

FY 2010-2011 Annual Report



AUSTIN
PARKS & RECREATION

Cultural Places, Natural Spaces



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



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara L. Hensley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

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

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Board Reflections



Jane Rivera

Chair, Parks and Recreation Board

The Parks and Recreation Board is an advisory board appointed by Mayor and Council responsible for advising the City Council and City Manager regarding:

- The acquisition, development, improvement, equipment, and maintenance of City parks and public playgrounds
- The future development of the city parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities, and the purchase of additional land for those purposes
- Improvements in the maintenance, operation, and general welfare of the City's parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities and their use by the public

As your community representatives, the seven-member board is pleased to present the 2011 Annual Report. Here are a few of the many board accomplishments achieved in the last year.

1. Discussed draft resolution concerning Parks Department and Parks Board authority over development activity along the lakes
2. Requested that Law Department pursue ability to limit cases that return to Navigation Committee & Parks Board
3. Approved Memorandums of Understanding (Requests from other City Departments and governmental entities) including:
 - Gillis Park Drainage Improvements - Watershed Protection
 - Holly Shores Drainage Improvement - Watershed Protection
 - Shoal Creek Greenbelt Reconstruction Project - Public Works
 - Seaholm Transmission Relocation Project - Austin Energy
 - Perry Park Drainage Improvements - AISD
4. Reviewed Master Plans
 - Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park Design Process
 - Holly Shores, Festival Beach Master Plan
 - Butler Park Planning and Financial Process
 - 28 acre property at Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park
 - Austin Parks Foundation Invasive Species Management Plan

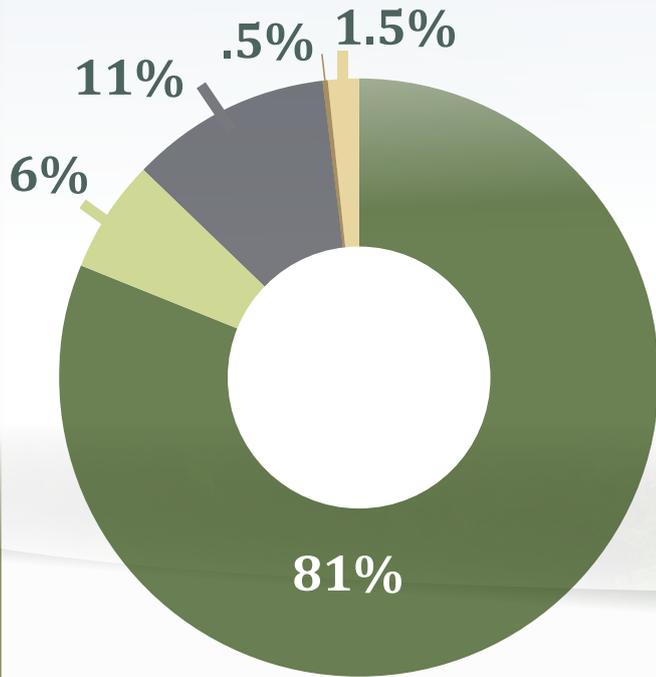
The Parks and Recreation Board members are proud to represent the citizens of Austin. With the community's input and recommendations the Board continues to strive to make Austin one of the best quality of life cities in America. We hope you will take the time to visit and enjoy the outstanding services, facilities and programs that the Austin Parks and Recreation Department offers.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dr. Jane H. Rivera".

Jane Rivera,
Chair, Parks and Recreation Board

FY 2010 - 2011 Financial Overview



- General Fund**
 \$43,506,919
- Golf Enterprise Fund**
 \$5,761,972
- Expense Refunds**
 \$3,311,694
- Grants**
 \$788,000
- Golf Surcharge Fund**
 \$200,000

City Operating Budget
\$2.8 BILLION

Parks and Recreation Budget
\$53.4 MILLION

QUICK FACTS:

The Roy G Guerrero Colorado River Park construction began

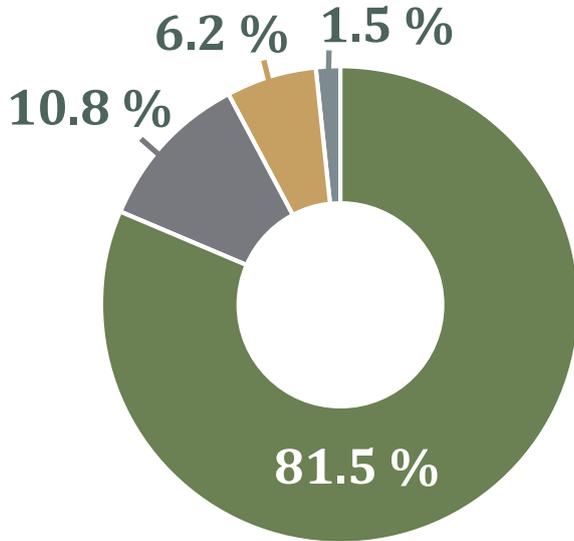
The Northwest Recreation Center re-opened after extensive renovations to the facility

