



BOATING CONCESSION PUBLIC COMMENT
MARCH 2012

MARCH 7 & 21 2012		COMMENT
PUBLIC MEETINGS	PUBLIC MEETING MARCH 7th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen expressed safety concerns regarding novice SUP, Canoe, Kayak, uses and excursion vessels. PARD will coordinate with city departments regarding water safety and navigating requirements
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at recreational boating on Lake Austin – 2010 study
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a broader scope of community input
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicitations shall address permitting removal and compliance of waste on excursion vessels
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen expressed concerned regarding Hyatt rental activity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abundance of rental opportunities currently present, to operate an excursion boat would make more sense and serve a larger part of the community
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excursion boats will provide more opportunity for the entire community to experience and enjoy Lady Bird Lake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More opportunity to service senior citizens through an excursion boat operation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is PARD's role in the management of private concessions operating on Town Lake? • Developing a mechanism to permit the activity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lone Star vessel operators present a safety factor on the water because they are alert to all activity and do a good job avoiding it
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PARD should coordinate a Community Lady Bird Lake Safety Input Meeting
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PARD should think about the safety on the lake Possibly conduct a Lady Bird Lake Master Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate lake users by presenting a safety video prior to authorizing user access. Would be piloted by COA boating
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video could address prevalent issues such as low water areas, lake navigation and etiquette (ie laying down and sunbathing on paddleboards, etc.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excursion boats provide less impact to the lake 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practices of similar sized cities for ideas on how to address safety on municipal lakes 	



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	EMAIL	COMMENT
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">EMAIL COMMENTS</p>	<p>EMAIL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AustinNotes announcement says the "department will be gathering public comments on a recreational boating concession to be located at 101 South First Street on Lady Bird Lake." Using the words "to be" seems to indicate to me that a decision has already been made.....Could you please direct me to a website that could give me specific information and background about this concession "to be" located at 101 South First Street? Is this a proposal? Or has it already been approved by the Parks Board and City Council. RESPONSE: The current concession located at 101 South First Street, Lone Star Riverboat, contract has expired. In accordance with the department's concession policy, PARD must go through an extensive public input process to gather public comments on the recreational boating concession to operate in that location. Public input will be gathered and assembled to arrive at options that the department will present to the Parks and Recreation Department's oversight Boards for consideration. The department will then begin the process of developing requirements for a Request for Proposals (RFP)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I just heard that the concession next to Capital Cruises is currently up for renewal. I would like to strongly urge the City to consider utilizing this location as a hub for Stand up Paddling (SUP). As a pioneer of the sport and avid stand up paddler I can attest that this move would benefit thousands of Austin residents and visitors." "Austinites and visitors can rent boards at some of the other concessions now, but this would be like the scullers and rowers renting their equipment from Lonestar Riverboats, it just doesn't make a lot of sense." "Having been involved with SUP for over 7 years now and competing in races around the world, I can tell you that Austin is years ahead of other landlocked cities. We literally have people traveling here from Dallas, Houston and even the coast to SUP our waterways. Please ensure that the Austin SUP scene remains the leader in Texas, it's good for our citizens, for our visitors and our image as a cutting edge and leading city. SUP is the next triathlon, we would do well to collectively embrace it. Austin needs a waterfront location DEDICATED to SUP rentals, lessons, and training to keep this growing sport on track"
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What I would like to advocate is Lone Star be rebranded as the premier paddle boarding dock on Lady Bird Lake. Paddle boarding is the fastest growing water sport in the world with no end in sight. Supply will not keep up with demand and Austinites will continue to have to wait in line for sometimes over an hour before getting on the water. Not only is my proposal beneficial for public use, but the lucrative financial impact we would have on City revenue is inevitable. Please consider changing Lone Star's current use to a paddle boarding mecca, specifically designated to accommodate the growing demand for SUP
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like to suggest the Lone Star location next to Capital Cruises be structured to be a SUP dock. This is the fastest growing water sport/activity in the world. We are fortunate to live in a city that has weather for such fun to be had year around. This would not only be great for the city but all those who aren't so lucky to call Austin home. Please consider changing Lone Star's current use to be specifically designated to accommodate the growing demand for SUP



