



CHAPTER 6 PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Introduction

Purpose

Parks and recreation opportunities are crucial quality-of-life amenities for Converse residents. Development of a high-quality parks and recreation system doesn't happen overnight. Likewise, decisions about park amenities and recreational offerings should not happen in a vacuum. Rather, a cohesive vision for the community's parks and recreation system must be determined and then guidance provided toward incremental implementation over time. This plan, in concert with the overall Comprehensive Plan, provides that guidance.

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan:

- Identifies the implications of current community demographics and projected population growth as it relates to parks and recreation.
- Analyzes the current state of the City's parks, recreation and open spaces.
- Identifies parks and recreation deficiencies and needs.
- Establishes goals, objectives and recommendations for the next five to 10 years.
- Prioritizes improvements to the parks and recreation system.
- Aids the City in seeking funding opportunities.

This document should be used as a planning tool by City staff, elected and appointed officials, residents, and the private development community to understand community desires and move toward long-term community success. The plan is intended to help coordinate local efforts for Converse and to work in conjunction with Bexar County, area school districts, local organizations and sports leagues.

Benefits of Parks

Access to quality parks and recreation is an important component of a high-quality community. Planning for a successful, equitable parks system ensures that all residents can experience these key benefits:

Overall Well-Being Benefits

- Contact with nature helps to improve overall well-being and quality of life.
- Recreation provides multi-generational opportunities for mental, physical, social and emotional stimulation.

Health Benefits

- Access to nature and recreation increases frequency of fitness and improves psychological health.
- Play provides crucial developmental opportunities for children.
- Physical activity helps to reduce obesity, depression and many other health problems.

Environmental Benefits

- Parkland helps to mitigate climate, air and water pollution impacts.
- Preserved open space protects vital habitat for plants and wildlife.
- Parks foster environmental stewardship in citizens.

Economic Benefits

- Parkland increases property values within close proximity.
- Quality parks and recreation can attract new residents and businesses.
- Unique park and recreation amenities can encourage tourism and associated economic benefits.



Planning Process

In 2024, the City commissioned Freese and Nichols, Inc. to prepare a Comprehensive Plan, followed in 2025 by a PROS Master Plan as part of the same process. Prior to this, the City had conducted several public engagement activities and completed a parks inventory. The firm then helped finalize the assessment, develop park recommendations and integrate the parks content into the Comprehensive Plan. The engagement outcomes, vision, goals and recommendations from that process are carried forward into this PROS Master Plan.

This PROS Master Plan is intended to address parks and recreation needs over the next 5 to 10 years. Recommendations should be re-evaluated periodically to ensure they are still valid. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TWPD) master plan guidelines recommend updating the Plan every 5 years or before any new major developments occur that significantly change the parks and recreation needs of residents.

Planning Time Frame

The planning process included a variety of public engagement opportunities to gather community input and help shape the Plan. These efforts overlapped with the overall Comprehensive Plan engagements and also included a parks-specific online survey hosted by the EDC and multiple meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission. Detailed documentation of the public input process is provided below:

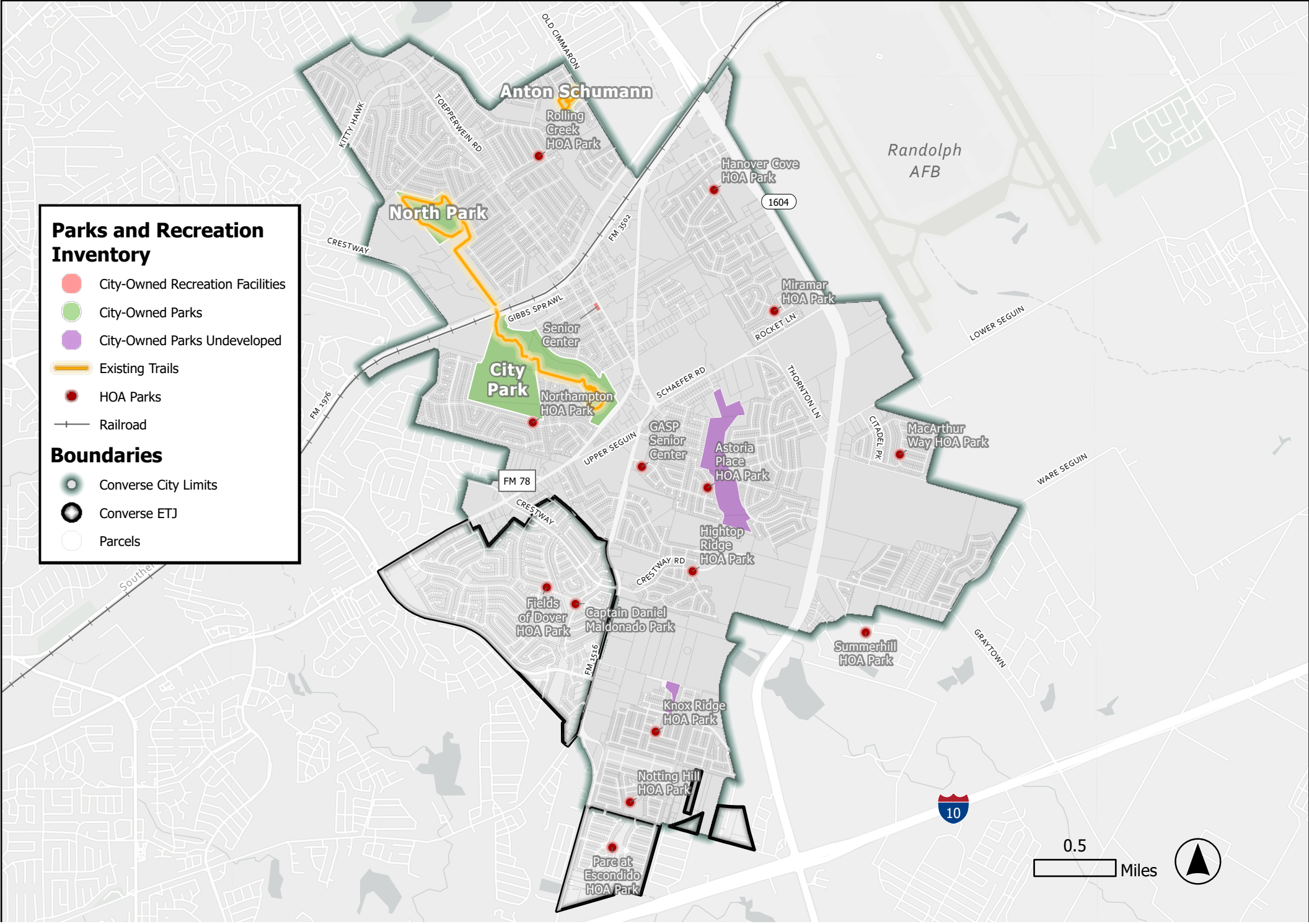
- **April 2024:** Launch of Converse EDC parks-specific online survey
- **March 2025:** Parks and Recreation Commission Workshop
- **April 2025:** Converse Green Day
- **May 2025:** Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting #1
- **August 2025:** Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting #2
- **October 2025:** National Night Out
- **November 2025:** Parks and Recreation Commission Recommendation Meeting
- **November 2025:** Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation Meeting
- **December 2025:** City Council Adoption

Planning Area

The study area outlined in this Plan encompasses Converse's entire city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), as indicated on Map 24 on the following page. Situated in Bexar County, Converse holds a strategic location, being in close proximity to the Randolph Air Force Base and the growing I-35 corridor. The City is also experiencing a recent shift in population growth trends and is now on an accelerated upward trajectory.

The City of Converse is the primary governmental entity responsible for providing parks and recreation facilities for its citizens. While implementation will be largely led by the City, everyone in the community has a vested interest in seeing parks and recreation improve and succeed. Potential partners during implementation may include other governmental entities, local industry and businesses, and the residents of Converse.





Map 17. Parks and Recreation Overview

Converse Parks and Recreation Administration

Converse Parks and Recreation Commission

The Converse Parks and Recreation Commission meets the second Monday of the month and is charged with identifying renovations, future improvements and major projects and their relative priorities for the City's parks and recreational facilities. The commission reviews suggestions for projects, develops a plan and makes recommendations to the City Council. The commission is responsible for providing various park activities for the Converse residents throughout the year. The commission is also authorized to receive gifts, bequests of money, and donations for park and recreation programs on behalf of the City. The commission may seek feedback on policies and priorities for property use and maintenance by coordinating with home owners' associations, business owners, non-profit organization and citizens.



