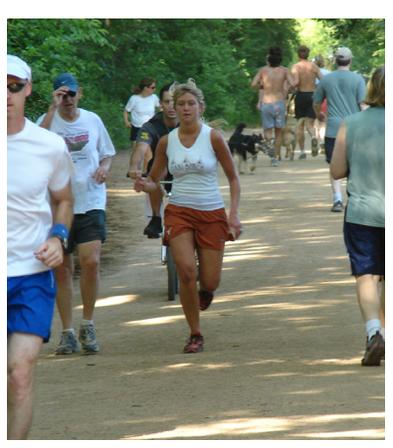
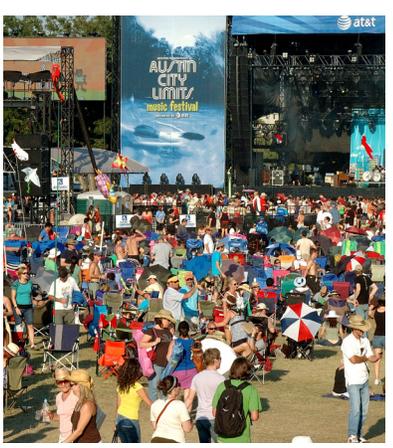




Austin Parks and Recreation

A City Within A Park



Internship Information Packet

"Your Pathway to a Successful Career"





WELCOME TO AUSTIN

Welcome to the “Live Music Capital of the World.” Austin is home to Barton Springs Pool, The University of Texas Longhorns, Silicon Hills, and the South by Southwest Film Festival.

Austin thrives on a healthy balance of technology, business services, education and government. It is currently the 4th largest city in Texas and 14th largest city in the United States and is packed with recreational opportunities. It frequently ranks high on the lists of “Best Cities.”

- Top 10 Cities to Live, Work and Play (Kiplinger’s Personal Finance)
- Top 10 Best Places to Live in the United States (msnbc.com)
- Top 10 Green Cities in the United States (Popular Science)
- Top 10 Startup-Friendly Cities (Entrepreneur Magazine)
- Best Cities for Recent College Grads (Forbes Magazine)
- Top Six Movie Landmark Destinations (Orbitz.com)
- Favorite Destinations in the United States (Trip Advisor)

Austin is known for its prized quality of life, talented workforce and extraordinary business opportunities. Austinites are some of the fittest people in Texas, with miles of hike and bike trails. An internship with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department is a valuable opportunity for a student to grow professionally and personally.

CITY OF AUSTIN OVERVIEW

The City of Austin has a council-mayor form of government. The City Council is comprised of seven members, including the Mayor. City Council Members are elected at-large for staggered three year terms. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council and has overall responsibility for the management of all City employees and the administration of all City affairs.

City of Austin Vision

We want Austin is to be the most livable city in the country

City of Austin Organizational Values

Gutsy

We honor the public trust by conducting ourselves with integrity and doing what it takes to get the job done.

Green

We consider the impact on the environment in everything we do.

Creative

We seek and embrace innovative solutions.

Committed

We provide unbeatable customer service and personally invest in our community.

Collaborative

We work together and support one another as team members across departmental boundaries.

Inclusive

We appreciate the added value the open-mindedness and diversity bring to our team.

Spirited

We are passionate about our work, have fun doing it and celebrate a job well done.

Accountable

We maintain the public trust by working smart and spending taxpayers' money wisely.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT HISTORY

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department was formed in 1928 with the passage of a City Ordinance creating the Austin Recreation Division. Thirty-six students from the University of Texas volunteered to help civic clubs, schools, and churches with their sports programs.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department is as diverse as the community it serves. As in so many other aspects of life, the key to running a successful department is having the ability to strike a balance between young and old, tradition and innovation, and the needs of one versus the needs of many. Keeping this in mind, our employees continually strive to honor the past while embracing the challenges of the future, and to serve an entire community while maintaining meaningful connections with individual participants.

The Department has grown since those 36 students helped to launch our Department.

Today, the Department oversees:

- 17,576 acres of parkland
- 206 parks
- 12 preserves
- 74 miles of hike and bike trails
- 172 athletic fields
- 20 recreation centers
- 3 senior activity centers
- 4 museums
- 4 18 hole golf courses
- 1 9 hole golf course
- 50 swimming facilities

Visit our web site at www.cityofaustin.org for more detailed information about the Austin Parks and Recreation Department.

