

## **PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**DATE:** *March 2020*

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### **Modifications to City Operations Due to COVID-19**

In order to ensure continued operations of critical City of Austin services and to protect the health and safety of employees, the City of Austin, including PARD, has modified its operations until March 30. The Human Resources division coordinated the modified operational work plans and technology requests with all PARD divisions and was able to successfully transition approximately 160 employees to telework or perform remote work. For those PARD employees whose work must be completed on-site, and the work does not allow them the opportunity to telework or work from home, PARD has either modified operations to practice social distancing or PARD has offered employees event specific work to assist in the City of Austin's COVID-19 response. The City of Austin is making every effort to keep all employees employed and paid during the pandemic.

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### **MASTER PLAN UPDATES:**

#### **John Treviño Jr. Metro Park at Morrison Ranch Master Plan (District 1)**

The park master plan has been completed and will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Board Land, Facilities and Programs Committee on April 13 and the full Board on April 28. The master plan is tentatively scheduled to go before the Environmental Commission on April 1 and the Design Commission on April 27. The proposed master plan can be found at the project's website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/JohnTrevinoMetroPark>. The date for City Council consideration is currently unknown.

#### **George Washington Carver Museum, Cultural and Genealogy Center Master Plan (District 1)**

The Capital Contracting Office finalized the contract on January 27. Park Planning staff is holding internal meetings with the Carver Museum leadership team to discuss outreach efforts and strategies to help direct the consultant team, Smith & Company Architects, on next steps.

#### **Zilker Metro Park Master Plan (District 8)**

A solicitation for qualifications was issued on March 2 to consultant teams to lead a master planning process for the park. Due to the challenges and travel restrictions associated with COVID-19, the deadline for consultant submittals has been extended to April 30. PARD anticipates bringing a recommended consultant to City Council for approval in the summer of 2020 and begin the community planning process in the fall of 2020.

#### **Land Development Code Rewrite (Citywide)**

The Land Development Code rewrite was approved on 2nd reading on February 13. An amendment was approved, directing staff to make changes to the LDC for sites 1.66 acres to 6 acres, located along activity corridors and centers. The amendment lists criteria for parkland dedication and stipulates that when parkland deficiency is used as a criterion to require parkland, these cases would go before the Land Use Commission. PARD will continue to coordinate with the LDC team to implement City Council's direction on the LDC.



Please know that in response to the increasing concerns and fluidity of the COVID-19 situation, the City of Austin has decided to postpone meetings and action related to the Land Development Code Revision, including the meetings scheduled on:

- Saturday, March 28 at 9 am
- Tuesday, March 31 at 9 am
- Wednesday, April 1 at 9 am
- Thursday, April 2 at 10:30 am
- Tuesday, April 7 (no time announced)

## DEVELOPMENT UPDATES:

### Govalle Neighborhood Park Pool (District 3)

The original pool was constructed in the 1950's during the era of segregation. The facility consisted of a square shaped pool with limited deck space and shallow water. The new facility exemplifies the Neighborhood Pool classification as established in the Aquatic Master Plan. The new Govalle aquatic facility consists of a recreation/lap pool and a separate activity pool (tot pool) with a zero-depth entry feature, ample deck space, large shade structures, gender specific rest rooms and family rooms centered around an iconic existing oak tree. In addition, the new facility provides year-round restroom access to the existing park as the older dilapidated restrooms located in the park shelter building have been closed. The project is funded through a one-time allocation from Council and 2018 Bonds.

The Govalle pool has received the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) and the pool facility has been turned over to the Aquatic Division in preparation for the 2020 swim season. **A ribbon cutting event organized by the Aquatic Division in conjunction with the South Airport Neighborhood Association for this much anticipated pool is tentatively scheduled for May 16 at 3:00pm. This date is subject to change.**



View of recreation pool from bathhouse



View of activity pool from bathhouse



View of bathhouse from recreational pool

### Alliance Children's Garden (District 9)

The Alliance Children's Garden is located within a 2-acre recreational area within Michael Butler Park at Town Lake Metro Park and fulfills a multiyear master plan effort to provide Austin citizens with a multi-

purpose cultural park. The garden design is tailored for children while providing a variety of play and recreational experiences that focus on Austin’s unique culture for families and visitors of all ages and abilities. The project has reached substantial completion and the contractor is currently working on the remaining punch list items.

