



# Willow Park Trail Amendment Master Plan



**BAIRD, HAMPTON & BROWN**

building partners

# Why Is the City of Willow Park Amending the 2019 Parks and Trails Master Plan?

Baird, Hampton & Brown, the City of Willow Park, and the Weatherford Mountain Bike Club, a 501c (3) non-profit, have produced this plan to partner with private property owners, land developers and public utility entities to create trails for public use. The goals of this trail's amendment are to:

- Identify areas on public and private lands that are suitable for trail development within the city limits and ETJ of Willow Park.
- Establish a framework of cooperation between the City of Willow Park, trail steward nonprofits, private property owners, and land developers to create singletrack trails and bikeways.
- Provide land developers with a concept trail plan for public/private trail development partnerships.
- Identify bikeways within the city that connect singletrack trail networks with one another.
- Create a forum to educate the public on the stewardship responsibilities of singletrack trail sustainability.
- Partner with municipalities adjacent to Willow Park and the North Central Texas Council of Governments to create a cohesive trail network in East Parker County.

**Singletrack (or soft-surface) nature trails are built into the earth in a sustainable fashion to mitigate erosion. Singletrack trails are approximately the width of a mountain bike and are used for people on foot (hiking, trail running, backpacking, and dog walking) or people on off-road bicycles (mountain bikes).**



## Why Is the Weatherford Mountain Bike Club (WMBC) Involved in this Plan?

Founded in October 2014, the Weatherford Mountain Bike Club (WMBC), a 501c (3) non-profit, is an International Mountain Bicycle Association (IMBA) Local Chapter Partner. The purpose of the WMBC is to establish guidelines and a framework of cooperation between the club and Parker County land managers to collectively work together to build, maintain, and manage multi-use nature trails (singletracks) for the benefit of the off-road bicycling, trail running and hiking community.

The WMBC's mission includes volunteer efforts with regards to sustainability, conservation, education, partnership, and community involvement with like-minded advocates focusing on mountain biking, trail building, and all the health and welfare benefits associated with the sport for the benefit of the public.

## Why is the WMBC an IMBA Local Chapter Partner?

- The International Mountain Bicycle Association (IMBA) Local Chapter Partner program is a grassroots support system that helps mountain biking organizations, and their partners create and sustain thriving trail communities. This program provides support services, education, and mentorship programs that help communities accomplish their goals.
- IMBA's vision is to build the quality and quantity of mountain biking communities by supporting and empowering local leadership. IMBA wants to help communities build a base of knowledgeable and capable advocates and stewards.
- The access that mountain bikers currently enjoy is a result of decades of advocacy work, grassroots activism, and widespread volunteerism. IMBA was the first organization dedicated to gaining acceptance of and access for mountain biking at every level of government and land management and has remained at the forefront of those efforts for 30 years. Trail access is ours to go and get, but only if mountain bikers get organized, educated, and involved.



# Successful Mountain Bike Trail Projects in Parker County

## Quanah Hill

A 7.1-mile singletrack trail on approximately 108 acres located on the west side of Lake Weatherford.

