




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

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

DATE: May 8, 2013

SUBJECT: Response to Resolution #20121011-081: Comprehensive Analysis of Impacts from Events at Auditorium Shores and Zilker Park

Resolution #20121011-081 directed the City Manager to work with stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive analysis of impacts from events at Auditorium Shores and Zilker Park and to provide recommendation on a balanced solution that enhances public access and enjoyment of Austin's park system.

The Parks and Recreation Department coordinated with Austin Parks Foundation to develop a planning process to address the elements of the resolution. As a result of the planning process, Austin Parks Foundation contracted with Tur Partners, a nationally acclaimed advisory firm, to conduct the comprehensive analysis.

Attached is the preliminary report prepared by Tur Partners on behalf of Austin Parks Foundation. A final report/recommendation will be delivered to Council in April 2014.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at 974-6717.

Cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Bert Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager
Jesse Vargas, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department
Cora D. Wright, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department

Attachments

**Town Lake Metropolitan Park
Long-Term Redevelopment Study**

FOR:



Prepared By:



On behalf of:



**Preliminary Findings Report and Status Update
April 30, 2012**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (“PARD”) is currently in the planning and design phase for various projects within the parkland anchored by the Palmer Events Center and Long Center for the Performing Arts generally referred to as Butler Park/Auditorium Shores (herein referred to as “Town Lake Metropolitan Park”). The initial phase of this project (the “Auditorium Shores Improvements Project”) includes renovating the event space with enhanced recreation opportunities including a newly designed and redeveloped dog off-leash area, realignment of the trail and irrigation and turfgrass of Auditorium Shores. The Auditorium Shores Improvements Project will be led by PARD, actively coordinated with the Austin Parks Foundation (“APF”) and C3 Presents (“C3”), the organizer of the Austin City Limits Festival, and also outside consultants. In addition to the Auditorium Shores Improvements Project, APF is currently working with advisory firm Tur Partners LLC (“Tur”), in close connection with PARD and the City of Austin, on a comprehensive analysis of city plans, policies and initiatives relating to Austin’s Public Park System, with a particular focus on long-term redevelopment plans for Town Lake Metropolitan Park (the “Long-Term Project”).

This Preliminary Findings Report and Status Update (this “Report”) is intended to provide an update on the Long-Term Projects activities to date and a summary of key findings. The Long-Term Project, which has been underway since winter of 2012, will coordinate among various key constituents and stakeholders in order to create a long-term vision and execution plan for developing Town Lake Metropolitan Park. APF and Tur will also submit a final report to the City of Austin City Council (“City Council”) in April of 2014. The final report is intended to act as a suggested roadmap for the City of Austin in developing Town Lake Metropolitan Park into a best-in-class facility that serves as a parks centerpiece for the city as a whole.

The full scope of work for the Long-Term Project is attached to this Report as Exhibit A. The key areas of focus of the Long-Term Project include: (i) reviewing, evaluating and, if necessary, updating current plans for Town Lake Metropolitan Park, (ii) identifying key issues and potential solutions for dealing with parking and traffic within the Town Lake Metropolitan Park area, (iii) evaluating current event policies and procedures with consideration to the overall impact on Austin, including quality of the parks, experience for Austin’s residents and support for the Austin economy, and (iv) engaging the public, civic organizations, business leaders and other key stakeholders to ensure project success and the long-term viability of Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Overview of Town Lake Metropolitan Park and Austin Parks

PARD manages approximately 19,581 acres of parkland, which is equal to approximately 23.9 acres per thousand persons in the City of Austin. With 18.2% of the city’s overall land area covered by

parkland, Austin ranks substantially above the national average of 9.6%.¹ PARD employs 597 full-time employees and approximately 1,000 seasonal employees to support this parkland.

Town Lake Metropolitan Park consists of the 54 acres of parkland anchored by the Long Center for the Performing Arts and the Palmers Events Center, including the parks often referred to as Auditorium Shores and Butler Park. In the heart of downtown Austin and overlooking Austin's Lady Bird Lake, Town Lake Metropolitan Park is the flagship citywide parkland and has been the focus of a number of redevelopment efforts since completion of the original park master plan in 1999. Various improvements were made to Town Lake Metropolitan Park during Phases I and II of the 1999 master plan, which included developing the great lawn, Doug Sahm Hill and the Liz Carpenter Fountain. Construction of the Alliance Children's Garden, which was also planned as part of Phase II, is expected to begin in the fall of 2014. Construction on improvements to the Auditorium Shores trailhead is also expected to begin in fall of 2013.

A timeline of key events relating to development of Town Lake Metropolitan Park is as follows:

1987	Beginning in the 1980s, the Town Lake Alliance began accumulating park dedications throughout the City of Austin. The process culminated in 1987, wherein the alliance achieved the dedication of 54 acres of public lands south of Riverside Drive adjacent to auditorium shores (now Town Lake Metropolitan Park) as well as over 300 acres of riverfront land.
1998	Parks and Recreation Board adopted a special events policy limiting Auditorium Shores to 25 days per year for events.
1998	City of Austin voters approved a bond which included the funds required to finance construction of the current Palmer Events Center, the supporting garage currently located behind the Long Center for the Performing Arts and to redevelop the surrounding parkland.
1999	City Council adopted the Master Plan by EDAW for redevelopment of Town Lake Metropolitan Park.
2007	Phase II construction complete and park opens to the public. Riverside Drive, adjacent to Town Lake Park was re-aligned and reduced to two lanes.
2007	TBG Partners presented a proposal for revised Master Plan to complete unfinished Phases III and IV of 1999 EDAW Master Plan.
2012	City Council approval on design services provided by TBG Partners for the Auditorium Shores Trailhead.

¹ According to 2011 data from the *Trust for Public Lands*.