The project is funded through the Town Lake Venue Fund and received additional funding from the City of Austin Urban Forest Grant, Austin Parks Foundation and the Town Lake Park Alliance. **A ribbon cutting ceremony is tentatively scheduled for April 25 at 9:00am. This date is subject to change.**



View of the park’s climbing element with skyline as backdrop

## **MAINTENANCE UPDATES:**

### **Aquatics Division (Citywide)**

To maintain the health and safety of City employees and the community at large, all aquatic facilities suspended operations on March 16 and will remain closed in accordance with City of Austin operational direction.

### **Bartholomew Pool (District 4), Barton Springs Pool (District 8), & Deep Eddy Pool (District 10)**

All three pools began charging entrance fees on March 14 and will continue through October 2020.

### **Barton Springs Pool (District 9)**

Barton Springs Pool completed a two-week maintenance closure. Projects completed include the following: vacuum dredge in the deep end of the pool, re-sodding high impact areas throughout the facility, painting safety signs and facility exterior, deep clean of the shallow end shelf, and mulching of trees. The first Friends of Barton Springs Volunteer day was March 5 and their help spreading mulch and performing other cleaning tasks is/was appreciated.

### **Deep Eddy Pool (District 10)**

The Deep Eddy weekly single day maintenance closure was a success. The pool shell is vibrant white again. Closures will continue throughout the year and occur on the first Tuesday of the month, except for April 7 when the closure will be forgone due to Deep Eddy's annual maintenance closure April 13-26.

### **Austin Memorial Park Cemetery (District 7)**

With the recent approval of the IDIQ road paving contract, staff is preparing to repave in the next few weeks. Advanced notification will be given to citizens prior to the start.

### **Grey Rock Golf Course (District 8)**

The driving range new synthetic tee and re-leveling and grassing of the tee is completed. The grass area will likely reopen in late April and the synthetic tee will open when the course re-opens.

### **Morris Williams Golf Course (District 1)**

Work on the putting green and 14th tee renovation will begin in mid-April and will take approximately 45 days to complete largely dependent upon greens mix availability.

### **Golf Courses Greens Transition**

Greens at all courses are starting to transition back to Bermuda grass. The courses that did not over seed, Grey Rock and Morris Williams, are struggling with weed control and Poannua grass. Staff will be nursing these sites along until weather conditions become more consistent.

### **Chicano Rock**

On March 9, Chicano Rock was successfully relocated from its current location at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Red River to the adjacent median in Waterloo Greenway.



### **Urban Forestry**

During this year's planting season (October through March) 472 trees were planted in 10 parks that included replanting missing or stolen trees in Parque Zaragosa. Partner groups that participated are listed in parentheses.

- Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia District Park – 78 trees (Austin Parks Foundation)
- Barton Springs Pool – 7 (Friends of Barton Springs)
- Colony Park District Park – 41
- Civitan Neighborhood Park – 63 (TreeFolks)
- Conley-Guerrero – 19 (Horticulture)
- Ponciana Neighborhood Park – 44
- JJ Seabrook Neighborhood Park – 56
- Hubert C. Schroeder Neighborhood Park – 41
- Circle C. Metro Park – 114
- Parque Zaragoza – 9 replanted

**Barton Jaycee Fields (District 5)**

Demolition of the current field lights and installation of LED lights began on February 17 and should be completed by March 23, pending weather events.