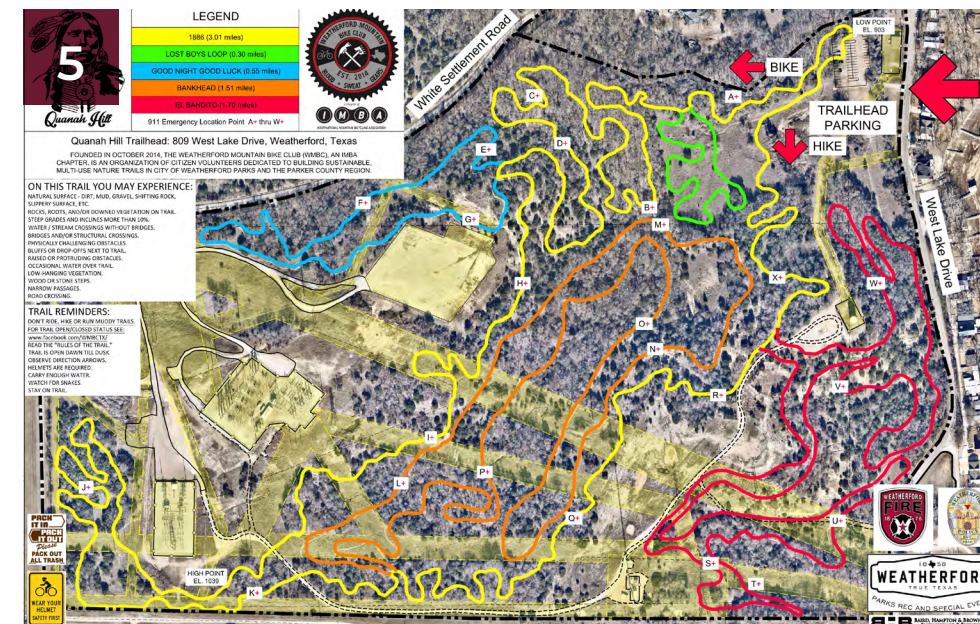
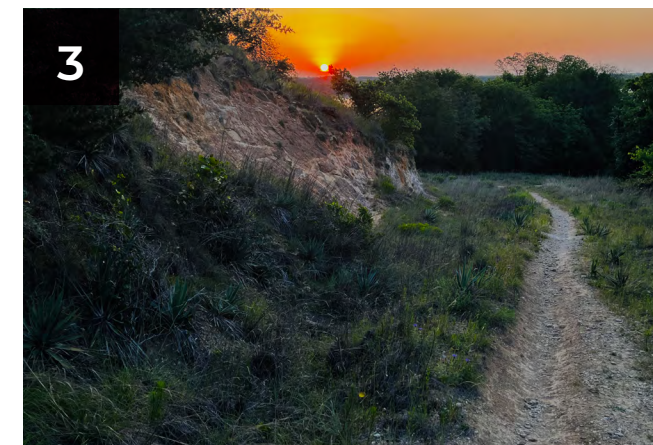
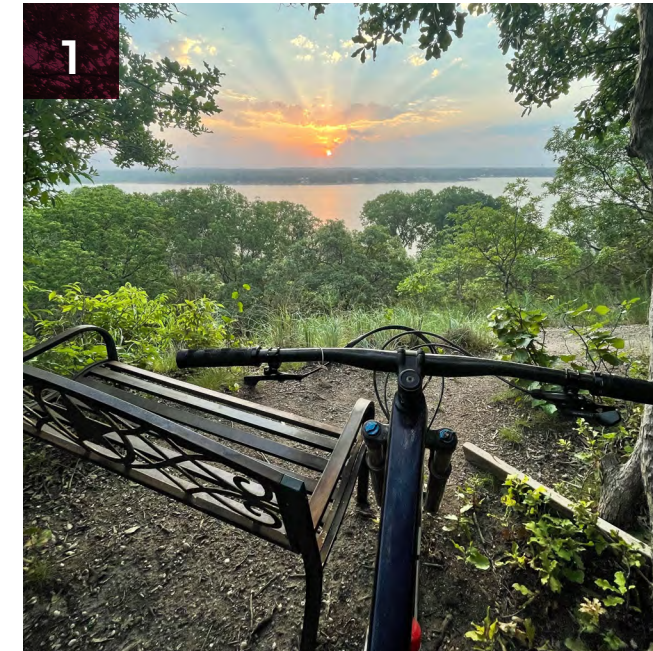
The land, managed by the City of Weatherford, is encumbered by more than 30 acres of electric substations, gas and electric transmission easements, City-owned water ground storage tanks, Weatherford Fire and cell communication towers, service roads, and a gas well pad.

The WMBC partners with the Weatherford Parks and Recreation Department to coordinate trail operations with periodic construction infrastructure improvements by the public utility providers operating within the park. In spite of these encumbrances, the City of Weatherford, the WMBC and the Quanah Hill mountain bike trail deliver a great trail experience for hikers, trail runners, and mountain bikers.