Scope of Project

The Long-Term Project, which is being led by APF and Tur in close connection with PARD and the City of Austin, is a comprehensive analysis of city plans, policies and initiatives relating to downtown parks, with a particular focus on long-term redevelopment plans for Town Lake Metropolitan Park. The central goal of the project is to create a long-term vision and execution plan for a redeveloped, world-class park. The full scope of the project can be found attached to this Report as Exhibit A. The key areas of focus include (i) reviewing, evaluating and, if necessary, updating current plans for Town Lake Metropolitan Park, (ii) identifying key issues and potential solutions for dealing with parking and traffic within the Town Lake Metropolitan Park area, (iii) evaluating current event policies and procedures with consideration to the overall impact on Austin, including quality of the parks, experience for Austin's residents and support for the Austin economy, and (iv) engaging the public, civic organizations, business leaders and other key stakeholders to ensure project success and the long-term viability of Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

The genesis of the Long-Term Project is found in the commitment of a number of key stakeholders, including PARD, APF and C3, to achieve a broader vision for development of the parkland into a world-class facility. The City Council has also given direction on the implementation of this project through a series of resolutions, including the following:

Res. 20120823-072: *August 23, 2012.* City Manager to work with stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impacts from events at Auditorium Shores and Zilker Park and provide comprehensive analysis by March 31, 2013.

Res. 20121011-081: *October 11, 2012.* City Manager to fully integrate efforts under resolution 20120823-072 to ensure they are integrated into the planning process being led by the Austin Parks Foundation.

Project Team

Austin Parks Foundation. APF is a non-profit organization devoted to building public/private partnerships to develop and maintain parks, trails, and open space in City of Austin and Travis County. Since 1992, Austin Parks Foundation has initiated, promoted, and facilitated physical improvements, new programming, and greater community involvement for Austin's 19,000+ acres of parkland. Each year, APF generates millions of dollars in volunteer time, in-kind donations, and financial support for city parks. APF currently has a team of 5 and is led by its Executive Director Colin Wallis who, prior to joining APF, served as Director of Advancement at the Livestrong Foundation and the 2011-12 Board Chair of the Trail Foundation. APF will also soon be adding an additional dedicated resource to support the Long-Term Project.

Tur Partners. Tur Partners LLC partners with leaders and innovators to drive growth within global urban markets. Tur, led by its Executive Chairman, Richard M. Daley former Mayor of Chicago for 22 years, is built upon a strong belief in the importance of cities in the global economy. Tur has brought together a team of professionals with extensive private and public experience in order to help business, municipalities and government agencies throughout North America develop and grow effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Tur's lead on the Long-Term Project is its Chief Executive Officer, Lori Healey, who has decades of experience across the public and private sectors, including serving as Principal in Charge of the Development Group at the John Buck Company, Director of the 2012 NATO Host Committee, President of Chicago's 2016 Olympic bid, Chief of Staff for Chicago's mayor and Commissioner of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development.

Other Outside Advisors. In addition to APF and Tur, the Long-Term Project may require additional review and analysis by outside professionals. In particular, it is expected that the project will require some evaluation by landscape architects with respect to design of Town Lake Metropolitan Park and some evaluation by transportation engineers with respect to consideration of traffic and parking issues. APF and Tur have had initial conversations with several outside advisors with deep knowledge of Austin and Town Lake Metropolitan Park and will look to engage such advisors as required in the near future.

Prior Studies

Both the City of Austin and supporting organizations have generated a number of comprehensive studies that have useful recommendations and important implications for the Long-Term Policy. APF and Tur have begun the review and analysis of those studies. Key studies include:

Austin Town Lake Metropolitan Park Master Plan (EDAW July 1999). The 1999 EDAW Master Plan is the original Town Lake Metropolitan Park master plan adopted by the City Council in 1999. Key focuses of the plan were (1) ability to support cultural events in the park and within adjacent event centers, (2) aesthetics of park space that highlights Austin and integrates with neighborhoods, (3) ergonomics of park that allows many uses for Austin residents, (4) environmental sensitivity and (5) security. Phases I and II of the project, completed between 1999 and 2007 (other than the Alliance Children's Garden), were focused on the parkland south of Riverside Drive, generally referred to as Butler Park. A number of the improvements outlined by this plan for north of Riverside Drive or expected to be completed in connection with the Auditorium Shores Improvement Project.

Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan (ROMA Austin January 2010). The Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan was never formally adopted by City Council but was endorsed by the Parks and Recreation Board. The plan articulated a community-supported vision for Austin's downtown parks and open space system that guides public and private investment and management of individual parks and the system as a whole. The plan encouraged a number of policy and procedure changes, including allowing long-term concessions, increasing PARD's budget,

making capital improvements, revising the parkland dedication ordinance, increasing revenue sources and enhancing partnerships with businesses and local organizations.

2011-2016 Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities and Programs (PARD November 2010). The 2011 Long Range Plan was developed by PARD as a guide for future growth and development of Austin's parks and recreation system and updated the prior 1998 long range plan. The plan includes various park standards, best management practices, national standards and PARD standards.

Urban Parks Workgroup (Volunteer Workgroup October 2011). A specially assembled workgroup of volunteers from the Austin community presented a report in 2011 to City Council with recommendations for acquiring, developing and maintaining parks within the Austin's neighborhoods. The report focused on identifying where neighborhood parks are most needed and demonstrating how to integrate best practices from other cities in order to achieve those development goals.

Downtown Austin Plan (City of Austin/McCann-Adams Studio December 2011). The Downtown Austin Plan, which was adopted by City Council, is a development plan to guide a shared vision for Downtown Austin that reinforces the City's fundamental goals of economic and environmental sustainability, affordability, livability and diversity. The DAP is the product of a three-year dialogue with the general public and downtown community and stakeholders. The plan addressed the importance of parks, including the importance of initiating a new generation of downtown signature parks. The study also emphasized the importance of investing in downtown infrastructure and revising the land development ordinances to encourage vibrant development.

Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (City of Austin/Wallace Roberts & Todd June 2012). The Imagine Austin Plan, which was adopted by City Council, is a comprehensive umbrella plan to guide other master plans and small area plans. Completion of the plan involved a various in-depth survey of the public with a large number of stakeholder meetings and interviews. The study provides a number of best practices relating to development of land and park spaces, including promoting coordinated planning efforts, developing community plans and regulations that create strong neighborhoods, integrate sustainable infrastructure, communicate with key constituents, preserve historic landmarks and character, etc. The plan also generally highlights the need to increase park spaces and the availability of community activities within park spaces, protect natural resources and habitats in parks.

