

CITY OF LEON VALLEY 2020 PARKS, RECREATION, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE **MASTER PLAN**



Approved by the Leon Valley Park Commission December 2019 Approved by the Leon Valley City Council

Resolution No. 20-004

Promoting City Council Goal #7-

"Provide Excellent Parks, Recreational Green Space, and Cultural Opportunities"

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Section 1 Overview

Parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces are essential, not only to enhance the quality of life and neighborhood vitality, but also to preserve natural resources and provide connectivity throughout the city. The City of Leon Valley has six parks, two swimming pools, and a developing trail system to meet the needs of approximately 11,000 citizens. The city welcomes numerous visitors from the surrounding City of San Antonio metropolitan area and tourists, whom also take advantage of our parks system.

The role of parkland and recreational resources in maintaining the health and wellbeing of a community like Leon Valley is universally recognized. Accessibility to parkland and recreational resources is an important consideration in the design and location of these resources, as Bandera Road (Texas Highway 16) creates a significant and serious barrier to pedestrian and cyclist travel between the northeastern and southwestern areas of Leon Valley.

The role of appropriate planning for parkland and recreational resource acquisition, development, and maintenance is well recognized. The purpose of this plan is to identify current and future community recreational needs, and to recommend additional acquisitions and development necessary to meet current and future needs. This plan seeks to detail and quantify needed improvements over a ten-year period. Formal updates to this plan are recommended at minimum 5-year increments, however a continual annual review process is highly recommended.

This Plan is not intended to be a specific listing of projects, but is a guide to be used by decision makers. It is the purpose of the Plan to develop a realistic and implementable tool for guiding the development of the parks, recreation and open space system in the most efficient manner possible. As the City seeks to obtain more funding for capital improvements, renovations, operations, and maintenance of the recreational areas, it is imperative that a comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan be in place to establish priorities for the distribution of limited funds. In order to effectively plan for our future system of parks and open space areas, it is necessary to examine the planning and development history of the parks system. This brief history and examination of current local, regional, national, and global trends will serve as the basis for the continued evolution of a vision for the City of Leon Valley's parks, recreation, and open space areas.

History of the Leon Valley Park System

The City of Leon Valley, Texas encompasses approximately 3.5 square miles of an urbanized area in the northwest quadrant of Bexar County, Texas. While the area has been populated by westward seeking citizens since the early 1800's, Leon Valley was not officially incorporated until 1952. The City of San Antonio was growing outside of Loop 410 and the citizens wanted to ensure their independence from what was perceived as the threat of being annexed and their collective individuality lost. What was a small farm community with narrow sleepy roads, slowly developed into a bustling suburban area with subdivisions of mostly middle to high-income single-family housing.

In 1975, the first public park was developed and from that year forward, the parks system has continued to grow. That park, located at 6440 Evers Road, was deeded to the City in 1973 by a prominent local developer. The developer was not able to use the original 17.153-acre parcel as it directly abuts Huebner Creek, which is in the floodway, so the land was donated to the public. Once the land was annexed into the City (Ord. 521) and deeded to the City, the City Council designated it as the Leon Valley City Park (Ord. 627).

In 1979, the name of the park was changed, at the request of the Leon Valley Historical Society, to Raymond Rimkus Park, in honor of the first Mayor of the City, who was also one of the founding members of the City. The City then gave control over the park to the Hill Country Jaycees to develop not only a park, but bicycle trails as well. At that time, Leon Valley had a population of 1960 persons and had large tracts of undeveloped land. The City currently has grown to approximately 11,000 citizens and it has been estimated that it has the potential to grow to a population of 13,650. Over the years, several vacant parcels adjacent to Raymond Rimkus Park were purchased by the City (the park now totals 27 acres), several neighborhood trails along drainage easements were built, and the City acquired the 36 acres adjoining Raymond Rimkus Park, which was designated in 2008 as the Huebner - Onion Natural Area Park. In 2014, the Park Commission revised the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan to recommend the creation of pocket parks to serve each individual neighborhood, which has been very successful.

The first Park Commission was formed in 1977 (Ord. 711). Consisting of nine members and two alternates, the duties of the Commission are to prepare and submit recommendations for park regulations to the City Council for approval and adoption; make recommendations concerning park ordinances and park policies; assist the Council in the development, maintenance, and regulation of city parks as the Council may prescribe; serve as a liaison for the city with the public for park matters; prepare a revised Master Plan every five years; and prepare and submit recommendations to the council concerning items to be purchased for the park. The recommendations are then considered by the City Council and a ten-year capital plan is formulated. The capital plan is reviewed yearly and necessary adjustments are made. The Leon Valley Code of Ordinances, Article 1.09, provides the rules and regulations for all parks.

"The 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

Section 2 Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Mission Statement

"To enrich the lives of our citizens through the stewardship of our resources and the responsive provision of quality recreational opportunities and community services."

Departmental Goals and Objectives

- 1. Restore and maintain the viability of the park, recreation, trails, and open space system by investing and re-investing in existing facilities.
 - a. Using a capital improvements plan, establish priorities to replace or renovate existing playground infrastructure on a 10-year cycle.
 - b. Renovate or replace segments of existing trails which have exceeded their useful life or deteriorated beyond repair, to protect the safety of users and preserve the investment in these facilities.
 - c. Determine the need for development of new park areas. The City's subdivision code states "Where a final subdivision plat is submitted for approval of any residential subdivision, such subdivision plat shall contain a clear, fee simple dedication of an area to the city for park purposes". Developers may also elect to pay a fee in lieu of the dedication of park land and these funds may be used to provide park amenities in existing parks. The Park Commission will make a determination and send a recommendation to the City Council on the creation of new park areas.
 - d. Reinvest in the current and developing park system, to preserve and protect the existing infrastructure and to effectively plan for, and efficiently develop, new trails, parks and facilities. In all instances, ensure that resources are allocated yearly to adequately maintain and appropriately sustain facilities.
 - e. Provide adequate staffing levels to maintain park facilities and operations. The creation of the new parks increases the demand for maintenance. Consider the creation of a Park Crew, with a minimum of four personnel, dedicated solely to the maintenance of the park system.

- 2. Provide new parkland and facilities to meet park, recreation, and open space needs in developing and re-developing areas of the City.
 - a. The City currently has approximately 77 acres of parks, recreation, and open space land, with an estimated population of 11,000 persons. The previous standard of 10 acres per 1000 persons has been relaxed, but the City should strive to increase neighborhood and community park acreage from 77 acres to 110 acres by 2028, concentrating on under-served areas of the city. Plans are being made to add a 1.81 acre park on El Verde Road and add 36 acres of Huebner Creek below El Verde Road to the park system, which would bring the total to approximately 112 acres of park, recreation, trails, and open space land. There will still be some areas that remain underserved, but available land in these areas is almost non-existent.
 - b. Assure a safe and secure environment for all users of the park system.
 - c. Seek improved accessibility of parks and recreational resources.
 - d. Investigate redevelopment opportunities to provide parkland for under-served areas.
 - e. During 2020, review the effectiveness of and seek amendment to the Leon Valley Subdivision Code, specifically addressing the regulations regarding parkland dedication and fee in lieu of dedication, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy in the establishment of local close-to-home parks and facilities.
 - f. Strive to provide recreational and fitness activities for all citizens, regardless of age, gender, or physical abilities.
- 4. Improve the variety and quality of park, recreation, trails, and open space opportunities available to the community.
 - a. Provide new park equipment and facilities where service levels fall below standards consistent with the priorities established in the Park, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. Focus should occur on priorities set on a city-wide basis and individual park planning district perspectives to ensure that the highest rated facilities and amenities are addressed in a prudent and proactive manner.

- b. Seek to beautify parklands with trees, plants, wildflowers, hardscape, interpretive displays, and public art.
- Strive to expand the trails system to provide better connectivity throughout our community.
- 5. Build and enhance community partnerships to deliver quality services and facilities.
 - a. Reaffirm and seek new partnerships for cooperative facility use and development with the Northside Independent School District (NISD), the Boy and Girl Scouts, other non-profits, and governmental agencies serving the City of Leon Valley, to expand recreational programs and community service opportunities.
- 6. Preserve and enhance the City's natural, historic, and cultural developed resources.
 - a. Implement current Park Master Plan goals that address the preservation and restoration of natural open spaces.
 - b. Develop interactive programs to introduce children and adults to the history and culture of the city.
 - c. Provide interactive interpretive displays at the Huebner Cemetery, near the Huebner-Onion Homestead, and in other appropriate areas.

Section 3 Planning and Development Process

The Leon Valley Parks, Trails, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is developed following processes recommended by the Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines – National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the American Planning Association (APA), and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This Master Plan serves as an evolving document that is reviewed and updated over time and provides a dynamic planning framework from which the future needs of the citizens of Leon Valley can be anticipated and met.

The Public Works Department employs a systems approach to create the framework for park master planning. This approach includes the effective use of citizen input and needs assessment tools, adherence to the City's overall vision for community enhancement, and identification of corresponding goals, objectives, and strategies. The comprehensive nature of the plan addresses the planning and development priorities of the Leon Valley Park system for the next five to ten years, as identified by the staff, citizens, the Park Commission, and the City Council.

Goals and objectives, based on citizen input, are integrated as a part of this update. The identified priorities serve as a guide for decisions made in producing and updating the park master plan.

The plan will address jurisdiction wide needs and follows previously designated Neighborhood Park Zoning designations (Park Zones 1-4). Supporting documentation, including demographics data and estimates, applicable ordinances, maps and other information, are included.

Needs assessment uses a combination of demand, standard, and resource-based approaches. Recommended acquisitions and/or enhancements are prioritized and based on need, acquisition and maintenance cost factors, aesthetics, established community standards, security and safety considerations. Accessibility, connectivity and compatibility issues are included as consideration and design factors. The needs assessment process seeks an appropriate balance of recreational resource availability including athletic, picnic, walk, bike, roll, and garden facilities, along with wildlife and native plant habitat.