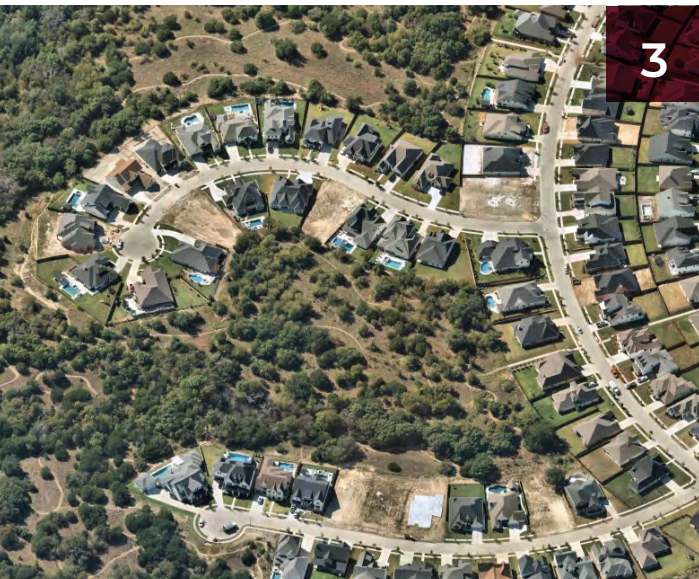
### HOW IT RELATES TO THE WILLOW PARK TRAIL AMENDMENT

The exhibits within this trail amendment plan identify areas where there are similar circumstances to Quanah Hill inside the city and ETJ limits of Willow Park. The north and east side of Willow Park, in particular, are home to an extensive network of gas and electric easements that greatly hinder commercial and residential development.

One of the goals of this plan is to form public/private partnerships with these public utilities and the private property owners where these easements reside in order to create singletrack trail networks. By creating public trail spaces the land outside of these easements will increase the value of private properties nearby.



- 1 Quanah Hill at sunrise with bike
- 2 Quanah Hill utility easements
- 3 Quanah Hill at sunrise
- 4 Quanah Hill prairie
- 5 Quanah Hill easement site plan



- 1 POA during construction
- 2 POA shaded area
- 3 POA after construction
- 4 POA prairie trail
- 5 POA trail with bench

## Parks of Aledo (POA) Trails

A stacked loop trail system of eight connected trails inside a 436-acre residential development of over 1,000 homes in the City of Aledo. Located in East Parker County about midway between Weatherford and Fort Worth, the 12+ mile trail winds through 135+ acres of native green space.

The trail was funded by the residential land developer, constructed by a professional trail contractor, and the WMBC acts as the trail steward. The POA Trails are an example of a land developer creating a public recreational amenity in order to enhance the value of a land development project.

The singletrack trails were constructed in areas where developing residential lots was problematic. The residential street alignments were designed with an emphasis on positioning residential lots adjacent to native open space where the trails are located wherever possible. The lots next to these open spaces proved to be the most valuable and the first to be sold. Once the residential home sites are built out, the land developer will donate the land and the trails to the City as a public park amenity.

### HOW IT RELATES TO THE WILLOW PARK TRAIL AMENDMENT

One of the goals of this trail amendment plan is to partner with residential and commercial land developers in order to create singletrack trails in a similar manner. People desire to live, work, and recreate next to native open spaces. With proper planning, land developers can reduce infrastructure costs, create spaces where people want to be, and provide a recreational amenity for the public at a fraction of the cost of traditional park spaces.

# Proposed Bikeways in Willow Park Will Focus on Connecting East Parker County Communities

**THE EAST PARKER COUNTY TRAILS (EPCoT TRAILS)** are a collaboration of six communities in Parker County, Texas (Aledo, Annetta, Annetta North, Willow Park, Hudson Oaks, and Weatherford) to create a hike and bike route utilizing public roadways, existing and proposed bikeways, and dedicated bike lanes to connect downtown Aledo to Lake Weatherford. The EPCoT Trail proposes to connect existing mountain bike trail networks in Aledo ("The Pit" Kids Mountain Bike Trail and the Parks of Aledo Trails) and in Weatherford (Quanah Hill). Additionally, the City of Willow Park and the WMBC have created a concept mountain bike trail map that proposes new singletrack trails throughout the city limits and ETJ of Willow Park. An additional goal of the EPCoT Trails will be to create an all-weather bikeway that will connect the existing and future mountain bike trailheads to one another.