STUDY/ ANALYSIS COMPLETED TO DATE

Initial Fact Finding and Review of Existing Plans and Policies

Tur, in consultation with APF and PARD, has completed an initial review of key documents and communications regarding the Long-Term Project, including the relevant city resolutions. Tur has

worked with stakeholders to identify the various plans, reports and communications relevant to successful execution of the project.

Planning and Feedback Meetings with Key City Department Leaders

Over the course of numerous visits to Austin during the past five months, Tur and APF have held a number of planning and feedback meetings with key city department leaders, including the departments of Transportation, Planning & Development Review, Office of Special Events and Sustainability. Tur has also held update meetings with the city council members sponsoring the Long-Term Project's underlying council resolution and their respective teams. The focus of these planning meetings has been on (1) developing a background of existing plans and policies around Austin's downtown park spaces and event policies, (2) identifying key issues and challenges facing development and operation of park spaces and (3) generating ideas and recommendations for achieving the Long-Term Project's goals and supporting its implementation.

Discussions with Neighborhood Leaders and Other Key Stakeholders

Tur and APF are in the process of holding stakeholder discussions with key neighborhood leaders, business leaders and other key representatives of Austin's communities. Tur and APF have already held initial meetings with several neighborhood leaders as well as other key constituents (such as representatives from the Long Center for the Performing Arts) and are in the process of scheduling additional meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to (1) receive recommendations and other feedback on addressing issues relating to Austin's park spaces and event policies and (2) begin engaging key constituents in the project in order to encourage an inclusive approach to accomplishing the goals of the Long-Term Project.

Chicago Visit by Austin Delegation

A delegation of Austin representatives visited Chicago on January 14th through 15th, 2013 for a site visit of downtown Chicago parks. Additionally, participants held a series of discussions with Chicago government and business leaders who were instrumental in the development of Chicago's Millennium Park and other park spaces. The purpose of the visit was to familiarize stakeholders with Chicago's redevelopment efforts and introduce stakeholders to key Chicago representatives who were involved in the process.

Attendees from Austin included representatives from the Austin Parks Foundation, representatives from key City of Austin city departments (e.g. PARD and its Board Members, Transportation, Planning & Development Review and Sustainability) and two Assistant City Managers. Chicago presenters included former Mayor Richard M. Daley, current and past officials from key City of Chicago Departments including Transportation, Cultural Affairs & Special Events, Zoning, Housing & Economic Development and the Chicago Park District. The delegation also met with the Executive Director of Millennium Park Inc. (the nonprofit tasked with management of Millennium Park), as

well as executives from the private development firm that led the redevelopment of Chicago's Lakeshore East area.

While much of the discussion focused on Millennium Park and its conceptualization, the Chicago representatives shared best practices and lessons learned from other major projects and developments, including the creation of Chicago's Museum Campus on the lakefront, the redevelopment of Navy Pier, the Riverwalk, and the transformation of Northerly Island. Common themes included communication with all stakeholders, incorporation of sustainable elements, and cooperation between public and private sectors with regards to planning, financing and maintenance.

Private projects are not exempt from these processes and considerations, as was noted by the developers of Lakeshore East who took a collaborative and comprehensive approach to their development in the revitalized downtown neighborhood. Working with City officials and the community to incorporate park land, including an off-leash dog park and other sustainable elements, the resulting mixed-use development over what was formerly a small municipal golf course is now Chicago's new preeminent neighborhood.

Additionally, listed below are a number of relevant ideas and best practices with regards to the creation and operation of Millennium Park.

- Millennium Park, downtown Chicago's world-class 24.5-acre public park, was built over what was once a surface parking lot and train yard. It was created in partnership with the private sector. The City provided the land and the vision and business and civic leaders helped raise the money to build one of the great urban parks in America. Some of the world's finest artists and architects came together to create what many, including the press, doubted would be worth the investment.
- The Austin delegation received two Economic Impact Studies regarding the benefits of Millennium Park. These reports detailed the fact that in the years following the Millennium Park's opening, it became the single largest public place revenue generator in the city, positively affecting the real estate, retail, hospitality and tourism industries in the surrounding areas.
- The economic benefits over the ten years following the opening of the park, as calculated in the Millennium Park Economic Impact Study, will be from \$428.5 million to \$586.6 million for hotels, from \$672.1 million to \$867.1 million for restaurants, and from \$529.6 million to \$711.1 million for retailers.
- Millennium Park's extensive utilization of space, particularly underground, maximized its ability to diversify the uses for the park. Although situated on Chicago's lakefront, the parking garages and Harris Theater descend five stories underground, in certain areas far below the water table.

- Various public-private partnerships were created to assist in the financing and maintenance of the park, including the leasing of the underground garages and the formation of Millennium Park, Inc., a private entity charged with management and maintenance the Lurie Garden the Boeing Galleries and the public art. The park operations are done by a private site management firm under contract to the City's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). DCASE staff also manage most of the free year round public programs. Permanent concessions and other revenue generators, including limited paid concerts at the Pritzker Pavilion, help to maintain the park and promote free, public programming.
- As part of the private sector investment in the park, certain naming rights were given to families and corporations who donated at the highest levels. The naming of various areas of the park was done in a uniform and simple manner, lending to the visual aesthetics of the park.
- In order to preserve the integrity of the investment in Millennium Park and promote safety for its visitors, a security staff patrols the park 24 hours a day and enforces various rules and regulations. Smoking is prohibited in many areas of the park, as are dogs, on or off-leash, unless they are service dogs.
- There are certain spaces and facilities that can be rented out for business and civic events, with proceeds from the rental directly supporting the public programming in the park.

Innovative programming helps bring premium cultural acts to the public, including free simulcasts of Harris Theater programs at the outdoor Pritzker Pavilion and adjoining Great Lawn. A state-of-the-art surround-sound system helps to provide an enjoyable experience to program attendees while keeping the sound from traveling outside the Park.

