



MEMORANDUM

TO: Dawn Lewis, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board

FROM: Kimberly McNeeley, CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department 

DATE: June 19, 2020

SUBJECT: Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

This memorandum serves as my support for renaming Metz Recreation Center to Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez Recreation Center.

Process

On December 5, 2019, City Council passed Resolution No. 20191205-117 (Attachment A), which initiated the process to rename Metz Recreation Center under Austin City Code 14-1-39. This resolution for renaming the facility nominated Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez. The Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) began a 90-day period to receive public comment, which culminated on May 2, 2020.

This memorandum outlines the work and serves as the formal submission to the chair of the Parks and Recreation Board according to subsection 14-1-39(F).

Background

The ordinance naming Metz Recreation Center was approved by City Council on November 3, 1983 through Ordinance No. 83 1103-C (Attachment B), 11 years after the facility opened. While the ordinance is unclear as to whether the recreation center was named after the person Metz or the area of the city that became associated with the name due to the presence of the nearby Metz Elementary School, the Resolution and the process have been informed by the person, Hamilton M. Metz. The resolution provides additional justification for the renaming of the facility by acknowledging the Confederate Monuments Resolution (20171005-031) and “undoing Austin’s racist past through honoring community members who dedicated their lives to the betterment of Austin.”

Hamilton M. Metz (1840-1915) was an Austin firefighter before joining the Confederate Army’s Texas Calvary during the Civil War where he achieved the rank of captain. After the end of the Civil War, Metz returned to Austin where he served as Travis County Tax Assessor and Austin School District board member and eventually president. Shortly after he died in 1915, the new Metz Elementary School was named in his honor.

Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez (1944-2019) was born in Austin. He studied dance and performance in New York and Spain and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Chile and Costa Rica before returning to Austin.

While in Austin, he dedicated his life to mentoring and teaching dance to youth in East Austin. He served the community as a program specialist at Metz Recreation Center, founded Ballet East Dance Company and developed the nationally recognized “Dare to Dance” program. Mendez was devoted to mentoring the youth who danced in his classes and his folklórico classes continue to this day on Saturday mornings at the recreation center.

Community Engagement

The renaming ordinance requires PARD to “take reasonable steps to inform persons who are likely to have an interest “... consider[ing] the nature and location of the facility and whether a particular community is likely to be especially interested in the process.”

To achieve this goal, PARD focused on the geographic area of the recreation center as well as connecting to the Metz Recreation Center’s visitors and patrons. PARD placed flyers (Attachment C) at local businesses, reached out to people connected to the dance community and sent general notices across the city through Facebook and Nextdoor. In addition, PARD Community Services Coordinator Larry Williams spoke about the renaming process on [“Good Day Austin” on Fox7 Austin](#) on February 25. Each promotion shared the opportunity to comment on the proposed name change online or in person at two community meetings.

Community comments were collected online and in-person at the recreation center using a short survey tool (Attachment D). In addition, two community meetings were promoted for February 29 and March 3 where interested community members could hear a presentation to learn about the process, the two individuals and provide feedback (Attachment E).

Results and Recommendations

The survey tool had 336 respondents with 97% supporting the proposed name change; 9 respondents indicated that they did not want the facility name to change (Attachment F). The two community meetings were lightly attended and overwhelmingly supported the name change (Attachment G).

Dissenting Voices

Attachment F contains five comments that do not support the renaming of the recreation center. These comments have been highlighted. The comments focus primarily on not needing to change the name, because it is fine how it is. One comment acknowledges the long history Metz had serving the Austin community. Another comment points to growth and ongoing changes in Austin that make it more difficult to get around as well as the need to acknowledge the past and be sure not to repeat it.

The Parks and Recreation Department honors those voices and appreciates their willingness to share their comments in this process.

Conclusion

Based on the community feedback and the amazing life of Mr. Mendez, I support renaming Metz Recreation Center to Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez Recreation Center.

Attachments

- A. City Council Resolution 20191205-117
- B. City Council Ordinance No. 83 1103-C
- C. Flyer for sharing with community
- D. Survey for community comment
- E. Presentation from community meetings on February 29 and March 3, 2020
- F. Results and comments from survey
- G. Recorded notes from community meetings on February 29 and March 3, 2020

RESOLUTION NO. 20191205-117

WHEREAS, Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez, a native Austinite, early in life developed a passion for dance, performance arts, and community service; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez studied dance theory, technique, and composition in New York through a scholarship from the Martha Graham School, studied Flamenco in Spain, toured with various companies, and performed in off-Broadway shows; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez’s passion for community service led him to Chile and Costa Rica, where as part of the Peace Corps, he worked with the minister of Education in each country and to develop performing arts and outreach programs for youth; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Rudy Mendez founded Ballet East Dance Company, which has for over 40 years, been true to its mission to provide a platform for young choreographers and dancers on a national and international level and to develop vigorous outreach to Black and Hispanic communities in East Austin; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez has been driven in his work by a conviction that theater and dance can transform lives and serve as powerful community development tools to equip young people in East Austin with discipline and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Rudy has selflessly dedicated his work to providing free lessons to multiple generations of young students and provided paid opportunities to dancers and choreographers; and

WHEREAS, by successfully securing funding and grants, including from the Texas Commission of Arts, Rudy Mendez has led award-winning efforts like Dare to Dance which has been recognized by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities as a top after-school program in the nation; and

WHEREAS; as the East Austin community has faced countless challenges, Rudy Mendez rose up for his community and provided necessary resources and support to the youth, and has long been admired and respected by many as a leader of East Austin; and

WHEREAS, the Confederate Monuments Resolution No. 20171005-031 revealed that the original land on which Metz Recreation Center is located was acquired by a bond purchase in 1933, opened in 1972 and named after Hamilton M. Metz: Captain Co. E, 33rd Texas Cavalry (Confederate Vet), also school board member 1903-1915; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to undoing its racist past and dedicated to honoring the long time Austin community members who have dedicated their lives to the betterment of the Austin communities, such as Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez, who through his continuous acts of service for the youth in East Austin has been recognized as a leader;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL:

In recognition of Rudy’s leadership and steadfast commitment to preserving and sharing the culture of the East Austin Community through his service and art, City Council directs the City Manager to initiate proceedings per § 14-1-34 of the City Code for the re-

naming of the “Metz Recreation Center” to the “Rodolfo ‘Rudy’ Mendez Recreation Center”.

