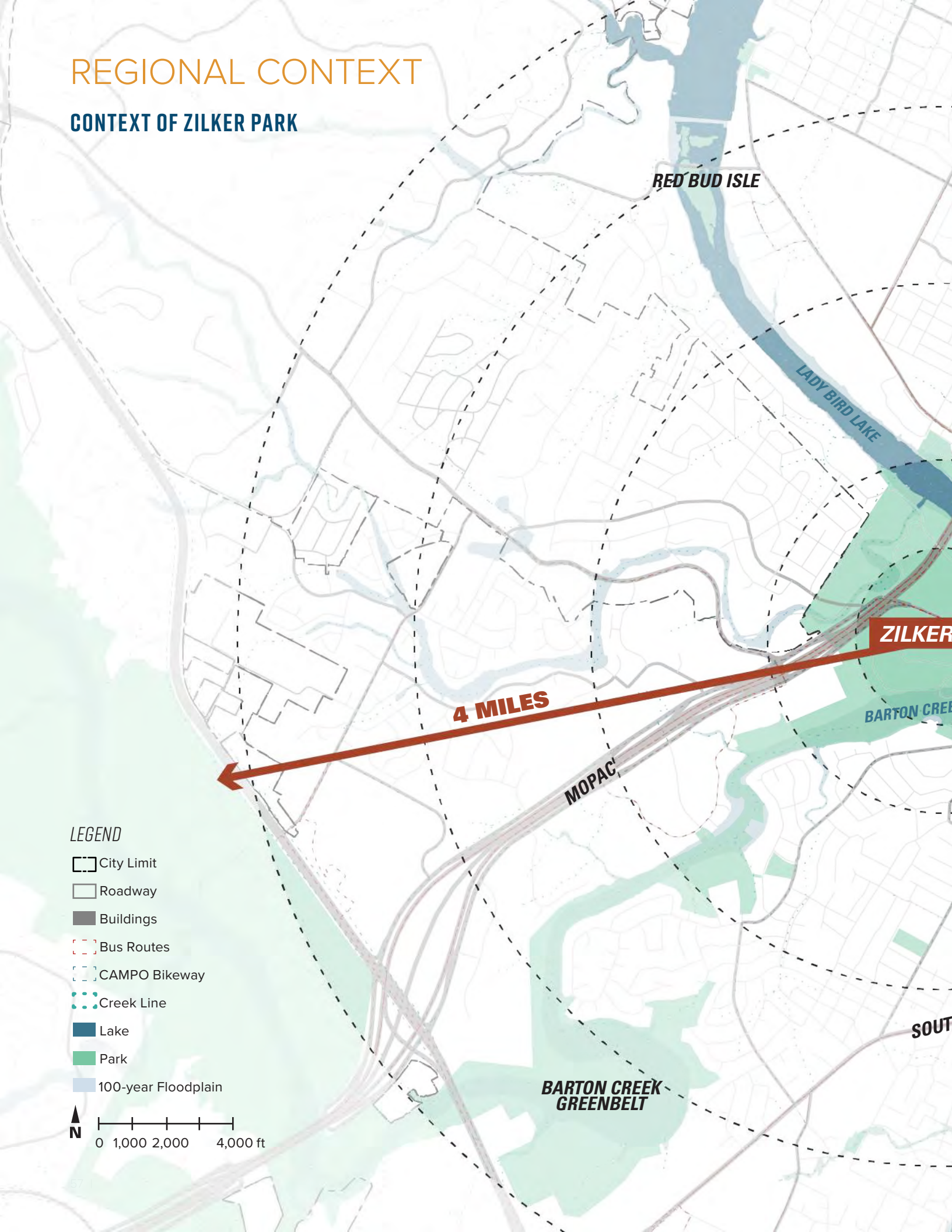
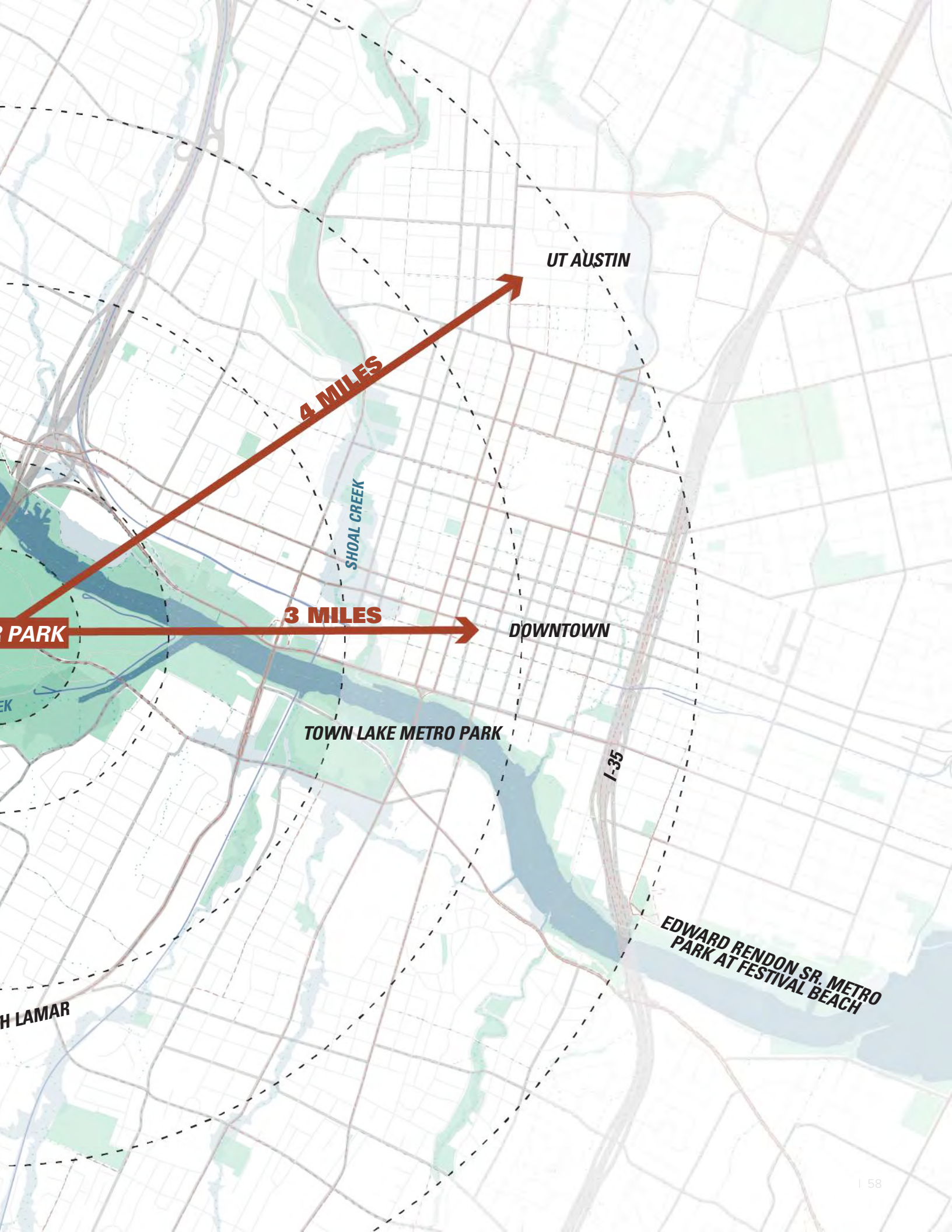