Park Planning Districts

As previously stated, Leon Valley is a small suburb of 3.5 square miles and is completely surrounded by the City of San Antonio. The City was incorporated in 1952 and most growth occurred from the 1960's through the 1990's. During that time, the City owned only one community park and one swimming pool. Since then, there have been a few areas of new development, but the City is predicted to enter into a redevelopment phase, as a good number of subdivisions are 40-50 years old. The City's Master Plan indicates 16 residential planning areas. In order to address the unique conditions in each of these areas, the City is divided into four park planning districts. The districts were derived from the physical characteristics of the City based on roadways, creeks, and topographical features that serve as boundaries for the park planning districts, as well as being based on population considerations.

Inventory of Existing Park Facilities, Programs, and Opportunities

The park resources are evaluated through a process of inventory, analysis, and assessment. Each park in the system is inventoried to determine acreage, location, and age of existing facilities. This information is used in conjunction with needs assessment instruments to evaluate areas for future park facility needs.

The inventory contained in this plan is a descriptive and mapped account of existing park, recreation, and open space facilities. This inventory is continually updated as park land and amenities are added to the system. When new parks are constructed, the information is used in the prioritization process for capital improvement expenditures for each Park Planning District.

Park inventory can be used to assess:

- The current level of service of existing park, recreation, trails, and open space infrastructure
- Connections to regional open space and facilities
- Relationships to school sites and facilities
- Relationships to private, non-profit, and commercial recreational facilities

2019 Needs Assessment

The Needs Assessment is one of the most significant instruments in the development of the Master Plan for the Leon Valley Public Works Department. The findings of the assessment provide the foundation for the direction of the Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan and provide guidance for developing priorities for park facilities and future park and open space development. The 2019 Needs Assessment process was undertaken to meet the following objectives:

- Identify priorities of Leon Valley citizens for facility needs
- Measure the extent of use for facilities offered by the City
- Measure perceived maintenance and safety of the park facilities and equipment
- Inform the residents about parks, recreation, and open space facilities
- Identify preferences and priorities for future spending on department services and facilities

In the summer of 2018, the Park Commission developed a needs assessment survey that was mailed to 3,043 residences within the city limits. To increase responses, a self-addressed, stamped envelope was mailed with the survey, which proved to be quite successful. Staff received over 500 completed surveys, which indicated a return rate of 18%. The surveys were tallied and a summary was submitted to the Park Commission. The Park Commission used the information to formulate the review of the existing Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. It was then forwarded to the City Council for final consideration.

The results were also published to the City's website and FaceBook pages. The information gleaned from the survey will be used for programming in the coming budget years.

Park facility usage estimates are also based on rental and reservation records maintained by the City of Leon Valley and observations over an extended period. Significant utilization by various area organized athletic groups is reflected in rental and reservation records. This is particularly true of the mixed-use field area. Other heavily used areas include walking/jogging path, picnic facilities, playground, pools, and basketball courts. Moderate utility has been observed of the ball field, tennis and volleyball courts.



Musical Instruments ADA Playground Raymond Rimkus Park

Community Garden Raymond Rimkus Park



SECTION 4 TRENDS

Overview

The City of Leon Valley Public Works Department is charged with the park system operations and maintenance and is committed to improving the community's health, stability, sustainability, beauty, and quality of life for all citizens. The planning for the needs of its citizens is influenced not only by analyzing past participation data and observing what leisure activities citizens currently participate in, but also by anticipating future needs. Recreation trends are influenced by continuous changes in our society.

It is imperative that the City anticipates the future needs of the community. Monitoring social, environmental, economic, demographic, and urban trends helps the department predict the needs and wants of the public.

This section will address the following trends:

- Community revitalization trends
- Green infrastructure and sustainable development
- Social trends
- Economic trends
- Health trends
- Technological trends
- Parks, recreation facilities and programming trends
- Demographic trends

The American Planning Association (APA) documents park trends through a continuing series of briefing papers on how cities can use parks to address urban challenges. The APA's City Parks Forum is dedicated to providing information on how healthy parks are fundamental to many aspects of community prosperity. These include improving economic health and vitality, reducing crime, improving public physical and mental health, creating a strong sense of community and supporting overall quality of life.

Community Revitalization Trends

In recent years, the use of parks for community revitalization has gained increasing momentum across the country. The APA has reported that more than 30 studies have shown that parks and green space positively affect real property values for adjacent properties by as much as 25%. In cities across the country, parks define the character of the city and its neighborhoods. Further, parks can be the catalyst for urban redevelopment.

The following four points are lessons learned from these studies (APA 'City Parks Forum' Briefing Paper "How Cities Use Parks for Community Revitalization" by Ed McMahon and Mark Benedict.

- 1) Parks that serve as central walking, resting, and meeting places can revive failing or threatened commercial areas.
- 2) Renewal takes leadership, vision, and time; with these three ingredients, revitalization tends to attract even more investment.
- 3) Community residents and the city, working together on a neighborhood park project, can turn around a distressed residential area.
- 4) Parks don't automatically lead to neighborhood revival; before investing, the city should make sure the relation of a park to its surrounding neighborhood will allow revitalization.

Green Infrastructure Trends

Much has been researched and written about cities and green infrastructure. The following four points are lessons learned from the APA "City Parks Forum" Briefing Paper "How Cities Use Parks for Green Infrastructure" by Peter Harnik states:

- 1) Creating an interconnected system of parks and open space is manifestly more beneficial than creating parks in isolation.
- 2) Cities can use parks to help preserve essential ecological functions and to protect biodiversity.
- 3) When planned as part of a system of green infrastructure, parks can help shape urban form and buffer incompatible uses.
- 4) Cities can use parks to reduce public costs for stormwater management, flood control, transportation, and other forms of built infrastructure.

Huebner Creek and its tributaries are an important resource and provide a natural means of linking the City's recreation sites and open spaces, as well as linking neighborhoods to centers of activity. The creek is also an important economic asset to the City, as it lends itself to incorporation into the parks system. Preserving the floodplain as open space allows for natural filtration of surface water runoff before it reaches waterways, and also protects structures from flooding.

Sustainable Development Trends

Sustainable development (development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) promotes development with smart environmental impacts. As population increases and land availability and resources decrease, it becomes ever more important to consider the long-term ramifications of growth, the needs of the citizens, protecting and enhancing environmental quality.

Below are some issues and opportunities that are specific to Leon Valley, which should be considered when developing our parks and open spaces:

 Protecting Natural Watersheds - As the City develops, it is important to be aware that significant open spaces, wildlife habitat, original landscapes, wetlands, natural drainage areas, urban forest and remnant landscapes may be in need of conservation and protection. The City's plan to plant 10,000 trees by the year 2025 will mitigate tree removal by developers. Developers are now required to replace trees over 8 inches in diameter or pay a fee in lieu of to the City tree mitigation fund. This fund can only be used to buy trees and tree removal/planting supplies.

- Providing Environmental Clean Up Coordinate Watershed Management Projects with other City departments, the San Antonio River Authority, the Edwards Aquifer Authority, the City of San Antonio, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to manage and conserve the floodplain and drainage corridors.
- Reducing Pollution and Waste Review management plans and practices such as those which reduce the number of vehicle trips each day to reduce ozone and pollution emissions and encouraging recycling contribute to a cleaner, healthier city. Promote reduce, reuse, and recycle at each park and along trails, by the installation of recycling bins and advertising. Participate in the City's Earthwise Living Day event to promote green spaces and encourage citizens to use the park system.
- Sound Environmental Management Seek ways for implementation of practices to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides. Encourage the use of hardscapes and drought tolerant plantings.
- Maintaining Natural Areas Expand management techniques that have unique natural and aesthetic value to these areas. Protect the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park and add to the acreage as the budget allows. Promote conservation and minimize activities in these areas. Remove any non-native vegetation and trees and replant with native trees.
- Maintaining Water Quality Examine the natural drainage ways and creeks that pose challenges for the Public Works Department and other City departments and agencies, which may require increased vigilance in efforts to protect floodplains and watersheds and maintain high water quality levels. Adhere to Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP's) and increase public education on stormwater. Partner with the San

Antonio River Authority, United States Corp of Engineers, and the University of Texas at San Antonio to monitor water quality and reverse erosion and scouring.

Green Space Benefits – Promote the City Council's El Verde by 2025 Program by
planting additional trees, and encourage the preservation of mature trees to help
improve air quality, mitigate the urban heat island effect. Adhere to the City's
landscaping requirements in the Zoning Code to assure streetscape trees and plantings
are installed and maintained in new and redeveloped properties.

Social Trends

City parks also produce important community and social development benefits. They make suburban neighborhoods more livable; they offer recreational opportunities for at-risk youth and low-income residents; and they provide places where people can feel a sense of community. Access to public parks and recreational facilities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and in particular to juvenile delinquency. Below is a list of issues that should be considered when planning for social trends:

- Safe community consideration of concerns for personal and family safety is fundamental in our efforts to provide a safe parks system.
- Wellness increasing importance of wellness activities for all citizens will increase demands for facilities and programs offered by the Department. Assure outdoor fitness equipment is available at all city parks and walking paths and trails are clearly marked for distances.
- Volunteerism in recent years, there has been an increased awareness in the value of giving back to one's community. Many groups and programs exist and take advantage of these human resources.

Below is a list of programs the Department is currently administering to address social issues.

- Youth at Risk the Department regularly invites school and church groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, and community youth to take part in the construction and revitalization of areas of parks in the City and in the revitalization of neighborhoods through the bi-annual Neighborhood Renewal Program.
- Adopt-a-Spot the Department facilitates opportunities for building community empowerment with programs like Adopt-a-Spot. This program provides a way for neighborhood residents and other groups to adopt their local parks, trails, and medians, and contribute volunteer resources to improve and maintain these areas.
- Citizen Participation the involvement of various stakeholders from city boards, committees, commissions, and community residents provide a vital connection in planning for the future of the community.