ADOPTED: December 5, 2019

ATTEST: 

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk

ORDINANCE NO. 83 1103-C

AN ORDINANCE OFFICIALLY NAMING VARIOUS CITY OF AUSTIN PARK SITES AND FACILITIES; SUSPENDING THE RULE REQUIRING THE READING OF ORDINANCES ON THREE SEPARATE DAYS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Board has recommended official names for the following park sites and facilities; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council is in agreement as to the naming of these sites and facilities; Now, Therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

PART 1. The following park sites and facilities shall be named as follows:

Metropolitan Parks

Commons Ford Ranch

District Parks

Bull Creek
Northeast

Community Parks

Colony Park
Balcones Community
Northwest

Neighborhood Parks

Battle Bend Springs
Clarksville
Comal
East Woods
Rosewood
Franklin
Govalle
Longview
Oak Hill
Metz
North Oaks
Spicewood Springs
Springdale
Tarrytown
West Austin
Westenfield

Neighborhood Parks

(Adjacent to Schools)

Mary Dawson
Williams

Greenbelts

Barton Creek
Blunn Creek
Boggy Creek
Boggy Creek South
East Bouldin Creek
West Bouldin Creek
Buttermilk Branch
Colorado River
Hemphill Parkway
Johnson Creek
Onion Creek
Big Walnut Creek
Little Walnut Creek
Steck Valley

Nature Preserves

Bee Creek
Blunn Creek

Recreation Centers

Metz

Municipal Pools

Northwest

Neighborhood Pools (Senior)

Metz
Rosewood
Westenfield

Neighborhood Pools (Junior)

Govalle

Wading Pools

East Woods
Metz
Northwest
Rosewood
West Austin

PART 2. The rule requiring that ordinances be read on three separate days is hereby suspended and this ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days following the date of its passage as provided by the Charter of the City of Austin.

PASSED AND APPROVED

November 3, 1983

X
X
X
X



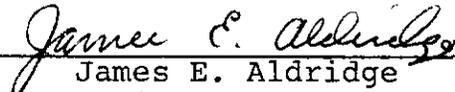
Ron Mullen
Mayor

APPROVED:



Jonathan Davis
Acting City Attorney

ATTEST:



James E. Aldridge
Acting City Clerk

JD:rs

Renaming Metz Recreation Center

Austin City Council has initiated the process to rename Metz Recreation Center to Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center.

The community is invited to provide input on the renaming now through May 3, 2020.

Provide feedback:

Online: www.PublicInput.com/G212

Text: MRC to (512) 580-8850

In-Person at Metz Recreation Center

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Learn more in person at the following times:

Saturday, February 29, 2020, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 3, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

2407 Canterbury Road, Austin TX, 78702

www.AustinTexas.gov/department/metz-recreation-center-renaming

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. For assistance please contact (512) 974-3914 or Relay Texas 7-1-1.



El Cambio del nombre de Metz Recreation Center

El Consejo de la Ciudad de Austin inició el Proceso para change nombre de Metz Centro de Recreación a la Rodolfo "Rudy" Méndez Centro de Recreación.

Miembros de la comunidad están invitados dar aporte a través del periodo de 90 días concluye el 3 de mayo de 2020.

Dar aporte:
en línea: www.PublicInput.com/G212-esp
text: MRC-esp a (512) 580-8850
en persona en Metz Recreation Center

CONVERSACIONES COMUNITARIAS

Aprende más en persona:

Sábado, el 29 de febrero, 2020, 10 a.m.

Martes, el 3 de marzo, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

2407 Canterbury Road, Austin TX, 78702

www.AustinTexas.gov/department/metz-recreation-center-renaming

La Ciudad de Austin se compromete a cumplir lo establecido en la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA). A solicitud de los interesados, se proveerán modificaciones razonables y acceso equitativo a las comunicaciones. Para obtener ayuda, por favor llame al (512) 974-3914 o al número de Relay Texas, 7-1-1.



Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center





Metz Recreation Center Renaming Input

online: <https://publicinput.com/G212>

On December 5, 2019, the Austin City Council passed Resolution No. 20191205-117, initiating the process for renaming Metz Recreation Center to Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center. Community members are invited to provide input through the 90-day comment period beginning today and concluding on May 2, 2020.

Background of Metz

Hamilton M. Metz was born in 1840 in South Carolina before moving to Austin in 1845. Metz served Austin before and after the Civil War as a re ghter. During the Civil War, he was one of an estimated 100 re ghters who volunteered to the Confederate army, becoming Captain of Company E of the 33rd Texas Cavalry. Later, Metz was elected as tax assessor for Travis County from 1879 to 1900. Metz then served the Austin school board as member and then president from 1902 until his death in 1915. Shortly after his death, Metz Elementary School was opened and named after him. Metz is buried at Oakwood Cemetery.

Background of Mendez

Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez, born in Austin in 1944, studied dance and performing arts in New York and Spain. He also served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile and Costa Rica, touring with each country's national ballet company and developing performing arts curriculum and programs for youth. In 1978, he returned to Austin and founded the Ballet East Dance Company to provide a platform for young choreographers and dancers and to develop vigorous outreach to Black and Hispanic communities in East Austin. From 1978 to 2000, Mr. Mendez worked for the Parks and Recreation Department as a program specialist at Metz Recreation Center. In 1989, he developed the city-wide program "Dare to Dance," recognized nationally. Mr. Mendez also created the Folkloric Dance and Mentoring Program to encourage students of living in East Austin to graduate high school. Rudy Mendez died in 2019.

Do you support the renaming of the Metz Recreation Center to the Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center?

- Yes, I support the renaming
- No, I do not support the renaming
- No opinion or unsure

Please share any comments you have:

Demographics

The Austin Parks and Recreation Departments asks for the following information in order to help identify whether we are connecting to our diverse community effectively. We aim to have our responses represent the people in the communities we serve. Your responses are appreciated.

How frequently do you visit this space?

- I have never visited
- Fewer than 5 times a year
- 5-12 times a year
- 2-3 times a month
- Once a week
- 2 times or more each week

What park is closest to your home?

How long have you lived in Austin?

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21-30 years
- More than 30 years

What is your age range?

- 17 or under
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Not including yourself, what other ages live in your household?

- 17 or under
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

What is your race or ethnicity?

- American Indian / Alaskan Native
- South Asian / South Asian American
- Hispanic / Latinx
- Pacific Islander / Hawaiian Native
- Black / African-American
- East Asian / East Asian American
- Southeast Asian / Southeast Asian American
- White / Caucasian
- Middle Eastern / North African
- Biracial, Multiracial, or none of the above. Please specify:

What is your gender?

- Woman / Feminine
- Man / Masculine
- Non-binary
- Transgender man, Transgender woman, or identifier not mentioned

What is your zip code?

Please describe where you currently live?

- I rent a house or duplex
- I rent an apartment
- I own a townhouse or condo
- I own a house or duplex
- I live in my parents', relatives', friends' home
- Other

What is your approximate household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,000
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$250,000
- More than \$250,000

Language spoken at home:



Oportunidad para dar aporte sobre cambiando el nombre de Metz Centro de Recreación

El 5 de diciembre de 2019, el Consejo de la Ciudad de Austin aprobó la Resolución No. 20191205-117, iniciando el proceso para cambiar el nombre de Metz Centro de Recreación a Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Centro de Recreación.

