

**Bicycle Advisory Council and Pedestrian Advisory Council Joint
Recommendation on Draft Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan
Recommendation 20230109-001**

WHEREAS the purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle, bicycle infrastructure, and individuals of all ages and abilities who utilize bicycles;

WHEREAS the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to pedestrians, pedestrian infrastructure and individuals of all ages and abilities who walk;

WHEREAS the citizens of Austin deserve the right to walk, ride bicycles and use other alternatives to motor vehicles without the risk of serious injury and death;

WHEREAS the draft Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan, released by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) on November 15th, 2022, includes accessibility goals to

- “Ensure there are multiple safe, enjoyable, and convenient modes of transportation to access the park,”
- “Improve and incentivize non-automobile mode access to, from, and within the park, in support of the City’s ambitious mode split and climate goals,”
- “Improve and incentivize non-automobile mode access to, from, and within the park, in support of the City’s ambitious mode split and climate goals,” and
- “Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation between the north and south side of Barton Springs Rd. Make travel through the park and to various parts of the park intuitive, safe, and easy by foot, bike, and accessible paths.”;

WHEREAS the draft Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan recognizes that many park visitors forgo active mobility options due to a lack of frequent transit service, lack of sidewalk connections, dangerous pedestrian and bicyclist crossings, inadequate detours during events, and insufficient separations between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists;

WHEREAS the draft Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan specifically recognizes that while Barton Springs Road is the “primary multimodal gateway into the park for most visitors” it is currently a “high-speed entrance to and exit from the [Mopac] highway ” and is “a major divider of the park and with minimal signed crossings, is very dangerous to cross as a pedestrian or cyclist;”

WHEREAS charging for parking will encourage other modes and shift the cost of parking infrastructure onto those utilizing the space rather than the general public;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC support the improvements proposed for Barton Springs Road, including the road diet, traffic calming measures, median, and the reduced speed limit. The BAC and PAC request that PARD make the following changes and clarifications regarding Barton Springs Road in the final draft:

- Incorporate alternative uses for on-street parking including drop-off zones, bicycle parking, dockless mobility parking, food trucks, street cafes, etc.
- Ensure the safety of bicyclists by widening the buffer to 4 ft to ensure car doors do not hit cyclists and place infrastructure that protects the bike lane from motorists.
- Include signalized pedestrian crossings and clear indicators for left turning bicyclists at all crossings and intersections;
- Ensure the design of the bike line is aligned, to the greatest extent possible, to the Austin Transportation Criteria Manual by placing the bike lane at sidewalk level, changing the color of the bike lane to Terra Cotta Dark, and enlarging the buffer to the recommended 4'; and
- Recommend that the City of Austin Transportation Department extend the Barton Springs Road alignment in the plan beyond the boundaries of the Zilker Metropolitan Park, ensuring safe access for pedestrians and cyclists to the park. In particular, ensure access from the East of the park meets the standards of the All Ages and Abilities Network.

BE IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD make the following changes and clarifications regarding events in the park in the final draft:

- Ensure event detours for bicyclists and pedestrians on Barton Springs Road are limited to 24 days in a year, including set-up and tear down;
- Establish a policy for clear and safe pedestrian and bicyclist routes and crossings, including of Mopac, when detours are necessary; and
- Require event organizers to cover the cost of any infrastructure damage caused by their event.

BE IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD includes in its goals for collaboration with TxDOT the development of signalized and protected pedestrian and bicyclist crossings to connect the Lady Bird Lake Trail, Zilker Metro Park Loop, Barton Springs Road, and the MoPac Service Road;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD work with the Austin Transportation Department's Active Transportation Division to provide a more detailed plan on active transportation connections to and through the park, and that those plans include the following changes and clarifications in the final draft:

- Establish preferred bicycle routes for bicyclists to connect to the park from the Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge, Roberta Crenshaw Bridge, South MoPac Shared-Use Path, and Azie Morton Road and develop a plan to upgrade those routes with paved and protected bicycle lanes or trails;
- Establish preferred bicycle routes to the south and west of Zilker Park, via either the newly pedestrianized Andrew Zilker Blvd, or Columbus Dr, connecting onward to MoPac Frontage Road towards Spyglass Dr.
- Explain what changes will be made to realign the “the existing pedestrian/bike bridge north of Barton Springs” to Toomey Rd; and
- Consider paving certain parts of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, Lady Bird Lake Trail, and other interior trails to create a fully accessible east to west trail for bicyclists and pedestrians with mobility impairments. This may also be accomplished through the double trails proposed in the Butler Trail Safety and Mobility study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD clearly enumerate and commit to “triggers” which will result in the removal of parking in the final draft.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD minimizes the size of the parking garages within the park, and on Azie Morton Road. Furthermore, in an effort to improve the likelihood that parking is available for those that have no other options, all parking in or near the park should be priced (at a minimum) at street parking rates, and go up to ensure availability for those that need to drive.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC and PAC request that PARD staff respond to the BAC and PAC with a memo detailing which recommendations were accepted in the final draft, which changes were covered by existing policy, and an explanation for any recommendation not incorporated into the final draft.

Date of Approval: January 9, 2023

Vote: Unanimously approved by voting members of the PAC and BAC

PAC: Chris Anderson (Chair), Kimberly Levinson (Vice-Chair), Alexander Flores, Garrett Hall, Daniel Kavelman

BAC: Les Case (Chair), Spencer Schumacher (Vice-Chair), Christopher Heathcott, Curtis Rogers, Drake Hampton, Russell Taylor

Attest: Spencer Schumacher, Vice Chair, Bicycle Advisory Council

