



AUSTIN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR
2023





AWARDS

**Austin Green Award
Exemplary Projects**
Waterloo Park

**Austin Young Chamber
FAVE Go-TO Spot**
Waterloo Park

**The Architect's Newspaper
Best of Design, Honorable Mention**
Waterloo Park Family Pavilion

**American Society of
Landscape Architects (ASLA) Colorado
Merit Award**
Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan

**Preservation Austin
Preservation Award for Rehabilitation**
Downs Field Rehabilitation

Preservation Award for Rehabilitation
Haskell House

**Special Recognition for Education:
"To Relate" Educational Exhibit**
Oakwood Cemetery Chapel

Special Recognition for Education:
Parque Zaragoza: Comunidad, Cultura, y Resiliencia
Parque Zaragoza

Honor Award
Downs Field Rehabilitation

**Texan by Nature
TXN20 Award**
Recognition of the best and most innovative work in conservation coming from businesses and organizations based and operating in Texas.

**Texas APA
Grass Roots Initiative Gold Award**
Central Williamson Creek Greenway Vision Plan

**Texas Historical Commission
Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grant Award of \$30,000**
Henry G. Madison Cabin

**Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS)
Lone Star Legacy Park**
Pan American Neighborhood Park
Promotions & Marketing Excellence Award – Class I
Parque Zaragoza: Comunidad, Cultura, y Resiliencia

RECOGNITION

Austin Chronicle

Reader's Poll
Best Swimming Pool
Barton Springs Pool

Best Golf Course
Butler Pitch n Putt

Best Bike Trail/Track
Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail

Best Place to Hang With Your Pet
Zilker Park

All Time Winners
20 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail

27 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Barton Creek Greenbelt

27 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Zilker Botanical Garden

33 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Mt. Bonnell at Covert Park

63 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Zilker Park

69 Reader's Poll "Best of" Wins since 1990
Barton Springs Pool



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2023
FISCAL YEAR

WE CREATE COMMUNITY

MISSION: Inspire Austin to learn, play, protect and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.

Executive Leadership

Parks and Recreation Department

Kimberly A. McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP, Director

Jodi Jay, M.B.A., CPRP, Assistant Director

Liana Kallivoka, PhD, PE, LEED Fellow, Assistant Director

Lucas Massie, M.Ed., CPRP, Assistant Director

Suzanne Piper, DBA, Chief Administrative Officer

Board Leadership

Parks and Recreation Board

Pedro A Villalobos, Chair

Kathryn Flowers, Vice Chair

Stephanie M Bazan, Board Member

Lane S Becker, Board Member

Jennifer Franklin, Board Member

Julie M Hayes, Board Member

Lisa Hugman, Board Member

Nicole E Merritt, Board Member

Shelby Orme, Board Member

Holly Reed, Board Member

Kimberly A Taylor, Board Member

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A NOTE FROM LEADERSHIP



Kimberly McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP

Director

Austin Parks and Recreation Department

I'm deeply honored to be part of Austin Parks and Recreation's vital mission. Our dedicated team works hard to bring spaces to life that foster unity, inspiration, and personal growth for community members and visitors. The Department creates community by promoting environmental sustainability, wellness, and educational opportunities. Our parks and trails provide ways to connect with nature, while pools, recreation centers and sports complexes facilitate community bonding through enjoyable activities. Our diverse museums, cultural centers, and historic sites reflect Austin's creative and cultural tapestry of people. Above all, we continue to refocus our priorities through the lens of equity for all people.



Pedro A Villalobos

Chair

Austin Parks and Recreation Board

Park and recreation spaces form the beating heart of our community. They are essential sanctuaries where families gather, children play, friendships are formed, and friendly competitions are held. These spaces offer a respite from urban hustle, promoting mental and physical well-being. Just as important, these spaces level the playing field for those who might otherwise lack such opportunities. They serve as havens for families facing economic challenges, providing cost-free avenues for leisure and exercise. By investing in these spaces, Austin acknowledges the importance of inclusivity, ensuring that every citizen, regardless of their background, enjoys the benefits of nature and community. In doing so, the city not only enriches lives but also advances a more just and interconnected society.

Equity & Inclusion Program in the Office of the Director

The Equity and Inclusion program has focused on continuing to increase awareness and commitment to race equity and building internal capacity. This past year, the program helped organize leadership development workshops, provided consultations to City staff and community members, and worked closely on various projects. One such project was leading a team to review the Department's Long Range Plan using an equity lens. The team developed an equity supplement for the plan with recommendations to leadership around communication and accountability.

As part of raising awareness and commitment, the program manager and several Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) staff are connected to the larger Equity Network in the City led by the Equity Office. Through their monthly strategy sessions, Equity Action Team Meetings, and relationship building, the Parks Department connects with others across the City to help advance racial equity at PARD and Austin.

40

Participants in Undoing Racism Workshop

Led by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond this past year. Held first Undoing Racism debrief for Department staff

1 Number of Staff

1 Book discussion on *The Four Pivots* by Dr. Shawn Ginwright

15 Number of Consultations

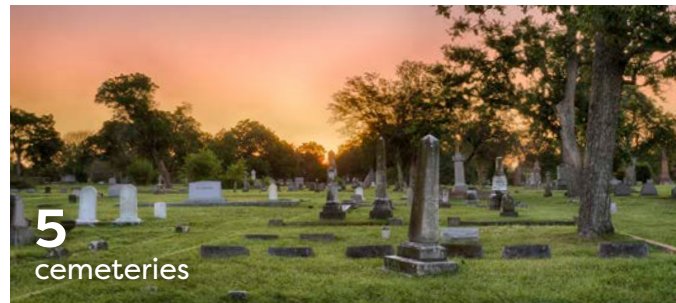
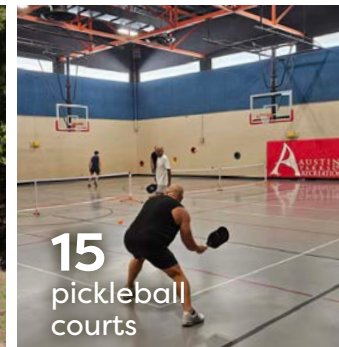
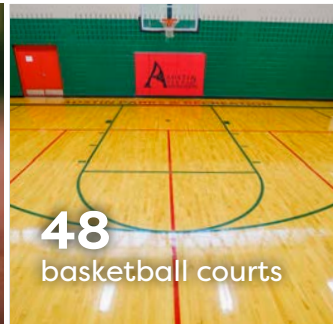
13 Number of PARD/City projects supported



PARD BY THE NUMBERS

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has been the steward of the City of Austin's public lands since 1928. As such, we protect and maintain parkland and urban forests.

We preserve and restore natural resources and historic places, maintain trails, and offer a variety of sports, recreation, educational enrichment, arts programs, cultural opportunities and aquatic activities.





CITY OF AUSTIN STRATEGIC DIRECTION

PARD has reached a pivotal milestone, marking the close of the ambitious 5-year strategic plan laid out in Strategic Direction 2023. As we reflect upon the half-decade journey, we're proud to recognize the strides made in the two Outcome Areas PARD has worked to advance: Health and Environment and Culture and Lifelong Learning. Achievements in these areas foster a creative, healthier, more equitable, and more sustainable Austin.



CULTURE & LIFELONG LEARNING



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & AFFORDABILITY



GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Indicator Category A.

Quality, accessibility, and diversity of civic and cultural venues, events, programs, and resources

FY23: 92% FY19: 56%

CLL.A.6 Percentage of available reservations filled at City owned cultural spaces

The Parks and Recreation Department's service model provides access to spaces within the park system for community use. The Museums and Cultural Programs Division has facilities where they offer both free access to the use of cultural and historic spaces through partnerships and co-sponsorship agreements and provide access to these cultural and historic spaces for a nominal fee.

Indicator Category C.

Appreciation, respect, and welcoming of all people and cultures

FY23: 447,412 FY19: 441,856

CLL.C.4 Number of attendees at City supported multicultural activities

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department's Museums and Cultural Programs (MCP) Division is to provide every participant the opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of world cultures, local and world history, and arts of every discipline through structured programming and special events. While we saw unavoidable attendance dips in 2020, 2021, and 2022 due to COVID-19 modifications and closures, 2023 numbers have rebounded. However, they are still lower due to facility closures.

FY23: 99% FY19: 96%

CLL.C.5 Percentage of participants in City-supported events or programs who report that they increased their knowledge and understanding of culture, history and/or art

Recreation program participants are surveyed after every event and indicate whether or not the event or program contributed to their overall knowledge and understanding of world cultures, history, or art of any discipline. The Parks and Recreation Department utilizes this feedback to improve services and programs throughout the year. The long-term goal is to have 100% increased knowledge with each program experience we provide.

FY23: 482k FY19: 277k

CLL.E.2 Number of participants in City-offered lifelong learning events, activities and resources

This metric is a way the City can monitor and assess how well we are serving the community's creative needs. PARD has been the lead for reporting data on this metric since FY19. The metric will also include data from contributing departments such as Austin Public Library and the Economic Development Department. These types of opportunities enhance one's personal exploration of hobbies and leisure interests and have been shown to lead to many overall health and wellness benefits over time.



HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT



MOBILITY



SAFETY

Indicator Category C.

Accessibility to quality parks, trails, and recreational opportunities

Top 10 Indicator

FY23: 70% FY19: 64%

HE.C.1 Percentage of residents with access to parks and open spaces.

This metric measures the percentage of residents within walking distance to any nearby parks. A 10-minute walk to the park is considered the standard for parks to yield a quality-of-life impact on users. Areas that are outside of walking distance to parks are known as "park deficient," meaning that residents within such areas lack adequate access to parks. By reducing park deficiency, we increase the percentage of residents who have access to parks, thereby improving the health and wellness benefits the City's parks provide.

FY23: #41 FY19: #43

HE.C.2 Austin's ParkScore Ranking

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a non-profit agency that conducts an annual survey of parks and recreation agencies in the 100 most populated cities in the United States. For this metric, a lower ranking is desirable, with number one being the highest-ranked city, and 100 the lowest. A static TPL ParkScore means that Austin is balancing the cost of acquiring parkland in an expensive market with rapid population growth and limited departmental resources.

FY23: 51% FY19: 20%

HE.C.4 Percentage of PARD programs and services that are ADA accessible.