Antecedentes de Metz

Hamilton M. Metz nació en 1840 en Carolina del Sur antes de trasladarse a Austin en 1845. Metz sirvió Austin antes y después de la Guerra Civil como un bombero. Durante la Guerra Civil, fue uno de los aproximadamente 100 bomberos que se ofrecieron para el Ejército Confederado, convirtiéndose en el capitán de la Compañía E de la 33ª del Calvario de Texas. Más tarde, Metz fue elegido como asesor de impuestos para el Condado de Travis de 1879 a 1900. Luego se desempeñó Metz al consejo escolar de Austin como miembro y luego presidente a partir de 1902 hasta su muerte en 1915. Poco después de su muerte, la escuela primaria Metz se abrió y se nombran después de él. Metz está enterrado en el cementerio de Oakwood.

Antecedentes de Mendez

Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez, nacido en Austin en 1944, la danza y las artes escénicas estudió en Nueva York y España. También sirvió como voluntario del Cuerpo de Paz en Chile y Costa Rica, de gira con el Ballet Nacional de cada país y el desarrollo de planes de estudio y la realización de programas de los artes para la juventud. En 1978, regresó a Austin y fundó el Ballet East Dance Company para proporcionar una plataforma para jóvenes coreógrafos y bailarines y desarrollar actividades de extensión vigorosa a las comunidades hispanas en el este de Austin y Negro. De 1978 a 2000, el Sr. Myndez trabajó para el Departamento de Parques y Recreación como un especialista del programa en Metz Centro de Recreación. En 1989, se desarrolló el programa en toda la ciudad "Dare to Dance" reconocido a nivel nacional. Sr. Mendez también creó el Programa del Baile Folklórica y Mentores para animar a los estudiantes de la vida en el este de Austin para graduarse de la escuela secundaria. Rudy Méndez murió en 2019.

¿Apoya usted el cambio de nombre del Metz Centro de Recreación al Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Centro de Recreación?

- Sí, apoyo el cambio de nombre
- No, no soporto el cambio de nombre
- Sin opinión o inseguro

Comparta sus pensamientos:

Demographics

El Departamentos de los Parques y Recreación de Austin pide la siguiente información para ayudarnos a identificar si estamos conectando a nuestra diversa comunidad de manera efectiva. Nuestro objetivo es tener nuestras respuestas representan a la gente en las comunidades que servimos. Sus respuestas son apreciados.

¿Con qué frecuencia visitas este espacio?

- Nunca he visitado
- Menos de 5 veces al año
- 5-12 veces al año
- 2-3 veces al mes
- Una vez por semana
- 2 veces o más cada semana

¿Qué parque está más cerca de su casa?

¿Cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Austin?

- Menos de 5 años
- 5-10 años
- 11-20 años
- 21-30 años
- Más de 30 años

¿Cual es su edad?

- 17 o menos
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Sin incluirse a usted mismo,
¿qué otras edades viven en su hogar?

- 17 o menos
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

¿Cuál es su raza / etnia?

- Nativo de Hawai o las Islas del Pacífico
- Blanco o Caucásico
- Negro o Afroamericano
- Indio americano / nativo de Alaska
- Hispano / Latino
- Asiático del este / Asiático-americano (de Asia del este)
- Asiático del sur / Asiático-americano (de Asia del sur)
- Asiático del sureste / Asiático-americano (de Asia de sureste)
- de Oriente Medio / Norte de África
- Biracial, multirracial o ninguno de los anteriores.
Por favor especifica:

¿Cuál es su género?

- mujer / femenino
- hombre / masculino
- No binario
- Hombre transgénero, mujer transgénero o identificador no mencionado

¿Cuál es el código postal de su casa?

Por favor describa donde vive actualmente:

- Alquilo casa o duplex
- Alquilo apartamento
- Soy dueño de pueblo / condominio
- Soy dueño de casa
- Vivo en la casa de mis padres o familiares o amigos
- Otro

¿Cuál es su ingreso familiar aproximado?

- Menos de \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,000
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$250,000
- Más de \$250,000

¿Cuál es el idioma principal que se habla en su casa?

Community Conversation

Metz Recreation Center Renaming



Larry Williams
Community Services Coordinator

Agenda

- Introductions
- Explanation of the renaming process
- Background on Hamilton M. Metz
- Background on Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez
- Small group discussion
- Community sharing



90 days

- Initiated by Council resolution and notice
- Survey and community comments ends May 2

PARB

- Parks and Recreation Board reviews comments
- Public hearing in May; sends recommendation

Council

- City Council receives PARB recommendation
- City Council makes final decision



December 5, 2019

The Austin City Council initiated the process to rename

Metz Recreation Center
(located at 2407 Canterbury Street)

to

Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez Recreation Center.



RESOLUTION NO. 20191205-117

WHEREAS, Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez, a native Austinite, early in life developed a passion for dance, performance arts, and community service; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez studied dance theory, technique, and composition in New York through a scholarship from the Martha Graham School, studied Flamenco in Spain, toured with various companies, and performed in off-Broadway shows; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez’s passion for community service led him to Chile and Costa Rica, where as part of the Peace Corps, he worked with the minister of Education in each country and to develop performing arts and outreach programs for youth; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Rudy Mendez founded Ballet East Dance Company, which has for over 40 years, been true to its mission to provide a platform for young choreographers and dancers on a national and international level and to develop vigorous outreach to Black and Hispanic communities in East Austin; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez has been driven in his work by a conviction that theater and dance can transform lives and serve as powerful community development tools to equip young people in East Austin with discipline and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Rudy has selflessly dedicated his work to providing free lessons to multiple generations of young students and provided paid opportunities to dancers and choreographers; and

The report described by Resolution No. 20171005-31 consists of three parts:

- A. Identifying all City-owned monuments and memorials of the Confederacy located on City-Owned property, including, an without limitation, streets and buildings located on City of Austin property.
- B. Producing an analysis of the cost of removal, replacement, or renaming of these icons, monuments, and memorials of the Confederacy; and
- C. Making recommendations for disposition of artifacts of historic value, including preservation, storage, and maintenance for educational purposes.



Additional Background

- Confederate Monuments Resolution (No. 20171005-31)
- Confederate Monuments Report (Equity Office, 2018)
- Guidance on Renaming (Women's Commission Resolution No. 20171011-05a)



Confederate Monuments Report

Equity Office, 2018

“It is essential to acknowledge that societal values are fluid, and they can be and are different today compared to when our city made decisions to name and/or place these Confederate symbols in our community,” the Equity Office’s report notes.

“It is also important to acknowledge that nearly all monuments to the Confederacy and its leaders were erected without a true democratic process. People of color often had no voice and no opportunity to raise concerns about the city’s decision to honor Confederate leaders.”



Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez

1944-2019

- Born in Austin
- Studied dance in New York and Spain
- Served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile and Costa Rica
- Founded Ballet East Dance Company
- Program Specialist for PARD at Metz Recreation Center 1978 to 2000
- Developed “Dare to Dance”
- Created Folklorico Dance and Mentoring Program for students in East Austin



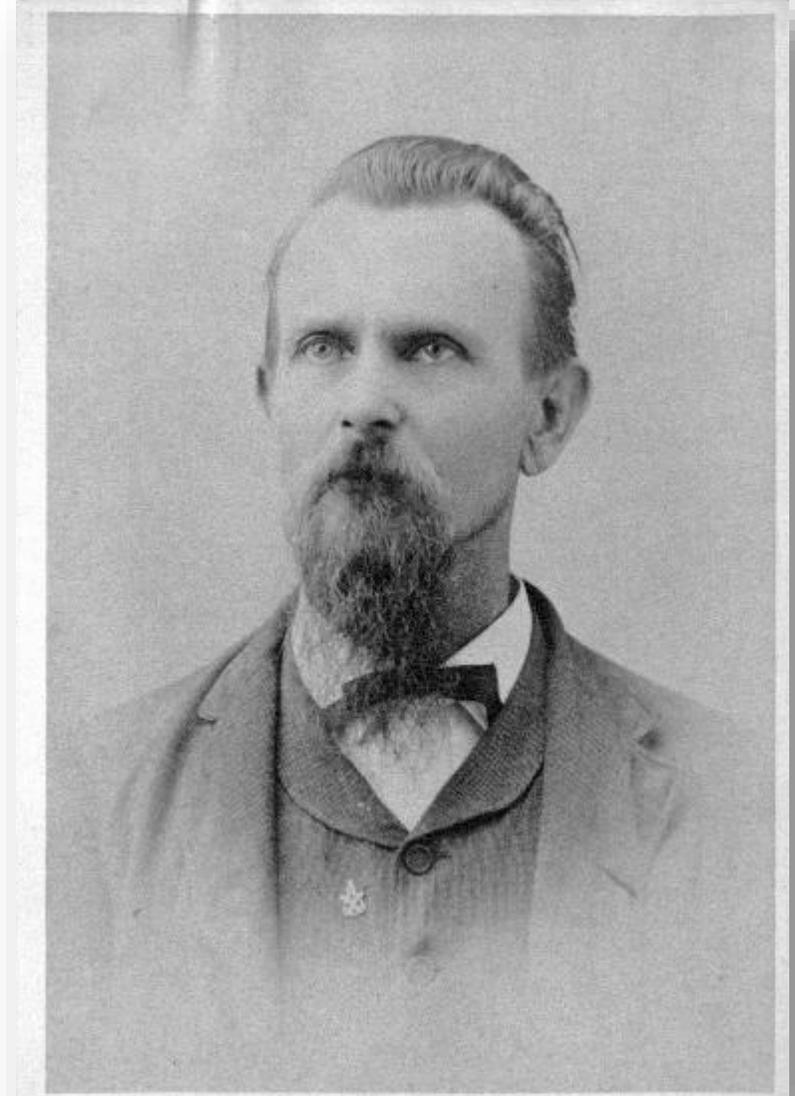
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department



Hamilton M. Metz

1840-1915

- Austin firefighter
- Captain in Texas Cavalry of the Confederate Army
- Travis County Tax Assessor
- Austin School Board member and president
- Involved in other civic organizations



Discussion in small groups

- What additional information would you like people to know about Mr. Metz or Mr. Mendez?
- What does it mean to “honor the history” of the community?
- How are you deciding whether you want to support the name change or not?



Community Sharing

What would you like to share with the group as a whole?



Next Steps

- Complete feedback form/survey by May 3, 2020
- All comments and feedback will be shared with the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) at their May meeting
- PARB May meeting will also be a public hearing for community members to also speak
- PARB will then pass on their recommendation if they have one
- City Council will make final decision



Share the opportunity with friends

www.austintexas.gov/departments/metz-recreation-center-renaming



Attachment F

Metz Recreation Center Renaming Input

Project Engagement

VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS	SUBSCRIBERS
888	336	1,177	206	3

Do you support the renaming of the Metz Recreation Center to the Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center?

97%	Yes, I support the renaming	319 ✓
3%	No, I do not support the renaming	9 ✓
1%	No opinion or unsure	2 ✓

Please share any comments you have:

-  Let's name the center for someone who sought to build up our community. That person is Rudy Mendez.
3 months ago 👍 5 Agree
-  Why isn't it already "Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center"? Do it!
3 months ago 👍 5 Agree
-  We support and defend the US flag in this country, and therefore, I think it is time we stop honoring those who fought against it and look to role models that better inspire creativity that lifts the community in a more relevant and meaningful way. That would be much more like Austin.
3 months ago 👍 4 Agree
-  I think it's a great idea to rename it in honor of Rudy Mendez, a pillar of the East Austin community.
3 months ago 👍 4 Agree
-  Get this done! It's far past time to stop honoring the Confederacy and I can think of no one more deserving than Rudy Mendez!
3 months ago 👍 4 Agree
-  Let's honor this great, impactful individual!
3 months ago 👍 4 Agree
-  As a native East Austinite and Mexican American, I can personally attest to the incredible impact and legacy left by Rudy Mendez. Rudy was a pillar in our Latino Mexican American community and always places the needs of our children and Latino community first. He remains deeply respected and regarded and he should absolutely honor his legacy.
3 months ago 👍 4 Agree
-  Rodolfo Mendez was a pillar of the arts and East Austin community and touched the lives of many, many youth and adults through his company Ballet East Dance Company and at Metz Recreation Center where he created a center for arts, learning and community. This renaming would give tribute to him in a way that he will always be remembered and honored.
3 months ago 👍 3 Agree
-  I own a house in this neighborhood. I'd much rather honor the Mendez legacy.
3 months ago 👍 3 Agree
-  I think it's important to memorialize the history and keep educating young people and newcomers about the history of this area. I support the renaming, and urge our institutions to make it a practice to share the history of the former names, the German American community that lived on Holly shores before racial segregation; the anti-Mexican/ pro-segregationist campaign to keep Metz whites-only and segregate Zavala Elementary just a few blocks away. And finally, to celebrate the heroes of our more recent history, like Rudy Mendez and the network of Mexican Americans and other East Austinites who made the community what it is.
3 months ago 👍 3 Agree
-  Mr Mendez is a phenomenal role model. Thank you for honoring his life and work this way for all of Austin to remember.
3 months ago 👍 3 Agree
-  Rudy was an Austin treasure. He deserves this honor.
3 months ago 👍 2 Agree

