

A photograph of an outdoor event space with many colorful flags on tall poles in the background. In the foreground, there are three recycling bins: a blue one for plastic, glass, and aluminum; a black one for general waste; and a green one for food and paper products. The text "Austin Parks and Recreation Department Recycling Program Update" is overlaid in white.

Austin Parks and Recreation Department Recycling Program Update

Zero Waste Advisory Commission
October 2019



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Recycling Program Manager

Agenda

- **Department Overview**
 - Current recycling efforts
 - New recycling bins
 - Phased approach
- **Recycling Dumpsters**
- **Messaging Campaigns**
- **Special Events**
- **Metrics & Baseline**
- **Long Range Plan Alignment**
- **Looking Forward**



Parks & Recreation Department

Mission

To inspire Austin to learn, play, protect and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.



Current Recycling Efforts

- Comprehensive Park Recycling Plan
- Hire Recycling Program Manager
- Recycling at PARD Offices
- Recycling at all PARD Facilities (recreation centers and senior centers, cultural centers and nature centers)
- Pilot High-Impact Recycling Programs



HIGHLAND PARK



New Recycling Bins

- 800 recycling receptacles
- 800 landfill trash receptacles
- Install concrete pads over 4 years
- Replace outdated bins
- Solid blue for recycling



Phased Approach to Recycling Implementation

Phase I

- Aquatics
- Athletic Complexes
- Metropolitan Parks
- Golf Courses

Phase II

- District Parks

Phase III

- Neighborhood Parks
- Remaining Park Facilities

Phase I : Implementation In Progress



Auditorium Shores 2017 – Existing Conditions

Phase I : Implementation In Progress



Auditorium Shores 2018 – Updated Receptacles

Phase I : Implementation In Progress

Ongoing asset management

- GIS mapping
- Optimize locations & routes

New receptacles for additional metropolitan parks

- Started with Zilker, Town Lake, Walnut Creek Metro Parks
- Expanding to Emma Long, Roy G. Guerrero Metro Parks, other metropolitan parks

Challenges

- Limited budget for waste audits and messaging campaigns
- Training needed for staff
- Special events



Recycling Dumpsters Needed

South District does not have designated recycling dumpsters outside of Zilker Park. Recommend adding recycling dumpsters at 5 south locations:

- Dick Nichols District Park
- Circle C Metro Park /
Slaughter Creek Soccer Fields
- Onion Creek Soccer Complex
- Central Maintenance Complex
- Barton Creek Greenbelt Trailhead

PARD is working with Waste Management directly to add more recycling dumpsters



Dumpsters at Northwest Recreation Center

Monthly Costs

Waste Management recycling dumpster:

8 yard, 2 x week = \$172.30

8 yard, 1 x week = \$94.04

8 yard, every other week = \$47.03

4 yard, 2 x week = \$126.0

4 yard, 1 x week = \$67.77

Austin Resource Recovery curbside cart:

Collected every other week = \$42.85

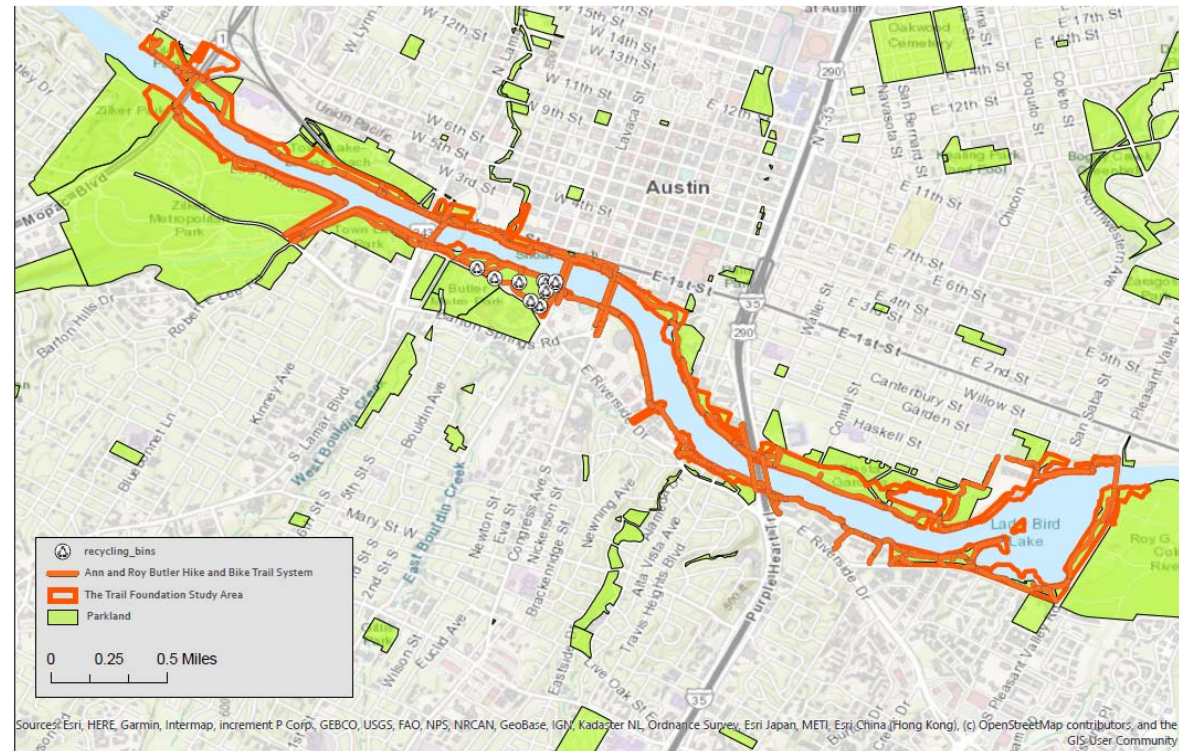
No charge to add additional carts



Austin Resource Recovery recycling carts at
Ramsey Neighborhood Pool

Partnering with The Trail Foundation

- Adding recycling bins along Pfluger Bridge, Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail at trailheads
- Pairing with existing landfill trash where appropriate
- Emphasis on *Pack it In, Pack it Out* on the trail



Quiz: Which is Trash and Which is Recycling?



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RECYCLING



TRASH

Messaging Campaigns

- **Leave No Trace**
“Pack It In/Pack It Out”
- **Focus on Trailheads**
Barton Creek Trailhead 2020 Hot Spot
- **Consistent Branding**
for public space recycling





**PROTECT THE
PLACES YOU LOVE.
LEAVE NO TRACE**

austintexas.gov/leavenotrace



Working with Center for Special Events

ACL 2017 had a 36.87% by cubic volume waste diversion rate and a similar rate in 2018.

Austin Parks Foundation hosts refillable water stations at ACL through their Rock & Recycle and Divert It! Campaign.

698,404 PLASTIC BOTTLES SAVED in 2017



Metrics & Waste Stream Studies



- Working with Austin Resource Recovery to determine industry standard metrics

- Contracting for waste stream study in FY20 – quarterly waste audits will examine weekly total of recycling and landfill trash generated at 4 representative park sites:
 - Emma Long Metro Park
 - Bartholomew District Park
 - Gus Garcia Recreation Center
 - Barton Creek Greenbelt Trailhead

- Quarterly waste audits will measure total volume of all waste generated and composition of waste stream

Long Range Plan Recycling Recommendations

The PARD Long Range Plan reinforces recycling goals:

Goal 6.
*Pursue sustainability
and resiliency goals
in all PARD facilities.*

6.4. Implement comprehensive recycling and composting standards at all facilities to meet zero waste goals.

Ensure that all PARD facilities adhere to recycling standards and provide 'organic diversion' / composting opportunities and community education.

6.5. Educate members of the community to 'leave no trace'.

Create educational materials and ensure that signage clearly highlights recycling and waste procedures that emphasize "pack it in, pack it out" at all parks.

"Maintenance of existing parks and facilities must include mandatory recycling. It is really hard to believe that Austin doesn't have recycling bins at parks since residents and businesses are required to recycle at home and work."

**COMMUNITY
FEEDBACK**
2018



Looking Forward: Zero Waste Goal

Complete Phase 1 Recycling (FY20)

Make progress on Phase II Recycling (complete FY21)

Establish metrics and baselines/benchmarks, set short term goals

Initiate Phase III Recycling (FY21)

Composting at Republic Square – building on Zilker Café composting procedure

Composting at special events on parkland

Composting of paper towels at PARD indoor facilities

Other initiatives: 2020 Aquatics towel donation to Austin Animal Shelter, donation of left behind goggles/clothes





Questions?

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