The Chestnut House was completed and renamed "The Britton, Durst, Howard, and Spence Building"

Barton Springs Pool attendance increased from 568,939 in 2009 to 723,355 in 2011

The Liz Carpenter Fountain at Butler Park was upgraded with a new water filtration system

Sources of Funds



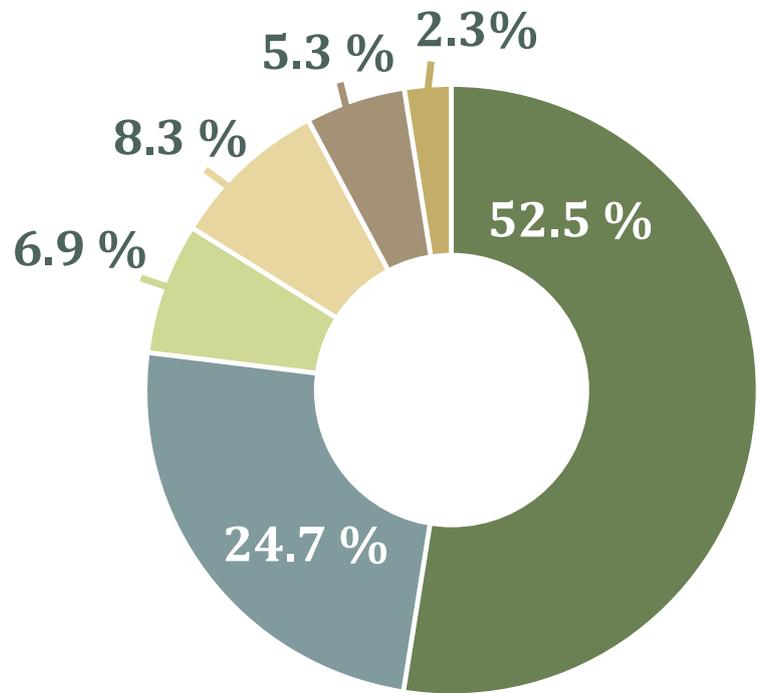
- General Fund
- Golf Fund
- Expense Refund
- Grants

Budget Highlights

Financial Forecast - The Department conducts an annual financial forecast process that is organized around four basic themes.

- Community Needs and Priorities
- Safe, quality physical environment
- Strong, fiscal accountability and public trust
- Meeting growing demands

Uses of Funds



- Community Services
- Maintenance
- Natural Resources
- Support Services
- Planning
- Other

Environment & Outdoors



Wildlife Austin promotes the creation and conservation of wildlife habitats through community-wide collaboration and public education. In March 2007, the City of Austin passed a council resolution to obtain National Wildlife Federation (NWF) community level certification. On March 12, 2009, Austin realized that goal and was recognized as a certified community. To date, the City of Austin has over 1,500 certified wildlife habitats and the number is steadily increasing.

The Wildlife Austin Program is coordinated by the Department's Park Rangers. The program activities were submitted to the National Wildlife Federation for review in the large city category. The National Wildlife Federation requires a score of 40 points for certification. In 2011 Wildlife Austin received a score of 260 points. The program also saw the graduation of 29 habitat stewards, the largest class in the program's history and 140 new certified Wildlife Habitats. To learn how you can create a wildlife habitat call 512 978-2606 or by e-mail to: wildlife@austintexas.gov.

The Urban Forestry Program



The Urban Forestry program assisted with tree planting projects, completion of land management plans for the Decker Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, and the Indiangrass Wildlife Sanctuary. A tree assessment project was initiated, which included recommendations for the Duncan Park BMX trail area, and tree maintenance for the Onion Creek Buy-Out Area.

The Urban Forestry Program plants over

- 1,100** Containerized trees
- 2,800** Bare root seedlings
- 3,400** Completed work order hours

The Urban Forestry Unit also hosted several public outreach programs including the Urban Forest Summit, the Christmas Tree Recycling project, the Urban Forest Stewards Workshop, the Austin Community Trees project and the Austin Tree of the Year project. To volunteer with the Urban Forestry Program, contact the Parks and Recreation Department at (512) 974-6777.