Converse Parks and Recreation Commission Workshop (March 2025)

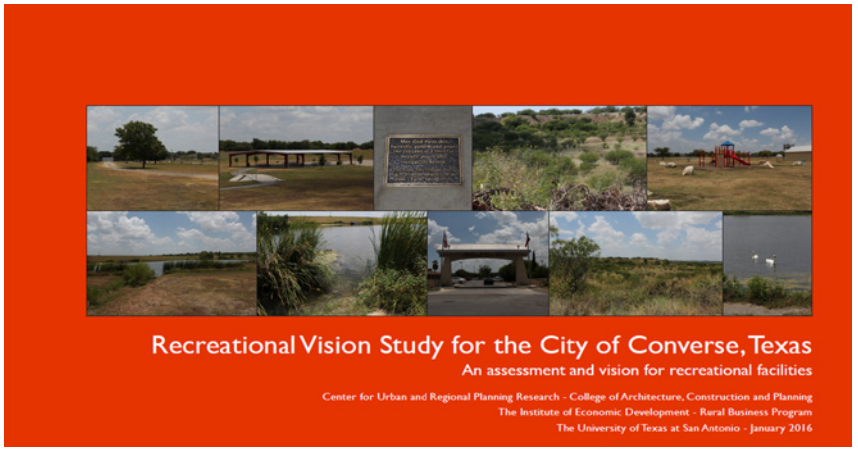
Converse Public Works Department

The Converse Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of parks, including mowing and trimming. The department also handles reservations for park facilities such as the pool, pavilions and picnic tables. The Public Works Department has seven full-time staff members dedicated to the care of Converse North Park and Converse City Park.

Previous Planning Efforts

In 2016, the City carried out a Recreational Vision Study prepared with the Center for Urban and Regional Planing at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) to assess the condition of its parks, review demographic and population growth trends, and outline improvements to better serve the community. The report documented the existing inventory of parkland, conducted a level-of-service (LOS) analysis, and identified strategies to strengthen recreational opportunities. Key priorities focused on planning for long-term growth, creating stronger park connectivity, and broadening both cultural and recreational amenities to meet the needs of a diverse and expanding population. Key recommendations included:

- Develop a 17-mile citywide hike-and-bike trail network utilizing drainage corridors and sidewalks.
- Construct an amphitheater at City Park Lake to provide cultural programming opportunities.
- Add new recreational facilities, including soccer fields, a campground and a dog park.
- Enhance lake recreation by improving fishing access at North Park and boating and paddle craft access at City Park.
- Expand park infrastructure with additional parking, upgraded softball fields, community gardens and a skate park.



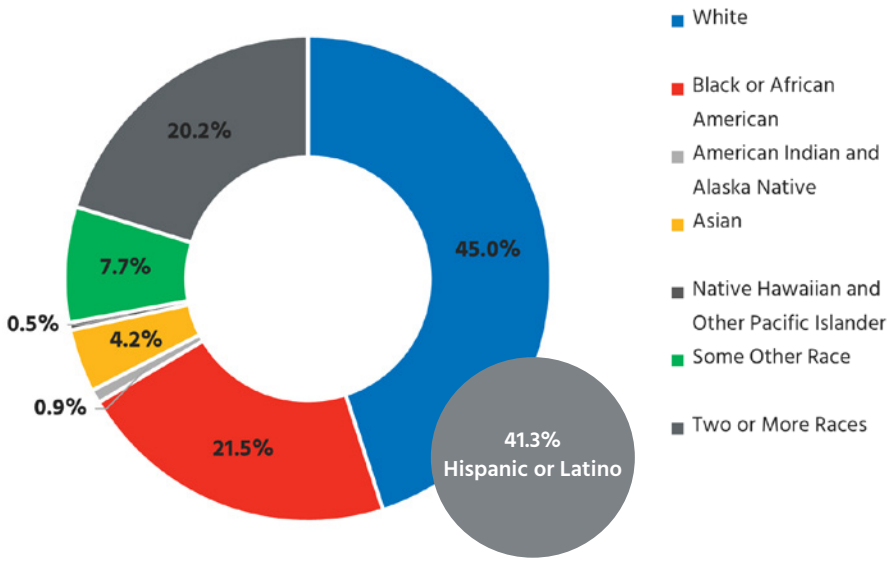
Community Demographics

Converse's population has experienced rapid growth in recent years. The largest cohorts of the population today include children and teens between the ages of 5 and 14, and adults between the ages of 30 and 39. As the City considers recreational opportunities, it will be essential to provide diverse opportunities that are suitable for residents of varying age groups.