Economic Trends

Leon Valley is experiencing the beginnings of a period of decline and redevelopment. Some shopping centers built in the 1970's, 80's, and 90's are being transformed, while some older commercial sites are becoming or remain vacant. The City has revised its business regulations and Zoning Code to encourage aesthetically pleasing architecture, encourage green building and environmental consciousness, and diversification of uses.

According to the APA's "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development" by Megan Lewis, AICP, parks are a source of positive economic benefits. Parks enhance property values, increase municipal revenues, bring in home buyers, and attract retirees. The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) found in a recent survey that American's top summer staycations activities include parks and trails. The study also stated that 48% of respondents attend a neighborhood festival or event; 47% visit a local park; and 47% go for a walk or a run on a local trail.

Understanding the economic impacts of parks can help decision makers better evaluate the creation and maintenance of parks. The following economic challenges and opportunities should be considered in the development of parks and recreational facilities in Leon Valley:

The increasing costs associated with providing a wide range of facilities, programs, and services to meet the needs of the public.

- The increasing labor and energy costs that will require the Department to examine more efficient ways of management and operations.
- The need for leisure services to be provided by a partnership of both public and private sectors.
- Financial collaborations should continue to be formed with Non-Profit Organizations to share costs and realize common goals and visions, such as the partnership with the Leon Valley Historical Society, the Northwest Little League, the Medical Center, and the Northside Independent School District.

Health Trends

How cities use parks to improve public health has become an increasingly important issue. The following four points are lessons learned from the study in the APA City Parks Forum briefing paper "How Cities Use Parks to Improve Public Health" by Howard Frumkin, M.D., and May E. Eyesenbach:

- 1) Parks provide people a contact with nature, known to confer certain health benefits and enhance well-being.
- 2) Physical activity opportunities in parks help to increase fitness and reduce obesity. The City should install outdoor fitness stations at each of the parks and along trails.
- 3) Park trees and all vegetation can help mitigate climate, air, and water pollution impacts on public health.

4) Cities should provide parks to provide their various citizen groups with a range of health benefits.

Technology Trends

As technology continues to advance and become more popular, the City will need to keep pace and strive to provide technological services to the public where appropriate. Below is a list of considerations regarding technology that may have an impact on park and recreational facilities.

- Social media Communication of upcoming events or opportunities through social media outlets like NextDoor, FaceBook, Twitter, and Instagram is becoming more popular.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technology The City provides a variety of map layers and data for documenting existing park acreage and for use in planning future park sites. GIS technology assists in identifying where contiguous park space exists, show how protecting natural habitats and connecting larger parks with linear greenways can create a patchwork quilt of open space.
- Interactive Website The Department works with other departments to create an
 interactive website, so that a variety of city facilities, including park addresses, facility
 inventory information, and pictures of park sites can be made available to the public, as
 well as allowing the public to report concerns and complaints.
- Global Positioning Systems (GPS) Most people use GPS to locate street addresses
 and park locations. There are several specific areas in our parks that can be mapped for
 GPS systems that would allow ease in finding such sites. An example would be the
 Huebner Cemetery inside the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park.

Park and Recreation Administration Trends

The official blog and podcast of the NRPA posted a blog, *Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2018*, by Richard J. Dolesh (January 8, 2018), NRPA's Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, which discusses some surprising trends, including the increase in parks becoming preferred sites for opioid users. Other discussions included the not so surprising discovery that parks have sometimes become sites for homeless encampments centers. Homeless campsites have been discovered in the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park and some presumed homeless persons have been observed sleeping on benches in Raymond Rimkus Park and near the library. Each of these instances has been abated by the removal of any camps or persons immediately upon discovery.

On the good news side regarding parks and health, Mr. Dolesh notes that many park and recreation sites are becoming not just places to improve health through physical activity, but locations to participate in evidence-based programs that measurably improve health.

Finally, Mr. Dolesh warns that plans to convert park property to non-park uses without equal value replacement will be proposed with increasing frequency. Cities that have not been diligent in dedicating their parks according to state law requirements may lose valuable parks to development.

These are just some of the trends indicating Park Administrators will need to be diligent in keeping up with the most current news and legal trends in the Park sector of municipal administration. For Leon Valley, the following strategies should be implemented.

- 1) Provide increased security at each park location and continue to remove any graffiti or homeless camps immediately.
- 2) If homeless persons are encountered, involve community health care providers to find more appropriate spaces for this segment of the population. Partner with other non-profit agencies, such as *Haven for Hope*.

- 3) Assure each park site is duly dedicated by ordinance which shows clear and distinct boundaries. Assure and state clearly in each ordinance that parkland may only be removed for sale by vote of the citizens.
- 4) Assure adequate funding in each fiscal year to provide for security updates. Collaborate with the Police Department on strategies for policing parks and trails.
- 5) The City Council has determined that by Ordinance No. 2018-27, in order to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Leon Valley and those people who visit the City, it is necessary to create and maintain a City Park and Recreational Area Safety Zone, which would encompass all so designated city parks and recreational areas.

The Park Commission strives to work in coordination with the Zoning Commission, Earthwise Living Day Committee, Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee, Hike and Bike Trail Advisory Committee, Pool Advisory Committee, and Tree Advisory Board to ensure an integrated and holistic approach to identifying and meeting the needs of the community.

Section 5 Demographic Trends

The data below was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau's Quick Facts:

Leon Valley city, Texas

Population estimates, July 1, 2017, (V2017)	11,426
PEOPLE	
Population	
Population estimates, July 1, 2017, (V2017)	11,426
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2017)	10,231
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2017, (V2017)	11.7%
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	10,151
Age and Sex	
Persons under 5 years, percent	5.6%
Persons under 18 years, percent	21.2%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	17.3%
Female persons, percent	
	51.6%

Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone, percent(a)	81.9%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	7.6%

Master Plan	
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	0.1%
Asian alone, percent(a)	4.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	0.0%
Two or More Races, percent	4.2%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	57.2%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	29.0%
Demographics	
Population Characteristics	
Veterans, 2012-2016	1,141
Foreign born persons, percent, 2012-2016	13.8%
Housing	
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2012-2016	57.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2012-2016	\$147,000
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2012-2016	\$1,391
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2012-2016	\$497
Median gross rent, 2012-2016	\$899
Families & Living Arrangements	
Households, 2012-2016	4,017
Persons per household, 2012-2016	2.73
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1	81.7%
	22 1

year+, 2012-2016	
Language other than English spoken at home, percepersons age 5 years+, 2012-2016	ent of 40.1%
Education	
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons years+, 2012-2016	age 25 90.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age years+, 2012-2016	25 32.0%
Health	
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2012	-2016 8.7%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 year percent	ars, 16.2%
Income & Poverty	
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2	\$57,817
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollar 2016	rs), 2012- \$31,319
Persons in poverty, percent	10.0%
GEOGRAPHY	
Geography	
Population per square mile, 2010	2,957.8
Land area in square miles, 2010	3.43
FIPS Code	4842388

Value Notes

Estimates are not comparable to other geographic levels due to methodology differences that may exist between different data sources.

Some estimates presented here come from sample data, and thus have sampling errors that may render some apparent differences between geographies statistically indistinguishable. The vintage year (e.g., V2017) refers to the final year of the series (2010 thru 2017). *Different vintage years of estimates are not comparable.*

Fact Notes

- (a) Includes persons reporting only one race
- (b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories
- (c) Economic Census Puerto Rico data are not comparable to U.S. Economic Census data

Value Flags

- D Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information
- F Fewer than 25 firms
- FN Footnote on this item in place of data
- NA Not available
- S Suppressed; does not meet publication standards
- X Not applicable
- Z Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown
- -Either no or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a
 ratio of medians cannot be calculated because one or both of the median estimates falls in
 the lowest or upper interval of an open ended distribution.

QuickFacts data are derived from: Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits.

Using these resources, the average estimated and ultimate population at maximum build out is 13,650 or 19.46% higher than the estimated census figure of 11,426.

SECTION 6 PARK ZONES

The City of Leon Valley is divided into four (4) park zones for the purpose of facilitating planning intended to provide parkland and recreational access to various sectors of the city in as equitable a manner as possible. Each of these park zones are bounded by both city boundaries and major thoroughfares that course through Leon Valley, creating accessibility challenges to the central Raymond Rimkus Park.

The entire city of Leon Valley is considered a single community park zone in comparing park and recreational resources against published National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) guidelines.





Black-chinned Hummingbird and Nest Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park Pictures courtesy Thomas Backlund

"In merging nature and culture, the most successful cities combine such universal needs as maintaining or restoring contact with the cycles of nature, with specific local characteristics." Sally A. Kitt Chappell, Chicago's Urban

Nature: A Guide to the City's Architecture + Landscape

Leon Valley Park and Facilities Zone Map



Zone Map Facilities

ID#	Facility	Address
1	Old Mill Park	6501 Huebner Rd
2	The Ridge at Leon Valley	5740 Grass Hill Dr
3	Shadow Mist Park	5487 Shadow Mist St
4	City Hall-Police	6400 El Verde Rd
5	Fire Station	6300 El Verde Rd
6	El Verde Park	6208 El Verde Rd
7	Forest Oak Pool	6221 Evers Rd
8	Huebner Onion Natural Area Park	6601 Bandera Rd
9	Small Pavilion	6916 Poss Rd
10	Raymond Rimkus Park	6440 Evers Rd
11	Leon Valley Pool	6600 Strawflower St
12	Steurenthaler-Silo Park	7510 Huebner Rd
13	Veterans Memorial Park-Community Center	6427 Evers Rd
14	Public Works	6429 Evers Rd
15	Conference Center	6421 Evers Rd
16	Library	6425 Evers Rd
17	Leon Valley Cafe	6417 Evers Rd
18	Walking Trail	Stirrup Ln
19	Walking Trail	Evers Rd

Park Zone 1

Bounded on the North and the West by the City Limits, the East by Bandera Road, and on the South by Grissom Road. The area is primarily commercial; however, there is a manufactured home park in the northeastern sector; in the Northwestern sector single family dwellings; and apartment complexes on Grissom Road, just west of Bandera Road. It contains the Old Mill

Park.