KEY ISSUES

Town Lake Metropolitan Park Design Priorities

(1) Venue Space

Austin has developed a reputation internationally as a destination for music, festivals and world-class events. Auditorium Shores, home to the venue stage at Town Lake Metropolitan Park, is at the epicenter of Austin's event culture. A key role of the Long-Term Study will be to provide design recommendations relating to Town Lake Metropolitan Park's ability to host events of all sizes. The facilities need to not only be capable of handling large crowds and renowned headliners, but also capable of scaling down to accommodate smaller events. The overall design and infrastructure of Town Lake Metropolitan Park must also reflect its status as an event center and include design considerations that allow events to operate safely and efficiently.

(2) Sound Attenuation

Initial fact finding and stakeholder review has revealed that noise pollution within the neighborhoods surrounding Town Lake Metropolitan Park is a key issue of concern, particularly within the neighborhoods directly south of Auditorium Shores and downtown directly across Lady Bird Lake. Although there are certain influences on sound propagation that cannot fully be controlled, such as wind direction, there are a number of best practices that can be incorporated into design of Town Lake Metropolitan Park to mitigate disruption to the park's neighbors. The Long-Term Study is exploring a number of design factors that may help attenuate sound travel, such as direction of the venue stage, placement of hills, berms and trees within Town Lake Metropolitan Park and innovative sound system technologies.

(3) Neighborhood Considerations.

Although the long-term vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park will be one that serves as a best-in-class park for all of Austin, it is also imperative that design of the park takes into consideration the interests and concerns of surrounding neighborhoods and their respective organizations, including the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association and the Zilker Neighborhood Association. The Long-Term Study will actively engage neighborhood leaders and take neighborhood considerations into consideration with respect to its design recommendations.

(4) Dog Owners

Austin has developed into a dynamic culture for dog lovers. In particular Auditorium Shores has grown into a regular destination for dog owners, and the section of Town Lake Metropolitan Park bound by Riverside Drive on the South, Lady Bird Lake on the south, Dawson Road on the west and South 1st Street on the east is currently an off-leash area. Long-term recommendations to Town Lake Metropolitan Park will need to take into consideration the interests of dog owners and ensure dogs have designated off-leash areas with best-in-class amenities. At the same time, design of Town Lake Metropolitan Park will need to balance the interests of dog owners with quality of the overall parkland and maintenance of the park's overall facilities and landscape. Special consideration must also be given to safety, such as safety of bike riders using the trail and children using the park. The Long-Term Study will work to bring all constituents together in order to propose recommendations for design that take all parties and issues into consideration.

(5) Ann and Roy Butler Hike & Bike Trail

The Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail along Lady Bird Lake is a leading Austin attraction. Considerable effort has been made by the city, The Trail Foundation and other organizations to create a first rate trail. Any long term development of Town Lake Metropolitan Park should take into consideration its effect on the trail. The City of Austin and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department have already committed \$2 million to improvements along the Trailhead area

at Auditorium Shores, which will include widening the trail, landscape improvements and new amenities. Construction on the Trailhead is expected to begin in November 2013 and extend through April of 2014, and recommendations by the Long-Term Study will take these new improvements into consideration.

(6) Long Center for the Performing Arts / Palmer Events Center

The Long Center for the Performing Arts and the Palmer Events Center are both important Austin establishments and key pillars of Town Lake Metropolitan Park. There have been historic challenges to fully coordinating the priorities of constituents from all of the Long Center for the Performing Arts, Palmer Events Center and surrounding parkland, and considerable effort should be given to help all parties maintain a collaborative working relationship. The long-term vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park is one of a unified campus, bringing together the parkland, venue stage, Long Center, Palmer Center and other facilities as a central Austin public resource. It will also be important to further address the scheduling and coordination of events to ensure that the various separate facilities can all operate successfully.

(7) Dougherty Arts Center

Dougherty Arts Center ("DAC") is a PARD programming facility that currently houses a large number of important arts and other activities for both children and adults. Current evaluation of the key design reveals the importance to the community of the activities within the DAC and the importance of preserving their availability to the community. The Long-Term Study will further assess the community programming needs of the DAC and recommend ways for providing high-quality space that is suitable for such programs.

(8) Pitch & Putt and Other Amenities

The broader Town Lake Metropolitan Park footprint includes other existing facilities, such as the Butler Park Pitch & Putt, which must be examined in connection with the broader planning process. This facility will be analyzed and discussed with stakeholder groups to identify long term recommendations.

Transportation and Parking

(1) Traffic Flow and Riverside Drive

The Long-Term study will dedicate considerable effort to assessing traffic considerations and road design in and around Town Lake Metropolitan Park. Final recommendations will balance the importance of preserving well-functioning roadways that serve commuters with an interest in providing a well-designed, cohesive Town Lake Metropolitan Park for Austin residents. Additional consideration will also be given to coordination with the needs of the Long Center for the Performing

Arts and Palmer Events Center, special event-day considerations and safety of pedestrians and cyclists traveling through the park. APF and Tur also expect to engage outside traffic consultants in the process to identify best practices and revisit prior traffic and planning studies.

(2) Parking

Initial feedback from stakeholders has identified parking as a critical issue facing long-term viability of Town Lake Metropolitan Park. In particular, the lack of quality parking options during peak days of leading events can create a real disruption to the park and the broader neighborhood. The Long-Term Study will explore a variety of approaches to addressing the parking issue, including better utilization of existing parking facilities (such as Long Center for Performing Arts parking lot), implementation additional policies within neighborhoods to protect neighborhoods, the better use of existing surface lots and garages in the surrounding area and evaluating new and innovative parking facilities.

(3) Public Transportation

The Long-Term study will assess various means of improved public transportation in order to better serve visitors to Town Lake Metropolitan Park, both year-round and during event days. The study will explore enhancement of conventionally deployed options such as shuttles and buses. The study will also explore alternative means of transportation, both existing and new, such as pedicabs and gondolas. Public transportation recommendations will also take into account long-term transportation efforts in Austin at-large, including urban rail.