OUR COMMITMENT

PARKS IMPROVE HEALTH AND LIVABILITY

When people have access to parks, public exercise facilities, trails, and greenways, they significantly increase the frequency of physical activity and exercise, leading to improved health and chronic disease prevention.

Source: National Parks and Recreation Association

Sustainability



The Sustainability Highlights

Internal highlights include:

- Switched to biodiesel and flex fuel in City vehicles
- Converted irrigation from potable water to raw water, gray water or captured rain water
- Promoted and utilized clean energy by switching over from gasoline to propane for mowers
- Converted to green cleaning products in recreation centers and office buildings
- Replaced standard office lighting with energy efficient lighting
- Replaced or upgraded HVAC units at the Old Bakery, Hancock Recreation Center, Austin Recreation Center, Doris Miller Auditorium, and Rosewood Recreation Center
- Conducted a weatherization review program to improve energy conservation at all PARD facilities
- Converted fill-and-draw pools and wading pools to splash pads

External highlights include:

- Conducted Community Education programs for park patrons
- Required recycling measures for special event rentals
- Promoted events that showcase the Department's sustainability efforts

Resource Management

It is in new, innovative and creative ways that the Department will succeed in managing its resources, by being good stewards of parkland and by wisely exercising the authority entrusted to us by the public.

Source: FY2010-2011 PARD Approved Budget

All new construction will meet

LEED STANDARDS

LEED is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance.

Adopted by the City of Austin on June 8, 2000.

Investing In Our Community

Waller Creek Conservancy

The Department worked in partnership with the Waller Creek Conservancy and other City Departments on future visioning for the Waller Creek District, a redevelopment project made possible by the Waller Creek Tunnel Project currently under construction. In coordination with Watershed Protection, Public Works, and Planning and Development Review, PARD is helping to shape the design, development and long term management direction for this unique district that is heavily influenced by the qualities of the Waller Creek greenbelt, its trails, parks and urban open spaces.

The Waller Creek Conservancy was formed to play a vital role in the preservation, redevelopment and maintenance of the creek's surrounding parks, nearby businesses, adjoining neighborhoods and community at large. The City of Austin and the Conservancy each contributed \$400,000 as seed funding for a design competition effort in order to generate ideas and momentum for the redevelopment of this district. With these funds in place, the Conservancy and City has launched the formation of a unique public-private partnership. The international design competition has solicited concepts from teams of landscape architects and architects from around the world and will work closely with government officials to enact policies that support the implementation of this emerging vision for the 28 acres that constitute the Waller Creek District.

Auditorium Shores Master Plan

In June 2011, at the request of City Council, the Department acted to update the Master Plan for Butler Park and Auditorium Shores. Proposed improvements include the parkland north of Riverside Drive, an area featuring the Auditorium Shores trailhead, the event lawn, the off-leash area, and the shoreline of Lady Bird Lake. A key component of this plan includes the redevelopment of the primary trailhead and parking area at Auditorium Shores. In 2011, the Department received a \$1 million urban parks and open space grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife, matched with City funds, to expand the parking area, install new restrooms, enhance recreation areas, trail surfacing and improvements to the pond at the Fannie Davis Gazebo.

The final design of the Auditorium Shores trailhead improvements is proceeding concurrently with an overall park Master Plan update. The final design for the trailhead is scheduled to be finished by February 2013 with construction completion slated for June 2014.

Barton Spring Pool Flood Debris Project

In January 2011, in an effort to return the pool to its natural state, gravel that had accumulated in the deep end of Barton Springs since 1991, near the lower dam, began to be removed. Special methods were used to protect the endangered Barton Springs Salamander as well as nearby heritage trees. The ecologically and environmentally sensitive plan was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Texas Parks and Wildlife. The Aquatics Division scheduled the pool cleanup during the winter months to minimize the impact to Barton Spring Pool patrons and loss of revenue to the City.

The Britton, Durst, Howard, and Spence Building Grand Opening

The Department celebrated the Grand Opening of the "Britton, Durst, Howard, and Spence Building", at 1183 Chestnut Avenue on Saturday, August 6, 2011. The new facility was built and renamed in honor of four distinguished Austin community leaders: Lawrence M. Britton Sr., Reverend Albert Lavada "Dr. Hep Cat" Durst, James Howard, Donald Joseph Spence.