ID#

Facility

Old Mill Park Park



Recommendations for Park Zone 1

- Continue to develop the Old Mill Park.
- Plant more trees, bushes, and a butterfly garden.
- Investigate the development of trails along drainage areas.
- Consider traffic calming devices along Timberhill and neighborhood identity signage.
- Continue to improve the neighborhood with funding through grants and capital Improvements planning.



Biba equipped playscape and Little Free Library

Old Mill Park



Park Zone 1 - Old Mill Park - 6501 Huebner Road

This park consists of 2.0785 acres and was donated to the City in 2016. It has a walking path, a handicapped accessible children's playscape, with web-based Biba technology, outdoor fitness equipment, Little Free Library, and picnic shelter, with picnic tables. Benches and recycling receptacles are scattered throughout the park.



Recommendations for Old Mill Park

• Continue to develop the park by the addition of an irrigation system, water fountain, picnic tables, trees and other landscaping.



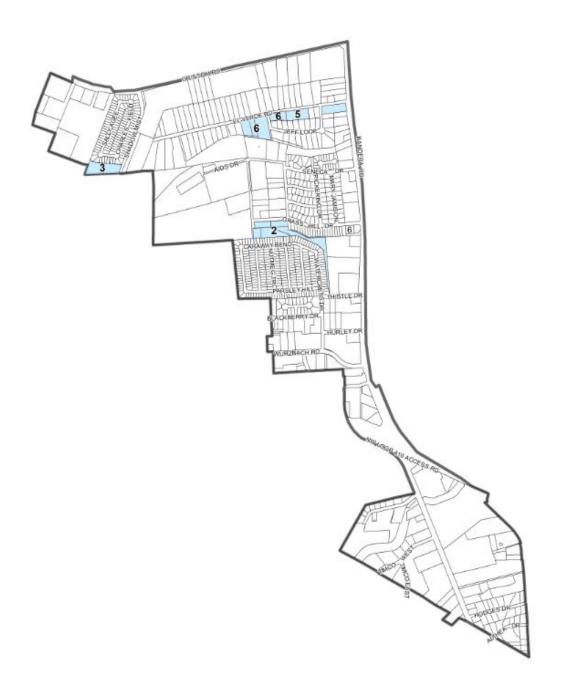


Playscape and Pavilion Old Mill Park



Park Zone 2

Bounded on the north by Grissom Road, the east by Bandera Road and the city limits on the west and south sides, this area has 3 primary sectors and needs improved connectivity. This sector further extends past Wurzbach Road, and to a small section South of Loop 410. It contains the El Verde Road proposed park, and the Shadow Mist Park.



Park Zone 2 Legend

ID#	Facility	Address
	2 The Ridge at Leon Valley	5740 Grass Hill Dr
	3 Shadow Mist Park	5487 Shadow Mist Dr
	4 City Hall-Police	6400 El Verde Rd
	5 Fire Station	6300 El Verde Rd
	6 El Verde Park	6208 El Verde Rd

Recommendations for Park Zone 2

- Continue to develop the Ridge at Leon Valley Park, provide connectivity from The Ridge at Leon Valley Park through Seneca Estates Unit 3, across Huebner Creek, and connecting to the proposed Huebner Creek Greenway Trail in the El Verde Road area.
- Develop the Hetherington Trail and connect it to The Ridge at Leon Valley Park.
- Designate the portion of Huebner Creek, from Shadow Mist to Bandera Road, as a part of the park system.
- Construct the parking lot at Shadow Mist and canvass the residents of that subdivision to get recommendations for further development.
- Area inside Loop 410 Only one residential subdivision exists in this area and there are currently no parks serving this side of Leon Valley. Investigate potential areas for redevelopment as a park.
- Investigate the use of Zarzamora Creek as a possible hike & bike trail.

The Ridge at Leon Valley Park - 5740 Grass Hill

This park consists of 5 acres and is still under development, but plans are to install a playscape, outdoor fitness equipment, a basketball hoop throw area, a walking path, benches, picnic tables, a water fountain, and recycling bins



Recommendations for The Ridge at Leon Valley Park

- Continue to develop this park with the addition of an irrigation system, water fountain, benches, basketball court, picnic tables, and extend walking path.
- Connect to the Hetherington Trail and to the Huebner Creek Greenway Trail.
- Widen Grass Hill roadway on City side and install sidewalks.



Fitness Equipment & Playground The Ridge at Leon Valley Park



Hetherington Trail - Grass Hill Drive at William Rancher

This parcel of land was donated by the heirs to the developer of the Seneca Estates Unit III developer. The trail will connect with The Ridge at Leon Valley Park, and then to the Huebner Creek Greenway Hike & Bike Trail and the City of San Antonio's Leon Creek Greenway Trail System.



Recommendations for Hetherington Trail

- Construct the trail, install appropriate signage, install mile markers, provide benches and trash receptacles
- Connect trail to The Ridge at Leon Valley Park, with an eventual extension to the Leon Creek Greenway Trail System, from Samaritan and Aids Drive.
- Engage with the developer of the Grass Hill Estates Subdivision to possibly dedicate a portion of property to this trail.



The Hetherington Trail Area



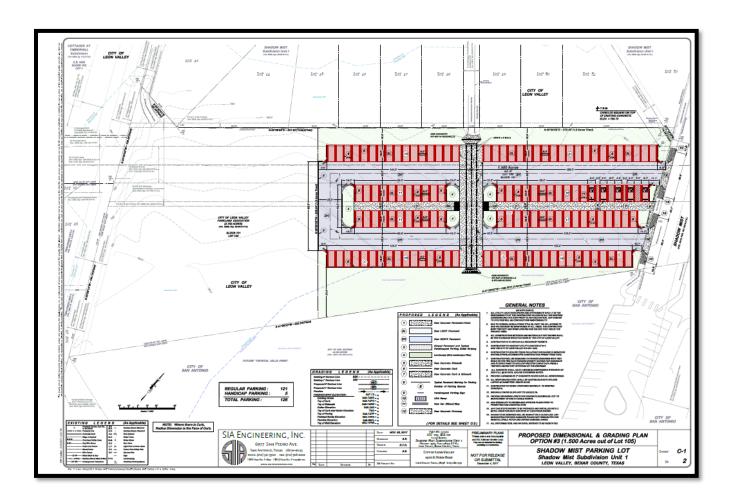
Shadow Mist Park - 5487 Shadow Mist

This park consists of almost 3 acres, and is still in development, but will have a large parking area and either a playscape or skate park, depending on collaboration with the City of San Antonio (COSA). COSA intends to construct a park directly adjacent to our park and have planned amenities. The new San Antonio park will be known as Crystal Hills Park and will connect to the Leon Creek Greenway Trail Grissom Trailhead and the Leon Valley Huebner Creek Greenway Trail. The parking area shown in this aerial is the COSA parking lot for the Leon Creek Greenway Trailhead at this location.



Recommendations for Shadow Mist Park

- Construct Low Impact Development parking lot on 1.5 acres and create a skate park on remaining 1.5 acres, with irrigation system, water fountain, and benches.
- Interact with the City of San Antonio's planned Crystal Hills Park and Leon Creek Greenway Trail system, and the City of Leon Valley's Huebner Creek Greenway Trail system.



Proposed Parking Area Shadow Mist Park

Park Zone 2 Leon Valley Ranches Park – 6208 El Verde Road

This park consists of approximately 1.81 acres of land, but is currently owned by Bexar County, as a part of their Huebner Creek Conveyance LC-17 Flood Control Project. They expect to deed this land to the City in the year 2020. During 2019, the City will start the planning process with the local residents, to prepare a budget for development. This park will also lie adjacent to the planned Hike & Bike Trail, which will provide connectivity with the COSA Leon Creek Greenway Trail System.



Recommendations for Leon Valley Ranches Park

- Prepare exhibit showing preferred amenities, as requested by park surveys returned to staff and hold public meetings with residents to gain citizen approval of proposed layout and preferred amenities for this park.
- Budget funds in the FY 2021 and following budgets for this development.
- Amenities would include rustic features, a split rail cedar fence, a pavilion on the existing concrete slab, picnic tables, children's play area, and an outdoor fitness area.

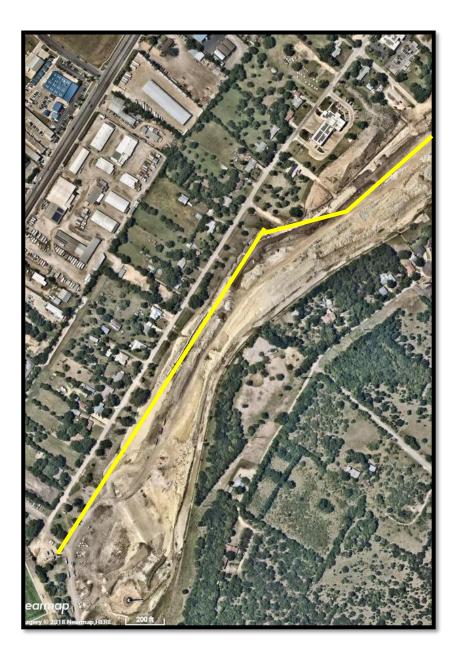


El Verde Road Neighborhood Park Area — To Be Developed



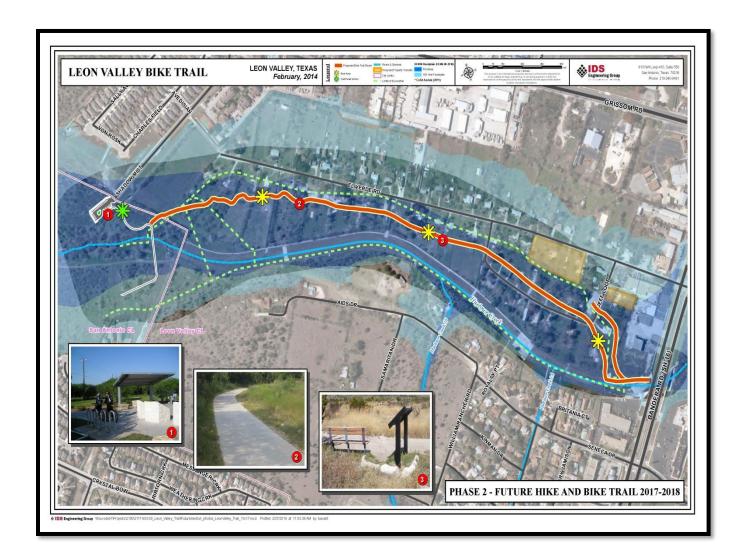
Huebner Creek Greenway Hike & Bike Trail - El Verde Road

This trail has not yet been constructed, but the funding is in place, plans have been designed, and a committee has been formed to determine the types of amenities that are to be located along the trail. The trail will connect to both the Shadow Mist and the City of San Antonio's Crystal Hills park.