Coordination with Other PARD Development Projects

Successful implementation of a long-term development strategy for Town Lake Metropolitan Park will require awareness of and coordination with the City of Austin's active redevelopment efforts of its parks and public spaces. A number of key park spaces are currently under redevelopment or are soon to be under redevelopment, including:

(1) Auditorium Shores Improvements Project

Concurrently with the development of the Long-Term Plan, PARD and APF are working on the planning for the Auditorium Shores Improvements Project. The result of the project will be a renovated event space with enhanced recreation opportunities including a newly designed and redeveloped dog off-leash area, realignment of the trail and irrigation, rehabilitation of shoreline erosion and improvement turfgrass of Auditorium Shores, with attention also to shoreline erosion. A fact sheet fully outlining the details of the Auditorium Shores Improvements Project is attached to this Report as Exhibit B. The design phase for this project will begin in June of 2013 and

construction will begin in September 2013 for the off-leash area and November of 2013 for remaining areas.

(2) Alliance Children's Garden

The City of Austin will begin construction on the development of the Alliance Children's Garden within Butler Park beginning in September of 2014. The project is currently in the design phase, which is being led by TBG Partners. This portion of Town Lake Metropolitan Park will temporarily be closed between September 2014 and April 2015.

(3) Auditorium Shores Trailhead

As discussed above, the City of Austin has committed to improvements along the Auditorium Shores Trailhead. The City of Austin and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department have already committed \$2 million to improvements along the Trailhead area at Auditorium Shores, which will include widening the trail, landscape improvements and new amenities. Construction on the Trailhead is expected to begin in November 2013 and extend through April of 2014.

(4) Waller Creek

The City of Austin established the area along Waller Creek as a TIF District in 2007. Construction on the Waller Creek tunnel is currently underway as part of the city's flood plan and should be completed in 2014. The project also envisions a number of above-ground improvements in order to develop the area into a linear greenway winding through downtown Austin and connecting Lady Bird Lake with Waterloo Park and the University of Texas campus. Above-ground construction is expected to extend through 2018 as a collaborative effort with the Waller Creek Conservancy. As part of this project, Waterloo Park, one of the city's key central parks and event venues, is also under construction as part of this process and is expected to re-open in 2015.

(5) Holly Shores

PARD is currently working with outside advisor Michael Van Valkenburgh & Associates Inc. to finalize a master plan for a redevelopment of the Holly Shores/Festival Beach parkland, including new parkland around the Holly Power Plant. A draft was presented in February of this year and construction plans and dates are still pending.

(6) Republic Square

A master plan for Republic Square, one of the few central downtown parks, is expected to be finalized in the coming months. The project includes the construction of a new small event venue, a promenade, concessions and other amenities. Once redeveloped, this 2 acre park will be able to accommodate larger events. Final design will begin in 2014 with construction schedule to occur in 2015.

Improving Maintenance

(1) Maintenance Needs

Initial fact finding suggests that PARD is currently underfunded with respect to its ability to maintain its parks at a best-in-class level. PARD, with an annual operating budget of \$54 million, spends less than \$6,700 per acre on upkeep of downtown parks, and \$3,000 per acre on its parks citywide. The Urban Park Workgroups identified Austin with having nearly \$1 billion in deferred maintenance for its current parks, which is one of the worst in the country. The Long-Term Study will spend considerable effort identifying areas for improvements on maintenance, in particular with respect to Town Lake Metropolitan Park. The pressing needs of maintenance in Austin's parks will need to be evaluated in combination with revenue opportunities, in order to determine long-term solutions for PARD and the City of Austin to ensure sustainability of their parks.

(2) Utilization of Public Private Partnerships

The Long-Term Study will explore opportunities to utilize public private partnerships as a tool for better maintaining Austin's parks, in particular its flagship parks. National best practices reveal the opportunity to effectively use nonprofit organizations and private sector organizations to support public parks from both a funding and operations perspective. As one example, maintenance of Chicago's Millennium Park is managed and partially funded through a nonprofit, Millennium Park Inc., in collaboration with the Chicago Park District and the City of Chicago.

Revenue Considerations

The Long-Term Study has started a comprehensive analysis of revenue opportunities in order to determine potential sources of funding for the long-term vision of Town Lake Metropolitan Park and to help PARD address its ongoing maintenance requirements. Currently PARD has an operating budget of \$54 million, \$36 million of which comes from the City of Austin's General Fund, \$8 million from grants and \$10 million in enterprise funds collected from sports activities designed to make the activities cost-neutral to city. Some of the key revenue opportunities to be analyzed and discussed by the Long-Term Project are as follows:

(1) Budget from General Fund

Currently \$36 million of PARD's \$54 million budget comes from the City of Austin's General Fund. Although adjustments in the city's allocation from the General Fund should be considered in connection with achieving the long term vision, the Long-Term Project will also spend considerable effort in identifying alternative sources of funding and opportunities for certain types of funds to be segregated specifically for PARD and/or Town Lake Metropolitan Park purposes.

(2) Parkland Dedication Fees

Currently City of Austin ordinances require that developers must dedicate 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 new residents or pay \$650 per new residential unit in lieu of parkland for new developments. The ordinance further stipulates that the funds must be spent on capital projects within 2 miles of the project. The Long-Term Project will further evaluate the current form and structure of the parkland dedication policies, particularly as it relates to downtown parks.

(3) Event Fees

The Long-Term Project will evaluate current City of Austin policies for fees assessed to event organizers. This analysis will also be coordinated with the Austin Transportation Department's current efforts to create a unified event application and permitting process pursuant to city council resolution number 20120524-89.

(4) Park Concessions

Park concessions currently generate approximately \$3 million in on-site earned income toward the general fund. The Long-Term Project will explore concessions as an opportunity to address PARD's structural deficit and help make Austin's parks long-term sustainable.

(5) Public Improvement Districts / Business Improvement Districts

Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) are innovative taxing strategies that allow cities the ability to levy and collect special tax assessments on properties in order to help fund infrastructure and other developments within a PID area. Currently Austin has 2 PIDs, the first is the East 6th Street PID and the second Downtown Austin PID. The latter PID currently helps to fund the Downtown Austin Alliance. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are similar tax structures that allow business owners in a particular area to vote on a special tax assessment to fund improvements in the area. Both PIDs and BIDs will be further evaluated as part of the Long-Term Project.

