




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

THROUGH: Stephanie Hayden Howard, LMSW, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Kimberly A. McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) 

DATE: April 8, 2024

SUBJECT: Zilker Metropolitan Park Weekend and Holiday Parking

I wanted to provide information regarding the Parks and Recreation Department's (PAR) intention to modify parking fees and manage seasonal parking at Zilker Metropolitan Park.

Parking Fees

Beginning May 25, 2024, PAR, in cooperation with the Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW), will transition away from a \$7/ day flat rate parking fee to \$3 hourly rate for parking at Zilker Metropolitan Park. This season's parking fees will continue to be collected at the new rate through September 2, 2024, on Saturdays, Sundays, and designated holidays. This incremental transition aligns with recommendations from TPW and mirrors other parking lot areas in and around the downtown and Zilker Metropolitan Park areas. This change is expected to increase vehicle turnover in the existing parking areas and allow for the collection of additional data related to length of stay. The data collected will assist PAR with future parking configurations and rate decisions. PAR's current data shows that many visitors park for less than two hours, making this change a reduction in fees for those who visit the park in shorter increments.

These new hourly rate fees come as a result of the newest incremental adjustments in Zilker Park's history with parking. In 2016, PAR began installing pay stations to increase efficiency in Zilker Park parking lots by reducing both traffic congestion and operating expenses. PAR marked the completion of the project with the installation of meters in the parking lots at Azie Morton Road and Stratford Drive in 2023, and the activation of the Park ATX parking app across the park.

All the funds collected from parking at Zilker Park go directly to support maintenance and improvements in the parking lots at Zilker Park. Future projects may include parking lot and road maintenance, lighting

installation, and installation of electric vehicle charging stations. Additionally, PARD utilizes parking fees to hire TPW staff on weekends to help enforce parking regulations.

Managed Parking

PARD has again identified one-time funding within the existing Fiscal Year 2024 PARD budget to operate two free peak-season shuttle programs designed to help visitors travel to, from and within Zilker Park. One program will assist visitors traveling to Zilker Park by shuttling back and forth from One Texas Center or another off-site parking facility. The shuttle service to a satellite parking facility has operated since 2022. New this year, PARD will pilot a circulator shuttle to help visitors get from one place to another within Zilker Park. The details of each program are being finalized and will be announced and next month. It is important to note that there is no identified sustainable funding source for either the internal circulator or the off-site parking shuttle. Shuttle service funding availability is evaluated annually and allocated if feasible.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6717.

cc: Jesús Garza, Interim City Manager
 Robert Goode, P.E., Assistant City Manager
 Richard Mendoza, P.E., M.P.A., Director, Transportation and Public Works Department