**THE MEADOWS PLACE DRIVE & ROYAL VIEW COURT BIKEWAY** will create a connection between residential neighborhoods west of Squaw Creek Golf Course and the business and commercial district along Interstate 20. This bikeway will allow Willow Park citizens in these neighborhoods to walk or bike to area shops, restaurants, medical facilities, banks, and Kings Gate Park.

**THE INTERSTATE 20 BIKEWAY** will create a connection between Kings Gate Park and East Bankhead Highway. The route will traverse under the Interstate 20 bridge along the west bank of the Clear Fork of the Trinity River and connect to East Bankhead Highway just west of the decommissioned East Bankhead Bridge.

**THE EAST BANKHEAD BRIDGE** was an existing decommissioned bridge that spanned the Clear Fork of the Trinity River. In July 2023, the bridge was relocated to private property. The City of Willow Park and the private property owner are negotiating to create a new bridge across the Clear Fork.

**THE I-20 BIKEWAY & THE EAST BANKHEAD BRIDGE CONNECTION** are vitally important to the EPCoT Trail vision. This missing segment of trail is approximately 1900 linear feet in length. Once created this trail connection will allow cyclists to ride from Downtown Aledo to Lake Weatherford the day it opens.

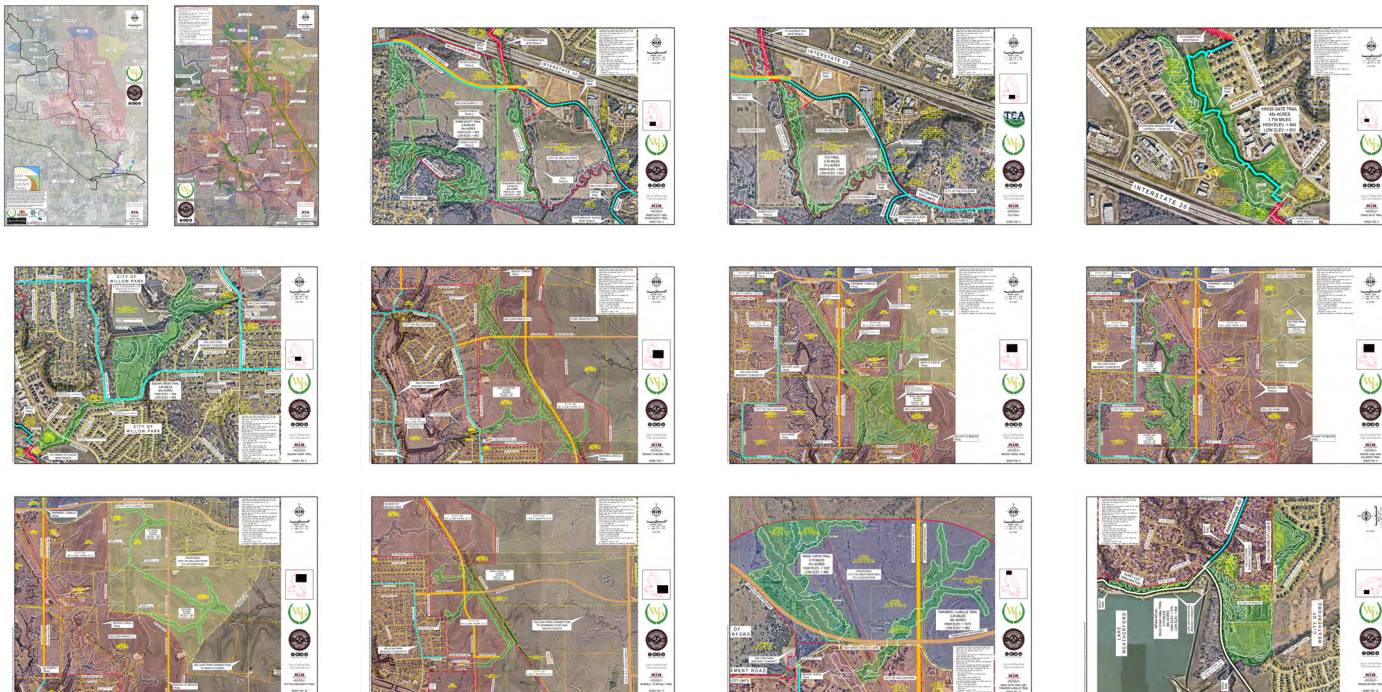


**Bikeway** is a term used to describe paved bicycle routes. Bikeways include:

- **Mixed Traffic Bikeway:** Regular streets on which bikes are permitted to mix with cars.
- **Sharrow Street:** Mixed traffic roads on which graphics have been applied to the roadway indicating that cars and bikes should share the full lane as equals.
- **Bike Lane:** Lanes painted onto a street that are designated for use by bikes, but which are not physically protected from lanes used by cars.
- **Side Path Bikeway:** Off-street bikeways that are built as extensions of the sidewalk. They provide complete physical separation from cars except at intersections with cross streets.
- **Shared Use Pathway:** Dedicated car-free bikeways that follow their own unique route. They are intended to be not only off-street, but to be completely free of any interaction with cars at all.

# How Were These Trail Exhibits Created?

- All exhibits were created using AutoCAD C3D 2022 using NAD83 Texas State Planes, North Central Zone, US Foot.