(6) Voter-Approved Tax Levies

Voter approved tax levies have been approved in various other regions of the country in order to support parks spaces. Cities such as Minneapolis and Seattle have successfully gone to voters to approve taxes directly earmarked for parks. The tax can be assessed to property, individuals or as a sales tax. In some municipalities, such as Chicago, the park district is authorized as a separate taxing authority with its own budget. The Long-Term Project will further assess best practices in taxing options for PARD and provide recommendations.

(7) Grants and Private Donors

Currently \$8 million of PARD's budget comes from grants. The Long-Term Project will further assess best practices in utilization of available public and private grants. The project will also explore increasing philanthropy by private donors and explore best practices regarding park naming rights, sponsorships, etc. See "***Engagement of Private Sector***" below for further discussion on private sector engagement.

(8) Bond Financing

In the fall of 2012 voters also approved a \$77.7 million bond for capital improvements to the parks pursuant to Proposition 14 including improvements earmarked for the Alliance Children's Garden and the DAC. Previously, voters approved a City of Austin bond in 2006 which included \$64 million dollars to PARD to complete renovations to existing facilities and to construct facilities and \$20 million for land acquisition and used a bond election in 1998 to fund construction of the Palmer Events Center. The Long-Term Plan will further explore bond financing opportunities and best practices in connection with making recommendations on achieving the Town Lake Metropolitan Park's long-term vision.

Event Policies

World-class events and festivals have become a large part of the Austin culture and have demonstrated themselves to be a huge driver to the Austin economy. Among the largest such festivals is South by Southwest ("SXSW"), which is an annual interactive, film and music conference operated by SXSW Inc. SXSW features over 2,000 performers playing across 90 venues and in 2013 brought in economic impact of \$220 million to the city. Austin City Limits Music Festival ("ACL") is also another renowned festival that calls Austin home. The event, which is held annually in Zilker Park, features a number of leading music acts over three days and brings in over 70,000 fans each day. This year ACL is further expanding to two separate weekends.

The City of Austin, led by the Department of Transportation, is currently working on a comprehensive revision to its ordinances on event organizing in the city in order to create a unified and streamlined event permitting process. This effort, which was directed by the City Council pursuant to resolution number 20120524-89, is currently in the stakeholder engagement phase. The Long-Term Project will dedicate considerable effort to working with the City of Austin to address the city's current event policies and compare to national best practices. The project will address the event policies with consideration to the quality and maintenance of the parks, interests of the neighbors to the city's park and overall impact on the City of Austin, its economy and its culture. The Long-Term Project will also assess and make recommendations with respect to the city's current policy that limits events on Auditorium Shores to 25 days per year.

Engagement of Private Sector

The long-term vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park is one that will have a broad impact, providing both a first rate public resource for Austin's citizens and a boost to Austin's economy. While the role of PARD, APF and the other usual players will be critical to Town Lake Metropolitan Park's success, success of the park will also require the input and support of the city's private sector. The Downtown Austin Alliance is one example of businesses coming together to support the parks, but in order to fully achieve the vision; the private sector will have to become an even more active participant in Town Lake Metropolitan Park's development and maintenance. APF and Tur have begun and will continue to engage Austin businesses and civic leaders in the Long-Term Project. The ultimate goal of the Long-Term Project is not only to provide recommendations on making Town Lake Metropolitan Park a world-class park, but also on garnering the broad support to help make it a reality.

NEXT STEPS

The Long-Term Project is expected to be completed in April of 2014 at which point a final report with a description of the project's findings and a comprehensive list of recommendations will be submitted to the City Council. In addition to the final report, however, one of the key objectives of the Long-Term Project will be to align key stakeholders and build the momentum necessary to achieve the plan's vision. The Long-Term Project aims to be less of a traditional plan and more of a roadmap to drive results.

Some of the next steps for the Long-Term Project include:

(1) Additional Fact Finding

APF and Tur will continue to work with City of Austin leaders and other stakeholders to identify and analyze key issues relating to development of Town Lake Metropolitan Park and accomplishment of the goals of the Long-Term Project. The project will look to further refine a list of priorities for developing a successful park by better understanding the key design considerations, economic parameters, city policies and procedures and other considerations that will determine success.

(2) Subcontractor Review of Studies

Certain specific issues within the scope of the Long-Term Project may require the review of industry professionals with specific expertise. In particular, it is expected that design architects will be needed to address the long-term master plan for Town Lake Metropolitan Park and traffic

engineers will be needed to address traffic and parking considerations. APF and Tur have had initial conversations with leading firms in both of these areas and will look to engage these specialists prior to the final report.

(3) Best Practices

A successful vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park will need to take into consideration the successes and experiences of other flagship parks throughout the world. The Long-Term Report will continue to explore international best practices on park development, maintenance and operations in order to help construct the roadmap for Town Lake Metropolitan Park's vision.

(4) Expanded Public Engagement

APF and Tur fully understand and embrace the importance of engaging the broader Austin community in the development and planning process. The vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park is one that not only benefits the City of Austin economy, but one that provides improved quality of life for each of Austin's residents. The Long-Term project will continue to reach out to stakeholders directly on a periodic basis. The project will also hold stakeholder meetings to allow feedback from a broad audience. The Long-Term Project will further coordinate with the Auditorium Shores Improvements Project with respect to community engagement and feedback.

(5) Engagement of Business Community

Although PARD and APF will play a substantial role in the ultimate development of the long-term vision for Town Lake Metropolitan Park, the Austin private sector will need to be a highly active participant in the overall process. APF and Tur will continue to work with business and civic leaders throughout Austin in order to generate the momentum and support necessary to drive the Long-Term Project's success.



**PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN
THE AUSTIN PARKS FOUNDATION AND
TUR PARTNERS LLC**

January 1, 2013

Scope of Work

Tur Partners LLC ("Advisor") will act as a special advisor to the Austin Parks Foundation ("APF") responsible for leading a comprehensive analysis of city plans, policies and initiatives relating to Austin's downtown parks, with a focus on redevelopment plans for the parkland anchored by the Palmer Events Center and Long Center generally referred to as Butler Park/Auditorium Shores, including a portion of Town Lake Metro Park (the "Project"). The Project shall be subject to the direction set forth by City of Austin Council 20120823-072 and 20121011-081.