Converse boasts a diverse population, with a large portion identifying as White (45%) and Black or African American (21.5%). There is also a large population within the City overall who identify as Hispanic or Latino (41.3%). Taking the community's diversity into account in parks and recreation planning is essential to ensure that facilities and programs reflect and support a wide range of cultural and recreational needs.

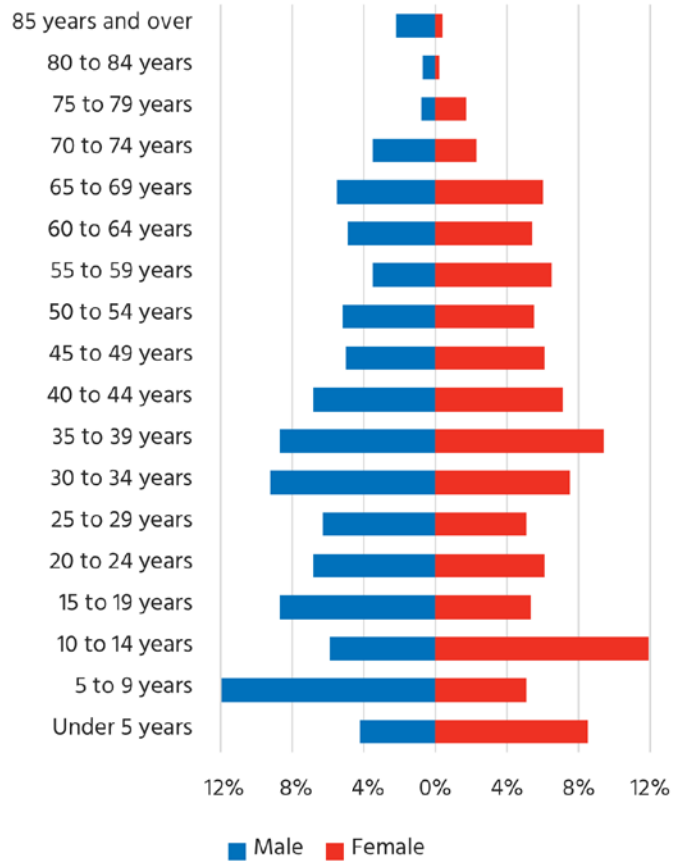
Additionally, the City's population is projected to continue growing over the next 10 to 20 years. Parks and recreation opportunities should increase accordingly to provide quality facilities and programming for the growing population.

Figure 25. Race and Ethnicity



Source: 2019 -2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 26. Age Distribution



Source: 2019 -2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 27. Population Projections