REGIONAL CONTEXT

CONTEXT OF ZILKER PARK





UT AUSTIN

4 MILES

SHOAL CREEK

3 MILES

DOWNTOWN

TOWN LAKE METRO PARK

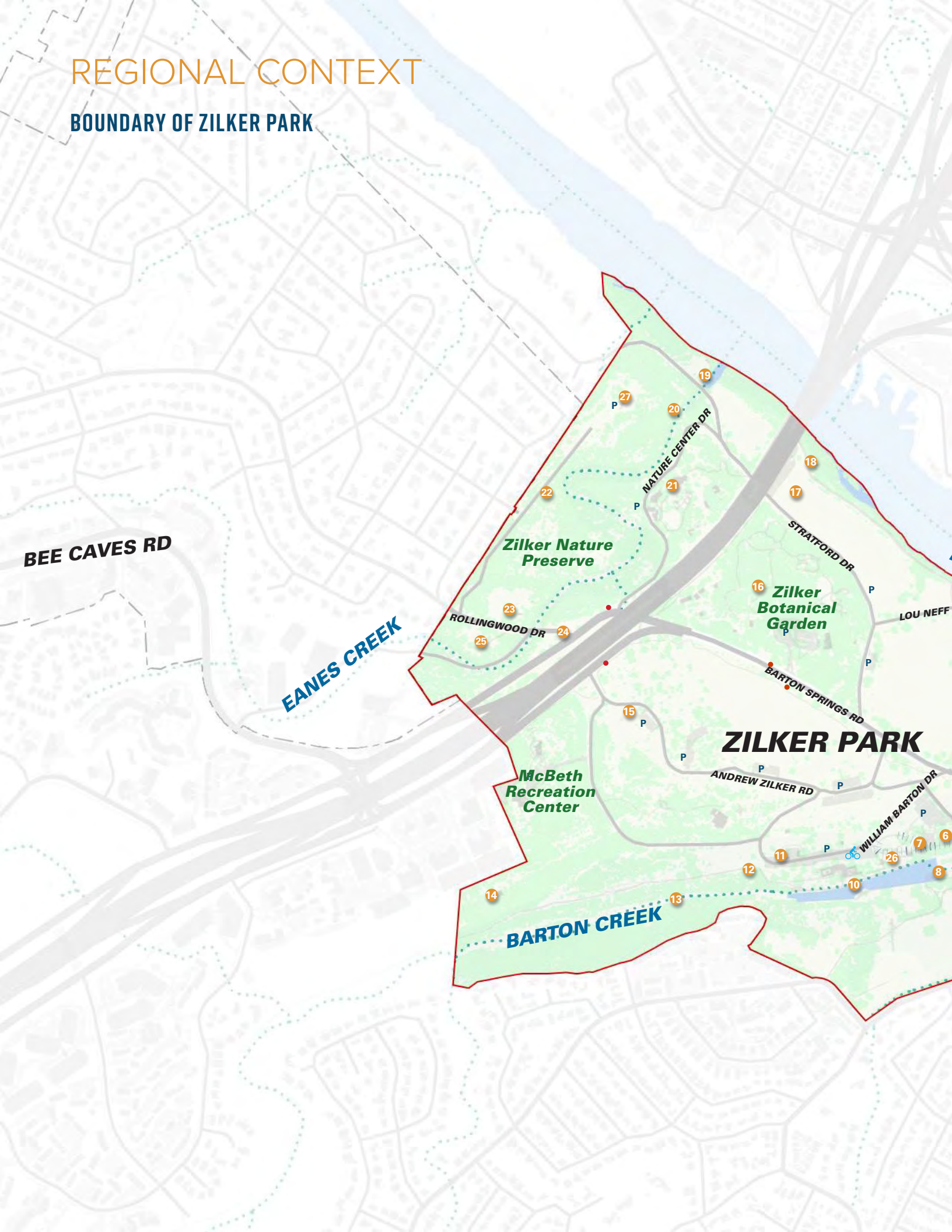
I-35

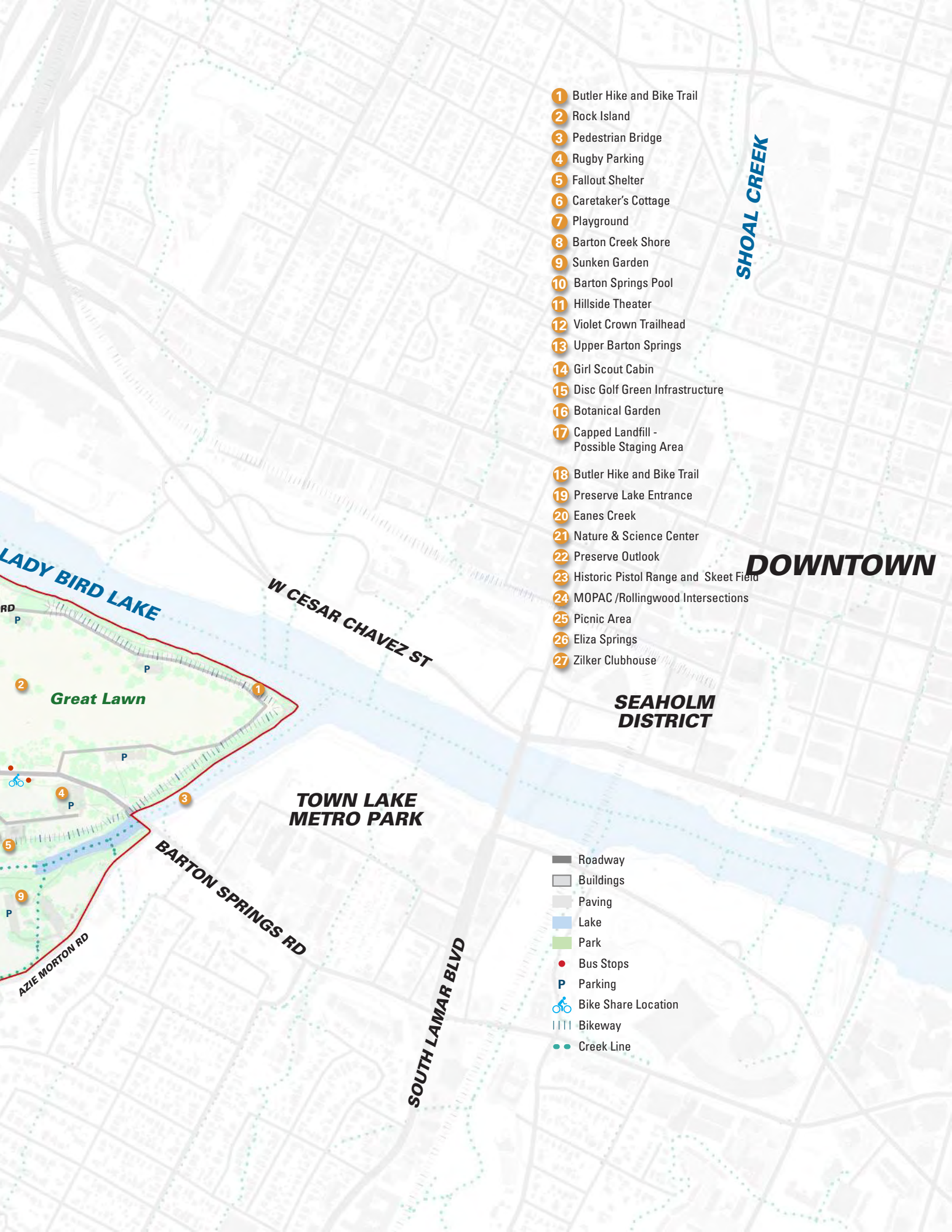
EDWARD RENDON SR. METRO
PARK AT FESTIVAL BEACH

H LAMAR

REGIONAL CONTEXT

BOUNDARY OF ZILKER PARK





- 1 Butler Hike and Bike Trail
- 2 Rock Island
- 3 Pedestrian Bridge
- 4 Rugby Parking
- 5 Fallout Shelter
- 6 Caretaker's Cottage
- 7 Playground
- 8 Barton Creek Shore
- 9 Sunken Garden
- 10 Barton Springs Pool
- 11 Hillside Theater
- 12 Violet Crown Trailhead
- 13 Upper Barton Springs
- 14 Girl Scout Cabin
- 15 Disc Golf Green Infrastructure
- 16 Botanical Garden
- 17 Capped Landfill - Possible Staging Area
- 18 Butler Hike and Bike Trail
- 19 Preserve Lake Entrance
- 20 Eanes Creek
- 21 Nature & Science Center
- 22 Preserve Outlook
- 23 Historic Pistol Range and Skeet Field
- 24 MOPAC /Rollingwood Intersections
- 25 Picnic Area
- 26 Eliza Springs
- 27 Zilker Clubhouse