Aquatics Division

The Aquatics Division experienced a record attendance year in 2011. The drought conditions, coupled with a record number of 100 degree days, attracted 791,218 visitors to the City's pools.

Barton Springs Pool alone reported a record number of visitors (723,355) who generated revenues of \$1,412,507.



Historic and Cultural Resource Inventory

A comprehensive inventory of the historic and cultural resources of Austin's park system was conducted in 2011. The survey documented more than 250 buildings, structures, sites, objects, and interpretive markers with historic significance. The survey products include a database as well as mapping through GIS indicating the locations of the resources throughout the park system. Survey information will be available to the public through the PARD online GIS viewer. Further, PARD's cultural resource specialist has developed a presentation summarizing the inventory process, final products and highlights of the survey and has presented to both staff and the public. Finally, the survey of historic and cultural resources has contributed to key benchmarks in PARD's current accreditation process and will be the first step in the development of a comprehensive cultural resource management program for the department.

Opening of the Austin BMX & Skate Park

The new Austin BMX & Skate Park opened on June 16, 2011. Located at 1213 Shoal Creek Boulevard next to the Austin Recreation Center, this 30,000 square foot facility features a skate bowl, a large plaza, shade structures, unisex restrooms, and a public art installation.

Reopening of the Renovated Northwest Recreation Center

The Northwest Recreation Center celebrated a Re-opening Ceremony on July 9, 2011, after a \$2.5 million renovation enhancement. The classrooms feature flat panel televisions that are laptop, cable, and internet connectable. The fitness room features equipment including medicine balls, jump ropes, elastic bands, and 5-to-50 pound dumbbells. The gymnasium features new glass backboards, a new volleyball system, and a new divider curtain. The whole facility is wireless, with several lounge areas and a game room. This renovation added approximately 8,000 square feet to the facility.



- 2 classrooms
- 2 multi-purpose rooms
- kitchen
- fitness room
- lobby
- gymnasium
- game room

Northwest Recreation Center

This renovation added

8,000 Sq. Ft.

The U.S. Davis Cup Legacy



On Saturday, October 22, 2011, the Department and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) celebrated the completion of eight permanent 36' courts at the Austin Tennis Center expanding programming opportunities for children 10 & under. This project began in July 2011 and was completed on September 15, 2011. Historically, The U.S. Davis Cup and Fed Cup teams have left a legacy gift in each city that hosts a Davis Cup and Fed Cup. The renovation project consisted of the conversion of two existing courts into eight permanent quick start courts at the Austin Tennis Center, located at 7800 Johnny Morris Road.

Morris Williams Golf Course Renovations

The Golf Enterprise Division secured additional funds to improve the Morris Williams Golf Course greens, tees, and fairways. The renovation will coincide with construction of the pro shop and cart barn, resulting in a completely renovated facility in November 2012.

New Ideas:

The Department is looking at new and different ways to re-purpose its existing facilities into more affordable facilities that meet the current recreational needs of the community.

Source: FY2010-2011 PARD Approved Budget

Partnerships



Pease Park Partnership

The Pease Park Conservancy began the Pease Park restoration process in 2008 as the “Trees for Pease Project.” In 2011, volunteers helped preserve and restore the historic Tudor Cottage, the historic entryway arches and picnic tables. The tree care was provided by certified arborists, and tree replacement was completed by dozens of volunteers.

\$200,000.00

Raised for Pease Park improvements

400

Newly planted trees

- Irrigation system upgrades
- Tree pruning
- Fertilization
- Tree care by arborists

Entrepreneur’s Foundation Partnership

The Department partnered with the Entrepreneur’s Foundation, whose community involvement launches special initiatives, helps design stage-appropriate community involvement programs, provides valuable team building experiences and staffs a volunteer workday.

On October 14, 2011, more than 425 volunteers contributed 3,150 volunteer hours towards 29 projects at the Austin Nature and Science Center (ANSC), Zilker Park; Zilker Botanical Garden, Zilker Preserve, and the Umlauf Sculpture Garden. In addition to recruiting volunteers from member companies, the Entrepreneur’s Foundation also contributed \$3,000 in materials, and other supplies, used in these projects.

October 14, 2011

- **425 Volunteers**
- **25 Companies**
- **3,150 Volunteer hours**
- **29 Projects** at The Austin Nature and Science Center (ANSC) and Zilker Metropolitan Park

Deep Eddy Pool Mural

In June 2010 the Austin Arts Commission approved the full funding of the Deep Eddy mural project through the Austin Arts in Public Places program as part of the Deep Eddy Shell Capital Improvement Project. The mural is made from handmade tiles and colored mirror that covers 1000 sq. ft. of wall and ramp on the northwest side of the pool. The mural was completed during the summer of 2011. A public dedication event was held October 16, 2011 in collaboration with the Friends of Deep Eddy Pool.