PARD's long-term goal is to remove, to the greatest extent, the physical barriers that limit accessibility to the department-owned facilities. PARD will strive to reach compliance by continuously assessing and responding to infrastructure needs and by providing accessible recreational opportunities for all park patrons. Current projects are primarily focused on the improvement of accessible routes, from parking areas and public right-of-way to building entrances, interior paths of travel, and connections among the different elements of the sites such as restrooms, pools, pavilions, sport courts, and playgrounds.

PARD Goals

- Align accessible and diverse programs and services with community needs and interests.
- Activate and enhance urban park spaces to provide flexible and diverse programming.
- Ensure that the parks system preserves recreational and natural spaces to serve as a respite from urban life.
- Expand and improve access to parks and facilities for all.

Look for these icons throughout this report to see which programs, projects, and investments directly support City and Departmental goals.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FY2023

Approved Operating Budget

Community Services	\$65,277,652
Park Planning, Development & Operations	\$34,603,972
Support Services	\$6,844,447
Transfers, Debts, & Other Requirements	\$21,514,904
Total by Program	\$128,240,975

Funding Sources

General Fund	\$14,052,745
Golf Fund	\$10,437,199
Total	\$24,489,944

Personnel

Full-Time Equivalents	809
Grant FTEs	-
Total Full Time Staff	809

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Expenditures

Aquatics	\$2,857,279
Athletics	\$2,951,952
Buildings & Improvements	\$9,095,991
Cemeteries	\$651,913
Golf	\$317,061
Land Acquisition	\$9,567,192
Parks	\$9,718,280
Plans and Studies	\$332,212
Playscapes	\$1,093,784
Trails	\$3,890,818
Vehicles and Equipment	\$171,563
Total by Program	\$40,648,043

CIP Funding Sources

Grants	\$1,019,279
Historic Preservation Fund	\$2,612,973
Non-voter Approved Debt	\$2,471,695
Other Revenue and Transfers	\$2,183,846
Parkland Dedication	\$7,354,252
Public Improvement Bonds	\$25,005,998
Total	\$40,648,043



ASSET MANAGEMENT



Colony Park District Park, Pool Construction

Asset Management provided program and financial management for \$40.6 million in PARD capital spending, including \$22.3 million from the 2018 Bond Program, on rehabilitation and improvements to parks and facilities, parkland acquisitions and new development.

The Asset Management team developed and maintained data management infrastructure to plan for the life cycle management of its assets. They trained and transitioned Aquatics Maintenance to PARD's new work order system. The team also worked to ready the system to incorporate Cemeteries Maintenance and Forestry in 2024.



Emma Long Metropolitan Park

SUPPORT SERVICES

ACCOUNTING SERVICES & FINANCE

Accounting

PARD's Accounting Team consistently processed all accounts payable (AP) invoices within the state mandated AP 30-day turnaround requirement. Accounting also worked with Information Systems Management to develop a new Sharepoint Travel Tracking system, a process improvement that will save time and enhance efficiency.

CONTRACTS/GRANTS/ PROCUREMENT

Nonprofits

PARD fostered relationships with approximately 82 nonprofits to provide services ranging from shared-use facilities and resources with other governmental agencies, to providing arts instruction at the senior centers.

Concessions

PARD has nine concessions that provided \$1,409,266 in revenue through September of 2023 despite the fact that two concessions, the Zilker Cafe and the Zilker Eagle, are temporarily closed. Plans are underway to reopen these concessions in 2024.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT



The *ISM Needs Assessment Survey* results showed a 2x increase in responses from the previous year.

GRANT FUNDING

Senior Transportation Program PARD received support from various grants to enhance its program offerings and services. The PARD Senior Transportation Program provides rides to congregate meal locations at PARD recreation and senior centers, door-to-door trips to requested destinations, and group travel. The program's mission is to create mobility solutions involving transportation services for people 60 years of age and older and to improve the quality of these services.

PARD received over \$83,000 from the Older Americans Act Title III-B Funds, administered by the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG)/Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area (AAACAP), and \$109,673 from the Federal Transportation Administration Section 5310 grant, administered by CapMetro.

After School Meals The Central Texas Food Bank Kids Café grant provided \$40,000 toward the cost of meals for kids attending afterschool programs at Turner-Roberts, Dove Springs, and Montopolis recreation centers.

Pharr Tennis Center Renovation The renovation of Pharr Tennis Center was partially funded by a \$1 million grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Recreation Grants program.

Oakwood Cemetery PARD received a \$50,000 grant over FY22-23 from the National Endowment of the Humanities to fund research and implementation of an interactive 3D model of the historic "Colored Grounds" at Oakwood Cemetery.

Information Systems Management (ISM) assisted several divisions of the department with technology-based projects and process improvements as part of its five-year plan. These applications helped the department hire sufficient lifeguards to open all pools, provide bonus incentives to new employees, move towards digital timesheets, implement a text pilot program for lifeguards and allow the department to perform invoice accounting more optimally and accurately. Moving forward, ISM will release two new internal applications and continue to transition into data analysis as statistics are collected.



HUMAN RESOURCES

SAFETY TRAINING

- 169** Safety Trainings
- 2,449** Staff Members Reached
- 5,413** Training Hours
- +2%** Increase in Safety Trainings Offered

SAFETY INSPECTIONS

- 339** Park Amenity Inspections
- 98%** Amenity Safety Compliance
+1% Increase

SAFETY DATA

- 200** Employee Injuries +33%
41% Deemed Preventable
- 54** Vehicle Collisions +20%
54% Deemed Preventable

Notable Accomplishments:

The "Driver Improvement Program" was released in August 2023, complementing the requirements of the City of Austin Driver Safety Program. Three PARD drivers met requirements to be entered into the program.

The "Hot Work Program" procedure was released in December 2022.

The Safety SharePoint site was redesigned making it more user friendly, accessible by all PARD staff, and promoting transparency.



STAFF HIRING

- 200** New Full Time Staff Hired
- 48** Staff Promotions
- 7** Military Veterans Hired
- 1,448** Temporary Staff Hired
- 6** Job Fairs and Hiring Events Attended
- 809** Total Full Time Staff
- 2,463** Total Temporary Staff
Highest number of active staff summer 2023.



COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement

NRPA defines community engagement as "the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people" (NRPA, 2021). The Department also follows the guidelines of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), which defines engagement as "an intentional process with the purpose of working in inclusive and respectful ways to shape decisions, actions, impacts or change" (IAP2, 2022).

Community engagement efforts focused on relationship building across Austin and refreshing training for staff. As leaders for the City of Austin, our in-house IAP2 trainer provided "Fundamentals of IAP2" training within the department and at other departments. With a new full-time community engagement specialist focusing on capital improvement projects, the Department's community engagement efforts for FY2024 will develop deeper relationships with community leaders in areas of future park improvements.



TRAINING

- 21** PARD Staff Received *Fundamentals of IAP2* Community Engagement Training
- 28** City Staff from 15 City Departments Received *Fundamentals of IAP2* Community Engagement Training

EVENTS

- 40** Community Engagement Events facilitated by PARD Staff
- 1,600+** People reached, face to face, at Community Engagement Events

Language Access

At the end of FY2022, Administrative Bulletin 22-02 was approved to provide specific guidance to City departments for translation, interpretation, and direct service regardless of community members' ability to speak English. The Bulletin provides direction on data collection, signage for iSpeak Austin, translation and interpretation, bilingual/multilingual staff, language access training, City-funded contractor requirements, and language access complaints. This year, the Department began implementation of language access tracking processes and posting iSpeak Austin posters in all facilities.

Since beginning tracking language access services in April, the Department estimates more than:

- 400** Instances of translation (written) by vendors and staff
- 800** Instances of interpretation (spoken) by vendors and staff
- 5,000** Instances of direct service (communicating directly by language other than English)

Numbers are expected to increase as the Department trains more staff members on how to support community members with language access needs.



PLANNING OUR PARKS

Zilker Metropolitan Park

The Zilker Parking Shuttle returned for a second summer and served over 2,700 riders, a 400% increase from ridership last year. The shuttle ran every weekend and holiday from May 27 through September 4, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. to transport riders from the parking garage at One Texas Center to Zilker Park. Parking at the garage was free with validation.

The shuttle was a pilot program connected to the Zilker Vision Plan. The draft plan was released for public input in November 2022. The process represents nearly three years of research, planning, and community engagement. Outreach included 122 on site pop-ups, 24 small group discussions, 12 technical advisory and Parks and Recreation Board working group meetings, six community surveys, and six community-wide meetings. The draft plan was reviewed by and received recommendations from the Bicycle Advisory Council and Pedestrian Advisory Council, Urban Transportation Commission, Environmental Commission, Design Commission, and the Parks and Recreation Board. Though the plan was ultimately placed on hold, the information and feedback received will prove invaluable in preserving this treasured space for years to come.



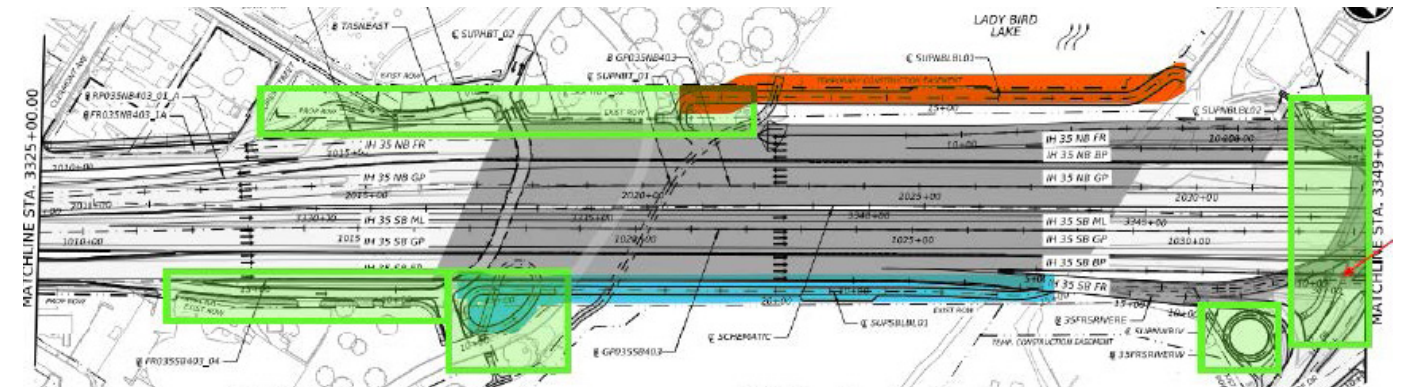
CITY COLLABORATIONS

Project Connect

PARD Planning staff collaborated with multiple departments on several major City projects this year. Staff is working closely with Austin Transit Partnership and the Texas Wildlife Department to remediate the impact of the Project Connect Austin Light Rail Implementation Plan to Waller Beach. A feasibility study to evaluate relocating the existing Waller Creek Boathouse to the former Youth Hostel site at 2200 S. Lakeshore Blvd. has been initiated.