SHOAL CREEK

DOWNTOWN

SEAHOLM DISTRICT

LADY BIRD LAKE

W CESAR CHAVEZ ST

SOUTH LAMAR BLVD

BARTON SPRINGS RD

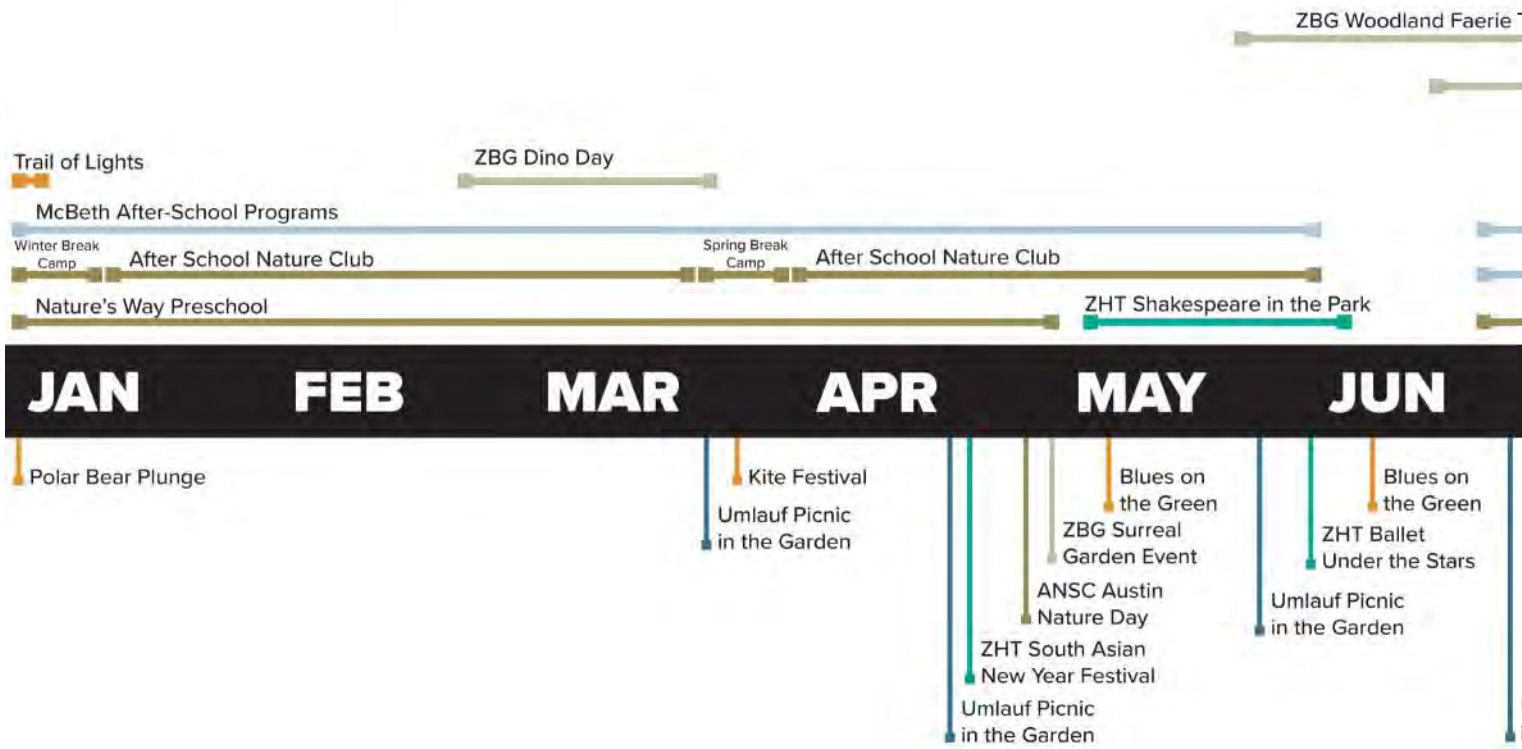
AZIE MORTON RD

- Roadway
- Buildings
- Paving
- Lake
- Park
- Bus Stops
- P Parking
- 🚲 Bike Share Location
- |||| Bikeway
- Creek Line

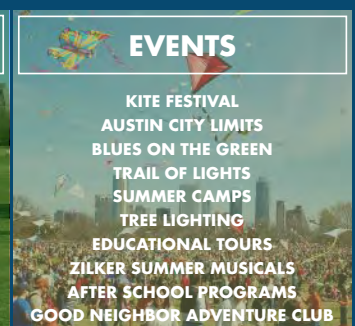
TOWN LAKE METRO PARK

Great Lawn

EVENT CALENDAR OF ZILKER PARK



TYPES OF PROGRAMS IN ZILKER PARK



Zilker Park hosts a variety of events year round, the largest of which are Austin City Limits Music Festival, the Trail of Lights and the ABC Kite Festival. ACL and the Trail of Lights impact roughly 135 acres of the park, closing the Great Lawn and surrounding roads and using adjacent areas like the polo fields for supporting infrastructure. Both of these events bring over 400,000 visitors to the park while the Kite Festival brings in another 20,000. All three events draw visitors from throughout the state of Texas with ACL being the biggest draw nationally.

There are also many smaller events at the park throughout the year. Primary hosts include Zilker

Botanical Garden, Austin Nature and Science Center, Zilker Hillside Theater, Umlauf Sculpture Garden, the City of Austin, and McBeth Recreation Center. Most hosted programming is offered to all ages with the remaining programming being geared towards youth and children. The summer is the busiest time of the year for these events with the first quarter of the year being the least programmed.

City Ordinance Section 8-1-15 designates a maximum of 24 special event days for Zilker per calendar year. Additional closure days of portions of Zilker may occur for operations of the park, including limited access due to set-up, take-down, or maintenance.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY MOBILITY AT ZILKER PARK

1 Although visitors today can access Zilker Park through a variety of transportation options, not all modes of travel to the park are equally convenient or safe. Because of this, most park visitors arrive via private automobile.

2 Barton Springs Road provides the primary vehicle access to the busiest parts of the park: from MoPac to west of Barton Creek. Barton Springs Road is the only vehicular connection across the creek and is the primary multimodal gateway into the park for most visitors.



GETTING TO THE PARK

TRANSIT

Zilker Park is currently served by one Capital Metro Route – Route 30 (Barton Creek Square route), which connects the Westgate Transit Center at US 290/SH 71 and Menchaca Road and Barton Creek Square Mall in Southwest Austin to Downtown Austin, stopping as far north as 12th and Guadalupe. Within the park, Route 30 operates on MoPac Expressway frontage roads and Barton Springs Road. The route serves seven stops within the park. However, there are no ADA compliant bus stops. Coming from Downtown, Route 30 stops at the following locations:

- At signalized pedestrian crossing of Barton Springs Road near Lou Neff Road
- At the entrance of the Zilker Botanical Garden
- At the Nature Center Access Road

Coming from Southwest Austin, Route 30 stops at the following locations:

- Along the MoPac Expressway frontage road near the McBeth Recreation Center
- Along the MoPac Expressway frontage road near the Disc Golf Course
- Across from the entrance of the Zilker Botanic Garden
- At signalized pedestrian crossing of Barton Springs Road near Lou Neff Road

The following map shows the alignment of Route 30 and ridership at stops near and within the park.

The busiest bus stop within the park is the stop pair located at Barton Springs Road near Lou Neff Road, which serves several of the park's primary amenities including the Great Lawn and Barton Springs. According to the most recent CapMetro data, in February 2020 eight people used this stop on a typical weekday,

while 25 people used the stop on a typical Saturday. However, it should be considered that 2020 was not a typical year, with the City taking official COVID-19 precautions starting in March 2020.

Route 30 typically operates approximately every 30 minutes, both during the weekdays and on weekends. Capital Metro temporarily increased the frequency of Route 30 to every 15 minutes during weekends in the summer months in 2019 as part of a pilot project.

Origin-Destination survey data collected by Capital Metro provides a snapshot of how transit users are accessing the park. Since Route 30 does not travel north or east of Downtown, nearly half of riders that use a stop within the park transfer to another route. Most transit riders walked to the bus and few riders took a bike with them on the bus, meaning that transit users are primarily on foot once they arrive at the park. Zilker Park is served by several of the city's highest profile trails – including the Butler Trail along Lady Bird Lake and the Barton Creek Greenbelt & Violet Crown Trail. Despite this trail access, getting to Zilker Park can be challenging by active modes (biking, walking, scootering).

BICYCLE

Bicycles are widely used throughout Zilker Park despite a lack of dedicated bicycle facilities. Due to the lower speeds of park roads, bikes are often seen on Lou Neff Road, Andrew Zilker Road, and Stratford Drive. There are partial bike lanes painted on Barton Springs Road but cyclists report the dangers of speeding cars and dropoff from road to grass or gravel. The park also features two MetroBike docks within the park boundary, one at the Capital Metro bus stop near Lou Neff Road, and the other at the entrance to Barton Springs Pool. While there are several additional docks located near the park there should be more within the park boundary to serve amenities such as the trail heads, the southern entrance of Barton Springs Pool, the Austin Nature and Science Center, and the Zilker Botanical Gardens.

MICROMOBILITY

Dockless scooters and bicycles, known as micromobility, are a popular way to access Zilker Park. Usage data shows that the peak of access to Zilker Park falls in the late afternoon to early evening, with the highest usage around 7 p.m. Access is about twice as high on weekends than at the same time on weekdays,

and access dips significantly in the early morning hours. Weekly usage follows the trend of most parks, with the bulk of access occurring on the weekends and the dip occurring mid-week.

PEDESTRIAN

Other than the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail and Barton Creek Greenbelt Trail, dedicated pedestrian facilities within Zilker Park are very limited. There is a paved, off-street sidewalk called the “Zilker Metro Park Loop” located to the east of the MoPac Expressway frontage road and south of Barton Springs Road. There is also a short segment of paved sidewalk between the Capital Metro bus stop and the Butler Trail on the north side of Barton Springs Road.

PARKING

Parking opportunities within Zilker Park are dispersed throughout the park, primarily in off-street parking lots that accommodate between 50 and 100 vehicles per lot. Between formal parking lots, on-street parking on Lou Neff Road, and informal lots such as the Polo Field and the former landfill gravel lot between Mopac and Lou Neff Road, there are almost 2,450 parking spaces within the boundary of Zilker Park. Of those spaces, approximately 875 of the spaces are located in formal lots (lots with marked spaces) and on-street parking stalls that serve general park attendees. These spaces require payment on approximately 57 days of the year on weekends and holidays from March through September. Of these spaces, approximately 230 are on-street spaces along Lou Neff Road.