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COMMENT CARDS		COMMENT
COMMENT CARD	COMMENT CARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the concession located @ 101 S. 1st street should specialize in larger excursion vessels. There are already too many canoes, kayaks and stand up paddle boards on the lake. Four other concessions and at least one other company rent all of the smaller boats. It is already a safety problem and the park police and Texas Parks and Wildlife are aware of the situation. It would also be an unsafe situation to have numerous smaller boats leaving and returning at the same dock as the larger excursion vessels. Many of the smaller boats are operating after sunset, without any lights or boat safety knowledge
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please put me on your mailing list for comments regarding this issue
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it is good to have competing large-boat concessions, LoneStar and Capitol Cruises, rather than a monopoly. Also, I think it is good to have boating activities usable by the less-athletic people who can't negotiate a kayak or the likes. Also, a large boat like LoneStar can hold 150 people, a kayak only 1 or 2. Thus more people can use the lake, with less lake traffic. I favor continue with Lone Star



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QUESTIONS		COMMENT
SURVEY MONKEY	<p>Please list the types of boats that you use/prefer to use (i.e. rowboat, canoe, etc.).</p>	• Canoe, kayak
		• Canoe
		• Kayak
		• crew style boats, but only if there is education/training
		• rowboat, kayak, canoe
		• I would love to have somewhere on Lady Bird Lake that rents small sailboats (Sunfish, Laser, sailing dinghy, etc.)
		• There are already too many small boats on the lake -- kayaks, stand-up paddles, canoes, rowing shells. Parks needs to do a capacity study before any RFP for a new small boat concession is written. Study should also compare Austin to competing cities with respect to lake saturation
		• My top two wants are: - Small sailboat rental - Standup paddleboard rental
	<p>How often do you go out on a boat excursion on Lady Bird Lake?</p>	• More often with out-of-town guests
		• rarely. Maybe once in 4 years
		• Twice a week
		• I row and paddle board so I don't go out except when family/friends are in town
		• 3 times per week
		• Never
		• seldom
		• 3 times a week
		• Row 3 times per week
		• Holiday parties / family gatherings
		• company events
		• Special events
• Personally, every 5 years		
• I go almost every time I have guests in town, which is often		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My top two wants are: - Small sailboat rental - Standup paddleboard rental
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sure why we would need to have another rowing location as there is one good one and two sub par ones already in competition... the good one being 500 feet (as the fish swims) from this location
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a lot of boats out there, esp. in the summer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lake is looking awfully busy these days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more water safety patrols on the lake
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding any more kayaks, canoes and SUPs on Lady Bird Lake will diminish the ability of existing and recently approved concessions to meet revenue expectations. More of an issue is the increase in kayak, canoe and SUP traffic adds to an already serious safety problem on the Lake
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety needs to be the number one concern. With that in mind, PARD should conduct a study of Lake Lady Bird's safe carrying capacity for the variety of boating uses that currently co-exist (e.g., excursions boats, fishing boats, kayaks, rowboats, SUPs, sculls, etc.) and the range of skill levels (e.g., unskilled hourly renters to highly skilled competitive racers). Is it unlimited? If not, how are safety concerns being factored into decision making?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake is already too congested. Is there a city study of lake usage that is guiding this policy development?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not logical to give people tickets for swimming in Lady Bird Lake then rent standup paddle boards that encourage that very activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am concerned about congestion and safety on the lake. Small boats that require little or no skill to operate (kayaks, SUPs, row boats) are potential hazards to themselves and/or to larger faster boats (sculls, sweep boats, excursion boats) that cannot maneuver quickly. Vendors and/or many of their customers do not pay enough attention to traffic rules and safety concerns on the water; and the City/PARD is either unaware or unconcerned that there is an issue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please do not create any more canoe/kayak concessions. Our lake is at a saturation point, and it would be irresponsible and short sighted for PARD to attempt to flood the various concession locations with even more canoe/kayak concessions--that will drive the margins (i.e. revenue to the city) for all concessions on the lake, which would be a tragedy for all involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love the concessions that are already provided at Lake Lady Bird. It seems like each of the businesses provide different specialties and services, each with their own area of expertise. I also love that there are several businesses that are able to thrive on water recreation activities, rowing, bats and private events- as opposed to just one large company for each concession. As of last year, I've noticed more water traffic than ever before. I keep hoping that the canoe, kayak and other rentals won't become so abundant that it becomes less enjoyable and scenic on Lake Lady Bird 	