I-35 Expansion

PARD has also collaborated with TxDOT on plans for a pedestrian bridge that will be separated from the travel lanes on the eastern side of the I-35 Expansion. This new pedestrian bridge will connect to the Boardwalk on the south side of Lady Bird Lake and the Hike and Bike Trail on the north side within Edward Rendon Sr. Park. Most recently, PARD has worked with TxDOT to consider a potential sound barrier wall along Waller Street within TxDOT right-of-way. PARD is working with TxDOT to conduct a community engagement process that will help build consensus on the potential design and aesthetic features of the wall.



PARKLAND DEDICATION AND LAND ACQUISITIONS



House Bill 1526

PARD staff provided testimony at the State Capitol during the 88th Legislative Session to preserve Austin's current Parkland Dedication Ordinance in response to House Bill (HB) 1526. HB 1526 reduces the City's authority to administer parkland dedication fees, prescribes new formulas for parkland dedication and fees in lieu, and places caps on the amount of parkland that can be required and fees that can be charged. The bill became law in June 2023, and PARD staff is working to revise the Parkland Dedication Ordinance to comply with the requirements outlined in state law.

Bull Creek Greenbelt

PARD was able to officially reach an agreement on Bull Creek Greenbelt after several years of negotiations over its eminent domain. Bull Creek Bluff Neighborhood Park is one of Austin's newest gems. Its 21 acres feature a 100-foot limestone bluff, a spectacular geological feature running along Bull Creek and closes a critical gap within the Upper Bull Creek Greenbelt trail system. Park development is currently underway, with an interim rustic parking area for visitors. An existing vehicular low water crossing will be converted into a pedestrian and cyclist passage in partnership with Travis County, while a new bridge is eventually built for Spicewood Springs Road over Bull Creek at this location.

Other Acquisitions

The Department expended \$2.7 million in parkland dedication fees and \$6.6 million from the 2018 Parkland Acquisition Bond to acquire over 128 new acres of dedicated parkland. Notable acquisitions include Jamestown Neighborhood Park, Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt, Country Club Neighborhood Park, Slaughter Creek Neighborhood Park, Billbrook Neighborhood Park, Ruby Neighborhood Park, Bethany Greenbelt, Lazy Creek Greenbelt. Acreage was also added to the Southern and Northern Walnut Creek Greenbelt, Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt, Poquito Creek Greenbelt and Country Club Creek Greenbelt.

68% Percentage of all residents living within walking distance of a park.

11 Existing parks expanded in 2023



Learn more about Parkland Dedication:

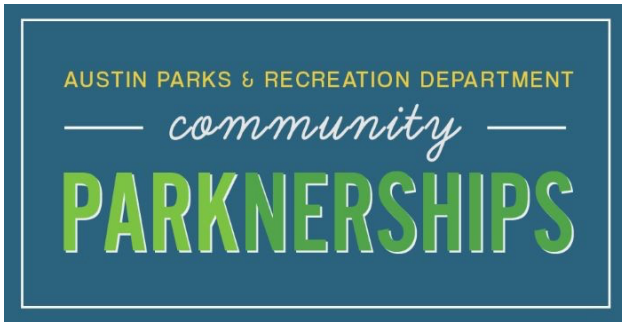
www.AustinTexas.gov ATXparkland



Bull Creek Greenbelt



Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt



Park Study Tour

In October 2022, the Community PARKnerships team hosted the City Parks Alliance for an Urban Parks Tour, a collaborative effort between Austin Parks and Recreation and The Trail Conservancy. This tour provided an immersive exploration of Austin’s innovative urban park strategies for park leaders across the United States. Highlighted throughout was the innovative approach to park partnerships, which showcased the PARKnership Program’s success in fostering community engagement, volunteerism, and resource allocation. The tour highlighted Austin’s commitment to preserving its natural landscapes through an interconnected trail system including experiences like kayaking along the Holly Power Plant Lakefront Trail and exploring Waterloo Greenway Park.

Mendez Park Gazebo Restoration

The comprehensive restoration included repainting the metal roof, stucco-sided columns, and concrete tables and benches. This CAPP proposal required coordination between Recreation Center staff, The Trail Conservancy, and PARD.

Court Resurfacing at Dove Springs District Park, Garrison District Park

Through funding and implementation partnerships with the San Antonio Spurs and Austin Parks Foundation, two parks were selected to receive court improvements as a part of “Spurs Week.” Improvements included resurfacing, repainting, and goal replacements.

Metz Neighborhood Park Bike Polo Court

In partnership with the Neighborhood Partnering Program (NPP), Austin’s first bike polo court opened in July at Metz Neighborhood Park. The court renovation included a new surface and striping, concrete perimeter walls and perimeter fencing. This project was partially funded by parkland dedication fees.



Butler Shores Fitness Station

Butler Shores Fitness Station

PARD partnered with the Trail Conservancy to replace and enhance the existing exercise equipment adjacent to the Butler Hike and Bike Trail on the southwest corner of Riverside Drive and South Lamar Boulevard. Updates include new surfacing, shaded seating, and a solar-powered chilled drinking fountain for humans and pets. This new equipment allows people to perform over 100 different exercises with video tutorials available on a free downloadable fitness app.

Sanchez Green School Park

As part of the Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative, the final pilot for the Green School Park (GSP) project was completed at Sanchez Elementary School! Full-size logs and boulders provide structures for climbing and play, and a dry creek bed was installed where existing runoff is prevalent. New park amenities include benches, picnic tables, and a new water fountain with a dog bowl.



Sanchez Elementary Green School Park

New PARKnerships

City officials and Pease Park Conservancy (PPC) solidified the organizations’ shared responsibilities for Pease Park’s Kingsbury Commons by signing the PPC Park Operations and Maintenance Agreement (POMA) on January 18, 2023.

The Trail Conservancy Ann and Roy Butler Trail Arts and Culture Plan was approved by City Council on April 13, 2023. The plan provides a structure for expanding the cultural relevance of the Trail through art selection, engagement, and curation.

An amendment updating the Interlocal Agreement between the City and Austin Independent School District (AISD), commonly known as the joint-use agreement, was approved by the AISD Board and passed by City Council on January 26, 2023.

Waterloo Greenway

The second phase of the Waterloo Greenway, The Confluence, began construction in the spring. The 13-acre project includes over seven blocks of creek restoration in the heart of downtown Austin, with more than 1,550 new trees and 200,000 mature plants, as well as improved trail connectivity through added pedestrian bridges and a new creek-level elevated boardwalk. The project is funded through a combination of public and private dollars, including but not limited to 2012 General Obligation Bonds, Watershed Drainage Utility Funds, US Army Corp Funds, Waller Creek TIRZ funds, and private donations.



In addition, renewed community engagement efforts began in the summer for improvements to **Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park**, a historically significant park with strong connections to east Austin communities. Amenities will focus on intergenerational family experiences, play features, shade, and connections to universally accessible trails along the restored creek. The project will also include the restoration of a historic shelter house that was one of the earliest buildings built by PARD. Design will continue through 2024. Funding for the project includes 2012 General Obligation Bonds, Waller Creek TIRZ funds, and private donations.



Photo Credit Waterloo Greenway Conservancy & Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

IMPROVING OUR PARKS



Brush Square and the O. Henry Museum Restoration

Brush Square and the O. Henry Museum had a grand reopening in September 2023. The O. Henry Museum Restoration project reached completion in January 2023. The project included cedar shingle roof repairs, window and door restoration, wood siding repair, and repainting. System upgrades included HVAC and security system replacement, new electrical wiring, new attic insulation, and a new state-of-the-art high-pressure misting fire protection system. Three rooms received new wallpaper, and the floors throughout the house were refinished.

Brush Square is one of three remaining historic public squares from the 1839 Waller Plan for the City of Austin. Phase I of the Brush Square Vision Plan, adopted by City Council in 2019, was completed in the summer of 2023. The scope included improvements to sightlines and circulation through improved grading and drainage, new walkways, an expansive event lawn, low walls and raised decking for seating, new lighting, new benches, and fresh landscaping. These updates will allow for the O. Henry Pun-Off to continue with room to grow. Funding was provided primarily through the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT).





Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center

The project renovated the 1970s era tennis courts and pro shop building facility to meet accessibility requirements and address site deficiencies. The renovation refurbished the courts; added energy-efficient sports lighting; replaced fencing, windscreens, and court amenities; and provided accessible parking, security site lighting, and proper drainage. Additionally, the project provided new facility signage, shade structures, and park furnishings. The renovation of Pharr Tennis Center is set to become the City’s first project to earn certification under both the SITES

and LEED green building rating systems. The project is an example of how the City’s commitment to resource efficiency, environmental stewardship, and community enhancement extends to projects at every scale. These sustainability initiatives are expected to reduce operation and maintenance costs and restore the natural ecosystem which includes protecting and restoring the site’s habitat, providing native grassland and wildflowers, preserving open space, and managing rainwater through the development of new rain gardens.

Buford Tower

Repairs to address damage from a 2021 fire were completed. The damaged brick, windows, and concrete base and carillon chimes were repaired or replaced in accordance with historic preservation standards. The building also received updates to the electrical system, landscaping and a new interpretive sign and a national historic register marker.



Govalle Neighborhood Park Renovations

The new playground area and multi-purpose field was funded by Austin City Limits Festival, the Tres Grace Foundation, Jay Paul Company (Tank Farm), Hershey Funding, Urban Forestry Grant, and Parkland Dedication fees.



Rialto Neighborhood Park

This park was planned and permitted through the parkland dedication process during the development of an adjacent multi-family project. This year, PARD completed the first phase of improvements, including an accessible concrete trail, concrete and natural stone steps, picnic tables, benches, shaded fitness equipment, a drinking fountain with bottle filler, and a new volleyball court. Future improvements are expected to include a looping nature trail.



