



Parks and Recreation Department Carousel Feasibility Report

Brian Block, Development Administrator
City of Austin- Parks & Recreation Department
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Background



- City Council passed a resolution directing the City Manager to investigate the feasibility of a carousel pilot project
 - Solicit feedback from the Parks and Recreation Board, the Downtown Commission and the Early Childhood Council
 - Investigate the merits and potential location of a carousel pilot project
 - Develop suggestions for how revenues might best serve Austin youth
 - Report back to City Council regarding
 - Options for locating and the feasibility of installing and operating a carousel at minimal or no cost to the City of Austin
- Process
 - PARD staff requested that the Parks and Recreation Board, the Downtown Commission and the Early Childhood Council each assign one member to serve as a representative to PARD
 - PARD staff met with each representative to solicit feedback



Potential Locations



Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston

■ Ideal Location Characteristics

- ❑ Near or adjacent to other kids/family activities
- ❑ Food and beverage concessions on-site
- ❑ Restrooms on-site
- ❑ Adequate parking
- ❑ Transit accessible
- ❑ ADA accessible

■ Current Potential Locations*:

- ❑ Zilker Park
- ❑ Butler Park
- ❑ Mueller (Thinkery)

■ Future Potential Locations*

- ❑ Waterloo Park
- ❑ Lamar Beach

* All location recommendations are conceptual and preliminary. No master planning or stakeholder outreach has taken place regarding installing of a carousel at these locations. No discussions with Mueller Development have taken place.



Important Overall Characteristic



Prospect Park, New York

■ Access

□ Physical

- the carousel should be ADA accessible
- Should include wheelchair options
- Should accommodate everyone

□ Financial

- The price should be affordable
- Consider a free day or time each week

□ Transit Accessible and Parking



Recommended Use of Revenue

- Overall Focus: low-income and underserved communities
- Should be consistent with the Early Childhood Council's School Readiness Plan
 - Add to early childhood subsidies fund
 - Fund high quality early childhood programs for low income families
 - PARD Summer Playgrounds Program – consider adding summer learning
 - Improve park playgrounds in under-served, low-income neighborhoods
 - Could conduct a survey to get information about barriers that need to be addressed
- Negotiate with carousel operator to secure free and reduced rate days for the City for:
 - Fundraising/Programming for non-profit organizations focusing on family and early childhood issues
 - Support events that fill a critical family or early childhood need/service

Pilot Goals and Permanent Carousel



- Purpose for a pilot project
 - Test Locations
 - Determine impacts on existing park uses and parking
 - Understand usage and potential revenue
- Recommended structure for pilot carousel project
 - Hire a vendor to provide a manufactured carousel and manage operations with revenue sharing for the City
 - This is the most feasible option to implement a pilot project in a short-term at no cost to the City
- Recommended structure for permanent carousel project
 - Pursue a privately funded carousel by a foundation or conservancy with grants and donations and hire a vendor for carousel operations
 - For a permanent project a stock manufactured carousel would not be consistent with Austin values and desired image

Next Steps



- Provide a briefing to the Parks and Recreation Board on May 27, 2014.
- Report back to Council outlining the recommendations from Early Childhood Council, Parks and Recreation Board and Downtown Commission representatives by June 26, 2014.