- Aerial photos from Nearmaps 2023-01-23.
- LiDAR contours are 1'.
- Parcel information, city limit and ETJ boundaries from Parker County Appraisal District 2022.
- Master Thoroughfare Plan roadway alignments per City of Willow Park and Parker County records.
- Mountain bike trail information provided by the Weatherford Mountain Bike Club
- All public utility easements were identified using Nearmap aerial images. All easement locations are approximate.
- Existing gas lines per Texas RR Commission 2023-07-11.
- On-street bikeway information provided by:
  - October 2019 Willow Park Parks and Trails Master Plan
  - City of Fort Worth GIS
  - Lake Weatherford Parks and Trails Master Plan 2018-02-08
  - City of Hudson Oaks Trail Master Plan
  - NCTCOG Trails and On-Street Bikeways
- All concept trail alignment designs are located using one of more of the following parameters:
  - Within a public utility easement.
  - Adjacent to drainage corridors (i.e. rivers, creeks, and native draws).
  - Topography more than 15%.
- All concept trail alignments are available for KMZ downloads.



# How to Read the Trail Amendment Exhibits

## 1

**SHEET NO 1 - EPCOT TRAILS** provides an overview of the East Parker County city and ETJ limits of Aledo, Annetta, Annetta North, Willow Park, Hudson Oaks, and Weatherford. This exhibit features:

- Lake Weatherford Bikeway Concept
- Existing and Future bikeways of East Parker County
- Existing mountain bike trail at Quanah Hill (Weatherford), Parks of Aledo, and The Pit (Aledo)
- Existing North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Veloweb Alignment
- Proposed alignment of the EPCoT Trail from Downtown Aledo to Lake Weatherford
- Proposed connection from the Split Rail Golf Course in Annetta to the EPCoT Trail adjacent to the Parks of Aledo Trails
- Proposed connection from Gene L Voyles Park in Hudson Oaks to the EPCoT Trail at East Lake Drive (south of Lake Weatherford)
- The I-20 Bikeway and the East Bankhead Bridge Connection
- The Meadows Place Drive and Royal View Court Bikeway

## 2

**SHEET NO 2 - SINGLETRACK SITE PLAN** identifies the 11 study areas of the Willow Park Trail Amendment. Each study area has a corresponding sheet number where more information can be found about each concept trail alignment. This exhibit features:

- City and ETJ limits of Willow Park
- City of Willow Park facilities such as parks, fire station, and water and sewer infrastructure sites
- Approximate locations of public utility easements
- Flowlines of existing river, creeks, and native draws
- Proposed master thoroughfare alignments of Willow Park and Parker County
- Negotiated ETJ swap between Weatherford and Willow Park

## 3

**SHEETS NO 3 THROUGH 13 - SINGLETRACK TRAIL STUDY AREAS** each detail a concept singletrack trail alignment based on LiDAR topography, flowlines of existing river, creeks, and native draws, and Nearmap aerial photo observations from 2023-01-08. These exhibits feature:

- Concept singletrack trail alignment with approximate mileage, land area, and elevation change
- Parcel and ownership information from the Parker County Appraisal District as of 2023-01-01
- City and ETJ limits of Willow Park
- Existing and Future bikeways of East Parker County

# Who Should Use the Trail Amendment Exhibits?

**LAND DEVELOPERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS & PLANNERS** are encouraged to use these exhibits for land development planning. The concept trail alignments were created in AutoCAD C3D 2022 using NAD83 Texas State Planes, North Central Zone, US Foot and are available for download.

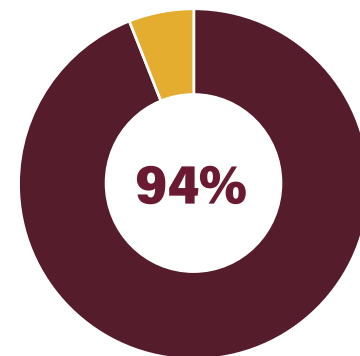
**PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS** who desire to:

- Create a public trail on land encumbered by public utility easements, steep grades and/or floodplain
- Create a conservation easement via the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for singletrack trail development
- Create a living legacy by donating property for singletrack trail development

# Why Should Developers and Property Owners Participate in Willow Park Trails Master Plan?

94 percent of Texas' 172 million acres is privately owned. The overwhelming majority of that 6 percent of public land is in Big Bend, a nearly nine-hour drive from Willow Park. Parker County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Texas (and Texas is the fastest growing state in the US).