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

-  Rudy gave so much support to dancers in the community. He believed in the potential in everyone.
3 months ago 👍 2 Agree
-  Rudy was a great mentor to many kids and devoted his entire life to the Arts.
3 months ago 👍 2 Agree
-  The last time I was at Metz mas for a rehearsal with a dancer from Alvin Ailey in New York, who Rudy brought in to choreograph for his company. This unique experience would never have happened if not for his generous spirit and commitment to accessible arts. Rudy always remained true to himself and his beliefs, and city of Austin benefitted from this for decades through his service. Renaming Metz Recreation Center in his name would be a wonderful acknowledgment.
3 months ago 👍 2 Agree
-  In addition Rudy always helped the kids in the neighborhood and kept the youth learning through his dance programs. He contributed to big events with his performances. He taught kids of all ages and was at Metz for a long time. He was active in the community with an upbeat spirit, full of joy and positive vibes & outlook on life that made people love being around him.
11 days ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy was such a light in his community. He helped so many young people. No one deserves this honor more!
2 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  We pay homage to people we respect by name naming locations in our everyday life after them. It's entirely appropriate and imperative that we update these when the symbolism is no longer in synch with our cultural beliefs OR when a memory more important or close to home is worth recognizing. As a native Texan and very long time Austin resident, I love the idea of naming after a local doer that gives more homage to Austin's own identity.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy all the way! There should be no doubt.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  When I think of Metz I think of Rudy. He gave his heart and soul to his community.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Mendez is a better representation of Austin.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy gave me my first job teaching dance at the Rec. Center, I will forever be grateful! He was so devoted to bringing dance and art to the center and he absolutely deserves this honor!
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy was a great patron of the arts in East Austin. His legacy should be carried on with honorable distinction for what he did and believed in.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Please leave as is. Metz is a great name.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  I fully support the renaming to Rudy Mendez .Mr. Mendez has contributed so much to this community and it would be a great tribute and honor for his family.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

-  Rudolfo changed my life in so many ways which has inspire my brands of Stay Active & Breakdance Austin to elevate to the next level of opportunities. Without his donations from the start I wouldn't know where I'll be today. I strongly support the name change especially when someone gives you a chance to believe in your self. Thank you Rudy for everything!!
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy did alot for the kids of this community, he deserves it.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  The legacy of Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez is east Austin and American history. As people and places that tell Mexican American history in east Austin rapidly disappear, this renaming can serve to preserve and elevate the voices of Mexican Americans that made Austin what it is today. It is rare to find descendants of 'border crossed them' Mexican American families, families who were involuntarily naturalized into U.S. citizenship by the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Mr. Mendez is such a descendant and his story and contributions must be preserved for future generations.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  I definitely give my approval every name in the park after Rudy he was an anchor to the community always treated you with respect and always was kind he helped out the community in many ways I know personally because I lived on the next block from Metz. And like I always told him when I saw him personally when he was alive thank you for all you did and I think I've learned myself as I got older to help with the community with what I could in any way I could. Thanks Rudy Mendez Rest In Paradise say Hello to my Mom
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  I was honored to have Rudy as my mentor. With his guidance and support I was able to run the only competitive dance team in middle school for 10 years, The Martin Eaglettes. He inspired myself and the girls with his guest choreographers, his love of performance and his love of the Martin community.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  He deserves it.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  For someone who gave so much of himself for the community to thrive and grow, it's ridiculous not to rename it.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  He did so much for the community of East Austin.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Leave it alone. Metz had personal history in Austin for 70 years.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  I think it is important to honor someone who cherished Austin rather than a Confederate soldier who wasn't even born here.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Served on the Advosry Board of this center at Rudy's recommendation. Rudy had a tireless commitment to the center and programming to serve all ages.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
-  Rudy Mendez made Austin a better place. Metz, not so much. Renaming the center is a wonderful idea and I hope it goes forward soon.
3 months ago 👍 1 Agree

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

- Rudy mendez was east Austin. The impact he had for kids in the community was amazing. Kids in n the community that wanted to be a part of the arts he made sure they were.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Great man and contributions to the community

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Remove and rename. Metz was a confederate leader.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Metz was a captain in the Confederate Army. Is that a joke?

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- I absolutely support this.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- What an opportunity to honor an inspirational local figure.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- I STRONGLY support removing any honor granted to people who defended the Confederacy and its ideals. Those who fought for the Confederacy believed that Black people were less deserving of respect and autonomy than White people, and it's something that we cannot continue perpetuating. Thank you for making the change!

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- I fully support this!

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Do the right thing

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Strongly support!

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- I am for it!

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- It's the right thing to do.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- My uncle deserves this!!

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- Very deserving as Mr. Rudy Mendez dedicated his life to helping the youth of Austin and impacting so many lives in a positive way.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree
- It would be a meaningful name change to replace a Confederate supporter's name with someone who was born in Austin and made a huge contribution to the city in this decade.

3 months ago 👍 1 Agree

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

-  I knew Rudy Mendez and he was a role model in the community. He enriched the cultural fabric in East Austin and brought pride and joy to the community through his dance troupe. This is a worthy name change.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Well deserved honor.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  with ever changing names, it is difficult to orient oneself in this city (i have lived here over 30 years). I understand we may have concerns about some elements of the US past, but we have to accept (not celebrate), and remember history. if we can cel it out, we repeat it. in addition, i can say Mendez is a very common name, again, the idea is to make something stand out and be recognizable, not to blur. I am already confused enough navigating this fast growing city. and i still call Townlake the body of water that now as a million different names for the pedestrian bridge, the trail, the lake, the.... whatever: it's townlake. Let's please stop changing names non stop. Metz is Metz. clear . simple. thank you.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rudy was a shining example of what a leader in the community is ... It would be such an honor to name the center after him ...after decades of providing arts, culture, dance, and educational opportunities for hundreds, if not thousands of students ... His legacy, as Metz' will live on, forever ...
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rudy is a leader in the arts in Austin and has impacted so many people positively. I can't think of anyone else who deserves this honor.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  As a former arts commissioner for the city of Austin I strongly suggest the change. His efforts and devotion surpassed most every expectation possible. A model citizen for sure.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rudy was a great dancer. He did so much for the community. He worked with so many children and Adults.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rodolfo was a pillar of the east Austin community. He devoted his life to young people, enabling them to access the arts and inspiring them to be disciplined, motivated, and successful in life. The Metz Rec Center would be honored to be named after him.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Mr. Mendez was an amazing dance instructor of mine. He opened my eyes to opportunities I never would thought of. I would love for the community of East austin to honor him and this way.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rodolfo Mendez developed many after school educational arts programs for youth in East Austin for decades. He mentored so many youth and adults during his lifetime and the many lives he touched and impacted, have been extremely successful. So many kids have risen out of poverty and became successful leaders, artists, business owners, and today's positive influencers because of Rodolfo's commitment of excellence to the underserved community of East Austin. He heavily and endlessly advocated for artists of color in Austin, and paved the path for many artists today to create. He was a visionary and strong leader.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree
-  Rodolfo Mendez's legacy should live on. He gave his heart and soul to East Austin and mentored so many young dancers.
- 3 months ago  1 Agree

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center



This is so important for his legacy to continue for future generations.

3 months ago

👍 1 Agree



Mr. Mendez dedicated his life to bringing the arts to the underprivileged community in East Austin. This renaming would be a great tribute to his legacy and would preserve the memory of his unwavering dedication to the youth of East Austin.

3 months ago

👍 1 Agree



He will forever be a legend to the East Austin Community.

3 months ago

👍 1 Agree



Mr. Méndez "Rudy" toda una leyenda de amor, compromiso y lealtad para los chicos y a toda la comunidad.