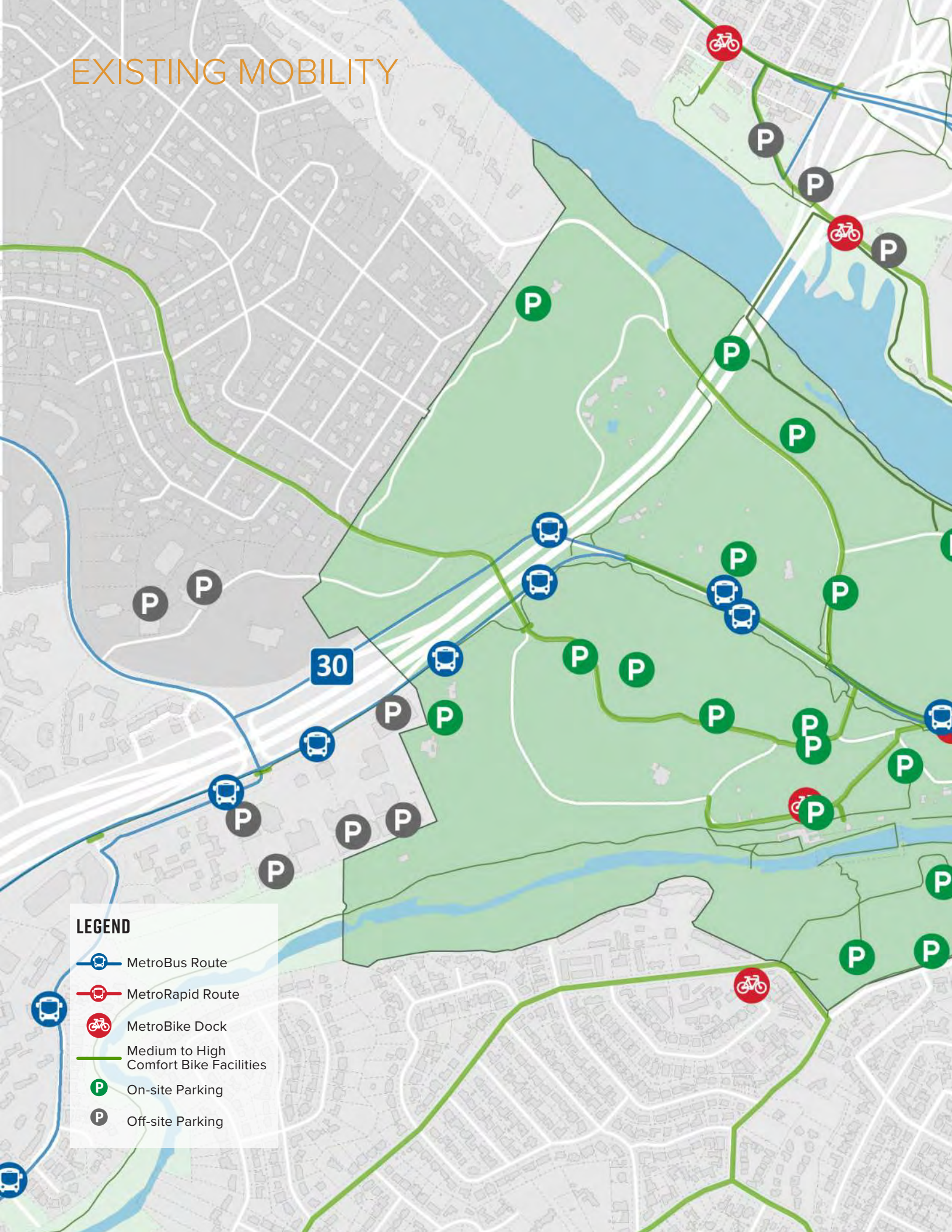
SAFETY

The highest incidences of crashes in the Zilker Park area were found at major intersections near the park, including:

- » MoPac Expressway / Bee Cave Road
- » MoPac Expressway / Barton Springs Road
- » Barton Springs Road / South Lamar Boulevard

Among crashes involving a cyclist or pedestrian, many of the incidents occurred primarily along South Lamar Boulevard, South Congress Avenue, and in the Downtown core. While there were crashes that occurred on Barton Springs Road and within the park itself, there were no recorded fatalities between 2016 and 2020 near or in the park.

EXISTING MOBILITY



LEGEND

- MetroBus Route
- MetroRapid Route
- MetroBike Dock
- Medium to High Comfort Bike Facilities
- On-site Parking
- Off-site Parking

A map of the Zilker Park area in Austin, Texas. The map shows the Colorado River flowing through the center. To the north of the river is a residential area with a grid of streets. A major road, Highway 663, runs diagonally from the top left towards the center. Highway 4 runs horizontally across the top. Highway 803 runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the center. Highway 30 runs horizontally across the bottom right. Zilker Park is shown as a large green area on the left side of the river. Various transportation icons are overlaid on the map: red circles with a white bicycle icon for MetroBike Docks, blue circles with a white bus icon for bus stops, and green circles with a white 'P' for parking lots. Some of these icons are highlighted with a red outline. The map also shows a network of green lines representing trails or bike lanes, and a network of blue lines representing roads.

EXISTING MOBILITY FRAMEWORK

Although visitors today can access Zilker Park through a variety of transportation options, not all modes of travel to the park are equally convenient or safe. Because of this, most park visitors arrive via private automobile.

The map shows the primary transportation options within and near Zilker Park and highlights the need for more MetroBike Docks, medium to high comfort Bike Facilities, and internal circulation options.

SITE TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

SUMMARY

- 1 Vehicular circulation within the park is dominated by Barton Springs Road, which travels east/west through most of the park. Most of the park's parking lots and major destinations that are accessible by vehicle are accessed through park roadways.
- 2 During major events, Barton Springs Road and Stratford Drive are closed to general vehicle traffic, although closures are limited to event hours for all events other than Austin City Limits Music Festival.
- 3 Parking opportunities within Zilker Park are dispersed throughout the park, primarily in off-street parking lots that accommodate between 50 and 100 vehicles per lot.
- 4 Most transit riders walked to the bus and few riders took a bike with them on the bus, meaning that transit users are primarily on foot once they arrive at the park.

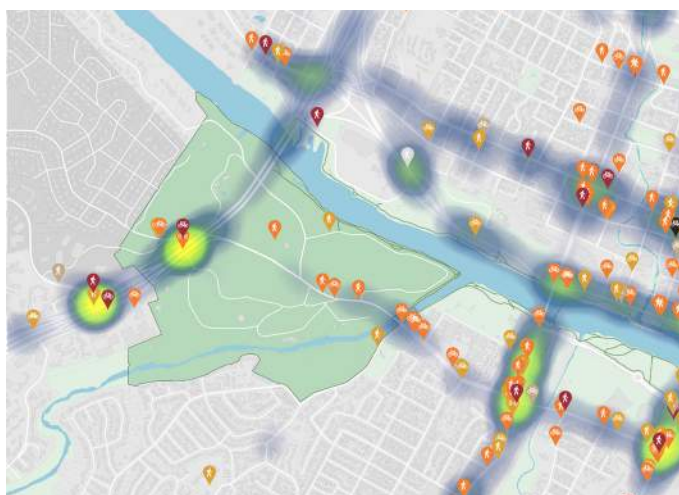
TRAFFIC CIRCULATION



LEGEND

- One-way Traffic
- Two-way Traffic
- Pedestrian Signal
- Adjacent Trails
- Butler Trail
- ADT Average Daily Traffic

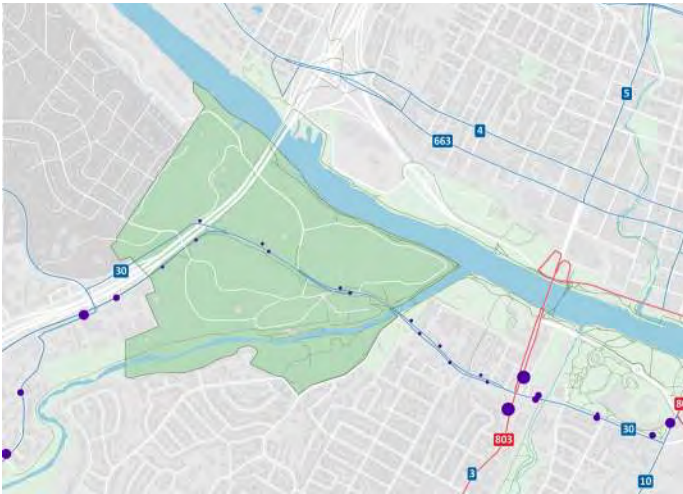
SAFETY



LEGEND

- High Density of All Crashes
- Low Density of All Crashes
- Unknown
- No Injury
- Potential Injury
- Fatality levels of Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes
- Non-Incapacitating Injury
- Incapacitating Injury
- Fatality

TRANSIT



LEGEND

- MetroBus Route

MetroRapid Route
- Average Daily Rider Activity

Low

High

PARKING



LEGEND

- Total Spaces

Paid Lot

Free Lot

Informal Lot
- Off-site Parking

No On-Street Parking

On-Street Parking

BIKE



LEGEND

- MetroBike Dock

Bike Repair Station

Adjacent Trails

Butler Trails

Urban Trails Planned
- Level of Comfort for Bike

High

Medium

Low

PEDESTRIAN



LEGEND

- Sidewalk

Crosswalk

Stairs

Pedestrian Traffic Signal
- Adjacent Trails

Butler Trails

Urban Trails Planned

ECOLOGY

SUMMARY

- 1 The land known today as Zilker Park has been an important gathering place throughout human history.
- 2 There are three Recognized Environmental Conditions in the park that require remediation.
- 3 Zilker Park is an important part of the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone and presents opportunities for green infrastructure implementation.
- 4 Erosion within the park is primarily caused by unmanaged stormwater and human disturbance.

