



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20230405-005

Date: April 5, 2023

Subject: Draft Zilker Park Vision Plan

Motion by: Kevin Ramberg

Seconded by: David Sullivan

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Park and Recreation Department has undergone a multi-year visioning process for Zilker park and prepared a draft Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission has received a presentation on the current status of the draft vision plan, received public comment on the draft vision plan, and reviewed the March 2023 version of the draft vision plan;

WHEREAS, the stated primary goal of the draft Vision Plan is to develop a visionary framework for the park and the draft vision plan includes: 1) the history of Zilker Park, 2) the purpose, guiding principles, vision and goals of the plan, 3) site analysis and need assessment, 4) community engagement, 5) the vision plan, 6) implementation and 7) appendices.

WHEREAS, the draft vision plan includes environmental site analysis of general ecology of the park, environmental contamination from historic land use, and review of the Edwards aquifer, plant communities and environmental regulations.

WHEREAS, the draft vision plan includes environmental improvements including: 1) reduction in impervious cover, 2) bank stabilization of Barton Creek below Barton Springs, 3) ecological uplift on landfill areas, 4) drainage enhancement infrastructure (such as rain gardens and other permanent stormwater attenuation improvements), 5) tree canopy enhancement, 6) and climate change mitigation measures.

THEREFORE, the Environmental Commission recommends adoption of the draft Zilker Park Vision Plan with the following conditions:

1. PARD continue to conduct public hearings, incorporate public comments, and seek City Council approval during the design and implementation of various elements of the draft vision plan as these become more detailed and finalized; and
2. For proposed subsurface impact beyond 15 feet below grade anywhere in the park or beyond six (6) feet below grade within USFWS-designed Critical Habitat for the Austin blind salamander, PARD will conduct detailed hydrogeologic, geophysical and geotechnical studies to confirm no impact to the flow, habitat and quantity and quality of water discharging at Barton Spring and Austin blind salamander sites. PARD will provide these

studies and present their findings to the Environmental Commission and City Council and seek comment and recommendation of the actions prior to construction.

3. If approved, the city should commence coordination with TxDOT and/or CTRMA regarding the parking under Mopac within 30 days of plan approval.
4. The draft plan should clarify (i.e. provides more details) the impervious cover calculations included in the plan.
5. Prior to City Council final decision, the draft Vision plan should be submitted to the City equity office for review and comment (and their findings presented to the City Council).
6. The immediate proposed Barton Springs road bridge improvement project be consistent with draft vision plan, specifically the lane configuration, bridge pedestrian crossings and envisioned pedestrian crossings in the draft vision plan.
7. The Special Events in Parks Task Force recommendations should be incorporated in the draft Zilker Park Vision Plan.
8. Remove the umbrella nonprofit organization overseeing Zilker Park, as articulated in the draft plan.
9. All parking garages be completely wired for EV.
10. 50% of all parking garages be equipped for EV charging when they open.
11. 50% of any other parking spots be equipped for EV charging.
12. Implement solar panels on all buildings.
13. Implement rainwater catchment on all buildings.
14. All restrooms not near existing wastewater pipes be composting.
15. The Parks Department conducts a study to determine the number optimal of parking spots required.
16. All new lighting meets "dark skies" standards, with the exception of the Moontower.
17. Incorporate butterfly gardens and community gardens into the vision plan.
18. The Parks Department produces a study outlining how many cars and parking spots could be reduced by utilizing mass transit and other alternative transportation methods.
19. Conduct an environmental impact study of any event that attracts more than 50,000 people a week and include it in the Zilker Vision Plan.
20. If parking rates are implemented, a tiered system should be put into place, with rates determined by proximity and time of day. An element for reduced rates for economically disadvantaged people should be included.

VOTE 9-1

For: Colin Nickells, Haris Qureshi, Rachel Scott, Perry Bedford, Kevin Ramberg, Melinda Schiera, Hanna Coffey, David Sullivan, and Richard Brimer

Against: Pam Thompson

Recuse: None

Absent: Jennifer Bristol



Approved By: Kevin Ramberg, Chair