7 days ago



YO CONOCI AL PROFESOR RODOLFO, SU TRABAJO Y SU OBRA CON LA COMUNIDAD. EXCELENTE HONRARLO CON ESTE RENOMBRE. FELICIDADES Y GRACIAS PROFE, DEJO HUELLA.

10 days ago



I fully support naming our public spaces after true heroes who spent their lives giving to others. Mr. Mendez deserves this honor.

11 days ago



Mr. Mendez was very welcoming to everyone. It was inspirational seeing him work with his folklórico students at Martin. It would be a beautiful way to honor the amazing things he did for the community.

12 days ago



I applaud this decision whole heartedly.

12 days ago



I knew Rodolfo Mendez for many years. He was tirelessly devoted to East Austin (as well as Austin in general), so renaming the neighborhood recreation center where he did so much of his community work, to honor his memory, is most appropriate.

2 months ago



[Translated from Spanish] Thanks for putting this name, this man did a lot for our children and continues to make a great example as a person. Thanks Mr. Rudy.

2 months ago



My daughter is a low income special education student. She began dancing with Ballet East under the direction of Rudy Mendez. She went from a shy, quiet girl to a confident outgoing young woman. Prior to dancing, she never spoke a word at school. 5 years later she is in a magnet school, excelling academically, doing public speaking and continues to grow leaps and bounds. Despite her size and disability, Rudy gave her a change to shine because he saw potential and believed in her. I fully support the renaming!

2 months ago



Mr. Mendez was such an important man who positively influenced so many. If anyone deserves to be remembered, it is him.

2 months ago

-  Rudolph was a force of nature in the dance world, the community and culture of East Austin and beyond, and had a seeming endless energy to create, support and bring out the best in anyone who had the good fortune to cross paths with him to share or collaborate or learn about the arts and life and caring... He is missed and should be remembered... and this is a most perfect way.
2 months ago
-  This is an excellent idea! He did so much for the arts community in Austin.
2 months ago
-  Our neighborhood should not have monuments or buildings named after Confederate soldiers.
2 months ago  SMS
-  My grandmother worked there for many years helping seniors as a senior herself until she passed away. Don't feel it's necessary to rename it.
3 months ago
-  I remember always hanging out at the recreation center and seeing my my friends participate in the folklore dance. I was too shy to participate but my friends loved it.
3 months ago
-  Great idea, very deserving.
3 months ago
-  Honor someone who actually encouraged youth to do better..
3 months ago
-  It's the right thing to do!
3 months ago
-  It's time to honor a cultural hero!
3 months ago
-  Rudolfo "Rudy" Mendez changed the lives of so many people, including myself. This would be a wonderful honor to him.
3 months ago
-  Renaming the center after Rudy Mendez would be a beautiful tribute to a man who did so much to build and support community in East Austin.
3 months ago
-  Rudy was an absolute legend. It was a pleasure shooting Ballet East with him for the last decade.
3 months ago
-  Both men have there place in Texas history. But that being said. Metz had a school named after him and his background is more towards education. Mr.Mendez background is more for the community and a rec center us the perfect place to honor his name.
3 months ago
-  Well deserved!
3 months ago
-  I value celebrating the names of those in the community who have reached out, made a difference, create opportunities, and inspired others to grow.
3 months ago

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

-  I say we should name it Community McCommunityCenterFace
3 months ago
-  Why would you even consider such a thing? Such a disgrace!
3 months ago
-  Hopefully this can be changed would be a great improvement.
3 months ago
-  Well deserved honor especially considering his connection to the Metz Rec Center.
3 months ago
-  Mr. Mendez has done great work for our city and deserves to be recognized!
3 months ago
-  Let's honor Rudy!
3 months ago
-  <3
3 months ago
-  Rodolfo is the perfect person to be honored in this manner.
3 months ago
-  Rodolfo opened my eyes and opportunities through work at the center with dance groups and seniors activities, and all kinds of activities.
3 months ago
-  I was born and raised in East Austin. Myself and my brother danced for Rudy. Ballet East and Rudy Mendez changed the trajectory of my life. Rudy dedicated his life to the children of East Austin. My siblings and I benefited from Rudy's dedication along with hundreds of other children.
3 months ago
-  Muchas gracias por tomarnos en cuenta. Rudy Mendez será honrada su memoria.
3 months ago
-  Rudy touched so many lives! He was a beautiful soul! Definitely for this change! ❤️
3 months ago
-  Please make this change. Rudy Mendez was an Austin gem and such a bright force in the creative community. This center was the life of so much of his work. The legacy must continue and this is an amazing way to do so.
3 months ago
-  He was a force for youth and culture! Rename!!!
3 months ago



"Rudy"

Native to Austin, Tejas since the day of Empresarios the Mendez family it's a pillar for minorities and less the fortunate.

Always bringing the arts to the community and our community to the world, by putting his young students through school, collegue and Dancing scholarship on the best dance schools of the nation.

Te amo Mendez.

Descansa en paz, we will always remember what you did for us.

3 months ago



3 months ago



I am pleased to say that his hard work and dedication, along with his dancers, gain my support for the renaming. Go Rudy!!

3 months ago



Rudy gave his life to Austin and the community.

3 months ago



Rudy served the community in Austin, he should be remembered in this way.

3 months ago



No question that this is a great idea !

3 months ago



A True East Austin Legend! Rudy gave his heart and soul to Metz. "Dare To Dance"

3 months ago



Rudy was a mentor, friend, and father figure to many during his time at Metz. Even lending money to me when I needed it (small denominations)

3 months ago



I served on the board of Ballet East Dance Theatre for very many years. Rudy was totally committed to making a difference for the youth of East Austin. Whether giving of his time professionally or personally, his selfless generosity made a difference to so many and was loved by even more. His legacy deserves to live in a place that will forever honor Rudy Mendez.

3 months ago



Rodolfo was the epitome of what recreation centers do and who they are. His work allowed the community to not only be exposed to the arts, but to be a part of them. Rodolfo invested in the growth of so many children and young adults. Renaming the recreation would speak to his dedication and commitment as a community leader, as well as a much loved community member.

3 months ago



I'm so proud to have worked with Rudy during the Dare to Dance program at Metz. He worked so hard for all of the students.

3 months ago



Rudy was an inspiration and shared his talent through teaching to many in Austin. I am blessed to have been a small part of his legacy.

3 months ago

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center



Rudy Mendez was a mentor and helped me found Latinitas, an Austin based nonprofit that empowers all girls to innovate using media and tech. It can't be put into words how well he maximized Metz for community engagement and help -providing programs there for children and adults - dance instruction to drug prevention. I was emotionally moved to see the city suggest this and would be available to help with any planning or fundraising.

3 months ago



No comments

3 months ago [SMS](#)

How frequently do you visit this space?