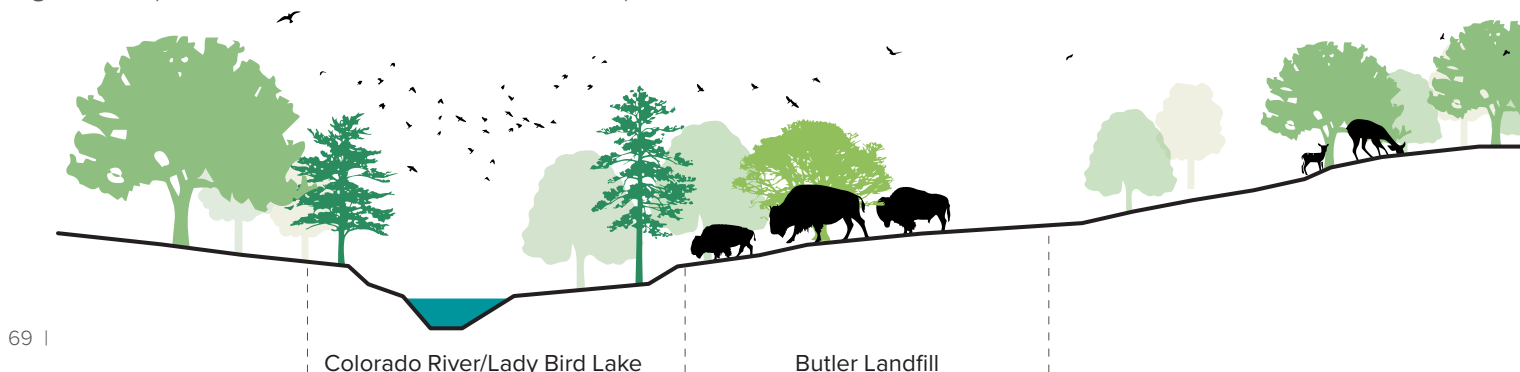


HISTORIC LAND USE CONTEXT

For the purposes of this report, Zilker Park's landscape history can be roughly divided into three periods: Forest, Savanna, and Springs; Industrial & Agriculture; and Recreational. The Forest, Savanna, & Springs period (7000 BCE–17th century) shows the landscape before widespread colonial settlements and represents thousands of years of Indigenous habitation. It highlights some of the tribes who frequented the springs, including the Tonkawa, Lipan Apache, and Comanche. This landscape was characterized by a

naturally dense forested landscape, a low and wide undammed Colorado River, plentiful wildlife, and naturally flowing spring water in Barton Creek. The Industrial & Agriculture period covers the 18th to 19th centuries and ends approximately 300 years after colonists first arrived. This time period in Zilker Park was characterized by highly extractive activities, such as mining, farming, and milling along Barton Creek's banks. These intensive land use changes removed tree canopy, decreased wildlife, and increased erosion. The final Recreational period (20th to 21st century) shows

Figure 1: Representation of Zilker Park before European settlement





land use up to today, which shows Zilker Park as a city-owned public space. The modern landscape in Zilker Park is characterized by a higher and more consistent water level on the north side of the park, created by the damming of the Colorado River and formation of Lady Bird Lake. Additionally, heavy public use, soil compaction, trampling, and contamination is also present throughout the park.

These sections highlight not only Zilker Park's accelerating landscape changes, but also how land uses have changed and why. Themes that have emerged from these three historic periods include:

ECOLOGY OF ZILKER PARK



Large numbers of visitors and lack of proper infrastructure increases soil compaction and erosion issues.



Barton Springs Pool is an amenity for people as well as a habitat for endangered species and important part of Austin's local hydrology.



50% of the park trails do not currently offer adequate shade.

- » A transition in land uses from a natural landscape to agricultural and finally to recreational;
- » A landscape where the proportion of wild lands decreases steadily over time;
- » A decrease in wildlife abundance and diversity over time, especially a decrease in megafauna; and
- » A transition from tribes camping along Barton Creek, to a few independent mill owners and homesteaders, to a modern landscape visited by hundreds of people daily.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION



Zilker Park has three main areas of environmental contamination concern: the Butler Landfill, the Pistol and Skeet Range, and the West Butler Landfill. In anticipation of future renovations on site, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was completed for Zilker Park in 2019 by TRC Environmental Corporation.

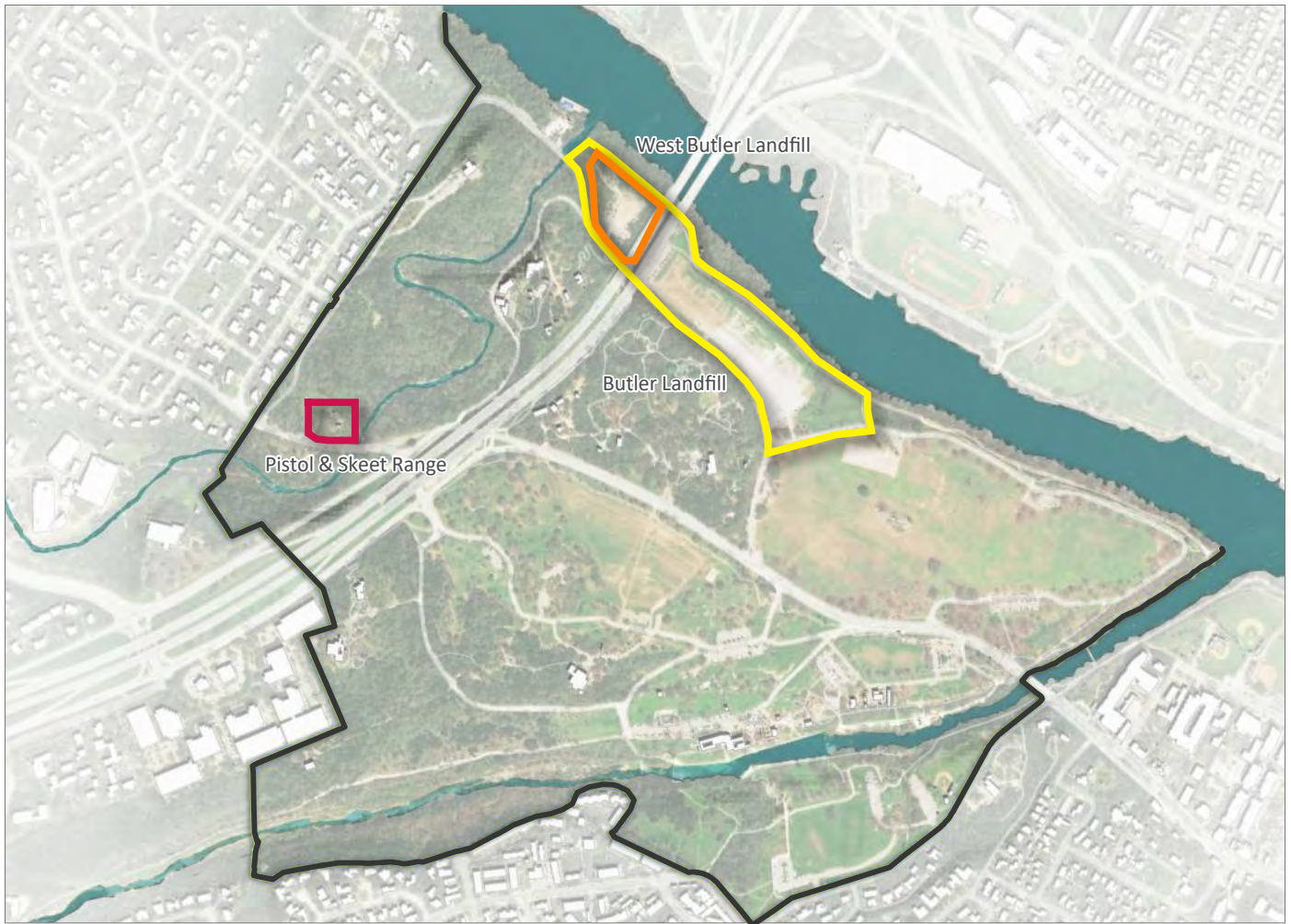
BUTLER LANDFILL

The 25-acre Butler Landfill has a maximum depth of 30 feet. This location originally served as a clay quarry for the Butler Brick Factory through the early 1900s, but after termination of quarry operations, the location was operated as a municipal landfill by the City of Austin from 1948 to 1967.

Several investigations and groundwater monitoring events have been conducted. While the earlier events did not find constituents of concern (COCs), later monitoring events did detect them. These later investigations found that waste materials were exposed in several areas throughout the landfill and that the lower portion of material within the landfill is saturated by the waters of Lady Bird Lake. A range of contaminants exceeded recommended maximum levels including arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, magnesium, lead, iron, and manganese. Due to this, the 2019 Environmental Assessment classified Butler Landfill as a Recognized Environmental Condition (REC).

Wetlands border the capped Butler Landfill on the eastern and northern sides. The Watershed Protection Department (WPD) advises that ponded areas should not exist over closed landfills. Based on the 1998 Task 5 Report, the boundary of the fill extends eastward towards the Zilker Zephyr tracks and under the eastern





ponded area. As of 2019, when the Zilker Park Working Group completed their report on the park, WPD and Parks and Recreation Department were planning to assess this area and consult with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to determine if additional action is necessary relative to this pond.

