



**AUSTIN  
PARKS &  
RECREATION**  
*Cultural Places, Natural Spaces*

# ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2011-2012



# Director's Message

*We are proud to share with you our 2010-11 Annual Report.*

*Once again, the Department has tried diligently to spend your dollars as responsibly as possible. We continue to focus on partnerships and coordinated efforts to stretch the dollars as far as we reasonably can.*

*I am proud of our staff and their work. They take PRIDE in the job and work hard to meet the community's expectations.*

*Please feel free to contact us, should you have issues, concerns or comments. Our email is [parks@austintexas.gov](mailto:parks@austintexas.gov)*



Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director  
Austin Parks and Recreation Department



Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director  
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

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# OVERVIEW

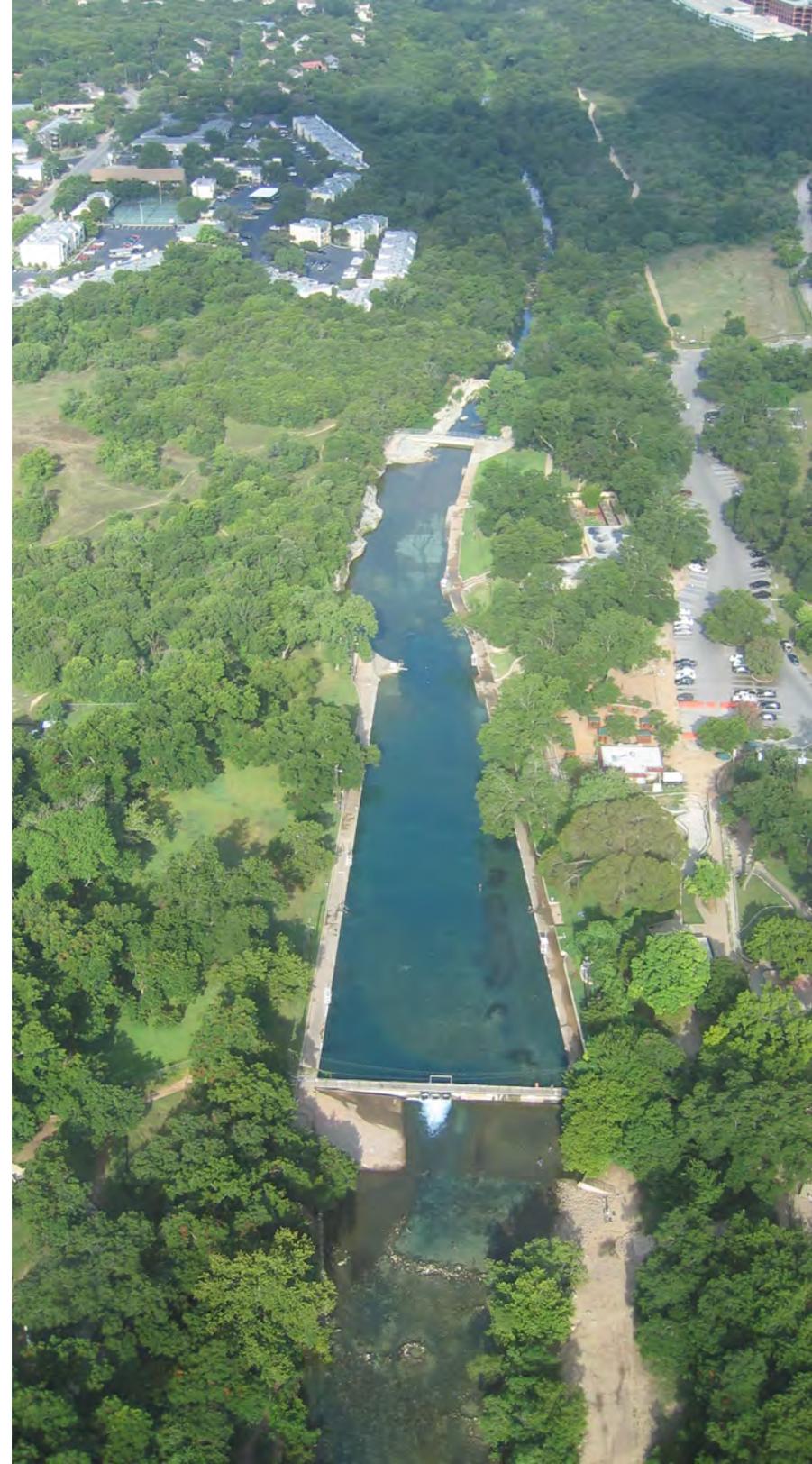
The Austin Parks and Recreation system started with the founding of Austin in 1839. The City's original layout included three squares set aside for public use. Wooldridge, Brush, and Republic Square were Austin's first parks and are still enjoyed today. The Department maintains park land, preserves, the urban forest and oversees:

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 garden center              | 7 arts and cultural centers |
| 1 nature and science center  | 9 stages/amphitheatres      |
| 1 crafts market              | 10 golf courses             |
| 1 youth entertainment center | 20 recreation centers       |
| 3 senior activity centers    | 52 swimming pools           |
| 4 reservable buildings       | 115 tennis courts           |
| 4 museums                    | 172 playscapes              |
| 5 public cemeteries          | 175 athletic fields         |

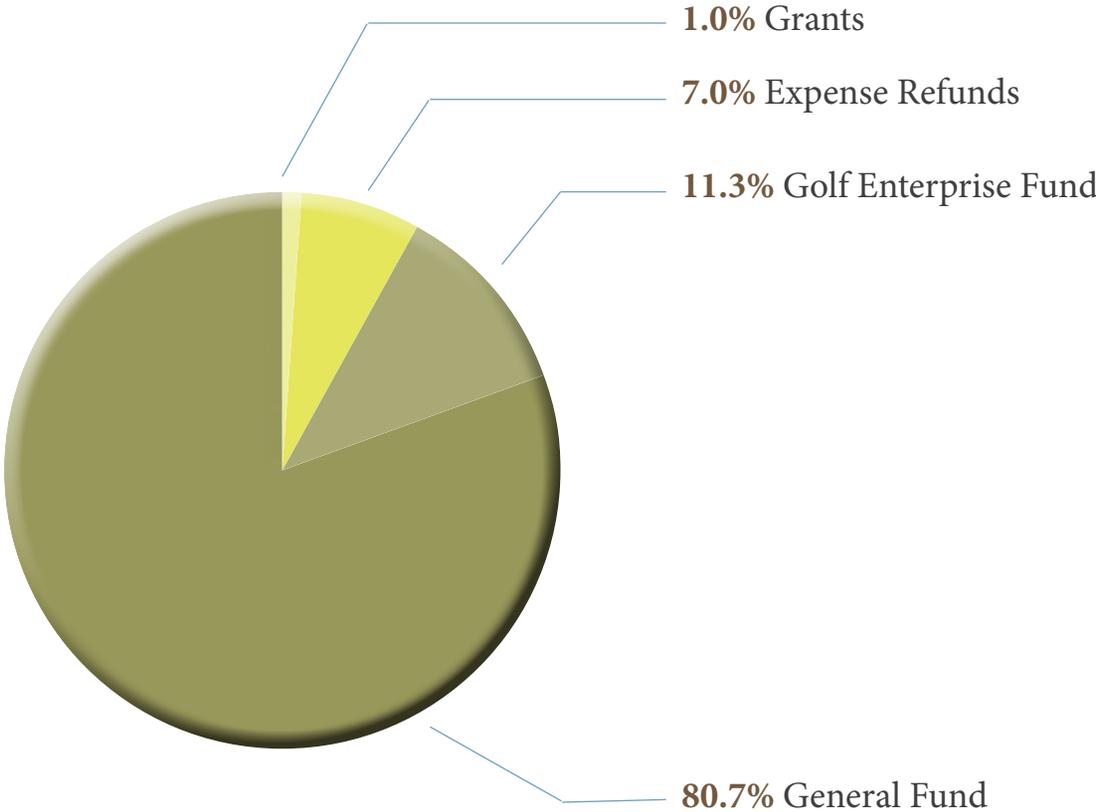


# PARK CATEGORIES

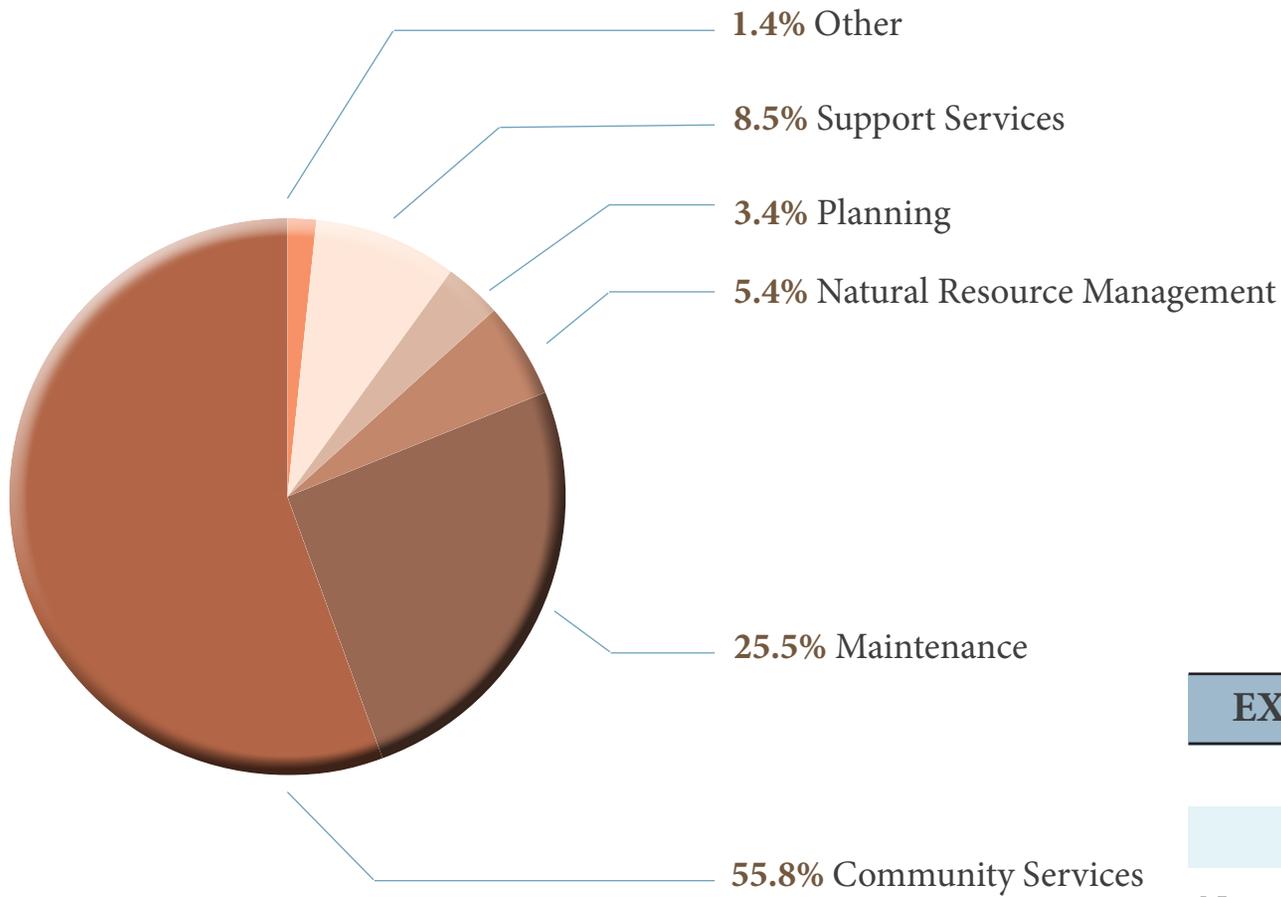
	District	14 parks	746 acres
	Golf Courses	5 parks	845 acres
	Greenbelts	39 parks	3,611 acres
	Metropolitan	11 parks	6,151 acres
	Nature Preserves	15 parks	2,513 acres
	Neighborhood	72 parks	946 acres
	Pocket	22 parks	21 acres
	School	23 parks	129 acres
	Special	39 parks	841 acres
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>247</b> parks	<b>16,009</b> acres



# FY 2011-2012 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



REVENUE	
Parks and Recreation Budget	\$55,114,946
General Fund	\$4,458,798
Golf Enterprise	\$6,172,873
Expense Refunds	\$3,802,931
Grants	\$551,149



EXPENSES	
Community Services	\$3,091,949
Maintenance	\$13,944,081
Natural Resource Management	\$2,755,747
Planning	\$2,094,367
Support Services	\$4,629,655
Other	\$771,609

# MARKETING

VISION

The Parks and Recreation vision is to connect people and parks through community engagement, public information and marketing.