Year	Growth Rate
	2.5%
2030	35,159
2035	39,779
2040	45,006

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

Growth Areas

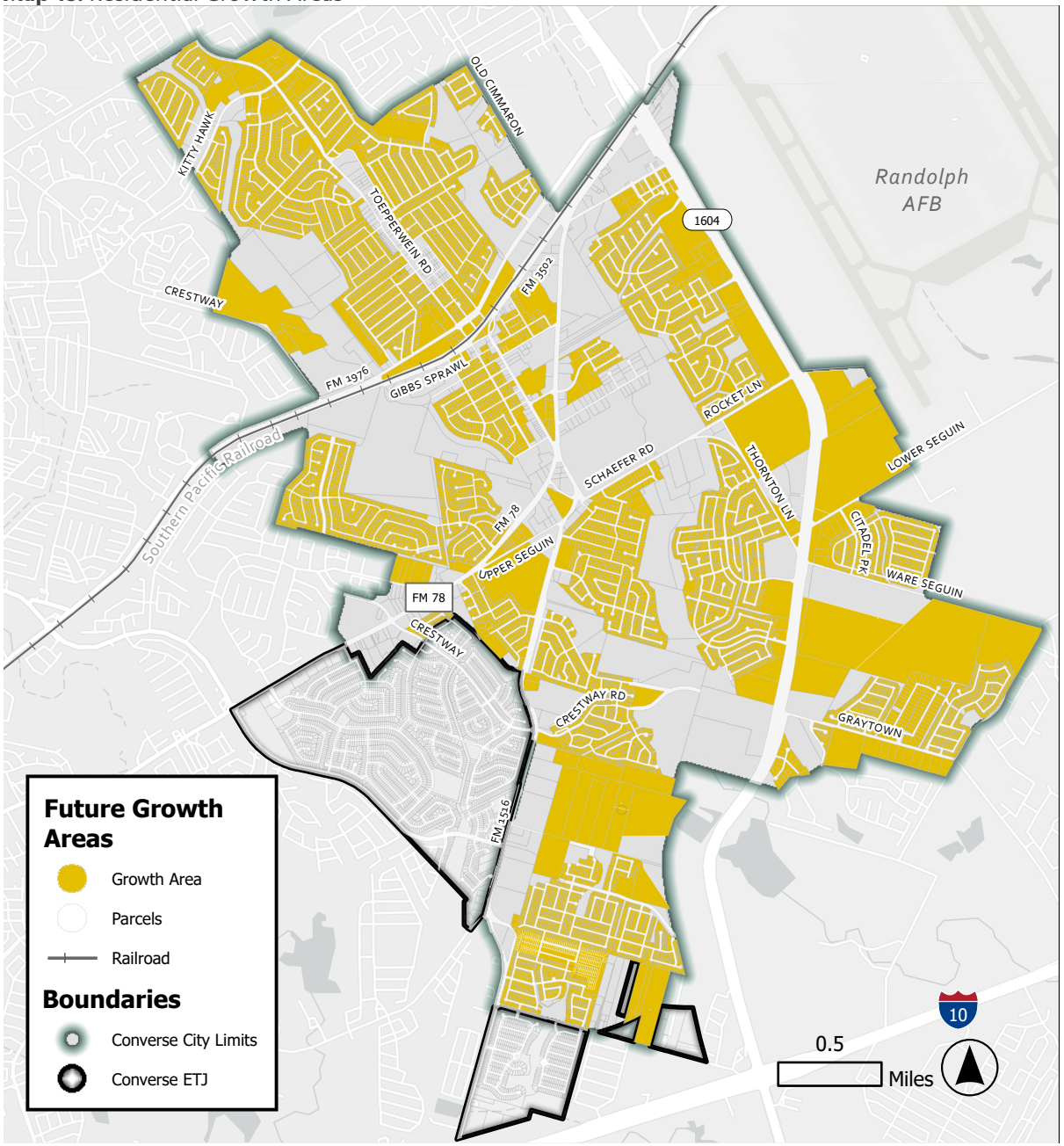
As seen in the population projections, the City's population is projected to continue growing at an accelerated rate. Some of the residential subdivisions under construction or recently completed in Converse include:

- Hightop Ridge Subdivision: East of FM 1516
- Knox Ridge Subdivision: West of Loop 1604
- Notting Hill Subdivision: East of FM 1516
- Summerhill Subdivision: West of Loop 1604

While much of the City and ETJ has already been developed (see Residential Growth Areas Map), there is potential for future residential development in southeast Converse. There is also potential for redevelopment of aging properties in other areas of the City as identified in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The yellow areas on the Residential Growth Areas Map include areas where current or future development or redevelopment would likely include a residential component (based on the FLUM found in the Land Use Chapter).

As the City considers the future of its parks system, its important to locate parks in close proximity to residential areas. Future parkland acquisitions and/or development should aim to provide adequate parkland resources to serve under-served neighborhoods in these areas (see the Needs Assessment later in this Chapter for Parkland Service Area Maps).

Map 18. Residential Growth Areas



Park & Facilities Inventory

Park Classifications

Parks and open space systems include a variety of different types of parkland that meet the varying recreational needs in a community. Types vary by size, function, typical amenities and service area. As the City grows and new park spaces are acquired, an adopted classification system should be used to guide the development for each type of park.

Pocket Parks

Pocket parks provide passive recreational opportunities to a concentrated population within an immediate proximity (e.g., a playground and/or picnic area in a residential area).

Typical Size: 1/4 to 1 acre

Service Area: 1/4-mile radius in immediate neighborhoods

Characteristics and Considerations: Pocket parks generally range in size from 2,500 square feet to one acre and usually contain a playground and picnic area. They should be located within close proximity to medium/high density residential areas. They are often located at the street edge and should be safely accessible by pedestrians. These parks are often built by developers and can be operated and maintained by a homeowners association or the City.