DEVELOPING OUR PARKS



Earl J. Pomerleau Pocket Park

Acquired in 2014, this new two-acre park opened to the public in June. The vision for this park started with community activation for a park concept plan which was completed in 2019 in partnership with Austin Parks Foundation (APF). Through continued partnership between APF and PARD, the Earl J. Pomerleau Park development was realized. It offers a loop trail system, multi-age playgrounds, swing set, picnic areas, an open play field and wildflower meadow. Funding was provided by APF and Parkland Dedication Fees. In 2024, APF and PARD will continue improvements to the park with the addition of a pavilion.

OTHER NEW PARKS AND TRAIL PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2023

Givens District Park

The new plaza with shaded picnic seating, multi-purpose field, fencing, and field lighting was funded was provided by the 2018 General Obligation Bond and the Austin Parks Foundation.

Superstar Button Park

Located at Ortega School Park, this park serves as an area for neighbors to enjoy when the school park is closed for student use. Amenities include a play structure, rope climber, a spinner, nature play elements, a ping pong table and shaded seating area. Funded by Parkland Dedication Fees.

Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park and Northwest Recreation Center

Both received new playground equipment and other amenity upgrades through the 2018 General Obligation Bond.

Phase 2A of the Northern Walnut Creek Trail

This 1.3-mile section of 12-foot-wide concrete trail continues the existing three miles of the Northern Walnut Creek Trail with a trailhead in the Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park, heads east under Lamar Blvd. and ends at Oakbrook Drive. PARD partnered with the Public Works Urban Trails Program to fund, manage and implement the trail.

Rainey Street

Due to increased safety concerns along the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail near Rainey Street, the South Maintenance team installed split rail fencing, a solar light and an access gate.

Violet Crown Trail Phase 2 North

This one-mile section begins at Home Depot Boulevard in Sunset Valley parkland and transitions to City of Austin parkland, just north of William Cannon Drive. The project, funded through the 2016 mobility bonds was a partnership between the Parks Department, the Urban Trails Program in the Transportation and Public Works Department, Sunset Valley and Hill Country Conservancy.



ACCESSIBILITY IN OUR PARKS

As part of the ADA Transition Plan, PARD has set a goal to have 100% of department programming held in ADA-accessible locations. To achieve this goal, PARD is committed to continuously reviewing the maintenance needs of park facilities and identifying opportunities to improve and enhance ADA accessibility as an integrated part of any PARD renovation project. The ADA Project Coordinator inspects architectural barriers in PARD facilities that host programs and meets with Program Managers to discuss programs and services held in each facility and identify community needs.

Dottie Jordan

At the Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park and Recreation Center, accessibility improvements were made to both internal and external routes, and a restroom renovation provided new adult changing tables, the first in Austin's parks. The adjustable height table offers caretakers a sanitary space to change an adult or older child with special needs who needs assistance from a caretaker or extra support to fully attend to their personal hygiene needs. The implementation of these tables helped to inform PARD's new accessibility guidelines for Adult Changing Stations.



ADA Improvements

PARD completed the following accessibility improvements as part of larger renovation and maintenance projects this year.

Millenium Youth Entertainment Center
Parking lot, walkway, ramps, restrooms, and water fountain

George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center
Parking lot, ramps, and sidewalk

Burnett "Blondie" Pharr Tennis Center
Parking lot, sidewalks, and restrooms

South Austin Neighborhood Park
Parking lot and sidewalks

Austin Memorial Park Cemetery
Restroom

South Austin Senior Activity Center
Sidewalks and improved building access

Givens Recreation Center
Restroom and walkway

Metz Neighborhood Park
Sidewalks and drinking fountain accessibility

Sanchez Green School Park
Walkway



- 8 Sidewalks & Walkways**
- 4 Parking Lots**
- 4 Restrooms**
- 2 Water Fountains**



SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PARKS

Resilience Hubs

In April 2021, Council passed Resolution No.20210408-028, directing the City Manager to engage multiple City departments and local agencies to conduct an assessment to identify potential locations throughout the City to serve as resilience hubs, community-focused physical facilities that offer day-to-day services and support the community before, during, and after a disaster. All six of the proposed sites for the pilot are PARD sites: Gus Garcia Recreation Center, George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center, Montopolis Recreation Center, Northwest Recreation Center, Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center, and Turner-Roberts Multipurpose Room.

PARD partnered directly with the Office of Resilience (OoR) to develop a methodology that matches the site conditions of the six PARD sites with redundant power strategies. Austin Energy, in collaboration with PARD, is leading the effort to pilot community solar arrays with battery back-up redundant power at Gus Garcia and George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Centers. The goal of this pilot is to develop a process that could be operationalized for future Resilience Hubs. The effort is funded by PARD, American Rescue Plan funding, the Office of Resilience and the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Recycling

PARD began work on the Recycling Implementation Plan in 2019. By the end of 2023, 800 pairs of recycled plastic receptacles have been added with labels in English and Spanish to metropolitan parks (Phase I), district parks (Phase II), and neighborhood parks, school parks, greenbelt trailheads, and larger pocket parks (Phase III). Phase III is expected to be completed in early FY24. Smaller pocket parks and other trailheads are transitioning to "Pack It In, Pack It Out" spaces with no receptacles. Additionally, PARD staff is partnering with Austin Resource Recovery and other City Departments to reuse soils, plants, lumber, outdated concrete receptacles, and other materials where possible in line with Citywide Circular Economy goals.

BEES Working Group

PARD Development Division employees, serving on the City of Austin's Built Environment, Equity, and Sustainability (BEES) Working Group, are leading a pilot program to equip COA professionals looking to make a difference in the world of sustainable design and construction with the LEED Green Associate (LEED GA) credential. Twenty-five employees attended 24 hours of training over seven weeks that include instructor-led courses, facilitated conversations that enable students to leverage their own experiences, and building tours that demonstrate sustainable strategies in-action. Lessons learned from the pilot initiative will inform future credentialing classes for COA employees.

Building a Resilience Hub Network in Austin

When disaster strikes, people across Austin need trusted community spaces to meet basic needs. When paired with ongoing emergency planning, disaster response, and sheltering plans, a Resilience Hub Network can help provide relief during extreme weather events and other emergencies.

What might I find at a Resilience Hub?

- bicycle parking
- green roofs
- solar panels
- emergency food, water, and supplies
- shaded seating and community gathering spaces
- EV charging
- community gardens
- education and programming
- backup power

Why do we need a Resilience Hub Network?

As climate change brings more frequent severe weather and other disasters, there is a need for accessible community spaces, supply distribution centers, backup power and water, safe temporary shelter, and better engagement and information around emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. Although disasters and severe weather can affect everyone, low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately impacted.

What's happening locally?

The City of Austin is working with the Austin Independent School District, Travis County, and other partners to pilot six Resilience Hubs in East Austin with plans to build a future network of hubs to serve the greater community.

What is a Resilience Hub Network?

A Resilience Hubs Network is a series of community-focused facilities that offer day-to-day services and support the community before, during, and after a disaster. While some hubs can offer information, accessible bathrooms, and cell phone charging, others can shelter residents and provide food and water during an emergency.

For more information on preparing for the effects of climate change, visit: austintexas.gov/climatepreparedness

Questions?
Contact the Office of Sustainability at: sustainability@austintexas.gov



PRESERVING OUR PARKS

EXPLORE HISTORIC AUSTIN PARKS

For nearly 100 years Austin Parks and Recreation has been the steward of the most iconic historic sites in the city, including Downs Field in historic East Austin where Negro League greats like Willie Wells and Satchel Paige played. Today, the Huston-Tillotson Rams are creating their own legacy on these hallowed grounds. Bring your family and explore historic Austin parks today. For more information go to: austintexas.gov/historicATXparks

Huston-Tillotson Rams at Historic Downs Field
 March 17 vs Texas College @ 1pm
 March 18 vs Texas College @ 12pm
 March 24 vs Louisiana Christian College @ 12pm
 March 25 vs Louisiana Christian College @ 12pm
 April 7 vs Texas A&M Texarkana @ 2pm
 April 8 vs Texas A&M Texarkana @ 12pm
 April 14 vs Our Lady of the Lake University @ 1pm
 April 15 vs Our Lady of the Lake University @ 1pm

Downs Field

Every year the Historic Preservation and Tourism's (HPT) marketing program promotes PARD's historic spaces to visitors through digital ads, social media, and feature articles. This year HPT launched an interactive Historic ATX Parks map and teamed up with Huston-Tillotson University to promote Rams Baseball at Downs Field. The interactive map features photos and historic information for 15 of PARD's most iconic sites across Austin, and an ad in the April issue of Texas Monthly promoted the Huston Tillotson Rams baseball schedule.

WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE
 Woolldridge Square, with its flag pole and a historic fountain, is one of Austin's original square. Important figures, including President Lyndon Johnson, Soule T. Washington, Minnie and Fisher Cunningham, led political gatherings and women's rights rallies at the square. Today the park is a favorite spot for picnics and poster meetings.



NEW HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS IN 2023

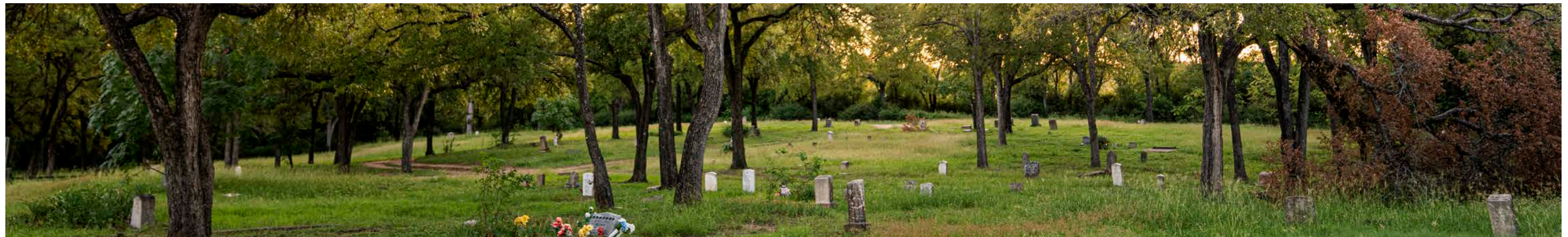
Wooldridge Square

This park was awarded a National Votes for Women Trail marker in recognition of the square's important role in the women's suffrage movement in Texas. An updated historical marker expanding on the park's historic significance was unveiled in the spring.