## Accomplishments include:

- Organized a corporate Marketing LERN Evaluation in May 2012
- Implemented a new Recreation Management Software called RecTrac. RecTrac is fully integrated parks and recreation software that **increases your efficiency and productivity, while providing management with extensive reporting and statistical data.**
- Established a Marketing Plan Calendar displaying yearly staff responsibilities, and a Marketing Committee Calendar listing the yearly marketed events.
- Implemented SharePoint throughout the Department. Organized a High Priority Calendar on SharePoint.
- Established a Single Point of Contact (SPOCs) system for Media, Graphic Design, Web, and Social Media. The Marketing and Communications Unit provides periodic training on best practices and emerging trends.
- Implemented strategy to better communicate with employees. DirectLine Newsletter place on the intranet to reach more employees. "Idea Box" added to intranet to allow employees to submit their ideas.
- Kicked off Benefit Campaign with monthly activities at PARD facilities. Coordinate monthly walks with Univision. Assist with marketing of weekly concerts in the parks
- Completed the annual Marketing Evaluation
- Completed the AustinGo Migration

➔ **\$6,655**

projected LERN conference costs for PARD Staff

➔ **600**

standard reports provides by RecTrac and each report provides multiple selection criteria.

➔ **4-5**

campaigns per month market by the Marketing and Communications Unit

➔ **8**

Marketing Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) have been put in place to help implement the Marketing Plan

➔ **7**

sites have been established on SharePoint

➔ **38,614**

followers on the Department Facebook pages, as of August 2012

➔ **28**

staff trainings were facilitated in photography, graphics, public information, marketing, media relations, social media, Drupal Software, and SharePoint Software



# HUMAN RESOURCES

The Department conducted a Market Study in May 2012 to determine appropriate pay rates, according to the job description, and the duties performed on the job. The statistics are as follows:

**549**

Number of Employees on payroll

**477**

Number of employees included in Market Study

**86.9%**

% PARD staff included in Study

**249**

Number of employees who received an increase

**52.2%**

% employees in study who received a pay increase

**45.4%**

% PARD staff who received an increase due to the Study

**228**

Number of employees who did not receive an increase

**3.9%**

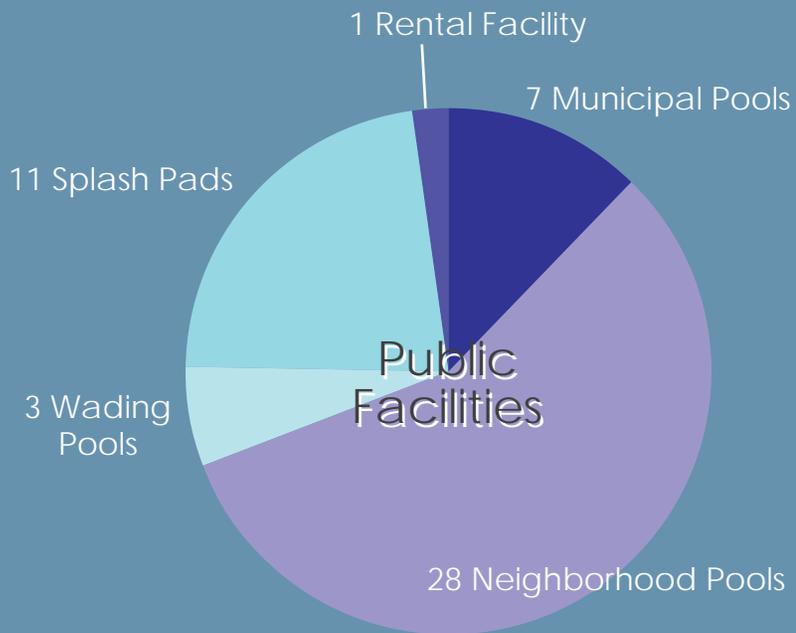
Average % increase

**551**

Full time employees as of July 28, 2012

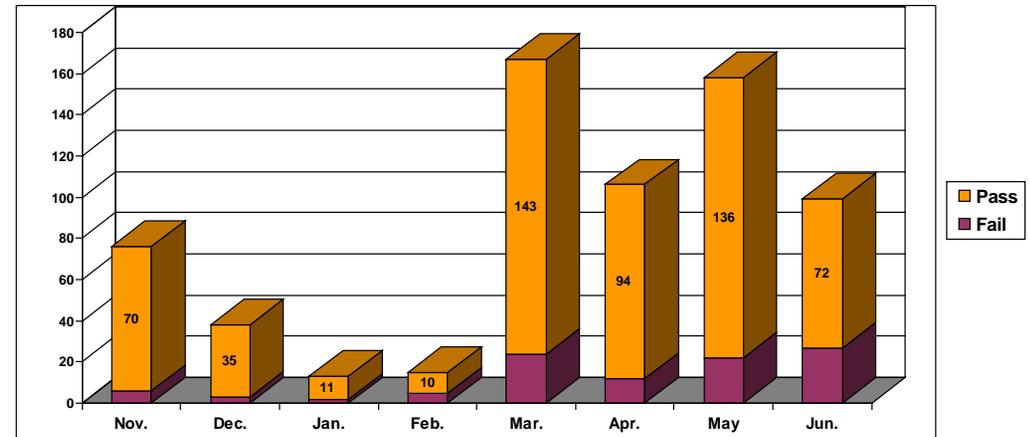
# AQUATICS

The Aquatic Division's mission is to provide a variety of safe and diverse aquatic programs and services to the residents and visitors of Austin by adhering to high quality standards established by the Aquatic Division.



The 50 public facilities hold approximately **8,145,025 gallons** of water

## 2010-11 Lifeguards Certified / Recertified by Month



**44 years**

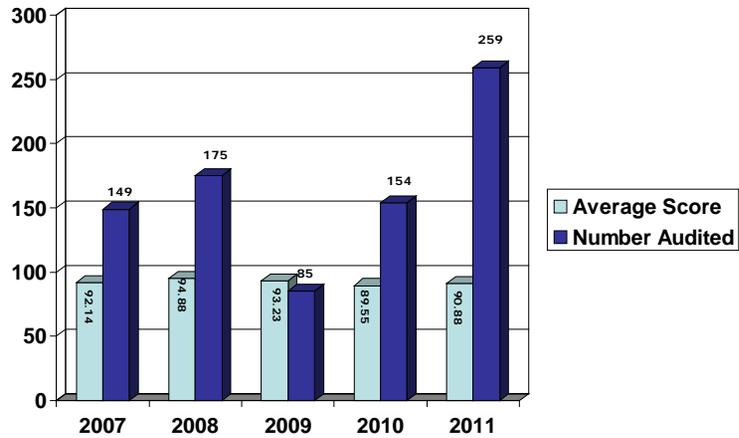
is the average age of our municipal, neighborhood and wading pools.



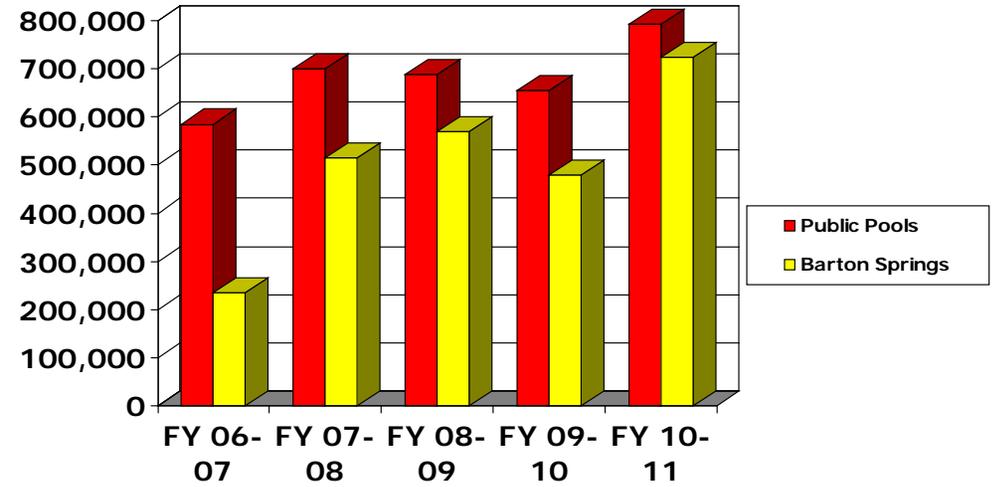
**2.8 years**

is the average age of our splash pads.

## Lifeguard Audits 2007-2011



## Total Attendance





150

special events hosts by the Department



700,000

people drawn to special events annually



\$316 million

injecting into the Austin economy by  
ACL between 2006 through 2009



\$225,000

raised from the Reggae Festival in 2012

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation plays a major role in the success of some of the country's best known international music festivals. These include the Austin City Limits Music Festival and South by Southwest. The Austin Parks and Recreation Special Events Office manages a wide array of special events. It is primarily responsible for facility rentals and facility rental marketing. The unit also manages commercial filming and photography, event contracts negotiations, plus assists event organizers in navigating the City's special events permitting process.