Pocket parks can also be found in urban contexts. In these situations, they often include amenities such as shaded seating and gathering areas, enhanced plantings, and water features.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are the foundation of a well-balanced park system and provide the daily park experiences for residents. They serve as the social centers for residential districts in an active and passive capacity for a wide variety of age groups. Anton Schumann Park and most HOA parks are local examples of neighborhood parks.

Typical Size: 3 to 10 acres

Service Area: 1/4- to 1/2-mile radius

Characteristics and Considerations: These parks should be located in the center of neighborhoods with good public access. At least one side of the park should front a residential street. Sites should drain properly and be suitable for a variety of uses such as playgrounds, sports courts, trail access and areas for family functions. Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access is important. Locations in flood areas should be avoided.



There are currently no City-owned pocket parks in Converse. This is an example of a pocket park in Harlingen, TX.



Anton Schumann Park is an example of a neighborhood park.

Community Parks

Community parks are larger in size and serve a broader population than neighborhood parks. They are intended to meet the recreational needs of several neighborhoods. Park development should protect desirable natural amenities and include active and passive activities for all ages.

Typical Size: 10 to 100 acres

Service Area: 1- to 3-mile radius

Characteristics and Considerations: Whenever possible, these parks should be adjacent to desirable natural resources and have amenities such as athletic fields, pools, playgrounds, sports courts, picnic areas and restrooms. Community parks should be connected to citywide trail networks and be conveniently accessed by cars. Park programming should include adequate space for off-street parking.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are the largest type of park for a typical community's park system. The size varies depending on the purpose and character of the site. Regional parks provide recreational amenities for the entire community and even serve as a hub for surrounding communities. Converse City Park and North Park are examples of regional parks.

Typical Size: Varies from less than 10 acres to several thousand acres

Service Area: Up to 50-mile radius, depending on site features

Characteristics and Considerations: Regional parks often help to protect and showcase valuable natural resources such as habitat preserves or bodies of water. These parks include a very wide range of active and passive recreation opportunities and can be an economic generator through sports tournaments, ecotourism or hosting large events. Typical amenities include destination playgrounds, athletic courts and fields, trail systems, water activities, unprogrammed open space, and preserved natural areas. These parks can be located almost anywhere in the community. They should be accessible by car and connected to citywide trail networks.



Converse does not have any City-owned community parks. However, this is an example of a community park in La Grange, TX.



Converse City Park is an example of a regional park.

Greenbelts and Linear Parks

Greenbelts and linear parks are often located along linear natural (e.g., creeks) or man-made (e.g., utility rights-of-way) features. These parks often include hike and bike trails and connect two or more parks or points of interest in a city. They are also used to protect wildlife migration routes and natural processes such as floodways or stormwater drainage. The Greenway Trail System is a local example of a linear park in Converse.

Typical Size: Varies based on surrounding environment

Service Area: Varies based on amenities

Characteristics and Considerations: Greenbelts and linear parks include amenities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and/or hiking. When property adjacent to creeks and floodplains is developed, floodplain property should be dedicated to the City. The City should not purchase floodplain property unless it provides an opportunity to preserve key natural resources and/or provide a link to another park. The City should also be careful in accepting dedication of linear parks unless they provide trail links or useful recreation. Acquisition of linear parks, if small in size, can burden maintenance budgets.

Special Use Parks

Special use parks can have a wide range of uses, but parks are designated as special use when the park facilities are oriented toward a single purpose. Skate parks and dog parks are examples of special use parks.

Typical Size: Varies

Service Area: Varies

Characteristics and Considerations: Special use parks serve varying user groups based on the programming. The location of the park within the community will vary based on available land and appropriate adjacent uses. Typical examples of special use parks include golf courses, skate parks, aquatic facilities, tennis complexes, ballfield complexes, nature centers or historic sites. These parks can be operated and maintained by the City or a private enterprise.



The Greenway Trail System is an example of a linear park.



There are currently no City-owned special use parks in Converse. This is an example of a skate park in Seguin, TX.

Converse's Existing Parks and Facilities

In total, the City of Converse owns six parks, two of which are undeveloped, covering 305.7 acres with 4.2 miles of trails and two recreational facilities. The parks range in size from just over 5 acres to 162 acres. The system includes two neighborhood parks, one linear park and three regional parks.