WEST BUTLER LANDFILL

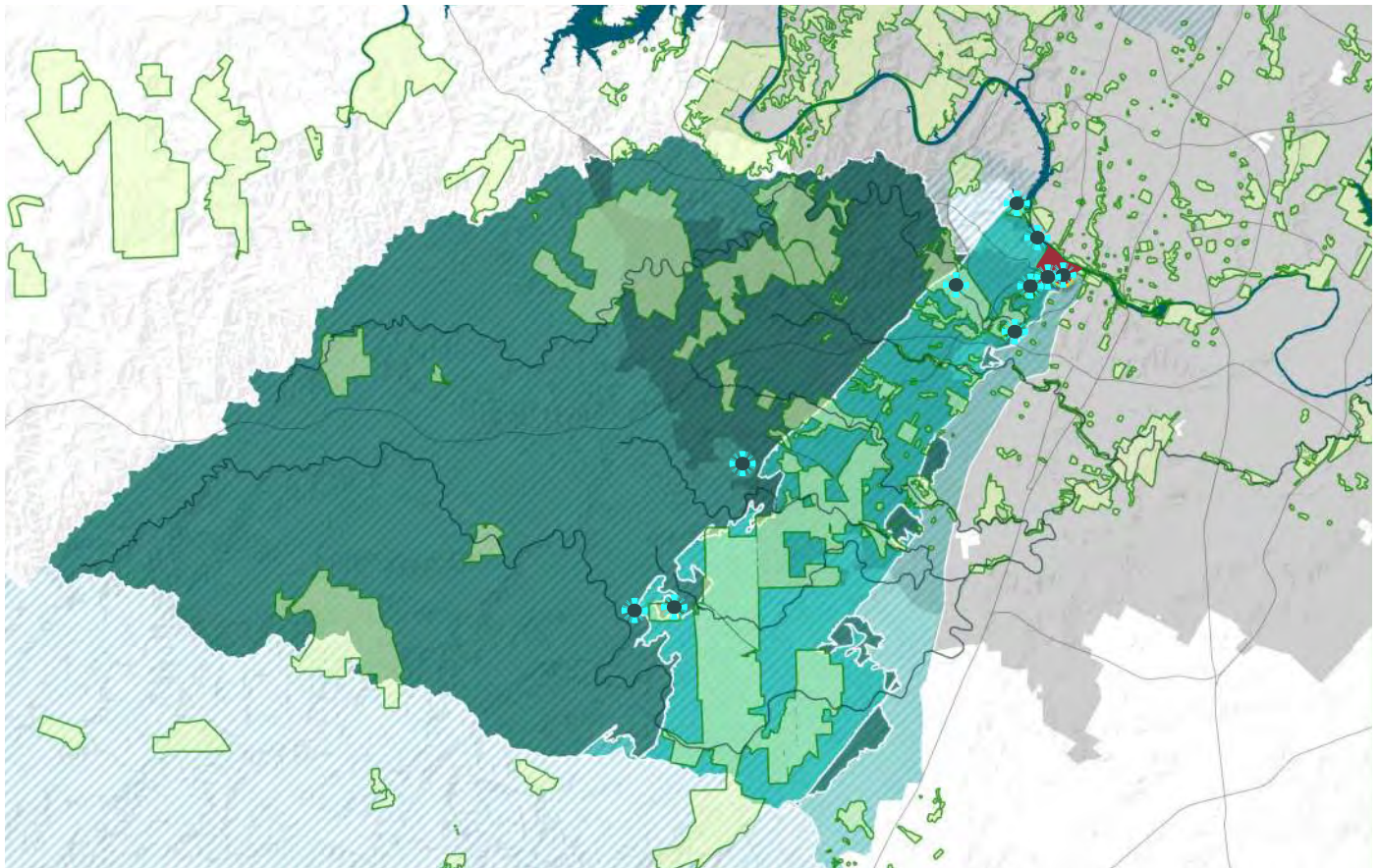
This area lies atop the northwest corner of the Butler Landfill and is currently used for storage of equipment and landscaping materials such as soil, brush, and gravel. Due to the presence of asphalt, electric-powered carts and small vehicles with lead-acid batteries, surplus lawn maintenance equipment, and chemical containers without cover or impervious pavement, this area has a possibility of leaking hazardous substances or petroleum products to the environment. This area is a REC, due to the material threat of a future release into the environment.

PISTOL AND SKEET RANGE

The 2.5-acre Pistol and Skeet Range was originally developed in the 1930s. Based on aerial photographs and interviews with PARD staff, the western portion was used for skeet shooting (Skeet Range), while the east side was used for pistol and rifle shooting (Pistol Range). The range was heavily used on a daily basis by the Austin Police Department and citizens between the 1930s and 1970s. The Pistol Range property was used by the Austin Nature & Science Center for archery, equipment storage, and supply storage in portable buildings after the mid-1980s. Historic and recent soil investigations have identified elevated concentrations of arsenic, antimony, and lead. The Pistol and Skeet Range, including the wooded area to the north, is therefore a REC.

ECOREGION & EDWARDS AQUIFER

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT










Zilker Park lies in the transition zone between the Edwards Plateau and Blackland Prairie ecoregions, blending aspects of the two. Hydrologically, Zilker Park sits atop the Edwards Aquifer and within the Colorado River corridor. The park includes sections of both Barton Creek and Eanes Creek and is home to the iconic Barton Springs. These factors combine to create a beloved, ecologically significant landscape in great need of planning and stewardship. This section describes the site's hydrology, topography, geology, soils, plant communities, and wildlife. This information is the foundation of the Natural Resource Inventory Report's management guidelines.

The Edwards Aquifer lies under the eastern and southern borders of the Hill Country and gives rise to the iconic springs of Central Texas. The Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer covers 250,000

acres and includes the Barton and Eanes Creek watersheds. The recharge zone is the critical area where water enters the aquifer through cracks and pores in the limestone. The recharge zone covers over 56,000 acres including the 387 acres of Zilker Park. Water from the recharge zone flows out in the prolific Barton Springs system that feeds Barton Springs Pool and creates habitat for the endangered Austin Blind Salamander and Barton Springs Salamander. Because the limestone through which water enters the aquifer does not filter out contaminants, this critical, fast-moving water system is impacted by resource management decisions throughout the contributing and recharge zones. Activities in the park impact the recharge zone and areas immediately adjacent to the springs.

LEGEND

-  Springs
-  Major Roads
-  Ecoregion Boundary
-  Lakes and Waterways
-  Conserved Land
-  Edwards Aquifer
-  Contributing Zone
-  Recharge Zone
-  Transition Zone
-  Zilker Park
-  Austin City Limits



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2012, the City of Austin adopted the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, which included Priority Program #4: Use green infrastructure to protect environmentally sensitive areas and integrate nature into the city. It also established a definition of green infrastructure as a strategically planned and managed network of natural lands, parks, working landscapes, open spaces, and green stormwater controls that conserve and enhance ecosystem services and provide associated benefits to human populations.

As climate change intensifies and results in higher temperatures and more extreme weather events, the many forms of green infrastructure will become increasingly important. Climate vulnerability and tree planting priority in Austin from the City of Austin Green Infrastructure Assessment shows areas that are climate vulnerable as a result of urban heat island temperature increases, lack of urban forest,

and lack of shade over impervious cover. In addition, these areas coincide with higher levels of social vulnerability and worse health outcomes.

While the general area around Zilker Park exhibits a low to moderate tree planting priority, this park serves as a city-wide refuge to enjoy the outdoors in a location that has relief from higher temperatures as a result of the urban forest, shading, and water-related cooling. In addition, the changes suggested in the Zilker Park Natural Resource Inventory and Natural Area Management Guidelines recommend the improvement of canopy in the park and addition of green stormwater infrastructure. The result is a park that is adapting to and mitigating climate change. These same concepts are integrated into the Zilker Park Vision Plan to create a sustainable park that addresses climate change.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

TOPOGRAPHY

Zilker Park is comprised of low-lying lands near waterways and steep cliffs carved by creeks. The lowest points in the park are at roughly 428' in elevation and the high points in the park are between 554' and 562' in elevation.

GEOLOGY

Zilker Park includes 6 types of geology. The geologic layer is often exposed at the surface and lies on top of the Hydrogeology layer.

SPRINGS AND SEEPS

Zilker Park not only plays a role in the recharge of the Edwards Aquifer but is also home to the 4 springs complex and an additional 10 smaller springs and seeps.

SOIL

Zilker Park includes 15 soil types. These soils have been heavily impacted by agriculture and urbanization over the past 150 years as well as ecological changes in climate and topography.

HYDROGEOLOGY

These are the geologic elements that define the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. These layers dictate subsurface movement of water. The only hydrogeologic member within Zilker Park that is not within the recharge zone is Del Rio Clay.

HYDROLOGY

Floodplains play an important role in regulating water quality, because they filter water through their soils. The extra moisture creates denser plant growth, providing important wildlife habitat. Floodplains can be harmed by trampling and high runoff during storms that erode soil and wash away plants. The park also accepts flood waters on its 106.6 acres within the 100-year-floodplain.