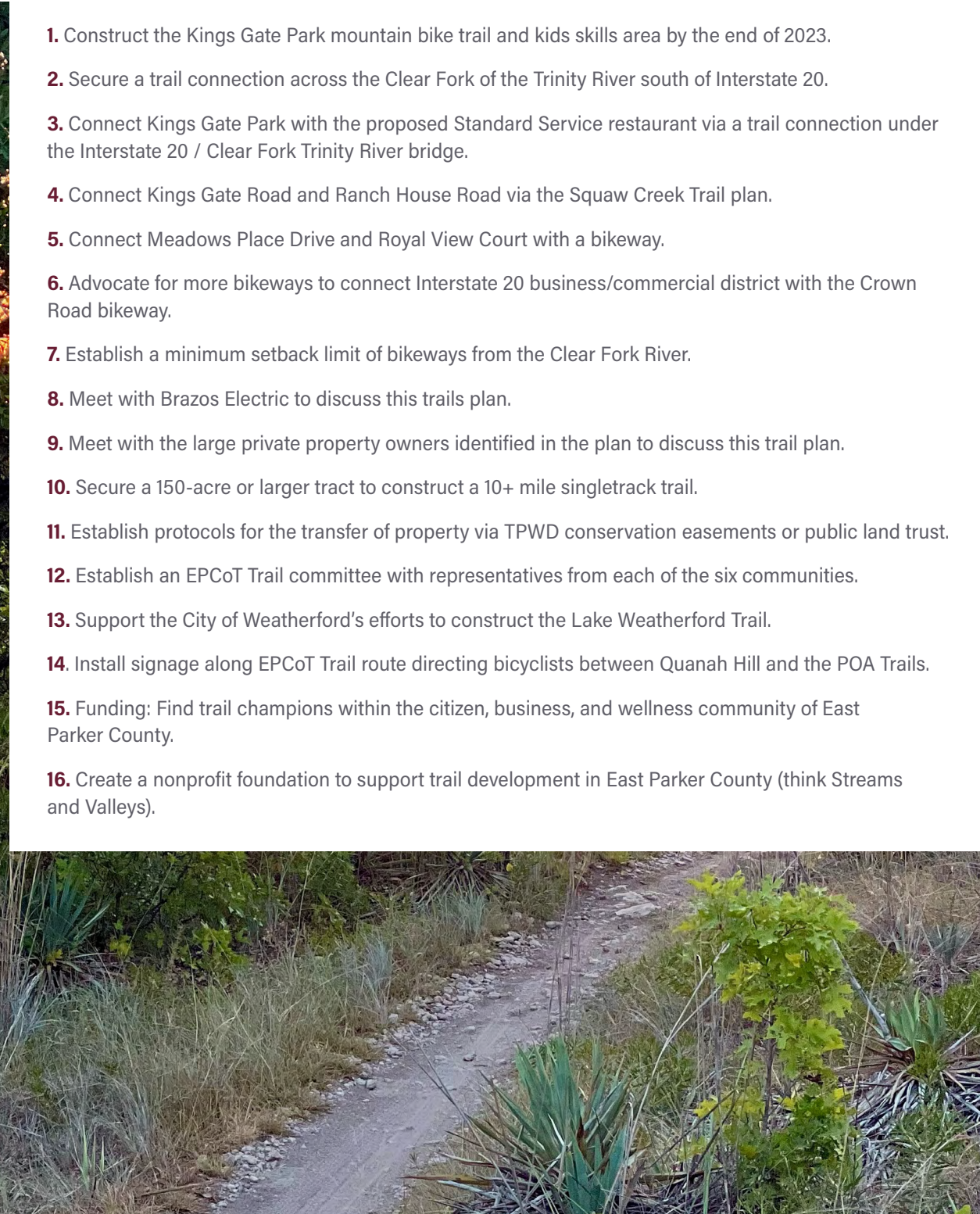
Simply put, Texas municipalities need to find innovative ways to partner with land developers and private property owners to help create parks and open spaces for their communities. Without their help, this trails plan will go nowhere. With their help, the potential to preserve native open spaces, create recreational singletrack trail experiences, and add value to our community can be achieved.



**94%**  
of Texas land is privately owned

# Willow Park Trail Amendment Priorities

1. Construct the Kings Gate Park mountain bike trail and kids skills area by the end of 2023.
2. Secure a trail connection across the Clear Fork of the Trinity River south of Interstate 20.
3. Connect Kings Gate Park with the proposed Standard Service restaurant via a trail connection under the Interstate 20 / Clear Fork Trinity River bridge.
4. Connect Kings Gate Road and Ranch House Road via the Squaw Creek Trail plan.
5. Connect Meadows Place Drive and Royal View Court with a bikeway.
6. Advocate for more bikeways to connect Interstate 20 business/commercial district with the Crown Road bikeway.
7. Establish a minimum setback limit of bikeways from the Clear Fork River.
8. Meet with Brazos Electric to discuss this trails plan.
9. Meet with the large private property owners identified in the plan to discuss this trail plan.
10. Secure a 150-acre or larger tract to construct a 10+ mile singletrack trail.
11. Establish protocols for the transfer of property via TPWD conservation easements or public land trust.
12. Establish an EPCoT Trail committee with representatives from each of the six communities.
13. Support the City of Weatherford's efforts to construct the Lake Weatherford Trail.
14. Install signage along EPCoT Trail route directing bicyclists between Quannah Hill and the POA Trails.
15. Funding: Find trail champions within the citizen, business, and wellness community of East Parker County.
16. Create a nonprofit foundation to support trail development in East Parker County (think Streams and Valleys).



# Additional Resources

FOR SINGLETRACK TRAIL PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT  
AND CONSTRUCTION

[1. Trail Construction and IMBA's Mountain Bike Trail  
Development Guidelines for Successfully Managing the  
Process](#)

[2. Guidelines for a Quality Trail Experience \(GQTE\)](#)



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