Plummers Cemetery and Longview Cemetery

These cemeteries were recorded as Historic Texas Cemeteries through the Texas Historical Commission. marker expanding on the park's historic significance was unveiled in the spring.



CARING FOR OUR PARKS

Winter Storm Mara Cleanup

In February, ice accumulated during Winter Storm Mara caused damage to an estimated 30% of Austin's trees, the worst ice storm in central Texas history. Working over 550 hours of overtime in two weeks, the PARD Grounds and Maintenance team took down, picked up, mulched, and hauled truckloads of damaged branches from 286 of Austin's parks and greenbelts. PARD's Forestry team stepped in to prevent further damage to trees where possible. Volunteers from other PARD teams and the Austin Parks Foundation piled and prepared branches for mulching. And PARD partnered with Austin Resource Recovery to provide central locations for debris drop off, processing and pick up on parkland. City staff and residents both rose to the occasion and showed what it means to create community.



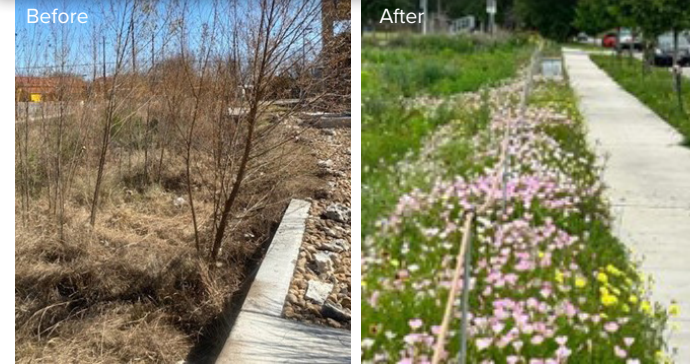
Zilker Park Improvements

PARD took on several projects this year to help extend the life of one of Austin's favorite green spaces. Maintenance improvements were made to the Butler Landfill site along Stratford Drive that included regrading to prevent ponding, new gates to control vehicular access, a pedestrian gate near Lou Neff Road, and an irrigation system to support three revegetated acres. PARD collaborated with the Transportation and Public Works Department to plan for a shared-use path along Stratford Drive between Barton Springs Road and the Austin Science and Nature Center, and along Barton Springs Road adjacent to the Zilker Botanical Center. That project is in process. The entryway to the Girl Scout Cabin was widened with culvert extension to improve access. this treasured space for years to come.



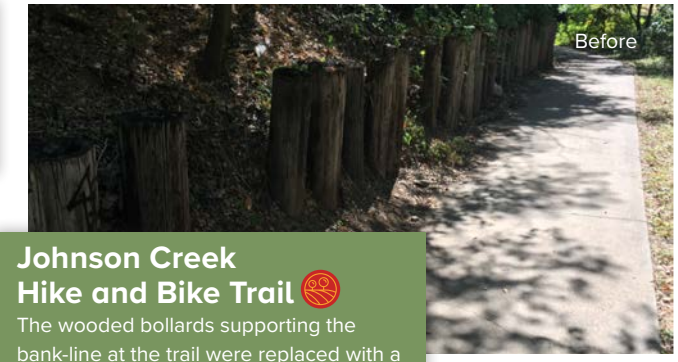
Montopolis Rain Garden

Approximately four pounds of native wildflower seed was spread in the rain garden along the northern edge of the Montopolis Recreation Center. The results are a lower, cleaner meadow of beautiful flowers for the neighborhood and a safe sidewalk and parking lot for the Recreation Center.



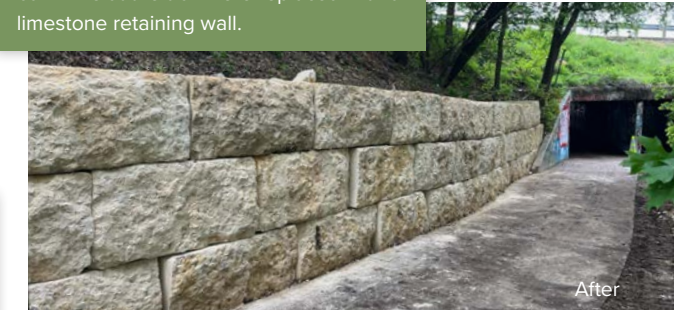
Commons Ford Metro Park

PARD staff partnered with the Transportation and Public Works Department (TPWD) to complete much-needed repairs at Commons Ford Ranch Metro Park. Work included repaving the access road and major parking lot improvements. Twenty-five parking spaces were striped with added tire stops, up from 10 original marked spaces.



Johnson Creek Hike and Bike Trail

The wooded bollards supporting the bank-line at the trail were replaced with a limestone retaining wall.



Walter E. Long Metro Park

Weathered boards on the boat dock were replaced and refinished.



MUSEUMS & CULTURAL CENTERS



The Oakwood Cemetery Chapel

The Oakwood Cemetery Chapel installed a permanent and artistically rendered granite monument to honor the 36 individuals reburied in Oakwood Cemetery after they were discovered during the Chapel's rehabilitation. A three-day event was held in May to acknowledge and celebrate their importance in Austin's history and to inaugurate the monument. This accountability work was honored, along with the digital history exhibit "To Emancipate," by Preservation Austin for educational programming.

Elisabet Ney Museum

The Elisabet Ney Museum, aided by funds raised by the Friends of the Elisabet Ney Museum, launched both an interpretive plan as well as a rehabilitation landscape plan. Both plans will be completed in 2024 just as the museum closes for a Capital Improvement Project. Within each plan, a wide range of community engagements were produced and incorporated into the process. The museum created five imaginative public engagement events through a series titled, "Re-Imagining the Ney," plus an Artist Salon engagement event with 50 local creatives. Additional engagement happened at a new community event, The Ice Cream Social. This event, hosted on June 10 with the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association along with four new local businesses, attracted over 500 guests.



The O. Henry Museum and Brush Square Park

The O. Henry Museum and Brush Square Park jointly celebrated their Grand Opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 17. Over 150 visitors were in attendance to celebrate with word games, activities on the lawn, museum tours, and refreshments served by the Brush Square Museums Foundation. On the same day, The Susanna Dickinson Museum shared new programming developed through a successful partnership with The Living History Foundation. With the Austin Civilian Conservation Core Museum Apprentice Program, museum staff trained current and new staff to deliver living history programs to the community. Their first successful programs in spinning wool, demonstrating pioneer games, and showing historically accurate clothing were conducted at the Museum Day and ribbon-cutting event.



\$8.2M Amended Budget

2.64k Active volunteers

46.75 Staff in MCP Division

7.16k Number of artists supported with a place to do their work

120k Participants in Programs

95% Percentage who say they learned something about history, art or culture.

261k Visitors to site total

801 Days - Hours of Reservations current MPR counts days not hours

86k Drop-in Visitors

848 Free Community Events

15k+ Hours of Educational Programming



Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center 🌸🌺🌿🍃

The Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center's (ESB-MACC) Holistic Wellness Program kicked-off late January with the goal of addressing eight different areas of wellness – Physical, Social, Environmental, Financial, Intellectual, Emotional/Mental, Occupational, and Spiritual. It also addressed the need to provide space for programs due to the closure of the building for the ESB-MACC's Phase 2 project. As of August 31, approximately 1,400 community members participated in 31 programs. Partnerships have also been established with 21 City, nonprofit, and local organizations. All programming is free and facilitated in both English and Spanish. The program's target audience is adults, while also offering multigenerational activities like yoga, drumming, swimming, and gardening. Some of the most popular programs have been Taller Abierto-Painting Workshop, Learn to Row, Documentary Film Screenings, Kayak/Paddleboard, and Indigenous Healing.



The George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center 🌸🌺🌿🍃

The George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center observed Juneteenth in an historic way at the 4th annual Stay Black and Live Juneteenth Celebration. The Carver team partnered with the Equity Office to honor the history of Juneteenth through dynamic educational lectures provided by Pamela Dawson, 2023 Grammy Award winner for Music Educator of the Year; culinary historian and James Beard Book Award recipient, Michael W. Twitty; and Dr. Annette Gordon-Reed, author of *On Juneteenth*, the essential story of Juneteenth's importance to American history as told by this Pulitzer Prize-winning historian. In collaboration with community partners and volunteers, the Carver erected a festival-sized stage to present a day-long event featuring local and national talent, including headliner GAP-X The Band, comprised of members of the Gap Band. Attendance topped 3,000 over the span of six days, and the Carver's following has widely expanded ever since the celebration.

EVENTS IN OUR PARKS

Office of Special Events (OSE) facilitates opportunities for diverse park experiences through a variety of events ranging from family picnic rentals to large scale public events as well as permitting filming and commercial activity such as fitness trainers and temporary concessions.

OSE successfully coordinated and maintained pre-pandemic amount of large scale annual Special Events. Public events hosted in City of Austin's parks are often complex in scope requiring permits from several City Departments. The Parks and Recreation Department leads Event Organizers through complex processes and City Ordinances to successfully engage attendees in unique and creative ways.



OSE successfully maintained temporary concessions, commercial use of parkland, and rentals of picnic areas and facilities to pre-pandemic levels.

People create community and enjoy parks in different ways – while some gather with family and organizations to celebrate milestones, others exercise in peaceful natural environments. OSE coordinates use of a venue to host life moments and permit amenities providing a park purpose and public benefit to park users.



FILM EVENT RENTALS

137 Days of Filming

101 Film/Photo Permits

TEMPORARY CONCESSIONS & COMMERCIAL USE

6 Total Staff

\$1.8M Total Revenue

350 Event Days

1184 Picnic and Facility Rentals

777k Special Event Park Visitors

10,381 Amount of Fitness Group Participants

21 Ceremonies: Celebrations, Dedications, and Ribbon Cuttings

AQUATICS

Lifeguard Hiring

The Aquatic Division enjoyed a record year for hiring and recruiting. Just over 1900 people applied to be a Lifeguard, in addition to over 130 Cashier applications. By the end of August, over 1200 Lifeguards were trained and hired; this includes more than 700 Lifeguards on payroll as of June 7. With the record number of staff hired, the Aquatic Division was able to open 31 swimming pools – all City pools except Givens Pool which is under construction and Gillis Pool which is awaiting repair. This marked the first time since the 2019 summer that Aquatic Division offered a swimming schedule. The Splash pad operational schedule was also extended. This new schedule saw seasonal splash pads open from May 1 to October 31, about an additional 8 weeks total.