Austin Parks and Recreation Department has something for everyone!

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department is not only responsible for the management of parks, but is also responsible for many other diverse endeavors including cultural centers, a botanical garden, a nature center, an urban forestry program, and the Old Bakery Emporium.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Mission – The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Department is to provide, preserve, and protect a park system that promotes quality recreational, cultural, and outdoor experiences for the Austin community.

Under the leadership of the Department Director, there are three Assistant Directors overseeing ten Divisions. The Division Managers are responsible for the management of the following areas:

- **Aquatics**
- **Cultural Affairs**
- **Golf**
- **Finance**
- **Management Services**
 - Human Resources
 - Public Information Office
 - Organizational Development
 - Safety / Risk Management
- **Natural Resources/Central Park Division**
 - Austin Nature & Science Center
 - Nature's Way Preschool
 - Preserves
 - Wildlife Austin Program
 - Zilker Botanical Garden
- **Operations**
 - Forestry
- **Planning, Design and Construction**
- **Community Programs**
 - Recreation Centers/Parks - Northeast
- **Community Programs**
 - Recreation Centers/Parks - Northwest

Below is a snapshot of each division and potential internship opportunities:

AQUATICS manages 50 aquatic facilities throughout the city, five of which are open year round (Balcones, Barton Springs, Deep Eddy, Dick Nichols, and Stacy). The division provides affordable and diverse aquatic programs: swim lessons for all ages, fitness swimming for all adults and children, junior lifeguard program and snorkeling. In addition Aquatics also provides CPR/AED and first aid training, Basic Water Rescue training and lifeguard support for the other divisions of the Parks and Recreation Department. Goals for an intern would include but not limited to: program development for the Instructional Swim Program, aquatic facility operations and maintenance and staff training. Work schedule could include, but not limited to the hours between 5:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m., seven days a week depending on assigned duties and responsibilities; not to exceed 40 hours per week. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in the principles of life guarding, aquatic facility operations, risk management, aquatic maintenance, and pool chemistry.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS manages many cultural and arts programs at the Elisabet Ney Museum; the O. Henry Museum; the George Washington



Carver Museum and Cultural Center; the Dougherty Arts Center; the Mexican American Cultural Center; Totally Cool, Totally Arts Program; the Music Art and Performance Program; the People's Renaissance Market; the Trail of Lights; and the Zilker Hillside Theater. At these facilities, staff create and implement arts and cultural classes and events, curates exhibits, and maintains collections pertaining to culture, the arts, history, and nature. The division also collaborates with local arts and community groups to bring important city-wide events to our parks system. Staff is comprised of arts educators, arts administrators, curators, collections management professionals, artists, and event planners-many of whom have received national recognition for their work in the arts. Internship duties could include assistance in planning and implementing classes and events, assist in collections management, and may also work directly with the public.



GOLF program provides opportunities for affordable quality golf. There are five public golf courses located throughout the city of Austin. The golf courses are open sunrise to sunset seven days a week. Work schedule could be anytime between 4:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (depending on area of work and season). The goals for interns include practical application of Pro Shop Management, customer service, turf management and general maintenance and upkeep of the courses. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in golf course architecture, landscape architecture, and turf management.



FINANCIAL SERVICES includes short and long term financial planning, fiscal reporting, budgeting, auditing, accounting, purchasing, and resource management. We work with other City departments, governmental agencies and the public to provide continuous financial support needed to sustain operations of our Parks and Recreation land and facilities. Related work includes: financial forecasting, contract administration, conducting site audits, development of regulations, purchasing, payment and receivables processing, fixed asset monitoring, capital project oversight, and grant management. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in the principles of accounting, budgeting, auditing, purchasing, finance, resource management, and business.



MANAGEMENT SERVICES provide support to help advance the mission of the department. The core functions include assisting employees with human resources related concerns, managing payroll processes, designing and delivering training, and conducting employee relations investigations. The division provides services in compensation programs, implementing policies and procedures and monitors work performance to ensure compliance with the City of Austin personnel policies and procedures. The division also provides support with public information, records management, occupational safety, information technology and organizational development, serves as a strategic partner in developing organizational objectives and performance measures to remain competitive in the parks and recreation industry. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in the fields of safety, psychology, business administration, human resources management, journalism, English, marketing, education and public administration.



