

# Plano Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan - FAQs

Updated September, 2018

1. What is a Park Master Plan?

A Park Master Plan includes maps and a written document that identifies existing and proposed parks and facilities, and identifies needs, trends and issues that should be considered for the future. The plan is the Parks and Recreation Department's long-term action plan, providing guidance to the department, establishing goals and recommendations, and identifying needs related to both existing and future facilities.

2. Why do we need a Park Master Plan?

In addition to providing guidance for staff, the Master Plan is a key element in the Parks and Recreation Department's accreditation and eligibility for grant funding opportunities. Maintaining [national accreditation](#) for the department ensures we are performing at or above nationally recognized professional standards, allows for the potential to acquire grant funding for projects, and ensures our accountability to residents. Agencies with funding opportunities for park and recreation improvements like Texas Parks and Wildlife, Collin County, North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Texas Department of Transportation require Council-approved master planning documents as a condition of eligibility when submitting funding applications.

3. Have we always had a Park Master Plan?

The City of Plano's first Park Master Plan was approved in 1972 when the population was about 16,000 people (population is 286,057 today). Forty six years ago, our residents knew that Plano would grow, and a Park Master Plan was critical in identifying park and recreation needs to accommodate that growth. Since 1972, the plan has been updated approximately every five years and projects have been implemented through bond elections. The high quality of our parks and recreation system and its contribution to the quality of life in Plano is a direct result of on-going planning efforts and plan implementation.

4. What does the Park Master Plan achieve?

The Master Plan is a living document that allows us to reach out to residents for their feedback, review our inventory, assess needs, and review trends in recreation and leisure. It allows Parks and Recreation to reassess goals and objectives for the next 5 to 20 years to better serve residents. As such, staff will revisit the plan every 5 years and seek resident input for reassessing needs and priorities.

5. How has the Park Master Plan changed from the previous Park Master Plan?

The Park Master Plan shows recently acquired park land and identifies future opportunities for additional amenities such as trails, recreation opportunities, and park amenities in response to community feedback. It also describes the different classifications of parks, recommendations for achieving goals, and identifies areas for future study.

6. How were Plano residents engaged in creating the Park Master Plan?

Outreach meetings and events were held beginning in June 2017. A phone survey, along with an online survey, were also conducted at that time. For a full list of events and surveys, please see our webpage here: <http://www.plano.gov/3160/Community-Outreach>.

7. I was unable to attend any of the meetings. What opportunities are there for me to learn more? The [Draft Master Plan](#), [Draft Bicycle Transportation Plan Map](#) and [Draft Master Plan Map](#) are posted to our web page. Staff will present the final draft plan to Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council on the upcoming dates:

October 1 – Planning & Zoning Commission

October 8 – City Council

8. Why do we need more trails?

In the Parks and Recreation Plan online and telephone surveys, 3,561 people participated, 97% of which were residents. We learned:

- 79%, or 2,728 respondents, had used a recreational trail in the last 12 months, and
- 86%, or 2,970 respondents, said it was very important or important for the city to construct more trails in the next 5-10 years

Additionally in our trail-counter program, we count more than 500,000 uses combined by bicycles and pedestrians annually. Counters are located on seven of our trails at Bluebonnet, Jack Carter, Chisolm, Legacy, Bob Woodruff, and Rowlett Trails. While the counters do not provide full data for all our trails, they do provide an indication of how and when the trails are used. Totals for the last three calendar years:

- 2015 total: 507,574 (261,463 pedestrians and 246,111 bicyclists)
- 2016 total: 541,055 (288,946 pedestrians and 252,109 bicyclists)
- 2017 total: 549,851 (303,121 pedestrians and 246,730 bicyclists)

9. What happens to the on-street bike routes?

The on-street bike routes will remain and are shown on the Bicycle Transportation Plan, which is a part of the Park Master Plan documents. However, in response to resident feedback, staff will look for more opportunities for safe thoroughfare crossings and will expand the Shared Use Paths and Hike and Bike Trails where feasible.

10. How are these improvements funded?

All Park land acquisitions and park improvements are funded through voter-approved bond authority initiatives and the City's annual budget process with City Council approval. [Bond elections](#) in Plano are typically held every four years. For example, in the 4-year bond program approved by voters in 2017 identified \$91,350,000. The funds break out as follows:

- Parks - \$78,850,000
- Recreation Centers - \$12,500,000

Funds are then authorized annually through the [Community Investment Program](#).

11. How much will this cost?

The costs for land acquisition, park improvements, recreation center improvements and trail construction continue to rise. Projects and acquisition will be budgeted as funding becomes available.

12. How will this affect our property taxes?

The Park Master Plan is not a funding document. All park land acquisitions and improvements are funded through voter-approved bond authority initiatives and the City's annual budget process with City Council approval. The [tax rate](#) is determined by City Council during the annual budget process. In [A Look Ahead](#), the City's three year financial forecast issued in March 2018, the current ad valorem tax rate of 46.86 cents per \$100 of assessed property valuation is maintained throughout the forecast period.

13. When will all of this be done?

This is a long range plan. The plan is an attempt to look ahead for the next 5 to 20 years. The plan is typically updated every 5 years. The plan identifies both short term and long term improvements that will be completed as needs, funding and opportunities permit.

14. Where can I find out about specific Parks and Recreation projects?

Specific projects are listed by park name on the [Park Projects and Plans](#) webpage. Community Investment Program projects are listed by department on the [CIP](#) webpage.