**Community Meeting**

**November 12, 2019**

**Speaker: Ylda Capriciosso, New Braunfels Park Development Manager**

Friends of CCCA gathered at Landa Haus in Landa Park to hear New Braunfels’ Park Development Manager, Ylda Capriccioso, give an overview of greenways and trails in the city. In addition to discussing existing trails and greenways, she also reviewed the planning process used for overall trail development and for the Dry Comal Creek proposal, specifically.

In surveys conducted as a part of several planning efforts, the public, across a range of economic and educational circumstances, has indicated support for trails and greenways. That support typically cited the desire to be close to nature, to see and hear birds and other wildlife, and to see and enjoy plants and trees in a natural setting.

These findings complimented other benefits of the trails that Ms. Capriciosso noted. These included mobility options, improved health through outdoors exercise, and linking neighborhoods. Another, tangential, benefit deals with cleaning up some of the waterway corridors that might become paths. Other communities have noted that there is a tendency to use such corridors as dumping sites until they become used as trails. The use seems to force people to think before they dump and ignore.

New Braunfels now has about ten miles of trails. In addition, seven parks include trails. Countyline Memorial Trail, which is two miles long, contains overlooks and bridges, and connects schools, was mentioned as one well-used trail. Two nature trails, Panther Canyon and Dry Comal were also noted.

The planning process began as early as 2006, when statements of goals and objectives were developed. It has progressed through a masterplan development and revision. It has also been linked to regional transportation planning and a Thoroughfare Plan. All phases have included significant public input and participation. The growing population of the city underscores the continuing need for park, greenway, and trail development.

Dry Comal Creek is one of several planning efforts for new trails. It is envisioned as about a 6-mile extension of an existing 2.5-mile existing trail. The effort is still at a conceptual level, with no clear boundaries drawn.

To its desire for more trails, the city is working with developers to incorporate trails and greenways into new developments. Chapter 118 requires developers to accommodate platted trails into their developments. This facilitates the city’s involvement and has resulted in new trails in several developments. One of the challenges that the city now faces is providing connections between trails in subdivisions and existing city trails to facilitate mobility and recreation.