

Parkland Events Task Force  
Potential Policy Recommendations  
Work Products

- **A Applications and permits:**

1. Should low-cost and no-cost events be given preference over for-profit events on parkland?
2. Should non-profit events be given preference over for-profit events on parkland?
3. Establish criteria for approving permit applications for events.
4. Establish a standing committee of stakeholders to review and approve events on parkland.
5. Require a supermajority vote by the Council to override a Parks and Recreation Board action to approve or deny an application for an event at Zilker Park, Vic Mathias Shores, and Festival Beach.

- **B Planning and coordination:**

1. Establish a standing committee to help plan and coordinate events at the Long Center, Palmer Events Center, Vic Mathias Shores, and Butler Park. The committee should include representatives from adjacent neighborhoods, Long Center, Ballet Austin, Austin Symphony, Parks and Recreation Department, Palmer Events Center, Austin Opera, Daugherty Arts Center, event producers, Austin Parks Foundation, and Austin Center for Events (ACE).
  - *(PETF passed a resolution to the Open Space Committee regarding this recommendation.)*
2. Recommendations from the PETF should inform the special events ordinance to help ensure consistent and unified special events policies.

- **C Environment:**

1. Require events to utilize green event policies.
2. Protect trees, vegetation, and environmentally sensitive areas.

- **D Fees:**

1. Base fees on the total area of a park used for an event.
2. Charge a premium rate for high-demand parkland.
3. Increase rental fees for large events like ACL Fest.
4. Recalibrate maintenance and rental fees annually.
5. Hold bonds/deposit long enough to identify damage to parkland.

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6. Direct rental fees generated from events on parkland into a special purpose park fund that rolls over to the next parks budget year.
  7. Identify a strategy to reimburse the City's expenses for events without sponsors (Halloween, Mardi Gras, etc.).
- **E Limits on events on parkland:**
    1. Consider changes to current limits on events at Zilker Park, Vic Mathias Shores, and Fiesta Gardens.
    2. Recommend policy to include outdoor events on Long Center property in limits on events at Vic Mathias Shores.
      - *NOTE – including in Long Center resolution/action item*
    3. Relocate certain small size events at Zilker Park, Vic Mathias Shores, and Fiesta Gardens to other venues to help minimize the impact and closure of streets.
  - **F Alternative venues:**
    1. Identify parkland in East Austin for potential events. (*PETF is Currently considering a recommendation that Bolm Road District Park, Johnny Trevino, Jr. Metro Park, Walter E. Long Metro Park, and Onion Creek Metro Park.*)
    2. Establish criteria for designating a park as an event venue.
  - **G Impacts:**
    1. Establish impact zone and special event zone to facilitate planning and management of events on parkland.
    2. Establish a Special Events Permit Parking (SEPP) Program for neighborhoods that are in or adjacent to the impact zone. Permanent no-event-parking signs would be installed in the neighborhoods at the expense of event producers. The SEPP would replace the current program paid for by event producers to install temporary no-parking signs before each event and remove them after each event. Over time, the SEPP will likely cost event producers less than the current no-parking program.
    3. Increase fines for parking and traffic violations in the impact zone.
    4. Strictly enforce towing in the impact zone. Increase Austin Police Department's towing capacity during events. This will help reduce

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response times for towing and allow police officers to spend more time on enforcement.

5. Increase fines for unpermitted vendors located in the special event zone.
  6. Increase staffing for the traffic management center during events to monitor traffic flow and signals in the impact zone.
  7. Establish a temporary flagger team to augment police resources at key intersections during events to provide additional information and assistance to drivers and pedestrians.
  8. Amend City codes to establish pedicab traffic flow enhancement zones during events. The traffic flow enhancement zone would designate approved and prohibited routes for pedicabs to help facilitate and enhance traffic flow.
  9. Accommodate general park users that are displaced by events. Install signs to redirect them to nearby parks.
  10. Require a sound impact plan for events with amplified music.
  11. Provide funding for a sufficient number of sound meters that have A, B, and C weighting capabilities.
  12. Amend Parks code to change sound curfew extension requests from 10 pm to 2 am to 10 pm to 11 pm.
  13. Establish stakeholder meetings with affected neighborhoods to help plan and prepare for medium and large events.
  14. Streamline setup and teardown process for events.
  15. Establish higher standards (fees, impact mitigation, limits) for heavily used parkland.
- **H Fee waivers and City co-sponsored events:**
    1. Identify strategies to reimburse the City's expenses for events without sponsors (Halloween, Mardi Gras, etc...).
    2. Require free events produced by a commercial or for-profit entity to pre-ticket all attendees. *(This would protect these events from undue costs when all neighboring event centers are closed or working together on an event – Austin Symphony on July 4<sup>th</sup>)*
    3. Establish a policy that the Council may not waive damage deposits for events on parkland.

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4. Policies to waive fees and expenses for events cosponsored by the Council should be based on specific criteria:
    - i. Significant public benefit to a local Austin-based non-profit.
    - ii. Significant local public economic impact and public benefit.
    - iii. Free, family-friendly and alcohol/tobacco free.
    - iv. Environmentally friendly.
- **I Foundations and Non-profits:**
    1. Producers of events on public property must publicly disclose the amount of money or value of in-kind donations given to foundations and non-profits for each event.
    2. Foundations that receive money or in-kind donations from events on public property must publicly disclose that information for each event.

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**Status of work products required in PETF council resolution:**

1. Inventory of special events at City parks, including the number of events, number of participants, and number of days each park is unavailable for general park use.
  - *Inventory produced.*
2. A review of existing park special events policies, as well as existing practices related to events, scheduling, coordination, and enforcement of contracts and agreements.
  - *In progress.*
3. A comparative analysis of Parks and Recreation Department fees for park use received versus the cost of repair, maintenance, and other costs for each park facility in coordination with the City Council's Economic Opportunity, Technology, Innovation, and Creative Industries Committee and building upon the information gathered pursuant to Resolution 20130926-078.
  - *PETF passed a resolution on April 19, 2016, recommending funding in FY 2017 for a financial analysis of costs and fees for events on parkland and public right-of-ways.*
4. An assessment of the impact that park special events have on surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and infrastructure, in coordination with the work under way by the City Council's Mobility Committee regarding transportation impacts.
  - *In progress.*
5. Identification of opportunities for new public and private venues to accommodate events, including an assessment of their carrying capacities and potential impact on surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and infrastructure.
  - *List of potential public and private venues produced. PETF passed a resolution on April 19, 2016, recommending that the master plan for Walter E. Long Metro Park include use for large special events. It also recommended funding for a study to determine the feasibility of using Bolm Road District Park and Johnny Trevino Metro Park as alternative special event venues.*
6. Recommendation of mechanisms that ensure fees collected for special events are sufficient for the maintenance and repairs for any post-event issues.

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- *Potential recommendation that damage deposits be retained by the City for up to 90-days after medium to large events.*
7. Consideration of a policy change to direct fees collected for use of park facilities for a special event be directed to parks maintenance and operations.
- *Potential recommendation that rental fees be kept in a rental fee fund account instead of general fund account.*
8. Determination of whether an adjustment to the number of events held at City parks, most particularly Auditorium Shores, Zilker Park, and Festival Beach, is appropriate.
- *In progress.*

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