



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Parks and Recreation Board

Recommendation Number: 20200624-D2: Concern that Parking Meters Along Parkland
Create Equity Access Issues

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Austin, and Imagine Austin to ensure that citizens have equitable access to publicly funded parkland for recreation and adequate exercise, under the Strategic Direction 2023 goals to “Improve Access for All” and to “Offer Relief from Urban Life”; and

WHEREAS, at present, there are relatively few Capital Metro lines or protected bike lanes that run to main public parks and pools, specifically Deep Eddy Pool, Barton Springs Pool, and the Ann & Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail, which are unique within the city but far from many neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, similar access to year-round pool facilities and major parks is not equitably distributed across the city; and

WHEREAS, there is a push by city officials to meter parking everywhere, to encourage more frequent vehicle turnover, but metering access to public parklands potentially limits or denies access to some taxpaying citizens; and

WHEREAS, paying for metered parking is prohibitive for many Austinites who want to use parks regularly to exercise; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to better educate the public about available access by bike trail or about bus routes with reasonably timed schedules; and

WHEREAS, safer and more visible bike parking, along with safer bike routes through the city, are needed to encourage modes of transportation other than cars or buses; and

WHEREAS, Austin has extremely hot summers that may prohibit some citizens from walking, scootering, or biking to such parkland amenities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Parks and Recreation Board recommends to the City Council that the City of Austin not install metered parking around public parkland amenities (trails, parks, pools) until there is adequate, affordable, reasonably quick, and equitable public transportation for taxpayers to access these amenities for recreation and exercise. Metered parking makes sense only at park facilities which have frequent transit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Parks and Recreation Board strongly encourages the City to implement more of the pedestrian and bike routes to major parks recommended in the Zilker Park Working Group final report of June 7, 2019, allowing safer access to the pools and parks for those not in cars or buses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Parks and Recreation Board recommends that the City continue to invest in pools and parks for underserved parts of the city, to provide easier access to all citizens to appropriate trails, parkland, and swimming facilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED once new routes or protected trails are implemented, the Parks and Recreation Board encourages the City to spend time and effort communicating with and educating citizens about the alternate modes of transportation and safe routes, as those become available.

Date of Approval: June 24, 2020

Record of the vote: The motion passed on a vote of 6-1 with Board Member Rinaldi voting nay, Board Members DePalma and Luca abstaining and Vice Chair Farasat and Board Member Taylor absent.

Attest: 
Dawn Lewis, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board