Instructional Swim

The Aquatic Division opened all operational facilities for the first time since 2019. New bonuses and pay structures help contributed to record training numbers. Staff who signed up and paid for an instructor course were paid their regular hourly wage to become a Lifeguard Instructor (LGI) or a Water Safety Educator (WSE).

Swim Lessons were offered over two-week sessions to the public for \$57 for Austin residents. Scholarships were available for those that qualify. Class offerings included Swim Team, Junior Guard, Snorkeling, Starbabies, Swim School for adults and children as well as Stroke School for adults and children. Aquatic staff also worked with partners to offer specialized and free programs like ProjectSafe, SwimSafe, SwimATX, and Tankproof Safe Swim Summer.

Total Classes Offered	1,050	+483%
Swim Lesson Participants	3,149	+310%
Total Lifeguards	1,372	+211%
WSE Certified	78	+36%
Pools Open	34	-
Splashpads Open	11	-
Swim Teams Locations	19	+57%
Swim Team Participants	478	+9%
Participants at Local TAAF Meet	211	+18%
Swim Team Members Qualified for State TAAF meet	39	+95%
Swim ATX Participants	33	-15%
Swim ATX Employees	15	+13%

Maintenance Projects Completed

New Autofill Systems

Installed at Walnut Creek, Canyon Vista, Dove Springs Pools and Eastwoods Splash Pad.

New Filters

Installed at Patterson Pool, Clarksville, Rosewood, and Bartholomew Splash Pads.

Dove Springs Pool

Hi-Build Epoxy was painted on the pool shell for a longer lasting surface and a return line leak repaired to prevent further water loss.

Civitan Pool

An EcoFinish chemical-resistant pool shell surface was installed for a longer lasting durability.

Garrison Pool

Water actuated valves for the pool operating system were replaced with a pneumatic valve system.

Murchison Pool

A new EQ more energy efficient pump and motor system were installed for the pool system.

Metz Splash Pad, Brentwood and Reed Pools

New Prominent Chemical Control System was installed so that staff can now remotely control the systems.

Metz Splash Pad

A new more efficient chlorine feed system was installed to reduce closures.

Bartholomew Pool

More energy efficient pool heaters were installed.

Big Stacy Pool

New pool surface gutter grates installed due to the deterioration of the previous gutters.

Balcones Pool

New and energy efficient LED pumproom lighting installed.

Springwoods Pool

Aquatic Maintenance Staff installed sound dampening insulation in the pumproom to prevent hearing loss.

Lott and Chestnut Splash Pads

New UV Systems have been installed for better secondary sanitation.

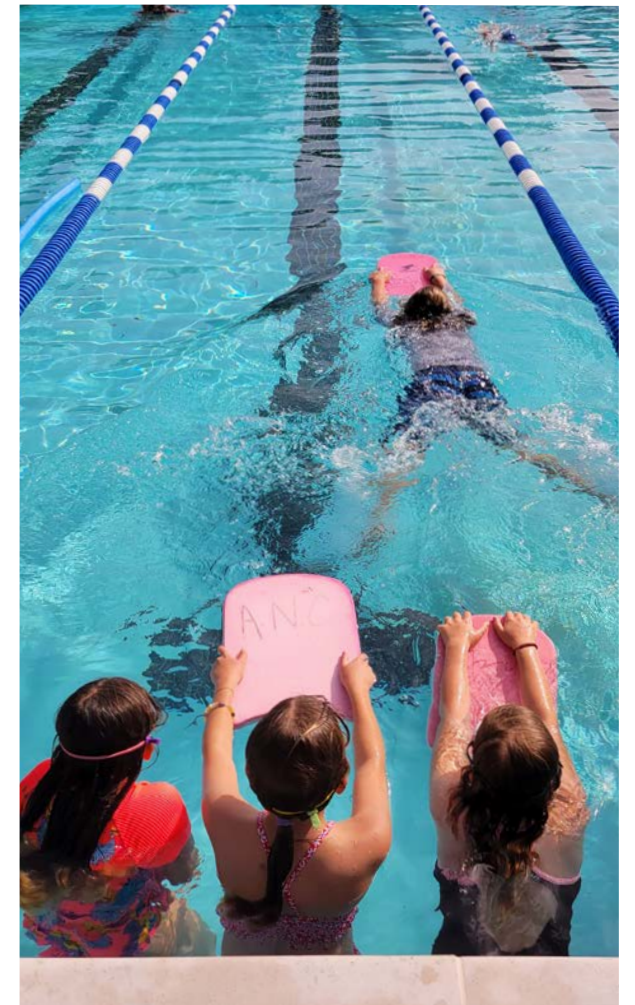
Liz Carpenter Splash Pad

11 coils and 11 spray features were replaced for better system flow.

Pool & Splash Pad Maintenance

Aquatic Maintenance was able to open all Splash Pads and Swimming Pools on time for the first time since the COVID-19 Pandemic. Aquatic Maintenance completed dozens of projects including the following noteworthy repairs and upgrades.

In addition to planned off-season projects, the Aquatic Maintenance Unit responded to emergency situations and repaired multiple plumbing issues caused by two different severe winter storms. These storms especially impacted Dove Springs, Bartholomew, Govalle, and Westenfield Pools.



GOLF ATX

\$13M

**In Revenue
18% Increase**

and recognized growth in memberships as well. This is the third time in the division's history surpassing \$10M.



6

City Golf Courses

324k

**Rounds of Golf Played
7% Increase**



The Jimmy Clay and Roy Kizer golf courses were featured as the backdrop course for Golf Now's new nationally run broadcast advertising campaign. The commercial was featured and ran during the 2023 U.S. Open.



Junior Golfers

Butler Pitch and Putt conducted The Junior Swing Easy, a free summer program sponsored by the Hannon Cup and Save Munny to introduce young children to the game of golf. The program reached 75 junior players and introduced the basics of the game of golf through professional instruction in three two-hour sessions.



Golf ATX Maintenance

The Golf Division maintenance staff and project crew completed numerous improvement projects including resurfacing the Grey Rock greens and tees and replacing the Lions Municipal driving range net. A new aerification fountain was installed in the Morris Williams pond and new driving range hitting mats were installed at Roy Kizer and Morris Williams. Hancock has a new shade pavilion and tee in celebration of its upcoming 125th anniversary. Irrigation pump station control panels were installed at Hancock and Jimmy Clay.



Golf ATX's Division Manager, Steve Hammond received the Southern Texas PGA's inaugural President's Award. The award, hand-selected by the officers, is given to a PGA member in high standing who works daily to promote the game. In addition, Jimmy Clay's Autumn Bynum was awarded the Section's Rolex Women's Player of the Year for earning the most points in specified tournaments with her outstanding play.



The Dallas Morning News named Roy Kizer #33 on the DMN's Top Public Golf courses in 2023 and #8 on the Top 25 Mid-priced golf courses (\$61-\$94) and #9 on Top 25 Economy courses list (under \$60). Also included on the Top 25 Economy courses list (under \$60) were Morris Williams at #8, Jimmy Clay at #10 and Lions at #14. Roy Kizer was ranked 12th in Texas Monthly's Guide to Texas' Best Public Golf Course. The ranking consists of 18 exceptional courses known for their unique features, capturing the essence of their surroundings and offering great value to golfers of all levels.

COMMUNITY RECREATION

Mayor Gustavo “Gus” L. Garcia Mural

Austin is known to be weird, a sports town, and an artist hub – this could not be more true than in the Community Recreation Division. In north Austin, the Gus Garcia Recreation Center brought hundreds together for a mural of the beloved former Mayor Gustavo “Gus” L. Garcia to beautify the center. Artist Lindsey Millikan completed the Art in Public Places outdoor Mural. In the central area, the Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez Recreation Center finished their project this summer building a unique Multi-use Biko Polo and Tennis Court at Metz Neighborhood Park. This will serve many needs in programming at the center and be the first to feature Biko Polo. In the south of town, the George Morales Dove Spring Recreation Center (GMDSRC) partnered with the ever so loved Austin Spurs and Austin Parks Foundation to complete a renovation of the GMDSRC outdoor basketball court themed and added LED Lights for nighttime play. The renovation project was a part of the Play ATX Initiative.



Field Irrigation Projects Completed

In FY23 Community Recreation Department (CRD) conducted a division wide assessment of the youth athletic fields which are associated with their respective recreation centers. Field irrigation projects were completed at Givens, Martin Fields and Montopolis while turf renovation projects were completed at Martin Fields and Montopolis. Additional field improvements include the installation of new netting at Rosewood Park, Dove Springs Park, Martin Fields, and Pan Am.



Backpacks

The Community Recreation Division cares greatly for the communities they serve by being aware of the needs and interest of our community. The Division coordinated the provision of school essentials for the public at Givens Recreation Center, George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center, and Montopolis Recreation Center in partnership with many non-profits, advisory board groups such as the Travis County Constables Precinct 4, Travis County Posse, and volunteers for an annual “Back to School Bash.” To get kids hyped and excited each center provided games, crafts, and refreshments. There were 7,700 backpacks with supplies handed out to kids in need for the school year.

Varsity Generation

Varsity Generation programs for participants 50 years of age or older are based at three Community Centers with some offerings at most recreation centers as well. The Conley-Guerrero, Lamar, and South Austin Senior Activity Centers are known for creating quality of life with creative and thoughtful programming that encourages healthy living, education and inclusion. The Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center hosted a Summer Celebration of Cuban Carnival as intergenerational and cultural event provided live Cuban music, food, and fun to over 215 participants of all ages. The Lamar Senior Activity Center taught an inclusion program called “LGBTQ+ Community Talks” about how to use the correct verbiage to a create a stronger community. The South Austin Senior Activity Center partnered with Age of Central Texas for a program with 12 lawyers offering free estate planning assistance to low-income seniors.

Serving the Community

Community Recreation is a multifaceted division that meets the needs of the communities they serve. They provided warming centers during the winter, cooling centers during the summers, tiny tot programs, summer camps, youth and adult athletic programs, rental spaces, open play, cultural arts programs, resource HUBs for all ages, Varsity Generation programming to improve quality of life for senior citizens, and large events to celebrate our communities’ cultures. They implemented 295 new programs this year alone.

