

Friends of Barton Springs Pool

To: Austin City Council
From: Board of Directors
Friends of Barton Springs Pool
Date: 9/6/06
Subject: Budget Recommendations

We are grateful to the City Manager and the Council for adding funds to the proposed budget for improvements to Barton Springs Pool. As we have seen, the Pool has reached a state that is distressing to all who love it. The commitment of the council and manager to reverse this downward trend is welcome.

There is much to be done. Top priority must go to rescuing the Pool itself from a choked decline. Beyond that the grounds and facilities need restoration, renovation, and improvement. Below are the spending priorities we favor. We would like to work with the council and staff to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing Pool issues.

Recommendations:

1. Remove the gravel from the deep end of the Pool.
2. Increase the staff available to clean the Pool both in the Parks and Recreation Aquatics Department (Aquatics) and in the Watershed Protection & Development Review Department (Watershed) Salamander Conservation Program.
3. Develop procedures to lower the Pool for cleaning when the water flow is below 54 cubic feet per minute (CFM) due to drought conditions.
4. Develop a concise manual of city operation and management of the Pool to show current practices in Pool-cleaning techniques, and what techniques still must be developed to keep the Pool clean, even in drought and flood conditions; thereby creating a clear statement of the practical problems that remain.
5. Provide arbor care to all the trees around the Pool.
6. Remove the unsightly and dangerous tangle of electrical wires strung across and around the Pool, and replace outdoor lighting with solar-powered lights.
7. Immediately begin planning for a modest bathhouse or changing room at the South Gate that can serve during later renovation of the main bathhouse.
8. Initiate long-term studies for restoration and renovation of the historic bathhouse.
9. Additional projects for the future include: Restore native flora & fauna to pool; Restore some creek flow to pool; Replace the chain link fence with wrought iron; Improve irrigation system; Rebuild the dam; Build a second dam and pool downstream.