## PROGRAM/EVENT UPDATES:

### It's My Park Day

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department and the Austin Parks Foundation recently concluded one of the largest volunteer events across the city, "It's My Park Day." Many



helped to improve the conditions of numerous parks, greenbelts, trails, and as seen here at **Austin Memorial Park**, in our cemeteries. With the help of thousands of volunteers, the success of this event leads Austin to a greater chance at preserving our natural spaces that many can enjoy today and in the future.

volunteers from across the city

**Gus Garcia District Park** partnered with over 50 youth and adult volunteers who participated in a day of park cleanup, restoration of garden beds, and the spreading of wildflower seeds throughout the park's wildflower meadows.



### Big Stacy Pool (District 9)

On March 9, Austin Police Department began providing security at Big Stacy Pool on a limited schedule. Due to budget constraints, the security schedule has been cut on weekdays. A rotating daily schedule is being utilized so that coverage does not become routine and noticeable to the public. Weekend coverage will remain the same.

### Hancock Golf Course

PARD attended the Hancock Neighborhood association meeting on February 29 to discuss the concessionary concept for Hancock Golf. The meeting was productive and PARD is coordinating additional Community Engagement meetings to seek input on the path for a solicitation process. The meetings were scheduled for April 4 and 8 but will be rescheduled for dates to be determined in May. In addition, a [Hancock community engagement website](#) with survey was created to solicit feedback and was shared across all golf social media platforms. PARD staff continues to draft solicitation for Hancock operations RFP.

### Office of Special Events

PARD Special Events staff continues to respond to and implement disaster declaration directions to events/renters and is coordinating with Austin Center for Events on the extended impacts of assembly limits. In response to the increasing concerns and restrictions due to COVID-19, events may be rescheduled or canceled. Details will be provided, as they become available.

### Spring Break Camps (Citywide)

As a result of City of Austin prohibitions on community gatherings of 10 persons or more anywhere in the city due to COVID-19, PARD canceled all Spring Break Camps effective March 18. PARD staff will process partial refunds to household accounts who paid for camp beyond March 17. A communication went out to all parents regarding the change in camp schedule.

### **Homeless Encampment Response (Citywide)**

A work order, mapping, and response tracking system for homeless response is operational. Standard Operating Procedures for unauthorized camping on parkland have been implemented and describes PARD's processes for responding to Austin 3-1-1 calls related to homeless encampments, issuing Criminal Trespass Warnings, removing individuals from parkland, and cleaning and remediating campsites.

For the January 1-March 7 timeframe, Austin 3-1-1 has recorded 114 reports regarding homelessness/camping on parklands. In addition, The Other Ones Foundation has provided approximately 2,220 hours of employment for individuals removing almost 70,000 pounds of trash and abating campsites at parklands throughout the city.

PARD focus areas include Gillis Neighborhood Park; Shoal Creek Greenbelt; Williamson Creek Greenbelt; Slaughter Creek Greenbelt; and West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt.

### **Triple Crown Softball Bomber Shootout Fastpitch Softball Tournament**

Krieg and Havins Athletic Complexes hosted 34 girls' softball teams from around the nation on March 7 and 8. Over 2,000 spectators attended the event.

### **Rec and Roll Battle of Heroes Wheelchair Basketball Expo**

In partnership with Lonestar Paralysis Foundation (LPF), PARD hosted a fun-filled day of wheelchair basketball at Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center on March 7. Teams from LPF challenged staff, interns and family members of the Austin Police Department and PARD (we won't mention the lopsided scores). Over 85 spectators were wowed by the athletes' athleticism and enthusiasm. For more information about PARD Inclusion Unit programs and services, please visit: <https://austintexas.gov/department/inclusion-unit>



### **Friday Night Hoops – Gus Garcia**

On March 6, Gus Garcia Recreation Center kicked off its first night of Friday Night Hoops. Over 30 teens were in attendance for a night of food, basketball games, and prizes. The newly initiated program will run every Friday night for students in 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade who are interested in a night of hoop dreams.