Recommendations for Huebner Creek Greenway Hike & Bike Trail

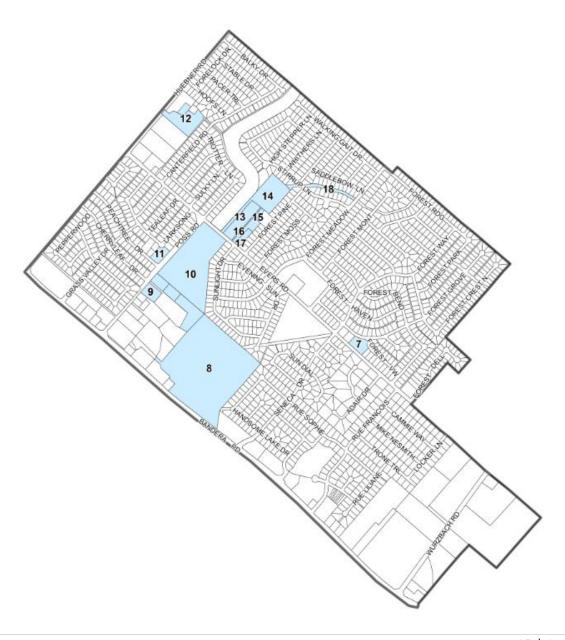
- Build trail on publicly owned land, once property is deeded to City.
- Connect to the Leon Creek Greenway Trail system and Crystal Hills Park.
- Add amenities such as benches, water fountain, recycled water irrigation, mile markers, and trash receptacles.



Conceptual Plan of Huebner Creek Greenway Hike & Bike Trail

Park Zone 3 Map

Bounded on the North by Huebner Road, on the West by Bandera Road (SH-16) and on the South and East by the City Limits. This zone has the largest number of housing sub-divisions and they almost surround Raymond Rimkus Park which is located near the center of the zone. The Park is bounded by Evers Road on the East, Poss Road on the North, and the Sun Valley Subdivision the Southside. This area also contains the Silo Park, the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park, the Forest Oaks and Leon Valley Pools, and the Stirrup Lane Trail.



Park Zone 3 Legend

ID#	Facility	Address
7	Forest Oaks Community Pool	6221 Evers Rd
8	Huebner Onion Natural Area Park	6601 Bandera Rd
9	Small Pavilion	6916 Poss Rd
10	Raymond Rimkus Park	6440 Evers Rd
11	Leon Valley Community Pool	6600 Strawflower St
12	Steurenthaler-Silo Park	7510 Huebner Rd
13	Veterans Memorial Park / Community Center	6427 Evers Rd
14	Public Works	6429 Evers Rd
15	Conference Center	6421 Evers Rd
16	Library	6425 Evers Rd
17	Leon Valley Café / Kinman House	6417 Evers Rd
18	Walking Trail	Stirrup Ln

Park Zone 3 Recommendations

- Continue to develop the Steurenthaler-Silo Park, with the addition of the silos.
- Continue walking paths behind Public Works to Forest Ridge (eastside City limits).
- Develop the Triangle Area Reserve pocket park in area adjacent to Bandera Road and the Huebner-Onion homestead.
- Provide an accessible trail from Raymond Rimkus Park to the Huebner-Onion Homestead and to the Huebner Cemetery.

Raymond Rimkus Park - 6440 Evers Road

This is the community's oldest and largest park, consisting of 27 acres of land, with equipment and facilities including:

- Walking/Jogging trail (approximately ¾ mile track).
- Picnic Facilities: Northern sector: 12 picnic tables w/ BBQ pits (two with disabled signage), One large pavilion with: fixed perimeter seating, 12 tables, electrical power outlets, BBQ Grill and ash pit. Southern sector: 10 picnic tables w/ BBQ pits, one small pavilion with 2 anchored tables & BBQ pit.
- Two basketball courts
- Tennis courts: Two enclosed courts, including 2 player's benches and a backboard.
- Multi-use fields: soccer, football, cricket, T-ball and kite flying, etc. This area includes three soccer goal sets and a covered bleacher section
- Softball field: complete with backstops, foul ball fly, and covered bleachers along the baselines.
- Volley ball courts: 2 dirt surfaced courts.
- Horse shoe pit
- Community garden area
- Main playground facility includes pirouettes, decks, safety panels, crunch stations, chinning bar; custom kids' choice adaptive play system; multipondo, spring riders; swing sets; power peddler; tots choice deck system; engineered wood fiber surfacing; benches; picnic tables; ADA picnic tables
- Secondary playground is located near the Community Garden and consists of swings, a playdeck, slides, Jax, and engineered wood fiber fall surface.
- Freenotes outdoor musical equipment are located near the Community Garden.

The large playground was installed in 1997 and a smaller playground was installed in 2014, along with outdoor musical instruments. The Community Garden was rehabilitated in 2014.

Many current Raymond Rimkus Park facilities are essentially multi-purpose capable and are used accordingly. The multiple use field areas are typically used for soccer, youth football, and cricket, along with a variety of incidental activity. Local schools, YMCA, Pop Warner, churches, and similar youth and adult athletic programs for both practice and games heavily utilize these fields. The softball field supports softball, baseball and t-ball, and the pathway is used by walkers, runners, pet walkers and cyclists. Much of this park, and facilities, lies within a flood plain and together with heavy usage presents a significant playing-surface maintenance challenge.



New Playground Raymond Rimkus Park

Shade Covers — Large Playground Raymond Rimkus Park





Recommendations for Raymond Rimkus Park

This park is established, but concerted efforts must be made to continually refresh facilities and equipment to keep up with modern trends and for maintenance purposes. For 2019, a rain garden, with additional walking path, pavilion, and butterfly garden have been budgeted. Other improvements should include:

- Inspect and replace fall material under all playground equipment yearly.
- Install bulletin boards at pavilions and entrances and cigarette butt receptacles at playing fields and playgrounds. Add additional historic/environmental signage.
- Continue to inspect all playground equipment and replace as necessary.
- Consider installing sanitation stations at various intervals around the park especially near playground equipment.
- Consider adding chess tables with shade, if not installed at LV Community Pool facility.
- Rebuild basketball court to NBA standards, with junior hoops on each side.
- Replace picnic tables, water fountains, barbecue pits, and benches as needed. Budget for 1/3 replacement of each for each fiscal year.
- Consider remodeling the restroom facilities in the next fiscal year.
- Replace walking paths when uneven or dilapidated.
- Install outdoor fitness equipment stations.
- Resurface Raymond Rimkus Park trails with all-weather surface as needed.
- Plant trees around playground and picnic areas and bushes/flowers around drinking fountains, benches and picnic tables.
- Install a third picnic pavilion (possibly in the area west of the trail along the 3rd baseline of the softball diamond).
- Create treed groves with benches at selected Raymond Rimkus park locations
- Add shaded bleachers to athletic fields.

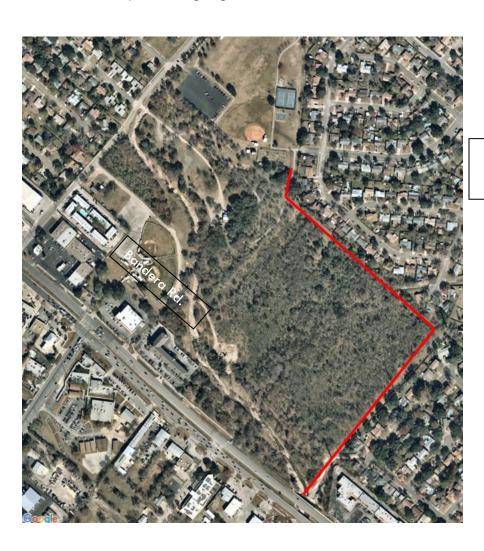
Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park - 6601 Bandera Road

The main entrance to this park is through Raymond Rimkus Park at the Forest Meadow Street entrance. This is a 36-acre natural area with a fire break around the perimeter of the park. It was once a part of the Huebner-Onion Homestead, which is owned by the Leon Valley Historical Society and located at 6613 Bandera Road. The Park serves as a recreational and educational resource, and will provide nature-based educational activity in the future. It also contains the Huebner Cemetery, which was designated in 2015 as a Historic Cemetery by the Texas Historical Commission, being No. BX-307. Many Native American artifacts have been found in this park, such as arrowheads and tools, which are in the process of being curated.