Privately owned amenities, such as those provided by neighborhood HOAs, provide residents with an additional 14 parks, one senior center and 40.3 acres. The local ISDs also maintain recreational facilities at schools throughout the City. It should be noted that while privately owned and ISD-owned facilities provide amenities to some residents, they are often restricted from public use and therefore do not function like true public parks. However, with appropriate agreements, ISD facilities could serve a larger portion of the community.

The City's parks are distributed throughout Converse, with the majority located on the west side near the City's older, more established neighborhoods. The parks offer opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Active recreation refers to structured activities for individuals or teams that typically require specialized facilities, such as baseball, soccer, and football. Passive recreation refers to unstructured activities that usually do not require specialized equipment or facilities, such as jogging, picnicking and fishing.

Based on the close proximity between the majority of the parks, there are opportunities to connect much of the parks system with an on- and off-street trail network. There are also multiple opportunities to expand Converse's park facilities and programming using the two undeveloped parks the City currently owns.



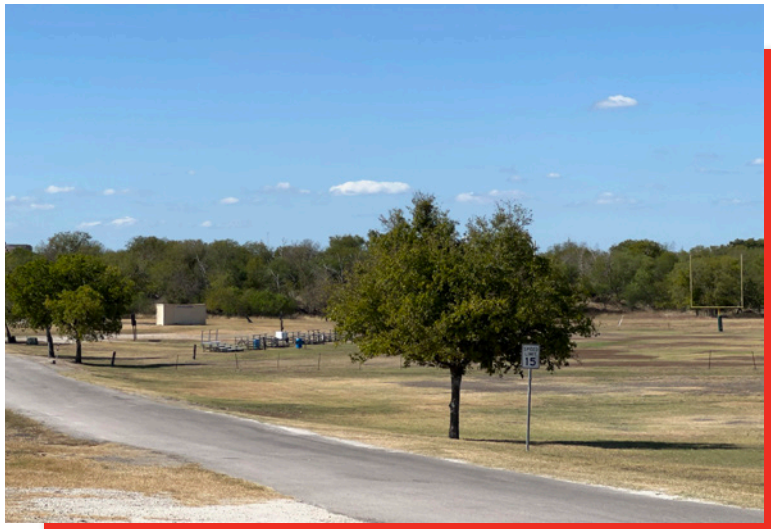


Figure 28. Converse Existing Parks and Facilities Inventory Table

#	Park Name	Address	Acreage	Classification	Active Recreation							
					Baseball/Softball Field (#)	Soccer Field (#)	Football Field (#)	Multipurpose Practice Field (#)	Basketball Court (#)	Pickelball Court (#)	Tennis Court (#)	Volleyball Court (#)
City-Owned Parks (Developed)												
1	Anton Schumann Park	10565 Old Cimarron Trail	17.30	Neighborhood								
2	Converse North Park	800 Spring Town Street	42.30	Regional			1		2			2
3	Converse City Park	307 School Street	162.50	Regional	5		1					
4	Greenway Trail System	N/A	N/A	Linear								
		Total	**222.10**		**5**		**2**		**2**			**2**
City-Owned Parks (Undeveloped)												
5	East Park	N/A	78.20	Regional								
6	Knox Ridge Northeast Park	N/A	5.43	Neighborhood								
		Total	**83.63**									
City-Owned Recreation Facilities												
7	Converse Community Center	407 South Seguin	0.72	N/A								
8	Converse Senior Center	407 South Seguin	0.72	N/A								
		Total	**1.44**									
		City-Owned Total	**307.17**		**5**		**2**		**2**			**2**

							Water Recreation				Passive Recreation								Miscellaneous			
Concession Stand (Y/N)	Skate Park (#)	Disc Golf Course (#)	Improved Trail (Miles)	Unimproved Trail (Miles)	Fitness Equipment (#)	Fitness Center (#)	Fishing Pier (#)	Canoe/Kayak Launch (#)	Swimming Pool (#)	Splash Pad (#)	Dog Park (#)	Playground (#)	Community Garden (#)	Community Library (#)	Picnic Tables (Y/N)	BBQ Grill (Y/N)	Pavilion (#)	Outdoor Event Space (#)	Community Recreation Facility (#)	Restrooms (Y/N)	Historic House (Y/N)	Parking Area (Y/N)
				0.53										1	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y
			1.00		7		1					2		1	Y	Y	1			Y		Y
			0.71		2	1	1		1			2			Y	Y	1			Y		Y
			1.94																			
			3.65	**0.53**	**9**	**1**	**2**		**1**			**4**		**2**			**2**					
																			1	Y		Y
																			1	Y		Y
																			2			
			3.65	**0.53**	**9**	**1**	**2**		**1**			**4**		**2**			**2**		**2**			