44%	Fewer than 5 times a year	41 ✓
23%	5-12 times a year	21 ✓
17%	I have never visited	16 ✓
9%	Once a week	8 ✓
6%	2-3 times a month	6 ✓
2%	2 times or more each week	2 ✓

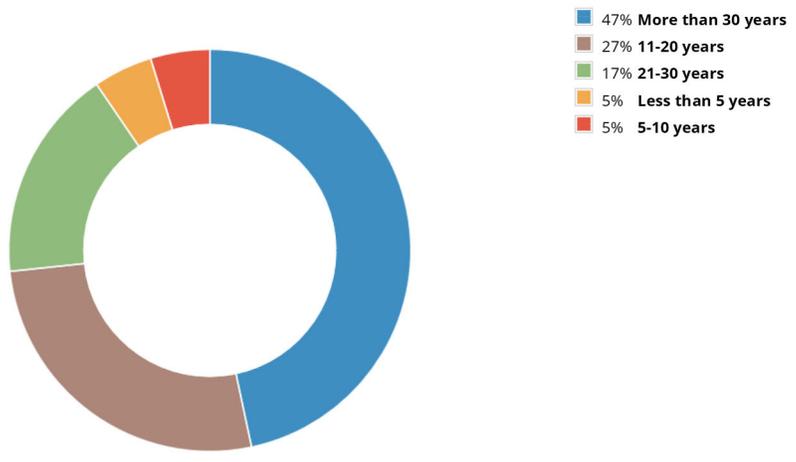
What park is closest to your home?

- Mabel Davis
2 months ago
- Montopolis Center
2 months ago
- Montopolis Recreation Center
2 months ago
- Metz Park
2 months ago
- Metz
2 months ago  SMS
- Gus Garcia Recreation Center
3 months ago
- Dove springs recreation
3 months ago
- Dove Springs
3 months ago
- Parque Zaragosa
3 months ago
- Zilker
3 months ago
- Patterson
3 months ago
- Butler
3 months ago
- Walter E Long and John Treviño
3 months ago
- Armadillo Park
3 months ago
- Boggy Creek
3 months ago
- Gus Garcia district park
3 months ago
- Alamo park
3 months ago
- Springfield Neighborhood Park
3 months ago

Memorandum of Endorsement of the Renaming of Metz Recreation Center

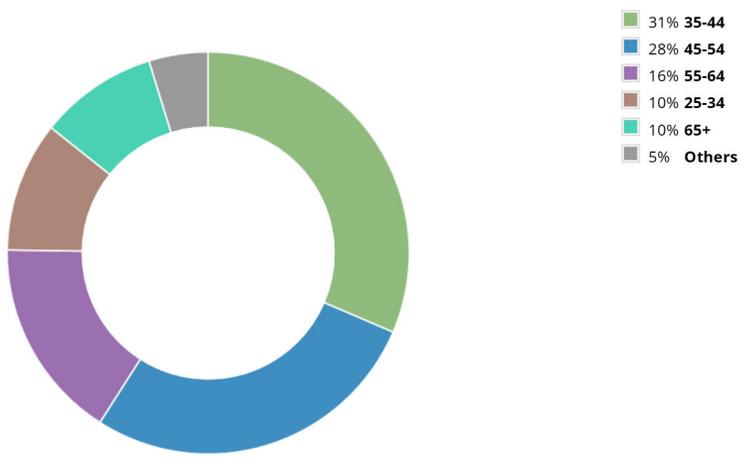
-  Metz
3 months ago
-  Metz
3 months ago
-  Kealing
3 months ago
-  Zaragoza
3 months ago
-  Walnut Creek Park
3 months ago 

How long have you lived in Austin?



105 respondents

What is your age range?



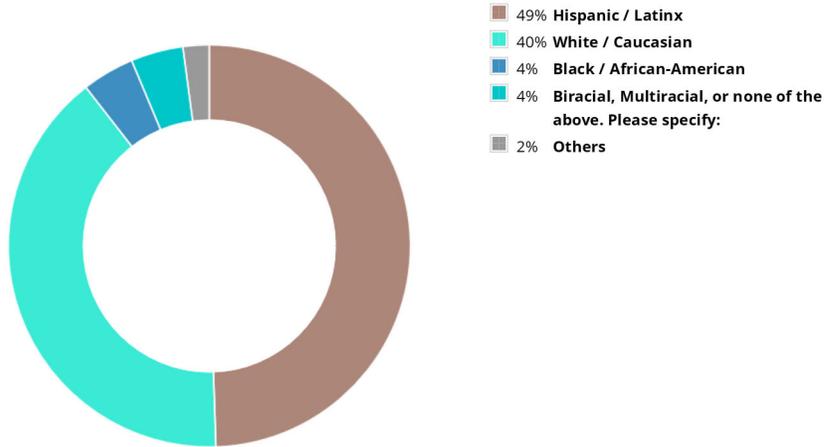
105 respondents

Loading more report objects...

Not including yourself, what other ages live in your household?

55%	17 or under	37 ✓
28%	35-44	19 ✓
19%	45-54	13 ✓
18%	18-24	12 ✓
16%	25-34	11 ✓
16%	55-64	11 ✓
10%	65+	7 ✓

What is your race or ethnicity?

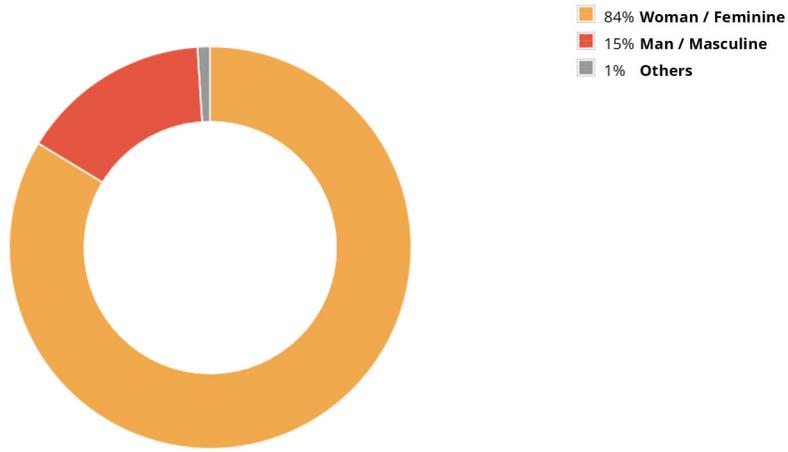


95 respondents

- Regardless of the demographic in the East Austin area now, the history of East Austin needs to include Rudy.
3 months ago
- should i share thoughts about my race? ridiculus. I am a PERSON, not a race. I happen to have a color.
3 months ago
- Parks are good