### **Adaptive Sports Basketball – Gus Garcia**

In the month of March, Gus Garcia Recreation Center introduced its inaugural adaptive sports basketball team for adaptive adult athletes. The Gus Garcia team competed in the area competition held in San Marcos and came home with gold for 3v3 basketball. The team’s next journey was scheduled to take them to Arlington UT for the state competition; however, the event has been canceled.



### **Dottie Jordan Recreation Center (DJRC) Beast of the East BBQ Cookoff**

On February 22, DJRC hosted its fourth annual Beast of the East BBQ Competition. Teams competed to win the individual categories, salsa, chicken, ribs and brisket, and to be crowned the overall winner. This was our biggest turnout yet. There were 11 BBQ teams and over 250 attendees.



### **Asian American Resource Center: Courage to Be – The Saheli Story**

On February 20, the Asian American Resource Center hosted a community gathering of over 75 people celebrating the past, present and future of one of the first Asian American organizations, Saheli, now known as Asian Family Support Services of Austin. The event highlighted the current AARC historical exhibit on display, *Courage to Be – The Saheli Story*, and offered a platform for the organization’s founders and early members to share stories. From poetry readings to panel discussion, these founders took part in an engaging, uplifting atmosphere that recognized the cause they championed as the first organization in the South to serve Asian families impacted by domestic violence.



### **Brush Square Museums: Traveling Trunk Program**

Staff at Brush Square Museums have been sharing information with schools about our new Traveling Trunk Program. These trunks contain Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) aligned lesson plans accompanied by hands-on activities such as spinning wool, making butter and constructing a typical Texas Frontier toy. The Susanna Dickinson Museum will be sending out “Frontier Fabricators,” which highlights the lives and roles of women and children on the Texas Frontier in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The O. Henry Museum will be sending out “Spirit of Texas Storyteller,” which highlights the origins of the Texas cowboy, life on an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Texas ranch, and of course, telling your own Texas story. So far, the trunks and activities have been shared with children through the “I Can” Project & Rotary Club of East Austin Role Model Fairs. Estimated participation is 160.



**Dougherty Arts Center: Austin Art Pop Up! at Spicewood Springs Library**

Participants painted with paper at the Dougherty Arts Center's Art POP UP! program at the Spicewood Springs Library on February 29. Local artist Laura Lincoln shared her artistic process and taught participants how to create original works of art at a free family event. Austin POP UP! Arts Program seeks to address "Arts and Parks Deserts" by bringing quality and diverse programming led by local artists to areas that do not traditionally have access to the arts. Attendance was 49 participants.



**ESB Mexican American Cultural Center: Caminos Teen Leadership Program**

Seven students graduated from the MACC's Caminos Teen Leadership Program on February 29. To honor the completion of their year-long internship, each student spoke about the impact of the Caminos program on their professional partnerships, artistic growth and college and career plans. They invited the 50+ graduation attendees to a first look at their colorful mural in the conference room, which they created to celebrate artists who inspired them over the past year. New students who were accepted to the 2020-2021 class of Caminos joined in so that they could meet their predecessors and initiate valuable mentor connections with staff and artists. There were no dry eyes as past and future students, families, staff, and artist mentors all congratulated the students on their amazing mural and wished them the best of luck on their future creative endeavors.



**George Washington Carver Museum, Cultural and Genealogy Center:  
The African American Presence in 19th Century Texas Exhibition  
Opening**

On February 29, the Carver Museum & Cultural Center unveiled its new core exhibit, *The African American Presence in 19th Century Texas*. The opening reception was well received with more than 500 people in attendance with musical selections from Shawn Lesure, Charles Moon, and Dionysus Henderson. From African civilizations to bonded servitude, to a precious but ever so fragile freedom, the history of Black people in Texas is a remarkable story of determination to gain, celebrate, and manifest their full rights as citizens.



**Oakwood Cemetery Chapel: To Hear**

During February, Oakwood Staff researched and created a history story map, "To Hear," that will launch in March for the Spring Exhibition at the Chapel. The Chapel was reserved for memorials for two different events.



