

A NEW & IMPROVED

# Zilker Train



**AUSTIN  
PARKS**  
FOUNDATION



# 01

## **Intro**

About APF

# 02

## **The Project**

How we got here

# 03

## **Our Approach**

Where we're going

# 04

## **Operations & Financials**

Looking to the future







## About Us

Austin Parks Foundation partners with our community to enhance people's lives by making our public parks, trails and green spaces better through volunteerism, innovative programming, advocacy and financial support.

Because of our partnership with the City's Parks & Recreation Dept., and nearly 30 years of proven results, we were contacted to help find an interim solution while Zilker Park undergoes a vision planning process to build a new, long-term vision for the park.

# Project Leads



**Ladye Anne Wofford**

Project management  
and operations



**Bobbi Kommenini**

Business management  
and operations



**Katie Robillard, PLA**

Landscape architecture  
and project design



**UT McCombs  
Business Fellows**

Business technology

The entire Austin Parks Foundation team is committed to the success of this project and is leading project management, operations, fundraising and marketing for the new Zilker Train. Our team brings expertise in park improvements and programming, and nearly 30 years of proven results partnering with the Parks & Recreation Dept.

# Project Expertise

We are bringing together a team of subject matter experts and well-established vendors for a well-rounded project team including:

- **The Railway Factory:** Custom amusement train manufacturing
- **Dunaway Associates:** Civil and structural engineering
- **Frank & Victor:** Brand development
- **Steven Smith, McKinsey & Co:** Business management and operations
- **Stan Li, McKinsey & Co:** Customer experience
- **Giant Noise:** Public Relations



McKinsey  
& Company



**GIANT NOISE**





# THE Project



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# Then

The Zilker Train is one of the most beloved family activities in Austin. Since 1961, the train has taken children on an adventure around Zilker Park, past scenic views of Lady Bird Lake, the great lawn and the Zilker Playscape. In 2019, erosion under the tracks caused the Zilker Train to close down permanently.

In February 2020, Austin City Council passed a resolution allowing Austin Parks Foundation to work in partnership with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department to bring back the Zilker Train as quickly and safely as possible.

# Now

# Project Timeline

## Analysis

Engineering firm site analysis  
Topographical survey  
Structural assessments  
Operations research  
Manufacturing research  
Concession agreement

**Summer  
2020**

**Fall  
2020**

## Design

Alternate train route development  
Naming contest  
Concession agreement

## Permitting

New route in permitting  
Brand development  
Formation of LLC  
Standard Operating Procedures  
Fundraising campaign begins  
Concession agreement finalized

**Winter  
2020**

**Spring  
2021**

## Construction

Fundraising campaign  
Secure permits  
Custom train build complete  
Formation of 501(c)(3)  
Rail installation  
Site improvements

## Launch

Fundraising campaign  
Site improvements complete  
Hiring and Training  
Test Runs  
Grand opening Q3 of 2021

**Summer  
2021**





OUR

# Approach



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# Key Focus Areas



## Preserving Traditions

To keep the sixty year tradition going, Austin Parks Foundation is working to **bring back the beloved tradition** to Zilker Park.



## Improving the Experience

APF is focusing on making the train a more **fun, efficient,** and **inclusive** experience for everyone.



## Safe & Prompt Action

We are working with Dunaway to reroute the tracks. This was the most straightforward path to getting the train running as **safely** and **quickly** as possible.



## Community Funding

Austin Parks Foundation is working to raise the capital for **all improvements** through a Spring 2021 fundraising campaign.



# Preserving Traditions

Austin Parks Foundation will keep the tradition of one of the most beloved family activities in Austin alive, **bringing the mini-train experience back** to Zilker Park to create lasting memories for Austinites and visitors alike

- Custom-built train by The Railway Factory to fit site specifications
- Replacing all removed railway with new rails and ties
- Improving the existing depot
- Maintaining and improving existing depot and tunnels
- Caring for the existing trees and landscaping
- Addressing drainage issues at the depot

# Improving the Experience

We will work to improve the train and its operations in a variety of ways to create a more **fun, efficient, and inclusive experience** for all. The new train will become the dynamic new centerpiece of Zilker Park.