The Special Events office facilitates 1500 rentals annually. Park rental amenities include 33 picnic sites in 20 parks and four event facilities. The office also manages the permitting of commercial filming and photography within the parks system. The public rents Parks and Recreation amenities for family celebrations, sports activities, classes, and for leisure activities. Corporations, companies and organizations rent park amenities for business functions and recreational activities. The Parks and Recreation Department's nonmonetary contributions place an impact on the economic expenses an organization would have to pay if not waived by the City Council.





# PARTNERSHIP

- Urban Forestry partnered with the Watershed Protection Department, and the Austin Water Utility Department to develop a water irrigation program to water young trees using backwash water, released from splash-pads and wading pools. Backwash water, after being treated with thiosulfate, has low chlorine levels and it is safe for irrigation.
- The History Arts and Nature Division (HAND) partnered with the Music Department, CTM and Austin Energy to produce 20 concerts in parks and recreation facilities celebrating local music and the benefits of their parks system.
- The Emma S. Barrientos partnered with non-profits Crossroads and Bellas Artes for a third time to produce four successful days of music, becoming an official venue of SXSW.
- Friends of the Parks of Austin (Friends) is a volunteer, non-profit organization incorporated in 1985 for the purpose of supporting and helping create a first class park system in Austin, Texas. It encourages and organizes programs for voluntary service in parks.
- Since 1992, Austin Parks Foundation has initiated, promoted, and facilitated physical improvements, new programming, and greater community involvement for Austin's parks. Each year, Austin Parks Foundation generates millions of dollars in volunteer time, in-kind donations, and financial support for city parks.

Businesses, non-profit organizations, neighborhood and community groups and individuals are invited and encouraged to partner with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) to enhance and improve parks, increase recreational and cultural opportunities and preserve natural areas in Austin. From volunteer opportunities and the adopt-a-park program, to park improvement projects and public-private partnerships, there are many ways to partner with the department.



## Town Lake Metro Park Fannie Davis Gazebo Development



PARD recently completed renovations to the Fannie Davis Gazebo located along Auditorium Shores within Town Lake Metropolitan Park. The scope of work included a report by engineering consultants of the existing wooden frame and roof membrane, installation of a new roof, painting of the structure to match original color scheme and anti-graffiti coating on the concrete benches. Additional site work related to the surrounding landscaping and pond will be coordinated with the Watershed Protection Department through future phases of work along Auditorium Shores.

## Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metropolitan Park – Disc Golf Course

On June 9th, 2012, PARD held the grand opening ceremony for the newly developed disc golf course at Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metropolitan Park in conjunction with the local disc sports community. The full 18-hole course features pro and amateur concrete tee pads, putting and practice areas, reinforced baskets, signage, benches at every tee box, crushed rock paths, water retention areas, erosion control measures and mulching which adheres to modern standards for sustainable design.



## Waller Creek Boathouse

Working collaboratively with Public Works Project Management and Watershed Protection, CIP staff from the Parks and Recreation Department assisted in the completion of the much anticipated Waller Creek Boathouse. This building, the first major structure completed under the Waller Creek Tunnel project, provides 10,800 square feet of new building space replacing the former buildings on the site of the Waller Creek Tunnel Outlet. In addition to boat storage, office, exercise room, locker and shower facilities, the new structure offers a number of amenities for park users including public restrooms, a viewing deck and a food and beverage concession. The new building is of a contemporary design style,



built with sustainability and durability as primary design objectives.

The Waller creek Boathouse was completed in May 2012, as part of the Waller Creek Tunnel project. The new boathouse is replacing two existing Parks and Recreation boat facilities and features a lobby, observation deck, vending area, and restrooms that are all open to the public. On March 1, 2012, City Council authorized the Austin Rowing Club to manage and operate the facility, with boat storage and office areas reserved for the use of the Austin Rowing Club. In addition to the new building, the project includes landscaping and new boat docks.

## Zilker Hillside Theater – Expansion

In partnership with Zilker Theater Productions, PARD completed an expansion to the stage and loading areas at the Zilker Hillside Theater. Working through a Public Private Partnership agreement approved by Council in January 2012, PARD leveraged the contribution of \$180,500 in public funds to compliment approximately \$90,000 of donated in-kind goods and services provided from Zilker Theater Productions and many other stakeholders to complete the project. This project was completed within an aggressive schedule in order for the theater to be open for the summer season.