Advisor will be responsible for engaging designers, consultants and other required third parties in order to develop the final plan and other Project deliverables and will also work to involve and unify key constituents in the process, including APF, the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department ("PARD") and other City of Austin departments, neighborhood organizations, business leaders and other stakeholders as identified by APF and/or PARD.

The final plan will be presented to the City Council in April of 2014 and will include a funding analysis and detailed project implementation schedule, complete with final cost estimates and project milestone dates. Advisor will also identify potential contractors and financing sources for redevelopment activities relating to the Project.

Although advisor will communicate with the various constituents to ensure the Project objectives fully incorporate diverse views and priorities, Advisor will focus on addressing the following objectives:

1. Review, evaluate and, if necessary, update current plans for park space surrounding Palmer Events Center and Long Center with a focused attention on parkland north of Riverside Drive, including the Auditorium Shores main trailhead, Alliance Children's Garden, event lawn, off-leash area, Dougherty Art Center redevelopment/relocation, and trail and the shoreline of Lady Bird Lake. The following city approved plans will be consulted in connection with the analysis:
 - a. Auditorium Shores Master Plan;
 - b. Holly Master Plan;



- c. Town Lake Master Plan;
 - d. SDAT South Shore;
 - e. Downtown Austin Plan;
 - f. Downtown Parks Master Plan;
 - g. Waller Creek Master Plan;
 - h. Waterfront Overlay Board Ordinance;
 - i. Capitol Metro Strategic Plan; and
 - j. Imagine Austin
-
- 2. Identify solutions for increasing the ease and availability of parking in the vicinity of the Auditorium Shores, the Long Center and Palmer Events Center and potential revenue opportunities associated therewith.
 - 3. Explore traffic considerations in and around the Auditorium Shores/Butler Park parklands and explore associated city policies regarding use of intruding/adjacent streets (including Riverside Drive).
 - 4. Evaluate existing agreement with event organizers and address current policy/procedures for multi-year agreements.
 - 5. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of combined impacts from events at Auditorium Shores, Zilker Park, Long Center, Palmer Events Center and surrounding area and provide a recommendation for PARD special events policies and Austin street ordinances (including number and schedule of events) with consideration to (i) maximizing public enjoyment of parks spaces; (ii) preserving and maintaining quality of parkland; (iii) revitalizing Austin and improving its economy and revenues; and (iv) protecting neighborhood concerns and public safety.
 - 6. Present options for funding and maintenance of parkland based on existing and new revenue streams, including revenue derived from existing motor vehicle rental tax and donation from C3 Presents. Consider policies regarding post-event costs for maintenance and repairs. Additionally, prepare a financial assessment of the staffing and maintenance requirements for upkeep of each of the key event facilities.
 - 7. Propose ongoing strategies, policies and organizational frameworks for park promotion and activity organization, which include a high level of civic engagement, including neighborhood associations, business leaders and other key stakeholders.
 - 8. Provide additional economic development and revitalization recommendations within the City of Austin relating to the Project, including recommendations for potential partnerships with the private sector, with consideration to City of Austin's existing procurement and project delivery process.



Key Dates

The current proposed major milestones for the Project are as follows:

December 20, 2012 – Preliminary Progress Report submitted to City Council

January 2013 – Chicago Visit by City of Austin delegation

April 2013 – Preliminary Report on Planning Process submitted to City Council

April 2014 – Final Report on Planning Process submitted to City Council

Auditorium Shores Improvements

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) is working actively with C3 Presents (C3), the organizer of the Austin City Limits Music Festival, and with the Austin Parks Foundation (APF) on a coordinated effort to develop a facilities and operational plan for PARD's major outdoor events venues, with emphasis upon Auditorium Shores. With the assistance of outside consultants, the team of C3, APF and PARD shall collaborate on improvements to Auditorium Shores. This collaboration will bring a renewed focus on this facility as a great urban park that can sustainably accommodate patrons, special events and community gatherings. Through this collaboration, the planned improvements will be implemented more rapidly and cost efficiently than the City of Austin could perform alone.

The need for improvements on Auditorium Shores was identified through the most recent public engagement process conducted between October 2011 and July 2012 as part of the Town Lake Metropolitan Park Master Plan process. The result of the project will be a renovated event space with enhanced recreation opportunities including a newly designed and developed off-leash area, realignment of the trail and irrigation and new turfgrass for the event lawn and remaining landscape and shoreline areas of Auditorium Shores. The total project cost for this scope of work is currently estimated at \$3,500,000 funded through a donation provided by C3.

Impact

According to current schedule, the design phase for this work will begin June of 2013 with construction anticipated to begin September of 2013 for the off-leash area and November of 2013 for remaining portions of the shores. The construction impact will result in a 1-year temporary closure of Auditorium Shores, the portion of Town Lake Metropolitan Park bound by Riverside Drive on the south, West Bouldin Creek on the west, South 1st Street on the east and Lady Bird Lake on the north. The Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail shall remain open during construction with detours provided. Under this project, events otherwise scheduled during 2014 will not be accommodated at Auditorium Shores. PARD is currently working with event promoters to mitigate this impact and temporarily relocate events where feasible.

Concurrently with this project, PARD will be renovating the main trailhead at Auditorium Shores and developing the Alliance Childrens' Garden south of the Liz Carpenter Fountain in Butler Park.

History

The development of Butler Park and Auditorium Shores within Town Lake Metropolitan Park has been an ongoing effort since the completion of the original park master plan in 1999. Phases I and II of the project, completed between 1999 and 2007 were focused upon parkland south of Riverside Drive, generally referred to as Butler Park. The scope of this work included a great lawn, observation hill and an interactive water feature now known as the Liz Carpenter Fountain. Improvements to be implemented through this renewed collaboration with focus on parkland north of Riverside Drive will result in a more resilient parkland setting for daily use and special events.

Public Input

Public engagement began in earnest for Phases III and IV in 2009 and was temporarily postponed due to uncertainty regarding amount of project funding. The public was re-engaged in 2011 with three

additional stakeholder meetings and one public open house conducted between October 2011 and July 2012. Public engagement will continue through design development of these upcoming improvements.