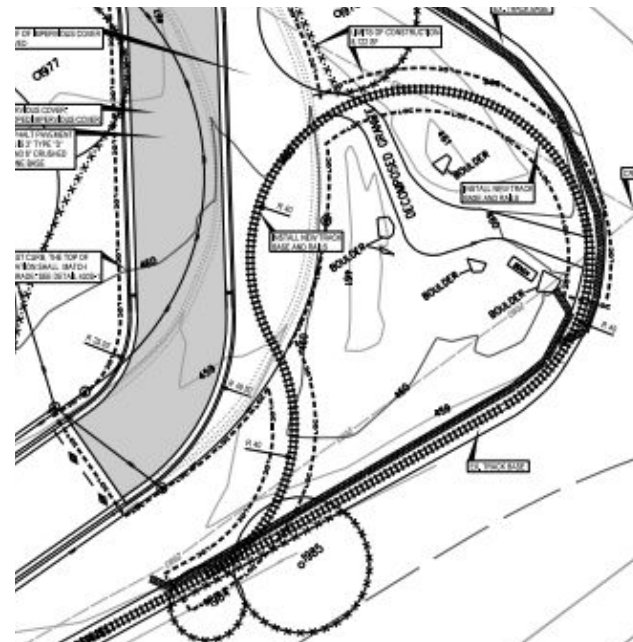
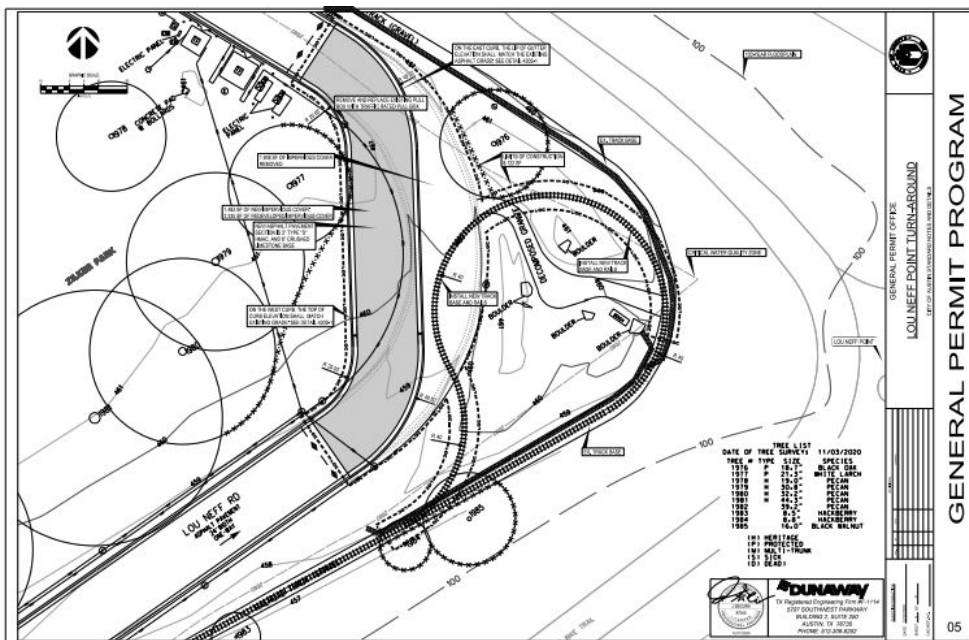
- Improved ADA-accessibility for the train and depot
- Improved ticketing system including more payment options, single ride tickets and annual passes
- Advance reservations including individuals, groups, birthday parties and school trips
- Special events
- Special discounts





# The Amended Route

APFs priority is getting the train in operation as **quickly and safely** as possible. Our engineers have conducted an initial safety assessment for the route, bridge and tunnels, and have designed a reroute for the train that will avoid the washout area (currently in permitting review).



# Engaging Community Funding Partners

Austin Parks Foundation is working closely with a variety of **corporate and community partners** to raise the funds necessary to make the project a success. We are taking on the responsibility of **raising 100%** of the funds in an effort to take this financial burden off the city.

More information is available at [austinparks.org/train](https://austinparks.org/train)



# Benefitting Zilker Park

Bringing the train back to Zilker Park will be a success within itself. Our goal is for the new Zilker Train to begin generating enough revenue to financially benefit the park within two years.

Austin Parks Foundation is committed to **reinvesting a portion of proceeds** from train ticket sales back into Zilker Park and to PARD partner organizations working within Zilker Park.





TRAIN

# Operations



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# Long-term vision

While the current project is an interim solution, we are thinking ahead. Should the Zilker Vision Planning process conclude that the train may be used as a people-moving solution, or the route may be expanded, we are ready to support whichever scenarios the community puts forward.





# Marketing

Austin Parks Foundation's Marketing & Events team will bring the brand and experience to life through a phased approach;

- **Phase 1** | January - March  
Education and awareness
- **Phase 2** | March - July  
Name and brand launch
- **Phase 3** | July - August  
Opening Day awareness and event
- **Phase 4** | August - Beyond  
Ridership campaigns



## ESTIMATED CAPITAL BUDGET - \$800K

ITEM	COST
Locomotive	\$85,000
Passenger Coaches	\$115,000
Rail + Ties	\$150,000
Rail installation	\$215,000
Depot improvements	\$235,000

Note: Operational costs not included





**Thank You!**



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