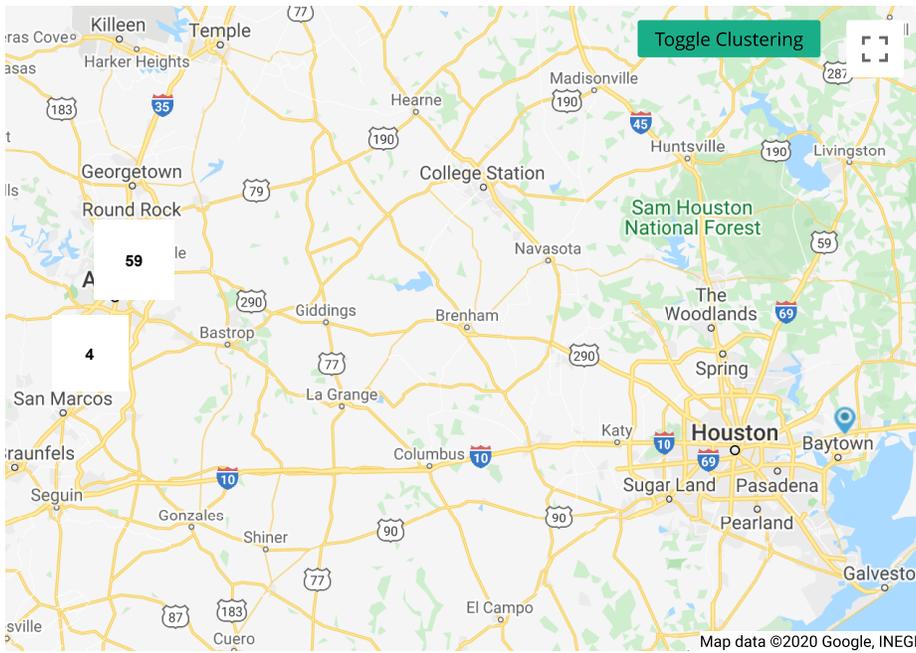
Show all 7 comments

What is your gender?

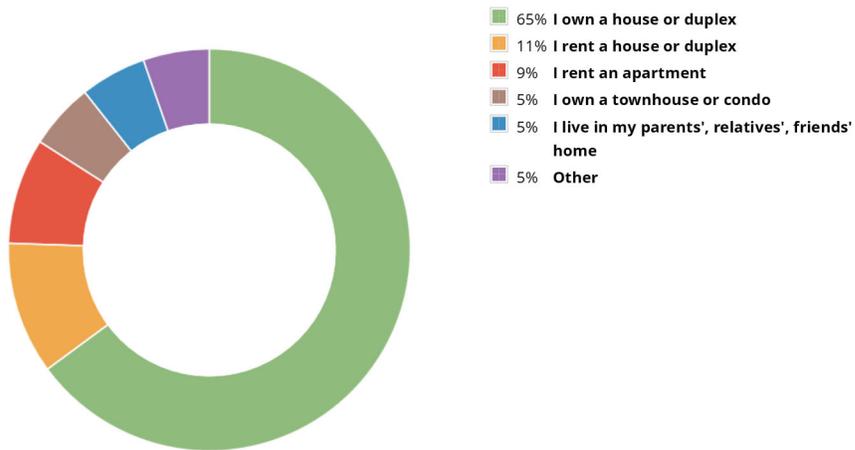


98 respondents

What is your zip code?

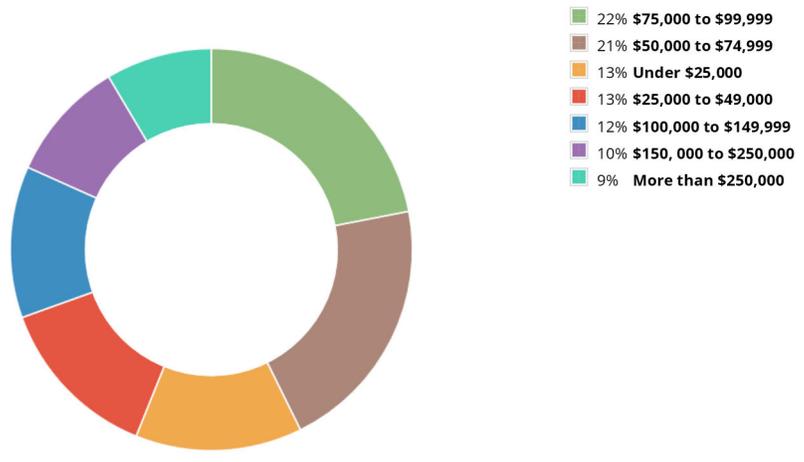


Please describe where you currently live?



94 respondents

What is your approximate household income?



82 respondents

Metz Recreation Center Renaming

Community Conversation

February 29, 2020

12 people in attendance

- “Things should not happen to the community; they should happen for the community”
- Martin Middle School dance team (Eaglettes) performed and won in national competitions
- Baile Folklorico – Rudy would check up on students and stay connected
- Ballet East Board – grants, videos, all documented; continues today and has not ended
- The neighborhood is changing. We can leave a legacy that can be searched and understood
- The soccer kids were also the folklorico kids who he followed to college and took care of basic needs (groceries, computers at college, etc.) – he took a holistic approach to caring for the kids
- Ballet East toy drive
- He had a bedroom in his house, but I never knew him to sleep
- Rudy would always go the extra mile, but he needed you to go with him
- Folklorico and contemporary dance continues
- He was persuasive and demanded a lot
- Marie Martinez, former president of Ballet East, took care of all of their books, has a ton of information
- Millie Hernandez, director
- Would bring groups from China and other countries to expose people to other types of dance from all over the world
- Folklorico kids were exposed to new experiences and other dancing. He took kids to Nutcracker each year so they could see outside of their world. Traveling outside state for the first time for many of the kids.
- Keep the kids for those hours to make sure the kids were challenged physically, mentally. Also a way to keep the parents involved (backstage)

What does it mean to honor the history?

- Rudy lived here. Literally gave his life for the children of this neighborhood. More than fitting to name it after him.
- The connection.
- He connected way beyond this community. He was concentrated in East Austin, but he was so connected to the national and international dance scene. He would be choreographers from Chicago, New York, and more. Regina Larkin would come down every year.
- Finally recognizing all that he did. Our way to give back to him after he spent his life giving back to us. He never took any awards or recognition, because it was always about the kids.

Documenting the stories

- Austin History Center
- Life in New York

Upcoming: PanAm Spring Production

Additional Outreach:

- UT
- Bass Concert Hall – Judith
- Martin Community – Connect to the principal
 - Reach out to former staff
 - Invite students back to Martin
- Miguel would know
- Cinco de Mayo – celebrations
- Ballet East community; Stephen Mills
- Ballet East Board

Attachment G

Metz Recreation Center Renaming

Community Conversation

March 3, 2020

2 people in attendance

-“Our understanding was that the rec center was named after the neighborhood or the school, not Metz the person.” So renaming shouldn’t be an issue.

-further discussion on how the renaming process works, the limitations on renaming a place that was named after a person, and how Metz Rec came to be named.

How do you Honor the community?

“[the renaming] is not so much about honoring the community as the community honoring him.”

Danny – “I want to make this happen, so I’m willing to go and find what you need in order to back the support from the community.”

“We [the Ballet East company] have wanted to approach it as a family driven initiative and with us [Ballet East] as the backing to the family.”

- further discussion on how the Metz Renaming was originally brought about for clarification.