## Seaholm Water Intake Structures – Redevelopment Investigation

In the Spring of 2011, PARD retained Cotera+Reed Architects to prepare a redevelopment investigation report, assessing the existing facilities and considering potential adaptive reuse possibilities for the decommissioned Seaholm and Greene Water Intake structures. The Cotera+Reed study was not commissioned to recommend specific adaptive reuses, rather to analyze broad categories of potential uses and explore the opportunities and potential constraints associated with the use. The final report was presented to the Parks and Recreation Board and the City Manager's Office in March of 2012 in anticipation of future public engagement, design partnering and redevelopment phases.

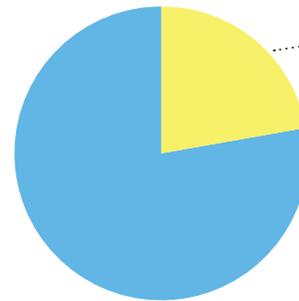
# SUSTAINABILITY

The Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program (SUACG) was created by Austin City Council in 2009. The purpose is to establish a single point of contact and streamline the process for establishing community gardens and sustainable urban agriculture on city land. SUACG seeks to connect the dots between all of the efforts that make up the City of Austin's local food system, catalyzing partnerships to build community around local food production and food security. SUACG's broader goals include providing leadership, education, policy analysis, and project development support for the City of Austin's community-based food system.

## Reclaimed Water

The City of Austin treats wastewater that may be reused in activities that do not require fully treated drinking water (such as irrigation, cooling towers, ornamental ponds, manufacturing and toilet flushing).

**1.2 billion**  
gallons of water conserved by the City's reclaimed water program in an average year



**6 swimming pools and 1 splash pad** were closed in 2011 to conserve resources and assist with some repairs

## Metrics of a Austin Grows Program

**36**

community garden and farm site visits

**63**

community queries and consultations

**13**

13 new projects/initiatives in progress

**\$6 billion**

in collaborative grant submissions

**22**

presentations to community events

**11**

boards/councils/commission presentations

**5**

Research Collaborations with Universities



# HAND

The History, Arts, and Nature Division celebrates and promotes Austin's diverse history and culture, through community events, exhibits, classes, programs as well as by providing low-cost or free access to performance, rehearsal and meeting space for the purpose of enriching the quality of life for every citizen in Austin.



**672,000**

people accessed cultural, and nature activities



**\$XXX million**

injecting into the Austin economy by  
ACL between 2006 through 2009



**\$XXXXXXXX**

raised from the Reggae Festival in 2012

## Highlights

- HAND partnered with the Old Bakery to transform their 3rd floor space into an art gallery and history museum, with new museum graphics illustrating the history of the historic Old Bakery and its role in Austin's history of the 19th and 20th centuries.
- HAND completed a year-long pilot program in partnership with the Recreation Division and Centralized Programming Division providing enhancement instruction in arts from the Dougherty Arts Center and environmental sciences from Austin Nature and Science Center to after-school programs in 6 recreation centers
- The O.Henry partnered with the Austin Book Festival for the first time in presenting the national release of The Pen/O. Henry Prize Stories with a host of nationally recognized writers.
- The George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center opened the "Original Anderson High School Exhibit," a new permanent exhibit produced in collaboration with community volunteers, partners from Huston-Tillotson University and the University of Texas and former students of Anderson High School to commemorate this historic east side high school.
- The Elisabet Ney Museum initiated "Museum Soloists," a series of performances by local musicians to complement the museum experience.

# RECREATION

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department's Community Recreation Division is committed to providing a wide-range of quality recreation programs and services to the Austin community. The Department conducted a series of 'Community Engagement' open house meetings with a desire to better serve the communities that neighbor the Department's 18 recreation centers. Conscientious work was put towards improving and standardizing Department programs. The goal is to ensure that selected programs reflect the professionalism, equality, affordability and accessibility to services voiced by the community. The scope of programs offered at the recreation centers are planned for people of all ages and abilities.

2,450

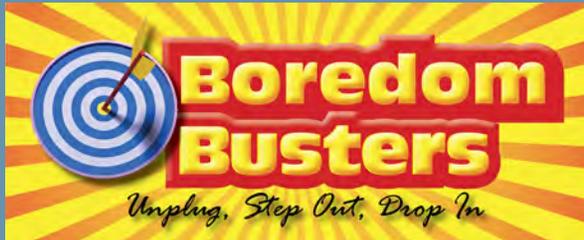
recreation programs were conducted  
citywide during FY 2011-2012.