Community Access

City Community Survey Highlights

During fall of 2011, ETC Institute administered a community survey for the City of Austin. Highlights are:

The 2011 City Community Benchmark Survey reported Austin tied as the #1 City in overall satisfaction with Parks and Recreation. This rating was in comparison to 13 other cities with populations greater than 500,000.

- The survey reported that respondents rated the overall quality of Austin Parks and Recreation 8 points higher than the national average rank of 66%.
- Survey results showed a 4 % improvement in responses about the quality of facilities at city parks and the quality of adult athletic programs, compared to 2010 responses.
- The survey results revealed that the City of Austin was 26 points above the national average in the overall quality of customer service (+26%), 12 points above the national average in overall satisfaction with city swimming pools (+12%), and 10 points above the national average in overall satisfaction with the number of walking/biking trails (+10%).

While we are proud to share this improvement with you, we are not resting. We want the Department to continually improve.



Children in Nature

The Austin Nature and Science Center celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2011. In addition, the center was presented with the Westcave Preserve Award for Enduring Dedication in October 2010. The award recognized the center for the quarter of a million annual visitors, for the special exhibits and programming, hands on activities, and homes for more than 90 injured or orphaned native Texas animals.



Elisabet Ney Museum 100 Years Old

The Elisabet Ney Museum celebrated its 100th Anniversary in a special ceremony on October 4, 2011, at the University of Texas System Bauer House. Mayor Lee Leffingwell, museum staff and guests received a State of Texas Proclamation honoring the Elisabet Ney Formosa Studio as one of Austin's first historic museums. The studio has been preserved as a museum since 1911 after the death of Elisabet Ney in 1907.

Social Media

The Department increased the use of social media to enhance communications with patrons. Social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and AustinNotes provide a quick, easy and contemporary avenue for the Department to deliver timely public information, and to market programs and services. The Department created the following Facebook pages:

Arts in Parks
Seniors
Families
Adults Sports
Park Project

Austin Parks and Recreation
Youth Sports
A Historic Sites
Parks in Nature
Volunteers and Partnerships

Examples of the uses of social media include: construction project updates, closures, information about repairs to parks , classes, programs, events and on improvements to the parks system.

Austin Wins National Competition

First Place - National Recreation and Parks Association Contest



Austin Parks and Recreation Department wins the National Recreation and Park Association's

Best 2011 Flash Mob Video Contest

In June 2011, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) designated July as National Parks and Recreation Month. This celebration promoted the importance of parks and recreation systems in providing the public with healthy lifestyles and recreational opportunities.

The 2011 theme was, 'Rock Your Park!' The contest encouraged park systems to market the benefits that parks

and recreation departments provide in enhancing the quality of life for communities. To promote this campaign, the NRPA initiated a national 'Rock Your Park!' Flash Mob contest. Groups of people were to assemble in a local park or restaurant facility, and unexpectedly perform a brief dance act and then disperse. Events from throughout the United States were video taped and all entries were posted on YouTube for selection.

This cross departmental collaboration culminated on Thursday, July 22, 2011, at the Zilker Metropolitan Park Great Lawn, the Department's Flash Mob event took place. The event featured youth, parents, staff, and community volunteers. The idea was to have participants play a soccer game, and break into a "flash mob" dance to the tunes of "Thriller" by Michael Jackson.

In August 2011, the NRPA announced the winners, and out of the 97 agencies that entered the competition, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department was awarded first place.

Mission Statement

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

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

City Manager

Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Michael McDonald, Deputy City Manager
H. G. (Bert) Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager
Rudy Garza, Assistant City Manager
Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager
Anthony Snipes, Chief of Staff

Parks and Recreation Department

Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director
Cora D. Wright, Assistant Director
Kimberly A. McNeeley, Assistant Director
David Juarez, Assistant Director

Parks and Recreation Board

Jane Rivera, Chair
Jeff Francell, Vice Chair
William Abell, Board Member
Linda H. Guerrero, Board Member
Carol Lee, Board Member
Jerry Perales, Board Member
Lynn Osgood, Board Member

Annual Report Staff

Judy Manza
Victor Ovalle
Simone Pollard
Betty Pu
Christopher Rodriguez
Cora Wright

www.cityofaustinparks.com

200 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78704 512-974-6700