NATURAL RESOURCES/ CENTRAL PARK DISTRICT

Austin Nature & Science Center provides individuals, families, and groups from the surrounding Central Texas area with educational and recreational opportunities to increase each person's knowledge and awareness and appreciation of the Central Texas natural environment and its connection to other world ecosystems. Interns with this site have studied science education, recreational programming, wildlife rehabilitation and environmental science. Work schedule will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with oversight by program coordinators. Goals for interns include practical application of theory, design of program, program presentations, and special projects.

Nature's Way Preschool provides an immersive environment for early learners to approach all subject matter through science and nature. Interns should have background in early childhood development, and environmental education. Goals for interns are practical application of theory, development of a day of curriculum that is put into practice, and special projects. Interns must commit to a semester or summer length internship, with 2 to 5 days a week schedule, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Preserves unit provides comprehensive land management and environmental education practices that serve to protect and foster stewardship and sustainability of Austin's natural areas and their ecosystems. The practical skills interns develop will be useful for a career in resource management. Interns will also get hands-on experience planning and implementing a variety of real-world, land management projects in fifteen diverse natural areas of the Austin Nature Preserve system.

Interns should have a basic knowledge of native species, be able to learn how to manage a diverse inventory of natural areas, be able to hike reasonable distances, carry tools necessary for field maintenance and for habitat restoration projects.

Interns will have an opportunity for active involvement in a program that addresses the threats of non-native invasive species, biodiversity research, and wildlife monitoring. Interns will rely on the application of scientific research and field work to meet complex conservation objectives. Additionally, beginning this year, the Preserves program will establish a propagation greenhouse and herbarium collection, and develop a seed bank for local ecotype plant species. Preserves will also continue to work with the development community to perform native plant rescues to defray restoration cost. Preserves is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in the fields of botany, biology, horticulture, geography, science and environmental education, natural resources management, and interpretation. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) background and web site design are also desired. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Some weekends are preferred.



Sheffield Education Center educates and fosters stewardship of the Edwards Aquifer and Barton Springs. Interns should have a background in graphic design, or woodworking and fabrication, or public events. Goals for interns are practical application of theory, fabrication of exhibit component, design of future exhibit or future event, and creation of activities to be tested on campers. Interns will be accepted for an 8 week span in the summer, for 40 hours of work with flexible times.

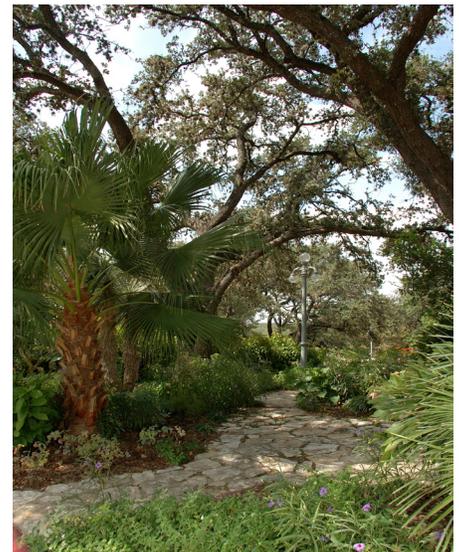
Wildlife Austin program actively promotes the creation and conservation of wildlife habitats through community-wide collaboration and public education with the objective of preserving Austin's biodiversity and natural heritage. The program is responsible for achieving Community Wildlife Habitat certification with National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and continues to promote NWF habitat certification of city sites, homes, schools, businesses, places of worship, and other common areas. We coordinate internally, with other City departments, government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, individuals and others to provide education, technical assistance and resources to create and conserve more wildlife habitat areas throughout the city. The program also trains NWF Habitat Steward™ Volunteers that support outreach and educational efforts.

Programmatic work includes planning local outreach events, giving public presentations and educational workshops, coordinating volunteer trainings and projects, training Department maintenance staff and other city staff on the principles of habitat creation, coordinating the Neighborhood Habitat Challenge, developing long-term wildlife habitat conservation goals and more. The program is coordinated by professionals knowledgeable in geography, natural resources, environmental studies/sciences, wildlife biology, zoology, botany, urban and regional planning, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), landscape architecture, and environmental and science education.