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QUESTIONS		COMMENT
SURVEY MONKEY	Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no master plan of activities on the lake, but a growing hodge podge of private rentals and "public" rentals of all kinds. Lady Bird Lake is turning into a big floating party with no understanding of situational safety considerations. Currently on the lake is Zen Paddle, Gliding Revolutions, the Hyatt's three private concessionaires (one SUP, one kayak, one excursion), Lone Star River Boat, Rowing Dock, Zilker Canoe, Texas Rowing Center, and the recently bid Waller Creek Boathouse Aren't 10 active concessions enough?!
	<p>Do you have any other comments or suggestions about potential boating concessions on Lady Bird Lake?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This survey is frustrating ... it forces you to make choices from a list that does not include other options, for example what if you do NOT want to see more watercraft on the lake? Does the Parks & Rec feel like everything is now for sale on our lake? Shame on them for not including choices they may not want to hear
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please do not over saturate our great Lady Bird Lake with too many recreational boating vendors. It is hard enough to get everyone to understand the basic rules of the water way without having dozens of different versions of the rules being distributed. The parks department should seriously be considering the entire Lady Bird Lake business "eco-system" instead of just leasing its shores out to the highest bidder for mass revenue generation. Time to give quality over quantity some serious thought
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What I'm willing to pay depends on how long the ride is and what amenities (food, drink) are offered. Aren't there other concessions in the immediate area that offer kayaks, SUPs, etc.? Do we really need more of them? Has there ever been a feasibility study regarding Lake Lady Bird's usage and capacity? And what about bringing back the gondola that used to be on the lake?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rowing shells, kayaks and SUPs that are currently on the Lake create a substantial amount of boat traffic, especially on weekends and holidays. The day tripper kayakers and paddlers, who are less aware of boating rules present a substantial hazard to themselves and other users. The recently approved kayak and SUP concessions at the Waller Creek Boathouse will just add to the congestion and the safety hazard. Any additional kayak, canoe and SUP concessions will substantially increase the congestion and the safety hazards and Lady Bird Lake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To quote Yogi Berra - no wonder no body comes here, its too crowded! Let's hope this doesn't apply to Lady Bird. Cruises are fun, but they should be limited. Let's keep the lake safe for the crew teams who are making Austin an attraction other than just for our great music scene
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While I welcome competition, there should not be too many organizations offering out this stuff. It will only pollute the lake and potentially cause injury
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area up by mo-pac is very crowded and touristy... its nice keeping the area around Congress for those who are want to see the bats and are respectful of the lake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's fun to go out and see the crew teams rowing by
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not sure why we would need to have another rowing location as there is one
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely no powered boats!
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payment. Depends on what it is. Dinner cruise would be nice and would pay more
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the new boat house, and the concessions there, there should be enough small boats on the lake 		