Program Elements

The subsequent sections of this document will provide detailed information for each of the program elements described above including scope of work, timeline, budget and impact. As described herein, the upcoming Phase III and IV project will include the following primary program elements:

- Auditorium Shores Event Lawn
- Off-Leash Area
- Auditorium Shores Trailhead
- Alliance Children's Garden

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Downtown View of Auditorium Shores and Butler Park

Auditorium Shores Event Lawn

Scope of Work

The event lawn, open turfgrass areas and paved promenades at Auditorium Shores are host to many of Austin's largest and most popular special events, festivals and thousands of daily users including families, walkers, runners, fitness enthusiasts and pet owners. The high popularity of this parkland has resulted in substantial site degradation necessitating significant reinvestment in infrastructure and landscape improvements as are being proposed under this Public/Private Partnership.

Work anticipated in these 18 acres (bound by the new off-leash area to the west, Lady Bird Lake to the north, Riverside Drive to the south and the new trailhead to the east) of lakefront parkland includes:

- Demolition of outdated infrastructure
- Site re-grading
- Utility and storm water improvements
- Accessibility enhancements
- Irrigation and turfgrass replacement
- Sidewalk, trail and shoreline improvements
- Tree planting
- Signage and wayfinding
- Site furnishings and amenities

Timeline

Phase	Start Date	End Date
Public Engagement	May 2013	June 2013
Design, Permit & Bidding	June 2013	September 2013
Construction	February 2014	August 2014
Turfgrass Establishment	August 2014	February 2015

Budget

Funding Source: Donation from C3 Presents
Estimated Construction Amount: \$1,625,000

Impact

The Auditorium Shores Event Lawn and adjacent parkland bound by the trailhead and off-leash area will be temporarily closed for renovations and turfgrass establishment from February 2014 to February 2015. During this time, the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail will be available for daily use with detours.

Off-Leash Area

Scope of Work

Currently, the entire Auditorium Shores parkland north of Riverside Drive is designated as an off-leash area and is considered a popular destination for dog owners who particularly favor this site for water access. The heavy use of Auditorium Shores as an off-leash area has taken a toll on the health of turfgrass in this area and has resulted in dog, pedestrian and bicycle conflict of use.

The concept plan for this off-leash area was developed with input from the off-leash community. Specifically, the Off-Leash Area Advisory Committee (OLAAC) was briefed on this plan from March 2011 through June 2012. Further community engagement will encourage additional input from the off-leash community and general park users as final designs are developed. Under the current project proposal, improvements are envisioned for a formally designed and developed off-leash area on 3.2 acres of parkland at the western end of Auditorium Shores. The design of this off-leash area will include a re-route of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail to allow access by dogs and their owners to the lake edge while avoiding direct conflict with trail users.

Additionally, the new off-leash area will feature the following elements that reflect best practices for off-leash area design and construction:

- Separation from adjoining land uses
- Trail and access improvements
- Defined edge consisting of land form, vegetative barrier and/or fencing
- Sustainable ground surfacing (mulch and/or synthetic)
- Controlled site drainage with water quality elements
- Architectural shoreline improvements for water access
- Site amenities for dogs and pet owners
- Signage and public information
- Landscaping for shade and environmental benefit

Timeline

Phase	Start Date	End Date
Public Engagement	May 2013	June 2013
Design, Permit & Bidding	June 2013	September 2013
Construction	October 2013	January 2014

Budget

Funding Source: Donation from C3 Presents
Estimated Construction Amount: \$1,100,000

Impact

The portion of Auditorium Shores being enhanced as the new off-leash area will be temporarily closed to public use from approximately October 2013 to January 2014. During this time, the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail will be available for daily use with detours.



Auditorium Shores Trailhead

Scope of Work

The purpose of this project is to enhance the Trailhead area of Auditorium Shores by redevelopment of the existing parking lot for improved traffic flow, parking capacity (add 33 spaces) and water quality improvements (bio-filtration and rain gardens). Other improvements include:

- New restroom building
- Trail connectivity
- Stretching and warm-up area
- Signage
- Landscape improvements

Timeline

Phase	Start Date	End Date
Public Engagement	December 2011	July 2012
Design, Permit & Bidding	April 2012	September 2013
Construction	November 2013	April 2014

Budget

Funding Source: City of Austin, 2006 G.O. Bond Program
Estimated Construction Amount: \$1,000,000

Funding Source: TPWD Grant
Estimated Construction Amount: \$1,000,000

Impact

The Auditorium Shores Trailhead and associated parking lot will be unavailable for daily use during construction, which is currently estimated from November 2013 to April 2014. During this time, the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail will be available for daily use with detours.



Alliance Children's Garden

Scope of Work

The Alliance Children's Garden was originally planned as part of the Phase II improvements for Town Lake Metropolitan Park. The scope of this project is to provide a children's activity area with educational, interactive and artistic play features and provide a complementary play experience to the existing Liz Carpenter Fountain. Design is currently underway by TBG Partners, whose work to date has included extensive interaction with stakeholders and the surrounding community, and design development services with a series of stakeholder meetings planned for the summer of 2013.

Timeline

Phase	Start Date	End Date
Public Engagement	July 2013	September 2013
Design, Permit & Bidding	April 2013	September 2014
Construction	September 2014	April 2015

Budget

Funding Source: City of Austin, Venue Funding
Estimated Construction Amount: \$2,500,000

Impact

The portion of Butler Park being improved as the Alliance Children's Garden will be temporarily closed to public use from approximately September 2014 through April 2015. In addition, there will be periodic impact upon the parking lot shared by the Dougherty Arts Center during the course of construction. During this time, the remaining areas within Butler Park including the Liz Carpenter Fountain and Great Lawn will be available for public use.



Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail Re-Route

Scope of Work

The City of Austin, through PARD in-house trail construction forces, shall construct the re-aligned portion of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail as indicated in the description of the Off-Leash Area described previously and shown below. This work will be scheduled prior to commencement of the Off-Leash Area and Auditorium Shores Event Lawn improvements with funding provided by The City. Upon completion of the Off-Leash Area and Auditorium Shores Event Lawn improvements, City in-house trail construction forces shall complete renovations to trail sections impacted by the scope of the Off-Leash Area and Auditorium Shores Event Lawn improvements.