Recommendations for the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park

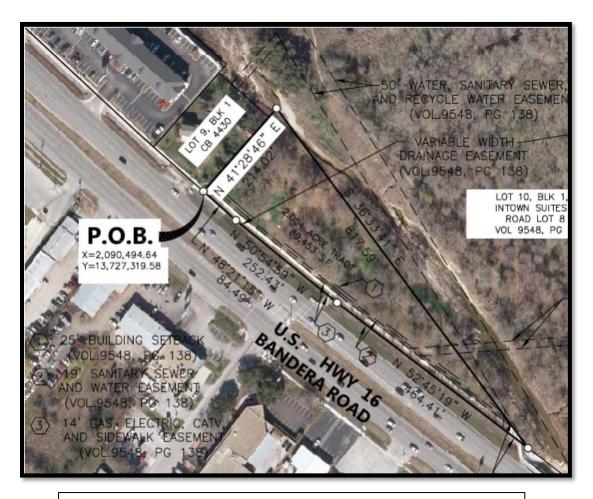
- Build wildlife viewing platform
- Remove non-native vegetation and trees and replant with native varieties
- Improve the existing natural trail surface
- Construction Hike & Bike Trail in Fire Break area
- Repair erosion along Huebner Creek
- Install interpretive signage near Huebner-Onion Homestead



Hike & Bike Trail Alignment Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park

Park Zone 3 Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park – Triangle Park Reserve 6601 Bandera Road

The main entrance to this 2.054 acre tract is from Bandera Road, although there is no parking, nor a driveway access point thus far. This is part of the 36 acre Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park, but due to its natural disconnection from the main portion of the park by Huebner Creek and the desire to keep Bandera Road mowed and clean, this area is reserved for other public improvements. It was also once a part of the adjacent Huebner-Onion Homestead. The Park will eventually be developed as a recreational and educational resource in conjunction with the main portion of the park. Recommendations for its use will be determined in the future.



Triangle Park Reserve Huebner – Onion Natural Area Park

Recommendations for Triangle Park Reserve – 6601 Bandera Road

- Build Hike & Bike Trail under Bandera Road bridge and allow connection to existing sidewalk along Bandera Road
- Keep mowed, cleared of trash and debris, and patrol for homeless camps
- Trim up trees periodically
- Invite public to Park Commission and City Council meetings when discussing future development of this area



Park Zone 3 Steurenthaler-Silo Park - 7510 Huebner Road

This park, consisting of 4.25 acres, includes two iconic concrete grain silos thought to have been constructed by the Steurenthaler Family in the early 1900's. The park has a walking path, picnic shelter, outdoor fitness equipment, Little Free Library, a handicapped accessible children's playscape with Biba technology, a shelter with picnic tables, and a large free play area. Benches and recycling containers are scattered around the park. There are no parking spaces and entrance to the park is from Canterfield Drive, thorough a pathway from the drainage channel.



Recommendations for Steurenthaler-Silo Park

- Continue to develop the park by adding irrigation system, water fountain.
- Incorporate the Silos and have them painted with murals.
- Build walking trail to this park from Huebner Road, and from this park to Canterfield Road, and then on to Huebner Creek via the drainage way. Consider building bridge over seasonal creek.



Biba Interactive Playground Silo Park



The Silos Silo Park

Park Zone 3 Stirrup Lane Trail – Stirrup Lane

This trail system was built in 2012 and has a surprising number of users. It starts at Evers Road between the library and Huebner Creek, winds its way behind the Public Works facility, crosses a small wooden bridge, then proceeds up the drainage structure between Stirrup Lane and Saddlebow, then up through the Forest Oaks neighborhood.



Recommendations for Stirrup Lane Trail

- Maintain trail surface and wooden bridge
- Consider installing outdoor fitness equipment in area near bridge
- Consider installing more playground equipment near bridge
- Install recycling receptacles
- Install mile markers
- Add pet control and waste signage
- Name the trail



Stirrup Lane Trail



Leon Valley Community Swimming Pool - 6600 Strawflower

Built by the developer of the surrounding neighborhood in the late 1960's, this facility is open to the public, from Memorial Day to Labor Day and offers concessions, swim lessons, and aerobic swimming. It is typically operated by an outside contractor, but maintained off-season by the Public Works Department. The facility has restrooms, concession area, open covered patio, storage shed, large pool, and baby pool.



Recommendations for Leon Valley Community Swimming Pool Facility – 6600 Strawflower

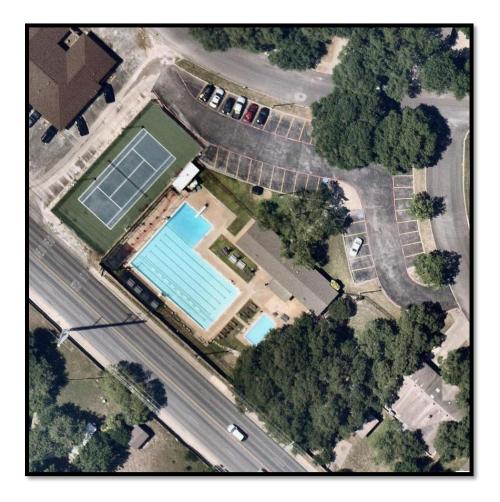
- Rehabilitate and enlarge the restrooms
- Develop the adjacent vacant lot as additional park facility with access to restrooms
- Install an enhanced pedestrian crossing from Peachtree St. to Raymond Rimkus Park
- Install public art



Conceptual Plan for Vacant Lot

Forest Oaks Community Swimming Pool & Tennis Court - 6221 Evers

Also built by the developer of the surrounding neighborhood in the early 1970's, the entrance to this facility is off of Forest Grove St., and it is open to the public from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The facility offers concessions, swim lessons, pool parties, and aerobic swimming. The facility is typically operated by an outside contractor, with off-season maintenance performed by the Public Works Department. The facility has a large pool, baby pool, doubles tennis court, a small meeting or party room, and a rentable outdoor barbecue area.



Recommendations for Forest Oaks Swimming Pool & Tennis Court

- Construct shade structure over deck near tennis courts to provide shade
- Remodel entire building for ADA compliance, update the party room and picnic area
- Rehabilitate parking area
- Refresh landscaped areas
- Provide public art



Park Zone 4 Map

Bounded on the South by Huebner Road, the West by Bandera Road (SH-16), and the North and East by the City Limits. The City owns a strip of land between 6801 Evers and Pavona Place subdivision that was once developed as the Linkwood Trail, but has since become overgrown and not usable.



Park Zone 4 Legend

ID#	Facility	Address
	19 Walking Trail	Huebner Rd

Recommendations for Zone 4

- Develop the Linkwood Trail, by restoring the trail surface, constructing outdoor fitness equipment, and installing benches, trash cans, trail signage, and dog waste stations
- Seek opportunities to increase trail length through the Linkwood Addition Subdivision
- Seek redevelopment opportunities to construct a pocket park in the Linkwood Addition
 Subdivision area



Conceptual

Trail & Equipment



Linkwood Trail - End of Evers Road

This proposed trail was acquired in the early 2000's from a foreclosure sale. It was intended to provide better traffic circulation from the Linkwood Addition Subdivision to Huebner Road, as it could be a 30' wide right of way, but after hearing from the residents in the Linkwood Addition and Pavona Place neighborhoods, it was decided to convert this area into a trail and try to connect the trail with other planned trail extensions in the future. The existing trail is overgrown, not marked, and undeveloped.



Recommendations for the Linkwood Trail

- Clear the walking path and install an all-weather surface
- Install outdoor fitness equipment, signage, and benches between church property and Linkwood.
- Investigate connecting trail to the Linkwood neighborhood to Eckhert Road.









Potential Trail Amenities Linkwood Trail Area

Section 7 General Recommendations for All Areas

Leon Valley Parks, Recreation and Open Space development recommendations are listed in this section. Included are recommendations for parkland acquisition, enhancement, and improvement, along with suggestions relating to Leon Valley parkland operation, maintenance and regulatory issues.

- Recommend that Huebner Creek land, from northern city limit to Raymond Rimkus Park boundary, and continuing from Bandera Road to private property boundaries, be declared Leon Valley Parkland by Ordinance action.
- Enhance enforcement of rules relating to noise pollution, nudity, profanity, alcohol or drug use, demonstrations' graffiti, harassment, destruction of property, or lewd/lascivious conduct by collaboration with the Police Department.
- Consider addition of splash pad, dog park, and skate park in appropriate areas.
- Consider adding an amphitheater to one of the park facilities.
- Recommend adoption of playground safety standards detailed in U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety publication and training personnel as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.
- Establish wildlife protection rules including anti- harassment definitions, pet leash requirements, and the exclusion of pets from defined natural areas.
- Establish aesthetic standards for Leon Valley parkland consistent with community standards and codes.
- Continue to coordinate with the City of San Antonio to develop Crystal Hills Park, in conjunction with Shadow Mist Park.
- Add shade structures to all parks near playing fields, and play or fitness equipment. Add small pergola type structures over sections of walking paths, particularly where benches are located.
- Continually review available grant and other funding options to acquire additional parkland, enhancement projects, and reprioritize approved projects based on funding opportunities.

- Establish a park facility resource inventory system and an amortization schedule for all park property to facilitate maintaining and replacing them.
- Continue plans to expand trails and provide connectivity throughout all park zones.
 Create Hike and Bike trails along the entire length of Huebner Creek.
- Beautify the park and parklands with plants and trees, especially those native to south Texas.
- Strive to gain and maintain connectivity with each park zone.
- Implement communications planning:
 - Implement a Leon Valley branding policy to feature lions in public art, such as murals or statues.
 - Institute a marketing campaign to encourage people to use the parks. Hold public park events, such as seasonal exercising, Mommy and Me stroller clubs, Movies in the Park, and other events.
 - Install bulletin boards at all parks to post information about Leon Valley facilities,
 activities, proposals, as well as community events.
 - Install trailhead style maps at each park, with both the specific park layout and the entire Leon Valley park system.
 - Install better signage on roadways to direct people to the parks.
 - Install more heritage and ecological signage where applicable.