Visitors to Centers **226K** **+58%**
 Volunteer Hours **6,267** **+68%**
 New Customer Memberships **6,707** **+18%**

Productivity Measures

In FY23, CRD created a report card based on 18 productivity measures focusing on five pillars. These pillars, (customer service, employee engagement, facility services, finance, and additional services) establish a foundation for measuring overall success at recreation and senior activity centers. The quantitative information helps facility staff improve programming and create achievable goals.

CRD had an overall score of exceeding goals for these measures by 147%. in FY23.



CENTRALIZED PROGRAMS



AUSTIN CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

388 Individuals employed/compensated

114 Individuals offered a position after term

10 Individuals transitioned from temporary to full time positions within the City of Austin

Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC) concentrates on equity in green workforce development and expands the narrative of green vocations. ACCC prioritizes working with communities who have been historically most impacted by extreme weather and will continue to bear the brunt of impacts as climate change accelerates; this includes low-income communities, those experiencing homelessness, and BIPOC (black indigenous, and people of color) communities.

ACCC has added pathways into employment across departments and with external partners, that connect mission aligned networks to form a larger collective, shaping Austin's green workforce. These pathways include Museums, Arts and Culture, Environmental Education, Zero Waste, Digital Media, Recreation, and Natural Systems.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Contract Instructors

53 Contracts with Organizations

135 Programs provided within our parks system

Food Access Data

91,883 Free meals served through partnership with Central Texas Food Bank

21,291 Pounds of fresh produce provided through Brighter Bites partnership

15 Nutrition education classes offered through partnership with Brighter Bites/Common Threads



1,332 Hours of free teen programs

29 Students provided entry-level positions within programs

Teen Outreach and Leadership

Free outreach leadership programs targeted toward at-risk and vulnerable teenage populations are provided by Teens in Leadership Training (TILT), Totally Cool, Totally Art (TCTA), and Roving Leaders programs. Through a collaboration with the Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC) youth were able to gain a unique opportunity for participation and advancement into entry-level jobs contributing towards the department's efforts in workforce development.

Teens in Leadership Training (TILT) is a leadership and job readiness program for students 16–18 years of age. The program provides teens the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful employees with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. TILT graduates are placed within positions at our Youth Summer Playgrounds Program as Activity Leaders in the free, drop-in program.

TCTA is a free art program where teens learn various techniques by working directly alongside professional artists. The program reinforces positive choices by offering art appreciation in a mentoring environment. During the summer the program provides a theater camp. This year, TCTA was able to offer paid positions for a theatre company production. Their contributions in script writing, choreography, sound, lighting, costumes, set decoration, etc. created an amazing production of "Roll That Dice! A Knights Quest!" that was performed at five summer youth program locations.





Youth Financial Assistance and Scholarships

1,317 Households received discounted program fees

452 Recipients of the Scott Johnson Youth Scholarship

For Austin residents that qualify for financial assistance, PARD offers a 50% discount on registration costs for all Youth Programs. Recipients also have the opportunity to apply for the Scott Johnson Youth Scholarship which further reduces program registration costs up to \$400 per child.

1,317 households with youth ages 18 and under received \$589,034.50 in discounted program fees through our financial aid program. 452 Scott Johnson Youth Scholarship recipients received an additional \$36,397.00 in discounted program fees.

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Austin Tennis Centers

The Austin Tennis Centers spent this past year under unusual circumstances. Instead of having four operating centers for the tennis-playing public, there were only three open while the Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center was under construction. Despite only having three open centers, it was a great year with just over 150,000 participants in League Play, Tournaments, Matches, Clinics, Camps and Group Lessons. The Pharr Tennis Center has since reopened and has been busy ever since!

National Junior Tennis and Learning (NJTL) is a summer program which teaches kids in Austin how to play Tennis. The program takes place in 19 different Parks and is open to all children. The program was able to teach over 500 children this summer.

150k Tennis Participants

500 Children who participated in the National Junior Tennis and Learning (NTJL) program



THERAPEUTIC RECREATION SERVICES

117 Unique individuals receiving Inclusion Support Services

5,800 Hands on Inclusion Support Service hours

140 Adults with disabilities served

62 Youth with disabilities served

12 Full-time Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS)

680 Hours of staff training

McBeth Recreation Center, Alamo Recreation Center and Dottie Jordan Recreation Center are dedicated to providing recreation-based therapeutic programs for youth, adults and seniors with disabilities. Adult and senior programs include three year-round adult day programs providing Therapeutic Recreation programming Monday through Friday, Enrichment Programs including fitness clubs, Try it Tuesdays, Sing and Celebrate Inclusive choir, and “Let’s Talk about It” social group, as well as Adaptive Sports programs that participate in Special Olympics competitions at area, state and national levels.

Sprout into Success

McBeth Recreation Center rolled out Sprout Into Success, a goal-based Recreation Therapy program designed by a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS). The process starts with a CTRS completing an assessment for each participant. The assessment is then used to create goals and objectives specific to each individual’s needs. The sessions are implemented in a group setting and are one hour in duration. The main goal of the program is to develop social skills with peers and improve fine and gross motor skills along the way. The social skills sessions focus on teaching individuals about their environment and building social connections that support problem-solving and creativity. The nurturing and inclusive environment helps participants feel confident and reach their full potential. Sprout Into Success also supports life skills, friendships, and positive social peer interactions. Sprout Into Success has served 26 youth, teens, and adults with disabilities.



Dottie Jordan Facility and Playground Renovation

Dottie Jordan opened in June of 2023 after being closed for roughly three years. The center went through a major renovation to both restrooms to improve ADA accessibility and functionality as the previous plumbing was failing. Both restrooms also provide users with a state-of-the-art electronic adult changing table. Other improvements to the Dottie Jordan neighborhood park include new picnic tables, benches, an ADA-accessible playground with adaptive swings and wheelchair accessible spinner. Additional improvements include a nature play stump table and a 40-foot section of balance logs and platform jumps. Since reopening, Dottie Jordan Recreation Center has provided the community with Adult and youth inclusive programs, and special events including an Inclusive Field Day with 130 individuals in attendance, and two Movies in the Park events with approximately 100 individuals in attendance at each.

NATURAL RESOURCES



FORESTRY

The PARD Forestry team was heavily involved in the cleanup efforts of Winter Storm Mara. This historic storm caused significant damage in over 200 City parks and required a herculean effort to remove broken or hanging branches and fallen trees.

Forestry has been experiencing historically high vacancy rates, reaching as high as 53%. Through multiple rounds of posting and hiring, Forestry was able to hire 19 new staff out of 35 total staff on the team.

“Flo” was diagnosed with Brittle Cinder Fungus in August by one of PARD’s certified arborists while undertaking a routine inspection, requiring it’s removal. Multiple other arborists were consulted, and the recommendation of removal was unanimous.

Due to a severe drought, the survival rate of planted trees dropped to 90%, but the Forestry team continued its maintenance efforts by pruning 2,106 trees, removing 630 trees, planting 916 trees, and recycling 690 tons of wood.

PUBLIC GARDENS

+173% Increase in overall rentals and internal events, an 11.9% increase over FY22

\$65,782 Annual Revenue

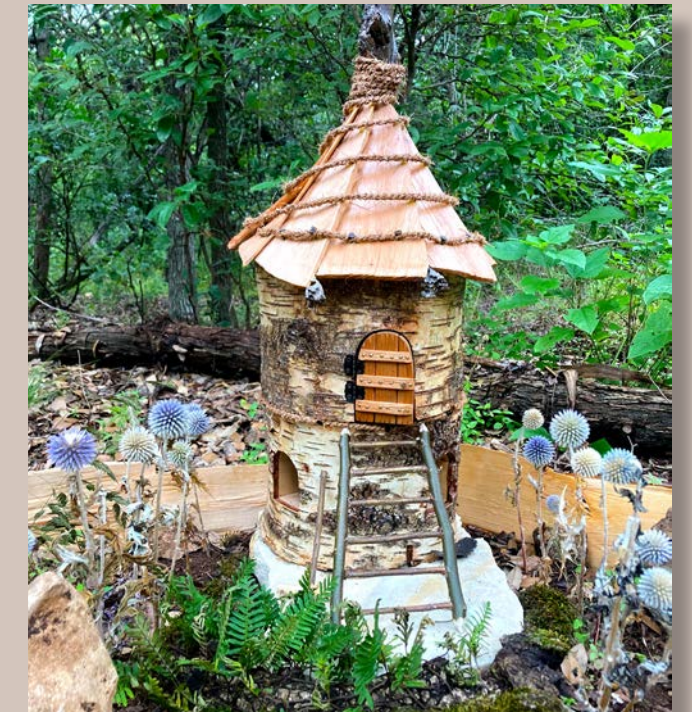
Improvement Projects

The Zilker Botanical Garden (ZBG) is undergoing several improvement projects to enhance its features and ensure the safety of its estimated 144,277 visitors that enjoy the gardens annually. To improve visitor experience, several garden areas were upgraded. The work included improved walkability along paths, new electrical connections for additional lighting, and a variety of outdoor musical instruments added to the Children’s Garden that added dynamic sound, touch, and color.



Programming

With an outstanding 309% growth in its volunteer efforts, ZBG and the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy led 751 volunteers who contributed 3,055 service hours to the garden and its programs. Programs included the Friends of Mayfield Park’s annual Trowel and Error program where gardeners of all ages perfected their native plant gardening skills and the return of the hugely popular summer Woodland Fairy Trail program since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Community Efforts

The community also benefited from efforts of the Garden that included a goat brush remediation of the St. David’s Foundation and MLK Teaching Gardens where a single Central Texas farm goat riddled piles of brush and poison ivy and the collaboration with the St. David’s Foundation and the PARD Community Recreation Division to open six new garden beds at the Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center for the Senior Garden Club.

LAND MANAGEMENT



Land Management Plan

City Council approved the first parkland natural areas land management plan in September 2023 that will guide PARD in restoring and managing natural areas to mitigate risk, improve resilience, and provide ecosystem services to Austin residents in perpetuity. To address the 76% of parkland areas in very poor to moderate condition due to invasive species, loss of biodiversity, and hazardous wildfire fuel conditions, the plan incorporates physical land assessments, management strategies, and social vulnerability indexes to determine how resources should be allocated. Potential future restoration efforts include selective thinning, fuel reductions, prescribed fires, invasive species removals, and planting and seeding.