#	Park Name	Address	Acreage	Classification	Active Recreation							
					Baseball/Softball Field (#)	Soccer Field (#)	Football Field (#)	Multipurpose Practice Field (#)	Basketball Court (#)	Pickelball Court (#)	Tennis Court (#)	Volleyball Court (#)
Privately Owned/Home Owner Association (HOA) Parks												
9	Northhampton Park	8989 FM 78	20.45	Community								
10	Northhampton HOA Park	8625 Manderly Place	1.33	Pocket								
11	Rolling Creek HOA Park	Shawnee Bluff	0.45	Pocket								
12	MacArthur Way HOA Park	MacArthur Way	0.72	Pocket								
13	Hightop Ridge HOA Park	Napa Ferry	0.48	Pocket		1						
14	GRASP Senior Center	250 Donalan	2.00	N/A								
15	Astoria Place HOA Park	Dolly Drive	0.50	Pocket								
16	Knox Ridge HOA Park	9105 McCoy Pass	3.48	Neighborhood								
17	Notting HIll HOA Park	8906 Pembridge Way	0.79	Pocket								
18	Miramar HOA Park	Civil Crossing	2.63	Neighborhood								
19	Hanover Cove HOA Park	9530 Hanover Cove	0.47	Pocket								
20	Fields of Dover HOA Park	8226 Morning Grove	0.43	Pocket							1	
21	Captain Daniel Maldonado Park	6255 Ironmill Creek	2.56	Neighborhood					1			

							Water Recreation				Passive Recreation								Miscellaneous			
Concession Stand (Y/N)	Skate Park (#)	Disc Golf Course (#)	Improved Trail (Miles)	Unimproved Trail (Miles)	Fitness Equipment (#)	Fitness Center (#)	Fishing Pier (#)	Canoe/Kayak Launch (#)	Swimming Pool (#)	Splash Pad (#)	Dog Park (#)	Playground (#)	Community Garden (#)	Community Library (#)	Picnic Tables (Y/N)	BBQ Grill (Y/N)	Pavilion (#)	Outdoor Event Space (#)	Community Recreation Facility (#)	Restrooms (Y/N)	Historic House (Y/N)	Parking Area (Y/N)
			0.48		7							1		1	Y	Y						
									1			4			Y					Y		Y
												1										
									1			1			Y					Y		Y
												2			Y	Y	1					Y
																			1	Y		Y
												1			Y		1					
									1	1		1								Y		
									1			1			Y					Y		Y
			0.11									2			Y	Y	1					Y
									1						Y					Y		Y
									1											Y		
			0.17								1	1			Y	Y						

#	Park Name	Address	Acreage	Classification	Active Recreation							
					Baseball/Softball Field (#)	Soccer Field (#)	Football Field (#)	Multipurpose Practice Field (#)	Basketball Court (#)	Pickelball Court (#)	Tennis Court (#)	Volleyball Court (#)
22	Parc at Escondido HOA Park	4150 Olmstead Park	3.79	Neighborhood					1		1	1
23	Summerhill HOA Park	10200 Waverunner	0.25	Pocket								
		Total	40.33			1			2		2	1
Judson ISD and Idea Public School Facilities (even if not currently open to public)												
24	Copperfield Elementary	7595 TX-1604 Loop	18.09	N/A					1			
25	Converse Elementary	6720 FM 1516	22.14	N/A					2			
26	Judson Middle School	9695 Schaefer Road	60.35	N/A	2	1	1		2		6	2
27	Judson High School	9142 FM 78	82.34	N/A	2	1	1		2		8	2
28	Elolf Elementary	6335 Beech Trail	10.48	N/A					1			
29	IDEA Converse	5490 FM 1516	13.84	N/A								
		Total	207.24		4	2	2		8		14	4
		Non-City Owned Total	247.57		4	3	2		10		16	5
		TOTAL ALL PARKS AND FACILITIES	554.74		9	3	4		12		16	7