USDA%2C%20more,United%20States%20a re%20food%20insecure.>
- Nowak Heisler Summary - National Recreation and park ...* (n.d.). Retrieved January 27, 2022, from <https://www.nrpa.org/globalassets/research/nowak-heisler-summary.pdf>
- Obesity in Texas.* TxOHC. (2020, December 21). Retrieved October 13, 2021, from <https://txohc.org/communication/data-dashboard/obesity>
- O'Hare, P. (2019, May 6). *Kendall County continues to show rapid growth.* News. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Kendall-County-continues-to-show-rapid-growth-13821189.php>.
- Search available commercial properties.* Boerne Kendall County Economic Development Corporation. (2019, September 6). Retrieved October 13, 2021, from <https://bkcedc.com/search-available-commercial-properties/?zpeptShare=aHR0cHM6Ly9wcm9wZXJ0aWVzLnpyb21wcm9zcGVjdG9yLmNvbS9rZW5kYWxsY291bnR5dHgvY29tbXVuaXR5L0tIbmRhbGwtQ291bnR5LzQ4MjU5P2xheWVycz1TVUJTRVRCT1VOREFSWSZsYXQ9MjkuOTI3ODU5Nzk0NzEyMzc2JmXuZz0tOTguNjY3MTY2NDg1NzYxODgmem9vbT0xMA%3D%3D>.
- Sciences, N. A. of, Engineering, & Medicine, and. (2017, January 11). *Key terms.* Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity. Retrieved November 9, 2021, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425851/>.