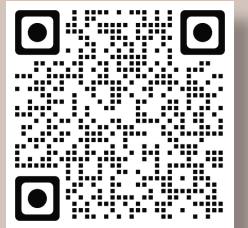


Land Management Plan



Nature Preserves Programming

The Land Management team works with local artists and musicians to create a multimedia interpretive experience for visitors at nature preserves called Audio Wild. While embarking on a hiking trail, visitors can listen to audio about interesting facts about plants and animals in the area and stories unfolding the history of the site. This year, community advocate Pete Rivera told the story of his experience growing up near Red Bluff Nature Preserve and his neighborhood's work to guarantee its conservation.



Red Bluff with Pete Rivera Audio

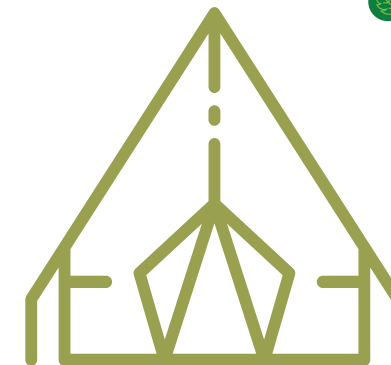
Land Management Presentations

18 presentations to various stakeholder groups, reaching **520 adults and 382 youth**

Presentations included Land Management Plan briefings related to the plan itself and ways that partner organizations can become involved in implementation. They also educated organizations on the preserve system, local ecology, and native wildlife.



HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE



To address approximately a 40% population increase of 741 individuals experiencing homelessness in 620 tents on parkland, PARD collaborated with the Housing Strategy Division of Austin Public Health (APH) to offer individuals bridge shelters through the Housing-focused Encampment Link Initiative (HEAL) while closing identified encampment sites. This year, 220 individuals and 30 pets were moved into the bridge shelter from encampments located in the Gus Garcia District Park, Asian American Resource Center, Gaines Creek Greenbelt, West Bouldin Greenbelt, Barwood Park, and the North Acres Greenbelt areas. After PARD welcomed a new Program Coordinator within the Homelessness Response team, the team has been successful in continuing to build and foster partnerships with other service providers and non-profit organizations including the Sunrise, Navigation Center, Urban Alchemy, Maximizing Hope, Texas Harm Reduction Alliance, The Other One's Foundation, The Hungry Hill Foundation, Integral Care, and Lifeworks.

NATURE PROGRAMS

AUSTIN NATURE AND SCIENCE CENTER

Programming

The Austin Nature and Science Center (ANSC) conducted several camps and programs for youth with a total of 11,162 participants. Despite an intense heatwave this summer, ANSC Summer Camp Program counselors were able to safely balance outdoor and indoor activities for 655 enrolled campers across 10 weeks that included kayaking, cave exploring, snorkeling, and animal presentations. The Nature's Way Preschool kicked off the school year with an annual Parent Workday where new and veteran teachers built a strong community right from the start. In collaboration with the PARD Community Recreation Division, the Park Ranger Program, and the Watershed Protection Department, the Junior Nature Ranger Club was brought to the Boredom Busters summer program at six recreation centers where participants enjoyed kayaking, practice slacklining, learning about the Barton Springs salamander and hands-on animal presentations.



Operations

The Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center Splash! Into the Edwards Aquifer Exhibit closed in August for a renovation that will begin in early 2024. This renovation will relocate the main entrance to Barton Springs Pool into the Beverly Sheffield Education Center and Splash! Exhibit, creating an opportunity to educate pool visitors about the importance of protecting water and preserving salamander habitat. The ANSC Wildlife Exhibit that houses 77 live animal ambassadors received excellent USDA inspection results and met new regulations for care of birds in the collection.



CAMACHO ACTIVITY CENTER



Adaptive Recreation

Camacho Activity Center provided 21 adaptive kayaking events for community members and 26 in-school adaptive recreation events for special needs students with a total count of 592 participants and 1,450 hours. Participant included events from Blazier Elementary School and Martin Middle School special education programs, the Lone Star Paralysis Foundation, Spero Rehabilitation, AISD's GoProject, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Fun-For-All Accessibility event.

Teen OST Programs

Camacho Activity Center is the only competitive teen mountain bike racing team in East Austin, competing in the Texas MTB League for the National Interscholastic Cycling Association. Thirty teens participated in weekly practices and five state-wide races located throughout central and north Texas.

Youth OST Programs

Designed for youth ages 4 to 11 years old, the Camacho Activity Center's youth Out-of-School-Time program is comprised of Dirt Divas, Learn-2-Ride, Youth Bike Club, Easy Riders, and Cubs Club where participants have an opportunity for recreational experiences, progressive skill building, and general promotion of social, mental, and physical well-being. Between these five programs, the center hosted 122 meetings, totaling 274 hours of programming for a total of 1,453 participants and 3,263 participant hours.

Youth and Teen Camps

The Camacho Activity Center prides in offering youth and teen camps that provide enriching outdoor recreational and multimedia programming for participants during school breaks. The center offered 20,420 program hours for 2,349 participants across 13 weeks that included film camps, summer and spring adventure camps, winter biking, and climbing camps.

Community Outreach

The Camacho Activity Center reaches out to local recreation centers, schools, and other organizations to provide outreach activities including kayaking, biking, geocaching, archery, fishing, field days, arts and crafts, and more for the community at large. For this fiscal year, the center reached a total of 981 participants through 39 separate outreach events totaling 111 hours of outreach programming and 2,450 participant hours.

Varsity Generation

The Varsity Generation programming offers health and well-being of individuals, offering opportunities for hiking and kayaking program for the senior population. With 12 hiking events and 25 paddling events, the Camacho Activity Center reached a total of 424 participants and 1,427 participation hours.

PARK RANGERS

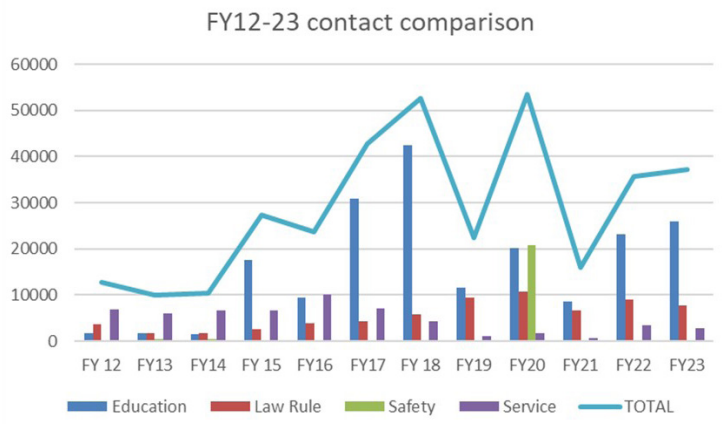


37,206 Contacts Park Rangers conducted 37,206 contacts, a 4% increase over 2021 resulting from programs and volunteer events resuming after the pandemic

1,075 Total encampments on parkland recorded

2,476 Dogs off-leash contact

495 Contacts made in Spanish



Ranger Safety Efforts

Park Rangers completed 1,269 directed patrols at 63 different parks. These patrols are assigned when there is a complaint or activity that relates to public safety, compliance with ordinances and Leave No Trace practices. In May 2023, PARD launched a mobile camera project where preliminary findings suggesting that installed security cameras helped reduced crimes specifically the vehicular burglaries on parkland. PARD and the Austin Police Department finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defining a partnership for support for public safety concerns in parks. In partnership with the Austin Watershed Protection Department and PARD Aquatics, Park Rangers gave out free Barton Springs Pool passes to park visitors who modeled behavior that contributed to clean streams.

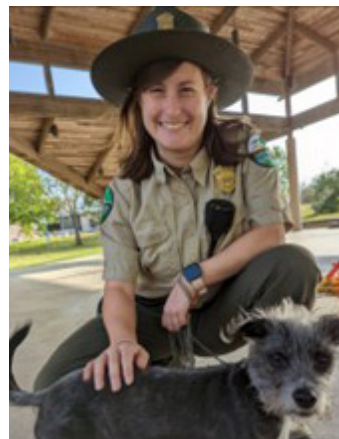
Programs

Park Rangers programs focus on the conservation of habitats as well as responsible recreation. Programs included The Junior Ranger Youth Program designed to inspire a love of nature within the community using a nature-based activity book and the Bark Rangers Program – a program promoting responsible use and enjoyment of City parks using the Leave No Trace principles, outdoor safety tips for pets, and park stewardships for pet owners.



Seasonal Park Rangers

Park Rangers held the second cohort of seasonal Park Rangers from June 2023 to September 2023. There were 16 temporary Ranger that contributed 2,200 contacts across City parks.



35 New Bark Rangers totaling 15 volunteer hours

281 Programs totaling 15,658 contacts

NOTABLE PROGRAMS

- Congress Bridge Bat Table
- GNAC – Good Neighbor
- Adventure Club
- Dougherty Arts Center's
- Creativity Club
- Bark Rangers
- Coffee with a Ranger
- Skins & Skulls Touch Tables
- Salamander Table at Barton Springs Pool and Barking Springs/Spillway
- Community trash pickups, including It's My Park Day
- Monthly guided hikes

HISTORIC CEMETERIES

5 Municipal Cemeteries

2 Family Cemeteries on Parkland

180 Years of History

200+ Acres of Cemetery Grounds

80,000+ Graves

\$3.2M Operating Budget

8 Full Time Staff

Doing management, conservation, programming, and administrative operations

263 Space Sales

323 Interments

284 Monuments

5 Historic Buildings

Gates opened 365 days per year

21 Full Time Staff

Doing ground maintenance, monument settings, and interment preparation

Cemetery Operations staff serve as last responders playing a critical role in honoring and commemorating our citizens lives at the time of their death. Staff meet daily with families for interment and space sales along with the ongoing grounds maintenance needed for each of the cemeteries. In addition, the maintenance team has been installing and working with a new conservator to relevel monuments and improve grounds operation and maintenance.

This year saw the completion of multiple projects. The Tower Restrooms at Austin Memorial Park and the roads at Evergreen Cemetery were updated and both Longview and Plummers Cemeteries received Historic Cemetery Designations. There was also an amazing wildflower display within the newly designated Wildflower Meadow at Austin Memorial Park.







austintexas.gov/parks