Zilker Botanical Garden promotes the education of citizens of all ages in the art and practices of gardening. Interns should have an interest in outdoor gardening, with background in horticulture and design. Goals for interns are practical application of theory, development of a bed design, refinement of techniques in plant care and propagation or installation of irrigation systems. Interns may work in two month increments, with a half day schedule of 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

OPERATIONS

Forestry manages and develops the Urban Forest in the City of Austin and is responsible for planting over 2500 trees annually, maintaining 225 park sites and managing 700 miles of right-of-way (ROW) trees. Other services include the short and long range planning, programming, project management, budget allocation, and education of the public in tree related matters. We work with



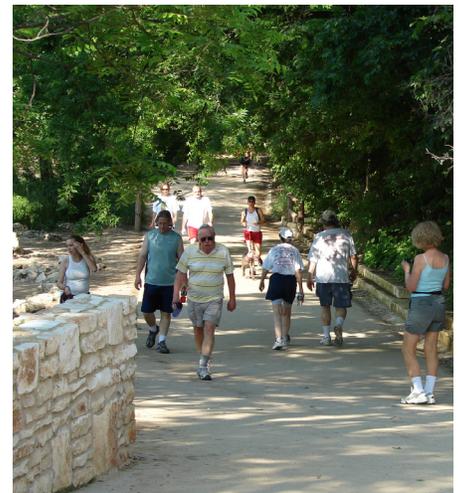
other City departments, governmental agencies and the public to conscientiously manage, sustain, and increase public parkland's inventory of trees and the urban forest. Some related work includes park master planning, site selection, development regulation, GIS mapping, research and analysis, park design, irrigation design, construction specification writing, using GPS technology for tree inventory collection, and assist with developing volunteer programs. The section is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in the principles of arboriculture, landscape design, geographic information systems, environmental design, horticulture, and irrigation design.



PLANNING, DESIGN and CONSTRUCTION division manages short and long range planning, programming, project management, budget allocation, and acquisition of public parkland and facilities. We work with other City departments, governmental agencies and the public to gather information to sustain and increase public parkland inventory for a rapidly growing metropolitan area. Some related work includes park and trail master planning, GIS site research, and analysis, park design, AutoCAD drafting, construction specification writing, and construction administration. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in architecture, landscape architecture, civil engineering, geographic information systems, environmental design, green building, horticulture and design related software.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS division offers a wide variety of programs for children, adults and seniors at twenty recreation centers, three senior activity centers, four museums, fifty aquatic facilities, a natural science center, and two arts facilities. Thirty sites offering after-school academic and recreation enrichment along with the summer playground and summer food program round out a division that provides numerous family oriented special events and workshops. Programs include adult athletics, youth sports, summer day camps, after school care, senior services and pre school enrichment. The division is comprised of professionals knowledgeable in recreation, kinesiology, sports science and health education.



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Department Responsibilities

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department Internship Program is designed to bridge the gap between formal academic training and practical work experience. Interns are integrated into the workforce and become engaged in daily issues confronting professional staff in a public sector setting. Internship opportunities can be paid or unpaid depending on the nature and length of the internship, and academic requirements of the student intern.

Throughout a student's internship the Department will be responsible for providing the following:

- An opportunity for a student to integrate academic theory and practice to his/her intern experience by encouraging the exchange of ideas.
- An opportunity for a student to promote and expand his/her philosophy and understanding of the park and recreation profession.

- An opportunity for a student to recognize his/her strengths and weaknesses.
- An opportunity for a student to gain experience in leadership, supervision and administration of park and recreation programming, and management.
- An opportunity to build a networking system within the park and recreation profession.
- An assignment/project that meets the intern's academic requirements and the Department's organizational development needs.
- Appropriate working conditions with necessary resources to complete assignments.
- An evaluation of a student's performance throughout the internship experience.

Intern Qualifications

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department provides internships for undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled in a two or four-year accredited college or university.

Undergraduate Students

- Must be enrolled in upper division undergraduate courses
- Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a minimum GPA of 2.75 in field of study
- Must be majoring in Recreation Management, Leisure Studies, Health, Physical Education, Sports Management, Park Planning and Design, Park Management, Marketing, Finance, Business Administration, Child Development, Therapeutic Recreation, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Natural Resources, Urban Forestry, Environmental Studies, Theater, Performing or Visual Arts, or related curriculum.

Graduate Students

- Must be enrolled in a graduate level program.
- Must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a minimum GPA of 2.75 in field of study.
- Must be majoring in Recreation and Park Administration, Park and Natural Resources Management, Health, Physical Education, Sports Management, Public Administration, Public Affairs, Arts Administration, Finance, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Marketing, Measurement and Statistics, Media and Communication Studies, Research and Evaluation Methods, Urban and Regional Planning, Therapeutic Recreation, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, Natural Resources, Urban Forestry, Environmental Studies, or related curriculum.