1,225

programs were offered at no cost  
to recreation patrons

24,733

youth participated in 'out of  
school time' activities during the  
first 9 months of FY 2011-2012



The new 2012 Summer drop-in program, Boredom Busters, was created to provide youth between the ages of 5 and 18 with an opportunity to experience and participate in structured programs during the summer month. The program provided participants with the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities, single day tournaments, active play, and field trips during the heat of the summer day.

3,135

programs were offered at no cost  
to recreation patrons

# FORESTRY

Our Foresters, Forestry Specialists and Forestry Technicians performed a wide variety of tasks; including tree inspections, maintenance, tree removals, pruning, watering, and tree planting.

 **5,535**  
bare root or seedling trees planted

 **435**  
volunteers for tree planting

 **1305 hours**  
contributed by tree planting volunteers

 **\$200,000**  
leveraged funding, donations and contributions

SERVICE	# of WORK ORDERS
Limb Hangers	139
Down Tree	231
Down Limb	105
Inspection - ROW Tree	512
Inspection - Park Tree	225
Tree Pruning	139
Tree Removal	242
Brush Removal	52
Irrigation Check	227
Tree Watering	472
Mulching	17
Hauling-Material Handling	30
Inspection - Blind Corner	34
Blind Corner	2
Inspection-Other	35
Inspection - Damage	9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2481</b>



## Programs and Services:

### Site Plan and Parkland Project Reviewed for impacts to public trees

- 215 commercial site plan reviewed for impacts to public trees
- 11 parkland project reviews completed for impacts to park trees
- Developed a Standard Comments sheet for tree related comments

### Claims and Tree Appraisals

- 5 Illegal damage cases investigated
- 1 Encroachment case investigated
- 4 Vehicle crash cases investigated

### Cemetery tree maintenance and care

- Performed over 100 hours of inspections and assessments of cemetery trees
- Provided tree care and watering recommendations
- Administered a contract for removal of 74 of the most critical trees

- Staff participated in the development of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
- Provided technical oversight and quality assurance of the NeighborWoods Program, which distributed over 3,773 street trees to 2,266 households

## Projects:

- Substantial progress was made toward the establishment of a Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan in conjunction with the Urban Forestry Board, including the completion of an Urban Forest Opinion Survey, completion of an Urban Forestry Board retreat to brainstorm plan elements, and the adoption of a vision for the plan by the UFB.
- Program staff lead the development of the Invasive Species Management Plan to guide vegetation management on city-managed property.
- Barton Springs Pool: staff prepared the second draft of tree treatment plan.
- Completed the Zilker Tree Rescue Project in conjunction with Austin Parks Foundation and volunteers. Staff facilitated the project, which involved the intensive care of 91 of the largest trees and the mulching of hundreds of trees in the Zilker Park polo fields area.
- Potable water use reductions were investigated and implemented, including:
  - The utilization of reclaimed water by one of the programs tree watering trucks. The reclaimed water will reduce potable water use by thousands of gallons per year.
  - Initiation of a pilot project at West Austin Park to utilize reclaimed water for tree irrigation.
- Completed first-year implementation of the Decker Tallgrass Prairie Preserve and the Indiangrass Wildlife Sanctuary restoration plan, in conjunction with Austin Energy, PARD Park Rangers and Austin Water Utility.
- An MOU between Environmental Sciences Institute and the Urban Forestry Program was established to allow for staff co-instructed a University of Texas Field Seminar in Environmental Science and Sustainability course in exchange for the completion of field studies on parkland.



## MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Lee Leffingwell, Mayor  
Sheryl Cole, Mayor Pro Tem  
Chris Riley, Place 1  
Mike Martinez, Place 2  
Kathie Tovo, Place 3  
Laura Morrison, Place 4  
Bill Spelman, Place 5

## OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Marc Ott, City Manager  
Michael McDonald, Deputy City Manager  
Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager  
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager  
Bert Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager  
Anthony Snipes, Acting Assistant City Manager  
Ray Baray, Acting Chief of Staff

## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director  
Patrick Corona, CPRP, Acting Assistant Director  
Kimberly A. McNeeley, Assistant Director  
Cora D. Wright, Assistant Director

## PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Jane Rivera, Chair  
Jeff Francell, Vice Chair  
William Abell, Board Member  
Susana Almanza, Board Member  
Dale Glover, Board Member  
Carol Lee, Board Member  
Lynn Osgood, Board Member

**Mission Statement** *To provide, protect and preserve a park system that promotes quality recreational, cultural and outdoor experiences for the Austin community.*