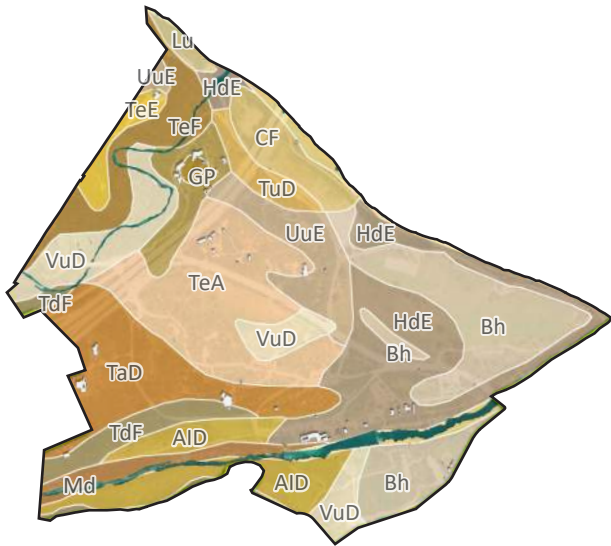
TOPOGRAPHY



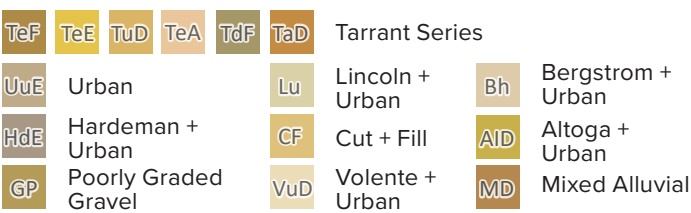
LEGEND



SOIL



LEGEND



GEOLOGY



LEGEND

- Edwards Formation
- Tributary Terrace Deposits
- Georgetown Formation
- Lower Colorado River Terrace
- Del Rio Formation
- Alluvial

SPRINGS & SEEPS



LEGEND

- Main Springs
- Seeps & Springs

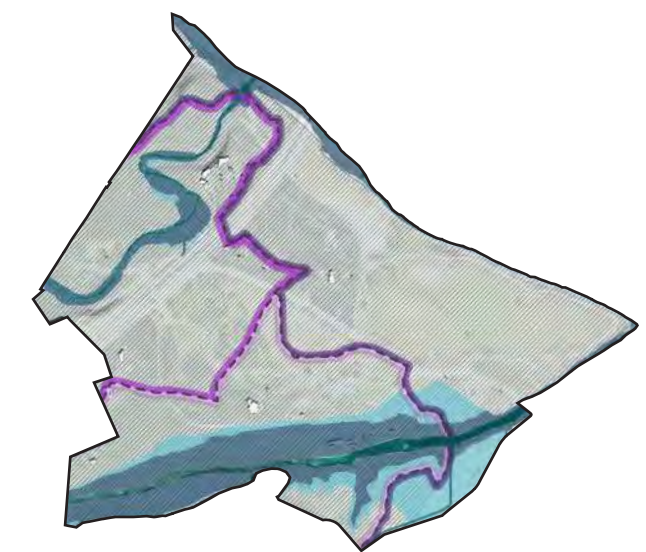
HYDROGEOLOGY



LEGEND

- Georgetown Limestone
- Grainstone Member
- Regional Dense Member
- Leached/Collapsed
- Kirschberg Member
- Del Rio Clay

HYDROLOGY



LEGEND

- Watershed Boundary
- Barton Creek Watershed
- Eanes Creek Watershed
- Lady Bird Lake Watershed
- 25 Year Floodplain
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Recharge Zone

PLANT COMMUNITIES

EXISTING PLANT COMMUNITIES



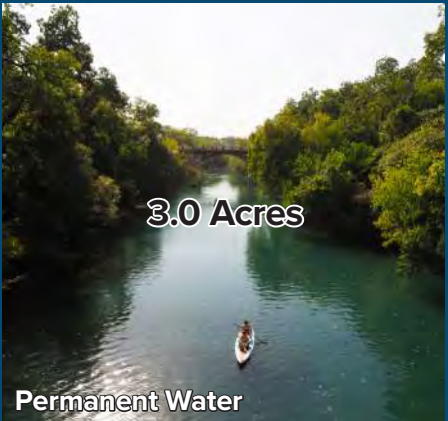
Zilker Park's habitats were grouped into 16 plant communities, which are influenced by the park's soil and geology as well as the history of human disturbance. These plant communities include over 380 plant species. The Oak/Juniper/Elm Woodland has 173 native plant species and 34 invasive and exotic species. The Barton Riparian woodland is inundated during floods, and in the lower areas, these plants must stay underwater for months. This woodland has a diverse canopy, understory and herbaceous layer with 78 native species and 15 invasive and exotic species. The plant diversity within the Intermittent creek bed is generally low, because it is often inundated. The Eanes Creek Riparian

Woodlands has 65% more species than the Barton Creek Riparian woodland, which is likely a result of less human impact. The Degraded Barton Riparian Woodland lies downstream of the pool and sees a high amount of human impact. The Degraded Barton Creek Shoreline could be one of the most robust plant communities in the area but overuse and upslope storm water outfalls prevent this. The Lakeshore Riparian Woodland is one of the few areas along Ladybird Lake that has not been cleared in the last 100 years. The Open Meadow is currently mowed at a rate that prevents native grass and forbs from being able to flower and seed.

LEGEND

- 1 Spring
- 2 Oak/Juniper/Elm Woodland
- 3 Barton Riparian Woodland
- 4 Intermittent Creekbed
- 5 Eanes Creek Riparian Woodland
- 6 Degraded Barton Riparian Woodland
- 7 Degraded Barton Creek Shoreline
- 8 Barton Springs Pool
- 9 Permanent Water
- 10 Lakeshore Riparian Woodland
- 11 Wetland
- 12 Open Meadow
- 13 Disc Golf Course
- 14 Zilker Botanical Garden
- 15 Austin Nature & Science Center
- 16 Maintained Parkland & Infrastructure

EXISTING PLANT COMMUNITY TYPOLOGIES





INVASIVE SPECIES

Over 70 non-native species were recorded during the plant survey, with 38 species considered invasive due to their aggressive growth and spread. Of these, 20 species were included in at least one of these three lists: Texas Invasives, the City of Austin's Top 24 Invasive Species list, or the Natural Resource Inventory by Siglo Group. The high priority species from this list include Arundo, bamboo, bastard cabbage, Bermudagrass, catclaw vine, Chinaberry, Chinese parasol tree, Chinese pistache, Chinese tallow, Nandina, hedge parsley, Japanese honeysuckle, Johnsongrass, King Ranch bluestem, Ligustrum, Malta star thistle, paper mulberry, sweet autumn clematis, and tree of heaven.

SOIL DISTURBANCE

The primary causes of soil disturbance in Zilker Park are stormwater flow, poorly functioning or absent infrastructure, mowing and use of other heavy machinery, off-trail recreation, formal recreation without suitable supporting infrastructure and erosion of trail material. Soil disturbance is problematic in all areas but is particularly concerning along environmentally sensitive waterways. Field data were taken on soil erosion issues at 140 points throughout the study area.

TREE SURVEY MAP










LEGEND

- | | |
|---|--|
| ● Hackberry | ● Huisache |
| ● Live Oak | ● Black Willow |
| ● Pecan | ● Cottonwood |
| ● American Elm | ● Green Ash |
| ● Cedar Elm | ● Red Oak |
| ● Juniper | ● Honey Mesquite |
| ● Box Elder | ● Other Oaks |
| ● Bald Cypress | ● Invasive Species |
| ● Sycamore | ● Other |
| ● Gum Bumelia | |

EROSION AND SOIL IMPACTS



Table 1: Erosion Types

TYPES	DESCRIPTION
 Informal Trails	Informal trails are paths created by foot traffic and are not created or maintained by park staff. Informal trails with trampled vegetation and compacted soils often lead to sheet erosion, rills, or gullies.
 Trampling	Trampling is a result of off-trail foot traffic not confined to a trail. It destroys vegetation and prevents its reestablishment.
 Compaction	Compaction is a loss of soil porosity. It inhibits plant growth and can lead to erosion.
 Sheet Erosion	Sheet erosion is the removal of thin layers of soil due to precipitation and shallow surface flow.
 Rill and Gully Erosion	Rill erosion is the formation of one or more small channels less than 1 ft deep; gullies are deeper than 1 ft.
 Bank Erosion	Bank erosion is found along both creeks and the Lady Bird Lake shoreline. It is a result of their urban setting and the powerful force of water after major rain events.
 Erosion on Formal Trails	In some areas, decomposed granite is leaving the trail and entering either natural areas or waterways. This material can bury native plants and make the soil more susceptible to erosion, thus lowering the quality of the natural area.

Source: Zilker Park Natural Resources Inventory & Management Guidelines. Siglo. 2021

REGULATIONS

CWQZ, WQTZ, AND CEFs

Critical Water Quality Zones and Water Quality Transition Zones setbacks limit development. CEFs or Critical Environmental Features require that a Environmental Resource Inventory be obtained prior to site design.