Application Process

In order to be considered for an internship with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, all candidates must submit the following items:

Cover Letter

Resume

Copy of Official Transcripts

Student Internship Program Application

Letter of Recommendation from Academic Advisor

Completed Application by Deadline:

Fall – June 30th

Winter/Spring – October 31st

Summer – March 15th

Once all application paperwork has been received, the Department Project Coordinator will contact applicant for an interview. Interviews are generally conducted in person; however, if a personal interview is not practical, a telephone interview will be arranged.

Internship Opportunities

Internships are designed to broaden the knowledge, understanding, and skills in a variety of service areas within the Parks and Recreation Department. Internships should provide opportunities for a student to apply educational concepts to real-world situations as he/she discovers a possible career

path. In addition, while a student is helping himself, he is also positively impacting the quality of life in the Austin community.

Internship opportunities are based on Parks and Recreation Department needs, student classification (undergraduate or graduate), student area of interest, and length of internship.

Below is a list of possible opportunities:

- Program Planning and Implementation
- Technical Skills
- Leadership Techniques and Skills
- Organizational Development
- Budgetary Process
- Finance and Accounting
- Facility Planning and Development
- Maintenance Procedures and Techniques
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Community Development
- Human Resources
- Performance Measurement
- Strategic Planning
- Park and Open Space Planning and Design
- Park Maintenance Standards and Procedures
- Horticulture and Landscaping Standards and Procedures
- Research and Evaluation
- Natural Resources
- Aquatics
- Urban Forestry
- Theater Management
- Art Gallery Operation

Visit [Internship Projects](#) to see what internship opportunities are currently available.

INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES

Student interns are representatives of the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, their college or university and their community. The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing each intern with the highest on-the-job-training possible, using all Department resources. In turn, each intern is expected to make the most of this opportunity. Below is a list of obligations each intern must commit to prior to and during an internship:

- Create goals and objectives for your internship.
- Become familiar with the history, philosophy and values of the Department.
- Make a personal and professional commitment to treat the internship as a learning experience that will help you discover a possible career path.
- Ensure internship is a practical application of your academic curriculum.
- Develop interaction and communication skills.

Selection Criteria

The intern selection process is based on the following criteria:

- Practical Work Experience
- Educational Performance
- Involvement with Professional, Academic, Service, or Social Organizations
- Letter of Recommendation by Academic Advisor
- Intern Interview
- Needs of the Department and the Intern

For more information about the Austin Parks and Recreation Department Student Internship Program, please contact our Department Intern Coordinator Robert Sopronyi at (512) 974-6720 or at email address robert.sopronyi@ci.austin.tx.us

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need a vehicle during my internship?

There are options for using mass transit; however, due to various work sites, project locations, meetings, and the varied hours, it is necessary for interns to have their own vehicle. Interns will receive reimbursement for mileage while utilizing their own vehicle on official City business.

2. How do I find short term housing?

Due to the various colleges and universities in the area, there are options for sub-letting apartments. An on-line search should steer you in the right direction.

3. What is the dress code?

Casual professional attire should be worn at all times. However, positions that require outdoor/field work will vary and may consist of jeans, khakis and casual long or short sleeve shirts. The division manager/supervisor will discuss this with the intern.

4. Will I have health insurance?

The internship program is a short term employment therefore health insurance benefits are not available. The intern will be covered by workman's compensation while performing duties during the internship.

5. Will I be subject to a background check?

Parks and Recreation Department positions that are responsible for cash handling and/or working with a vulnerable population are subject to a background checks.

6. What are the work hours?

The hours will vary by divisions and projects. Weekend work may be required; where applicable. The schedule will be set by the division manager/supervisor to whom the intern is assigned.

7. Will I be compensated for the internship?

Availability of funding may vary with each division and are subject to change. The division manager/supervisor will discuss salary with the intern.

8. Will I be offered employment at the conclusion of the internship program?

There are no guarantees on the availability of permanent positions. However the skills gained during the internship program will be beneficial for future employment opportunities.

9. Do you have a webpage?

Yes. www.cityofaustinparks.com

10. Where do I send my application?

Parks and Recreation Department
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78704
Attn: Intern Coordinator