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SURVEY MONKEY	Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think that big ole' paddle boat is a lovely feature on Lady Bird Lake and would like to see it continue. I am concerned with the ever-increasing number of unskilled little boats on the water and hope that the City doesn't let the lake become "littered" with too many boating concessions. Please don't add to the shoreline concessions
	<p>Do you have any other comments or suggestions about potential boating concessions on Lady Bird Lake?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I love the big boats and would like to see a casino operation that my friends and family could enjoy - in my opinion it would be a big success
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanks for seeking public input. The Lone Star excursion paddle boat at 101 S. First St is a defining feature of the Austin experience. I have attended birthday parties and work-related events, and enjoyed bat cruises many, many times over the years. It's one of a kind! We make a point of taking visitors on a cruise before having dinner downtown. I strongly believe adding canoeing, kayaking, SUP, even more paddle boats, in this spot would be a major overkill. Private concessions already offer these activities in that area. Moreover, an important factor to consider is that experienced vendors will now offer these water recreation features to the public east of Congress (yeah!) on the north shore at the Parks and Rec Waller Creek Boathouse; an over-saturation of the same feature benefits no one. In fact, folks responding that they would like additional "low-skill" boating here may not be aware that Parks and Rec is already about to offer these activities just across the Congress bridge on the north shore! I believe Parks and Rec is now providing ample public access to a variety of non-motorized boating activities. What a great way to enjoy our beautiful river, great weather, and Austin-style healthy outdoor recreation. Thanks!
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems there are plenty of canoe and kayak options on Lady Bird. However, the paddle boat is kind of unique and should be continued to have this as an option on the lake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is Parks changing everything--focus more on the good groups that are already here
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a complete plan of river use and get concessionaires to have customers follow rule to the right traffic patterns on the river and have wind warning designations. Limit the number of canoes, kayaks, paddle boards and paddle boats, on the entire river. I was out on a paddle board during the Longhorn invitational and it was a traffic jam at the rowing dock. I was very happy to be leaving before the racing started because I could easily see how dangerous it is when there are too many vessels with inexperienced people not being able to move out of the way of the race course or getting blown into danger, it was very windy day
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I really like the big excursion boats, they are a great way for me to show my visitors Austin in an unique way. I also like the look of this big boats on the lake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why fix what ain't broke? The excursion boat has been a wonderful resource for Austin - for employer recruiting, parties on the lake etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the City of Austin and Parks & Recreation should conduct some sort of traffic study to determine (1) the limits, if any, of Lady Bird Lake's capacity for boat/canoe/kayak/SUP traffic and, (2) the amount of current traffic at peak usage times--i.e., weekends dawn to dark and weekdays noon to dark. I'm guessing we're at the lake's limit of capacity already, esp. between MoPac and IH 35 		

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SURVEY MONKEY	Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm afraid that this may not be the point in this survey for my question, but I am afraid that I may not fully understand question no. 3. If you meant how much would I be comfortable spending for a form of paddle boat excursion into the lake, it would be considerably more than any of the options listed. But for the sort of activity that I undertake already and routinely on the lake, it would substantially less--but I think that you were asking about the concession at 101 S. First (which I'm assuming is the Hyatt address only; I haven't double checked that address). I'm most interested in the following: (a) the preservation of the lake as a place that is a place of beauty and recreation for residents and visitors alike (b) safety for all boating activities, including those that, by nature, go faster than others (c) making sure that everyone knows and abides by the "rules of the road" on the lake--when people ignore those rules, they ruin recreation for everyone else in the area, and I mean to include the rule that all eastbound traffic stays on the south portion of the lake and all westbound traffic stays on the north portion of the lake. It is possible that when we continue to add boating concessions we will crowd the lake so much that it becomes not only unenjoyable but hazardous to the people who truly love this lake. I know that you keep that in mind
	Do you have any other comments or suggestions about potential boating concessions on Lady Bird Lake?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You do not need more boat rentals on Lady Bird Lake. There were enough rental opportunities before you forced concessions at Waller Creek boathouse. Now you want to add more? Have you done any surveys on the traffic in that lake, or the lack of parking? ...And what kind of business sense does it make for you to be undercutting your business (Waller Creek Boathouse) before it has even opened? I do not understand!
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There really are sufficient small boat rental opportunities already on Lady Bird Lake and it leads to heavy congestion at certain times. This has a negative effect for all lake users. Please do not take steps which would further exacerbate that situation. The lake is an incredible natural resource and is home to a number of boating communities (Dragon boats, rowers, fisherman, etc). Please consider an approach which benefits all the lake users. Thanks for conducting the survey
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I rent boats at one of the existing concessions occasionally. I see no need for additional kayak or canoe concessions. I have been on several of the big boat cruises, and think they are great!
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lady Bird Lake already has several concessions which offer canoe, kayak, stand-up paddle, and paddle-boat rentals. It needs to have at least one concession that offers to take people around the lake without requiring them to get some exercise