Raymond Rimkus Park Playground



Huebner Creek

Section 8 Other Recreational Resources

- N W Little League Park, (on Poss Road behind Walgreen's) Leon Valley, extensive baseball field facility, privately owned and operated.
- Northwest YMCA is located north on Bandera Rd, adjacent to O.P. Schnabel Park.
- O. P. Schnable Park (on Bandera Rd.) approximately 5 miles north of Leon Valley, (City of SA), Houses a Northwest Little League facility, multiple athletic fields, and trails. The athletic fields are used by the Northside YMCA.
- Leon Creek Greenway Trail Mainland Trailhead (Bandera Rd at Mainland),
 approximately one mile north of Leon Valley (City of SA).
- Leon Creek Greenway Trail Grissom Trailhead (Grissom Rd just past Timberhill) has small playground (City of SA).
- Leon Creek Greenway Trail Cathedral Rock Park Connection (Grissom at Timberpath) –
 has small playground (City of SA) and is approximately 2 and ½ miles west of our city
 limits.
- Leon Creek Greenway Leon Vista Trail head (Whitby and Rochelle roads)
 approximately one mile north of Leon Valley (City of SA).
- University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC) (Babcock at Wurzbach) Located at Babcock and Wurzbach Roads, has lighted walking/jogging trail.
- Leon Valley Elementary School (Huebner Rd) has playground.
- Pat Neff Middle School (Evers Rd & NW Loop 410) has athletic fields but discourages public use.

- Driggers Elementary School (6901 Grissom Road) has playground.
- Oak Hills Elementary School (5710 Cary Grant) has playground.
- Bandera Bowl and Planet Fitness (Bandera Rd), privately owned and operated.



Footnote: It should be noted that nearby Northside Independent School District athletic facilities and fields are increasingly secured and inaccessible to Leon Valley and area residents. This has significantly increased usage of Leon Valley parks and recreation resources.

Appendices

Master Plan		
Appendix A - 2018 Park Survey Summary		
Surveys mailed	3043	
Surveys received	545	
Percent of return	17.9%	
National average of return	10-15% (for mailed surveys)	
1. Which recreational facilities	did you visit most recently? (Check all that apply)	
Forest Oaks Pool	_Total = 67	
Huebner-Onion Natural Area	_Total = 85	
LV Community Pool	_Total = 64	
Old Mill Park	_Total= 35	
Raymond Rimkus	_Total = 430	
Silo Park	_Total = 25	
Triangle Park	_Total = 6	
Did not visit	_Total = 79	
2. What recreational facilities have you enjoyed at a park lately? (Check all that apply)		
Basketball, tennis, volleyball	_Total = 53	
Jogged/walked	_Total = 348	
Rode a bike	_Total = 63	
Took a nature walk	_Total = 218	
Playground	_Total = 144	
Large/small pavilion	_Total = 28	
Athletic club organized	_Total = 5	

Gardened	Total = 7
Picnic	Total = 53
Read a book	Total = 84
Swam	Total = 60
Dog walk	Total = 127
3. What day(s) of the week	do you visit a park? (Check all that apply)
Monday	Total = 237
Tuesday	Total = 235
Wednesday	Total = 254
Thursday	Total = 226
Friday	Total = 234
Saturday	Total = 281
Sunday	Total = 251
4. What time of day do you	visit? (Check all that apply)
Morning	Total = 316
Afternoon	Total = 144
Evening	Total = 203
5. What park facilities did y	ou use on most recent visit? (Check all that apply)
Recreational ball courts	Total = 31
Jogged/walked	Total = 333
Bike Trails	Total = 52

Master Plan		
Took a nature walk	_Total = 192	
Playground	_Total = 128	
Large/small pavilion	_Total = 23	
Athletic club organized	_Total = 6	
Gardened	_Total = 9	
Picnic	_Total = 60	
Benches/shaded areas	_Total = 133	
Swimming pool	_Total = 73	
Dog walk	_Total = 110	
6. How long did you stay?		
Less than 1 hr	_Total = 148	
1-2 hrs	_Total = 291	
3-4 hrs	_Total = 35	
4 or more	_Total = 6	
7. How many people came with you on your most recent visit?		
I came alone	_Total = 162	
1 other	_Total = 140	
2 others	_Total = 80	
3 others	_Total = 52	
4 others	_Total = 26	
More than 4	_Total = 24	

8. How would you rate your overall experience at the park?				
Excellent	_Total = 125			
Good	_Total = 285			
Neutral	_Total = 28			
Poor	_Total = 7			
9. How did you find out about the park?				
Radio	_Total = 1			
Print ad	_Total = 10			
City website	_Total = 19			
Web search	_Total = 6			
Friends/family	_Total = 91			
Library	_Total = 18			
City Hall	_Total = 10			
Other	_Total = 265			
If other, how?All comment	ts - live here or drove by.			
10. How would you rate the following, regarding the parks?				
Facilities				
Excellent	_Total = 105			
Good	_Total = 277			
Neutral	_Total = 63			
Poor	Total = 11			

			4 -		
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Excellent_____Total = 252

Good______Total = 177

Neutral______Total = 15

Poor ______Total = 1

Parking

Excellent Total = 147

Good______Total = 231

Neutral_____Total = 49

Poor ______Total = 24

Accessibility

Excellent_____Total = 172

Good______Total = 243

Neutral_____Total = 28

Poor ______Total = 12

Signage

Excellent______Total = 95

Good_____Total = 270

Neutral_____Total = 52

Poor ______Total = 15

Facility Cleanliness

Quality/Maintenance

 Excellent ______ Total = 113

 Good ______ Total = 268

 Neutral ______ Total = 52

Poor ______Total = 16

Restrooms

 Excellent _______ Total = 47

 Good ______ Total = 196

 Neutral ______ Total = 118

1. Do the facilities meet your needs for ADA accessibility?

Yes______Total = 99

No______Total = 15

N/A_____Total = 321

If no, what better? See comments below.

12. Would you recommend the parks and other recreational areas to family or friends?

Yes	Total = 421		
No	Total = 21		
If not, why? See comments list	ted below.		
13. What is your age?			
Under 18	Total = 2		
18-24	Total = 2		
25-34	Total = 31		
35-44	Total = 47		
45-54	Total = 68		
55-64	Total = 99		
65+	Total = 242		
14. How many children are in your household?			
0	Total = 300		
1-2	Total = 117		
3-4	Total = 34		
5 or more	Total = 6		
15. Which of the following do you access for personal use – at home, at work, or elsewhere? (Check all that apply)			
Cell phone	Total = 423		
Computer/tablet	Total = 342		

 Website/internet
 Total = 310

 Email
 Total = 381

 Social media
 Total = 226

 16. What other park amenities would you like to have at a park?

 Splash pad
 Total = 150

 Skate Park
 Total = 54

 Dog park
 Total = 168

 Other
 Total = 76

Summary of Recommendations:

- Addition of a splash pad
- Addition of a dog park
- More basketball courts
- More walking trails on publicly owned lands, better maintenance of existing trails, connectivity
- More playground equipment
- More water fountains, benches, better picnic tables
- More shade especially over playground areas
- Exercise equipment stations at every park
- Beautification at all parks
- More Police presence, more security lighting
- ADA compliance at each park
- Better overall maintenance at each park
- Continue to fund improvements to the parks system





APPENDIX B - REFERENCES

<u>Leon Valley Code of Ordinances, Article 1.09 Parks, Recreation</u>, found on the City's website at <u>www.leonvalleytexas.gov</u>, as is the City's Master Plan.

APA reports and briefing papers, "The City Parks Forum", www.planning.org/cityparks.

<u>Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan Guidelines</u>, Texas Recreation and Parks Account Program (TRPA).

<u>Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines</u>, National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) <u>www.nrpa.org</u>

<u>Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: Census 2010</u> (City of Leon Valley), United States Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U. S. Census Bureau, <u>www.census.gov</u>.

DP-1 <u>Profile of General Demographics Characteristics: 2010 Data Set</u>: Census 2010 Summary File 1 (SF) 100-Percent Data, Geographic Area: Leon Valley city, Texas. American Fact Finder.

<u>Leon Valley Ordinance No. 03-032, Chapter 24-Subdivision & Plats, December 2, 2003</u>

<u>Requirements for Park Land Dedication or Payment of Fees in Lieu Thereof, City of Leon Valley, Texas</u>

<u>Handbook For Public Playground Safety</u>, U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Washington, DC 20207, Pub. No 325.

<u>Public Playground Safety Checklist</u>, Consumer Products Safety Commission. CPSC Document 327.

National Recreation and Park Association https://www.nrpa.org/

APPENDIX C - CITY ORDINANCES

ARTICLE 1.06 BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Sec. 1.06.005 Park commission

- (a) The commission shall consist of an advisory commission of citizens to be known as the city park commission.
- (b) The commission shall consist of nine (9) members who are appointed by the city council for a term of two (2) years, conterminous with the mayor.
- (c) The commission shall prepare and submit park regulations to the council for adoption and to make suggestions concerning park ordinances and park policies, and assist the council in the development, maintenance and regulation of city parks as the council may prescribe and serve as a liaison for the city with the public for park matters.
- (d) The commission shall prepare and submit recommendations to the council concerning items to be purchased for the park; however, the council shall have final decision-making power on all issues.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.010)

ARTICLE 1.09 PARKS AND RECREATION

Division 1. Generally

Sec. 1.09.001 Definitions

<u>All-terrain vehicle</u>. Any motor vehicle having a saddle for the use of the rider, designed to propel itself with three or four tires or belt tracks in contact with the ground.

<u>Arms and firearms</u>. Any device from which a shot, projectile, arrow, or bolt is fired by the force of an explosion, compressed air, gas or mechanical device. To include, but not limited to, a rifle, shotgun, handgun, air rifle, pellet gun, longbow, crossbow, slingshot, blow gun, or dart gun.

<u>Artifacts</u>. Objects used or modified by humans, including but not limited to arrow points, dart points, stone, bone or shell implements or any other prehistoric or historic objects.

<u>Cultural features</u>. Includes but is not limited to archeological landmarks, archeological sites and structures, Indian rock art or historic rock art.

<u>Motorcycle</u>. A two- or three-wheeled vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine or battery, to include motorbikes, minibikes, trail bikes, or scooters.