**Old Bakery and Emporium: Experimentation: Light, Spirit and People I know**

On March 5, the Old Bakery & Emporium hosted “Experimentation: Light, Spirit, and People I Know,” highlighting the works of Michael McCarthy, Betty Jameson, Beth Shapiro, Helen Faythe and Beverly Deutsch. The reception was held from 1:30-3:30 pm and 23 people attended the event.



## ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES:

### Zilker Train Concession (District 8)

On February 20, City Council passed a resolution directing City staff to execute an agreement with the Austin Parks Foundation for the procurement and operations of a family amusement train vendor and oversee the operations with all net proceeds to be distributed to non-profit organizations within and around Zilker Park. This direction is intended to be temporary and allow for the Zilker Park Master Plan to be completed, at which time the Department will conduct a competitive solicitation for continued operations. The Resolution goes on to provide direction to expeditiously coordinate track repairs and to consider all charitable assistance. PARD has begun to coordinate efforts with the Austin Parks Foundation.

### Town Lake Concession Solicitations (District 9)

The Texas Rowing Center concessionaire contract is set to expire on May 18. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for a concessionaire to maintain and operate a boating concession on Town Lake is scheduled for release on March 23 with a closing date of April 23. Additionally, to ensure ongoing services the current concessionaire has agreed to a 180-day holdover operating period.

### Management and Operation of Late-Night Youth Recreational Basketball Tournament Services

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) for an organization experienced in the management and operation of a recreation basketball tournament service for coed youth between the ages of 10 and 19 was rebid and the successful bidder is Athletes Services Network America. A contract was executed on February 26.

### Expedition School Boating Concession (District 3)

The City Council has directed the City Manager to provide a boating concession for The Expedition School through a resolution. PARD Contract Management staff is working closely with the vendor to develop a proposal that will serve as an essential component of the resulting contract. PARD has been granted an extension to August 1 from March 31 to complete the contract negotiation process.

### Morris Williams Concession Solicitations (District 1)

The Morris Williams concessionaire contract is set to expire on May 25. An RFP was released to solicit concession vendors on February 17 and closed on March 10. Three bids were received, and the bid evaluation process is underway.

### Budget Development Process

PARD has submitted its Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Forecast which was based on contracted increases, finance audit findings, and efficiency opportunities. The forecast submission is currently under review by the City Budget Office. The City's focus is on several areas to help better position the City in the coming years. The following are key dates from the City of Austin Budget Timeline (each is subject to change):

CALENDAR	
May 8	Proposed Budget due from Depts.
Jul 13	<i>Proposed Budget Presentation to Council</i>
Jul 23, Jul 30	<i>Budget hearings</i>
Jul 28, Aug 4	<i>Council Budget Work Sessions</i>
Aug 12	<i>Tax Rate Hearing and Budget Readings</i>

### **Boards and Commissions Budget Priorities**

The City Manager’s directive is for departments to engage with Board and Commissions with a focus on operational efficiency, equity, and strategic alignment, not new funding. On March 9, PARD Financial Services Division presented its presentations of the FY 2021 Budget Forecast to the LGBTQ QOL Advisory Commission. In response to the increasing concerns and restrictions due to COVID-19, the following meetings may be rescheduled or canceled.

<b>B&amp;C</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>
Commission for Women	Wednesday, April 1, 12 p.m.
Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board	Wednesday, April 1, 6 p.m.
African American Resource Advisory Commission	Tuesday, April 7, 5:30 p.m.
Commission on Seniors	Wednesday, April 8, 12 p.m.
Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities	Friday, April 10, 5 p.m.
Asian American QOL Advisory Commission	Tuesday, April 21, 6 p.m.
Hispanic/Latino QOL Resource Advisory Commission	Tuesday, April 28, 6 p.m.
<b>Parks and Recreation Board</b>	<b>Tuesday, April 28, 6 p.m.</b>