<u>Plant life</u>. All plants, including trees, dead or downed wood, shrubs, vines, wildflowers, grass, sedge, fern, moss, lichen, fungus, or any other member of the plant family.

<u>Public nudity</u>. To disrobe or appear nude in public. Females are considered to be disrobed when their breasts below the top of the areola are exposed, except when nursing a baby.

<u>Unattended pet</u>. A pet that is unaccompanied or not under immediate control by leash.

<u>Volume-drinking device</u>. Any object used, intended for use or designed for use in artificially increasing the speed with which, and/or amount of, alcohol is ingested by carrying the liquid from a higher location into the mouth by force of gravity or mechanical means, including but not limited to funnels, tubes, and hoses. The term includes a beer bong.

Wildlife. Any wild animal, bird, amphibian, reptile, fish, shellfish, aquatic life, or invertebrate.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.001)

Sec. 1.09.002 Request for variance

- (a) Request. A person, agency, or organization may file a written request for a variance from this article. The request must contain the following information:
 - (1) The specific nature of the variance requested;

- (2) A detailed explanation of why the person, agency, or organization believes they should be granted the variance, including any supporting documentation; and
- (3) A signed statement that the facts contained in the request are true and within the person's personal knowledge.
- (b) <u>Park commission</u>. The park commission will hear requests for variances and make recommendations regarding the granting of a variance to the city council.
- (c) <u>Additional information</u>. The park commission may request the person, agency, or organization to provide additional information, which must be filed within ten days of the request or as otherwise directed in the request.

(d) When variances may be granted.

- (1) A variance to the park ordinance may be granted when the request is consistent with the goals of this article;
- (2) Granting the variance will not cause significant harm to any other person or group of persons or result in the city being in violation of regulatory requirements; and
- (3) The activity being granted will not disturb the peace and dignity of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

(e) Terms and conditions of variance.

- (1) The city council may grant a variance for such a term and in accordance with any conditions the city deems appropriate consistent with the requirements of subsection (d) above.
- (2) It is a term of every variance granted by the city that the variance may be rescinded based on changed circumstances, new information, or failure of the holder of the variance to abide by the terms and conditions of the variance or to comply with these rules or any other order or rule of the city.
- (3) The city may require a person granted a variance to file reports with the city containing such information as the city believes relevant to monitoring the continuing appropriateness of the variance.

(Ordinance 15-028 adopted 12/1/15)

Sec. 1.09.003 Penalty

- (a) Anyone who violates the provisions of this article shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) and not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00). Each day's violation constitutes a separate offense.
- (b) No violation, definition, or penalty under this [section] shall have bearing on any violation, definition or penalty under any other section of this article.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.011)

Secs. 1.09.004-1.09.030 Reserved

Division 2. Use Regulations

Sec. 1.09.031 Motor vehicles

- (a) No person shall drive, push or propel any motor vehicle, of any size or description, on any public park property, natural area, city-owned Huebner Creek, trail, or related drainage.
- (b) Excepted from this prohibition are city vehicles, vehicles specifically authorized by the city, powered equipment specifically for and being used by disabled persons, or within designated parking areas.
- (c) Included in this prohibition are motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, powered scooters, minibikes, and the use of any motorized or propellant powered model aircraft, rocket, or similar projectile.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.002)

Sec. 1.09.032 Alcoholic beverages

No person shall consume or possess any intoxicating beverage whatever on city public park property except for wine, beer, ale and malt liquor as those products are defined by the laws of the state. No person shall use or possess a volume-drinking device on city park property. (Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.003)

Sec. 1.09.033 Vendors and solicitors; posting signs

- (a) No person shall act as a vendor or solicitor on public park property belonging to the city under any circumstances whatsoever.
- (b) It shall also be against the law to erect or post signs, bulletins or advertising devices of any kind in or on such park property.

- (c) An authorized group with a reservation can post two signs in the assigned area to identify the group and the event as long as same are posted not more than one hour before the event begins and are removed not more than one hour after it ends.
 - (1) Such a sign shall never be required.
 - (2) Such a group may also vend beverages, food, games, rides and craft and gift items to the persons in attendance and solicit the sale of same when given permission by the city to do so in writing in connection with its reservation and under such regulations, if any, as may be prescribed and not otherwise.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.004)

Sec. 1.09.034 Additional prohibited uses and activities

- (a) <u>Damaging property</u>. No person shall willfully injure, destroy, deface, remove, or alter public or privately-owned property, including cultural features, artifacts, signage, equipment, benches, or structures within city parkland, natural area, trails, city-owned Huebner Creek, or related drainages.
- (b) Removing, cutting or harvesting trees or plants. No person shall remove, cut, or harvest any trees or plants except as specifically authorized for community garden users and within the community garden area, or as specifically authorized by the city.
- (c) <u>Fires</u>. Prohibited are fires, except in approved BBQ pits or grills, and only at designated picnic pad sites, and the disposal of embers is only permitted in containers designated, approved and provided for this purpose.
- (d) <u>Fireworks and explosives</u>. It is an offense to possess or ignite, within city parkland, trails, natural area, Huebner Creek or related drainages, any fireworks, explosives, or similar devices capable of explosion, or to discharge, set off, or cause to be discharged in or into these areas any devices or substance except as permitted by specific city authorization.
- (e) <u>Metal detectors</u>. The use of metal detectors is specifically prohibited in each of these areas.
- (f) <u>Glass containers</u>. For the health and safety of all park users, no glass containers are permitted on city park property.
- (g) <u>Trash or refuse</u>. It shall be unlawful for any person to dump any trash or refuse of any type on any park or other city-owned property within the city limits.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.005; Ordinance 15-015 adopted 9/1/15)

Sec. 1.09.035 Firearms and weapons; throwing projectiles or driving golf balls

No person shall bear or discharge any firearm except as permitted by law enforcement certification or by concealed carry permit. Prohibited within city parkland, natural area, trails, city-owned Huebner Creek and related drainages are:

- (1) Paintball, BB, or pellet guns;
- (2) Archery equipment, slingshots, and catapult devices;
- (3) Machetes, spears, or similar weaponry;
- (4) Throwing rocks, logs, branches, similar projectiles; or
- (5) Driving golf balls in these areas.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.006)

Sec. 1.09.036 Pets and other animals

- (a) In addition to existing city leash law requirements, it shall be unlawful to enter any playground area with a pet except for trained assistance animals accompanied by a disabled individual user.
- (b) It shall be unlawful to enter the Leon Valley Huebner-Onion natural area with any pet.
- (c) In addition to the requisite that all pets within city parkland remain leashed at all times, leash lengths will be limited to eight (8) feet, and all canine or feline pets must bear proof of current rabies vaccination.
- (d) Pet owners will be held responsible for the retrieval and appropriate disposal of pet feces.
- (e) It shall be unlawful to harm, disturb, trap, confine, catch, possess, or remove any wildlife from city parkland, natural area, trails or city-owned Huebner Creek or related drainage areas except as specifically authorized by the city.
- (f) It shall be unlawful to release or abandon any animal within any of these areas.
- (g) It shall be unlawful to hunt or trap in any of these areas except as specifically authorized by the city.
- (h) Prohibited is the introduction of ponies, horses, or any dangerous animal, for any purpose, in city parkland.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.007)

Sec. 1.09.037 Park resource usage

- (a) All parkland resources, except for specified exemptions, are available on first come, first served basis during authorized operating hours specified as sun-up to sundown. Entry or remaining in any parkland, natural area, trails, city-owned Huebner Creek or related drainage areas except during authorized operating hours is specifically prohibited, including overnight camping (no exception), erecting a tent, or arranged bedding, or both, for the purpose of or in such a manner as will permit remaining overnight.
- (b) Only large or small pavilions, individual areas of multi-use sports field areas, softball fields or volleyball courts may be reserved for single, and specific, day use.
- (c) Auxiliary canopy shelters, portable recreational units and portable grills may be used in conjunction with identified picnic areas, but may not extend beyond the immediate area reserved or in use, nor may they be used in playground areas, tennis courts, athletic field play areas, natural areas, trails, green space, or similarly enclosed or fenced areas.
- (d) Tables in playground areas are for use by adults accompanying children, or children's groups visiting the playground areas, and are not available as part of the normal picnic facility resources.
- (e) Recreational resource users may not interfere with adjacent resource use, including, but not limited to, picnic areas, trails, athletic fields, playgrounds, rest areas, tennis and volleyball courts, pedestrian crossings, parking areas, and similar areas.
- (f) Use of auxiliary lighting is prohibited except for city-authorized security lighting.
- (g) Athletic or group activity is specifically prohibited in wooded picnic and trail areas except for hiking, biking, or observation of wildlife or land.
- (h) All lewd or lascivious behavior, including nudity, is specifically prohibited.
- (i) Climbing trees is prohibited.
- (j) It will be the responsibility of park visitors to respect other visitors and nearby residents by avoiding creating noise beyond that considered reasonable, noninvasive, or objectionable.
- (k) Skateboarding in the paved drainage ditch along Poss Road, away from pedestrian crossings and during park operating hours, is permitted.
- (I) Moonwalks and other inflatables may be used at Raymond Rimkus Park as a part of the rental activity at the pavilions. Moonwalks and other inflatables are not allowed in any other area of the park system. Persons bringing moonwalks or other inflatables must provide their own power source (generator) for such use.

(Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.008; Ordinance 14-009 adopted 6/9/14)

Sec. 1.09.038 Use of park resources for inappropriate activities

A person commits an offense if he or she uses, or permits a minor under his or her control to use, the city park facilities, including but not limited to basketball courts, pavilions, rest areas, bridges, pedestrian crossings, benches, and in other restricted use or posted park areas, for non-appropriate activities, including but not limited to roller skating, rollerblading, skateboarding, [and] bicycling in these described areas. (Ordinance 08-032 adopted 8/5/08; 2008 Code, sec. 1.09.009)