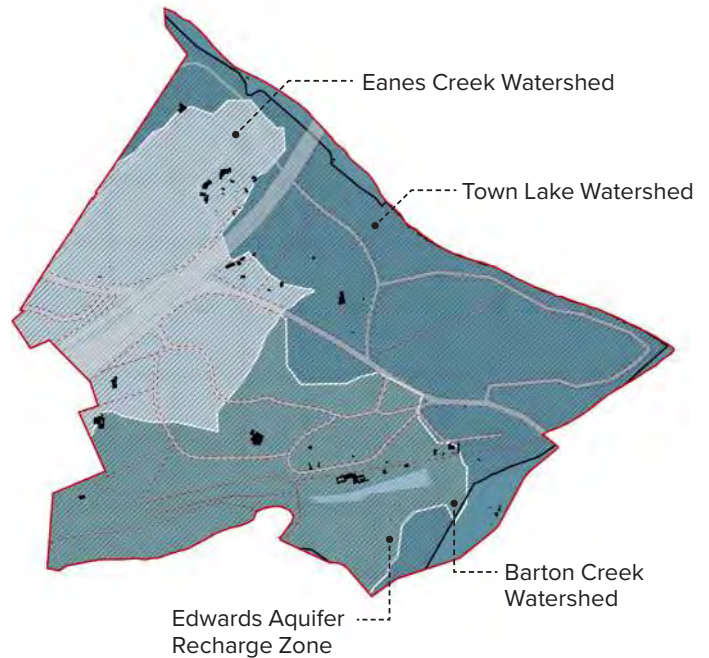
Most of the Zilker Park Vision Plan area is located within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, which will require review by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Additionally, if applicable, development may be subject to §25-1-84 if development is proposed on top of previous landfill sites.

Many of the tracts contain Critical Water Quality Zone (CWQZ) and/or Water Quality Transition Zone (WQTZ) setbacks, which restrict most development. Obtaining an Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) is recommended prior to site design due to the presence of existing Critical Environmental Features (CEFs) on many of the parcels. Additional features and or revised buffer areas may be established that could impact site layout and development. Any proposed development should be located outside of these protected areas. Many of the tracts are also encumbered by the 100-year floodplain.

Generally, development applications may not be approved if a proposed structure encroaches on the 100-year floodplain. A variance may be granted if the following is determined:

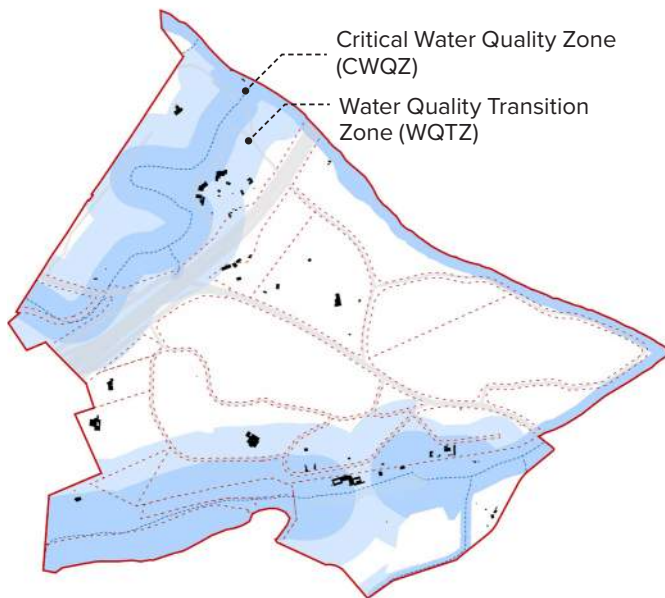
- The finished floor elevation of a proposed building is at least two feet above the 100-year floodplain;

WATERSHEDS

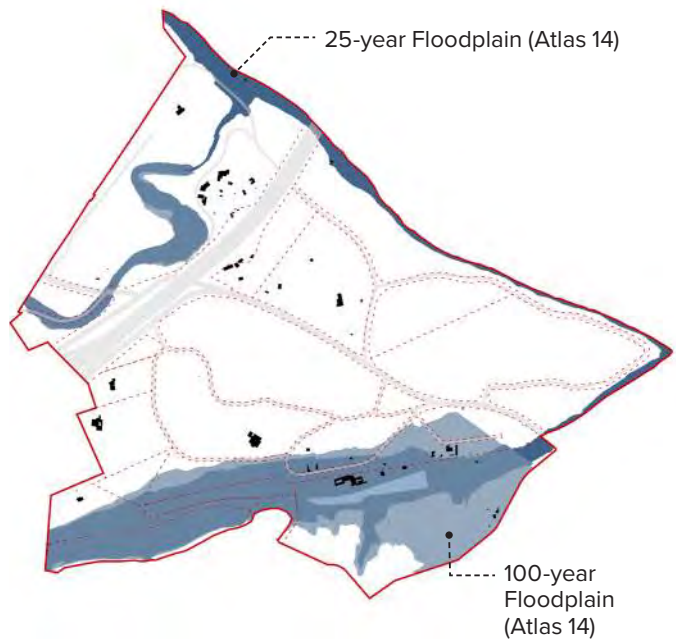


- Normal access to a proposed building is by direct connection with an area above the regulatory flood datum;
- A proposed building complies with the requirements of Flood Resistant Construction and Flood Loads;
- The development compensates for the floodplain volume displaced by the development;
- The development improves the drainage system by exceeding the requirements of Criteria for Approval of Development Applications, as demonstrated by a report provided by the applicant and certified by an engineer registered in Texas;
- The variance is required by unique site conditions; and
- Development permitted by the variance does not result in additional adverse flooding impact on other property.
- There is an exception for existing historic buildings within the flood plain to remain.

WATER QUALITY BUFFERS



FLOODPLAIN



Additionally, development applications with a proposed building or parking area that encroaches on the 100-year floodplain may be approved if the encroachment is:

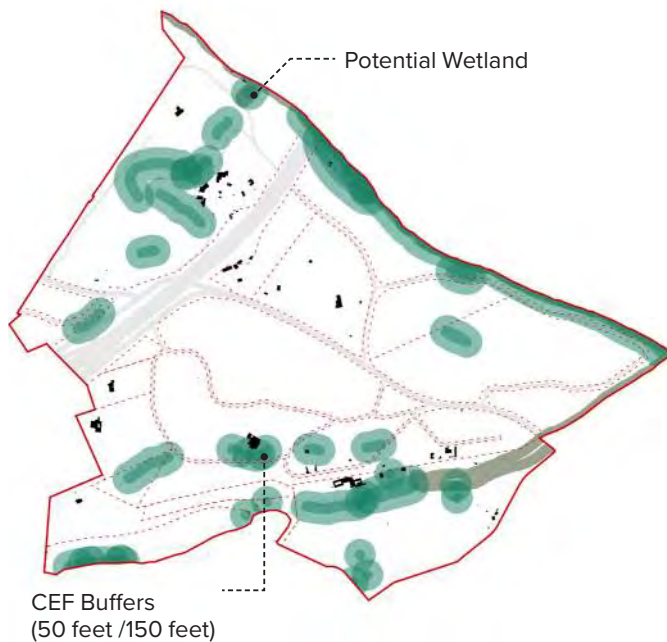
- A parking area that is smaller than 5,000 square feet or an unoccupied structure that has an area of less than 1,000 square feet, and the director determines that the proposed development:
 - » will not have an adverse effect on the 100-year floodplain or surrounding properties; and
 - » otherwise complies with the land development code requirements;
- A new building for residential use that replaces an existing legally constructed building for residential use on the same property and that does not increase the number of legal dwelling units on the property;
- A building authorized by a waterway development permit issued under Chapter 9-10 before September 25, 1983; or

- A building in the 100-year floodplain of:
 - » Lady Bird Lake;
 - » The Colorado River downstream from Longhorn Dam;
 - » Lake Austin; or
 - » Lake Travis.

To be approved, development in the floodplain must be no lower than 2 feet above the 100-year floodplain, as measured from the lowest elevation of any proposed building; comply with the requirements of Flood Resistant Construction and Flood Loads sections; compensate for the floodplain volume displaced by the development; and result in no adverse flooding impact on other properties.

REGULATIONS

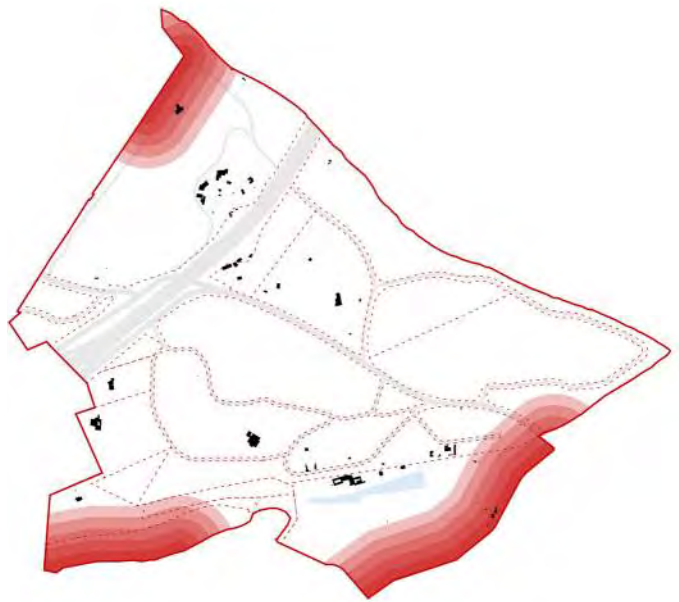
CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURE (CEF) BUFFERS



CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURE BUFFERS

Based on Austin City Code, a Critical Environmental Feature (CEF) buffer is most critical to preserving the function and characteristics of a CEF. This area should be covered by vegetation and any construction must be low-impact. Hiking trails are allowed within the buffer if they are at least 50' from the CEF.

COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS



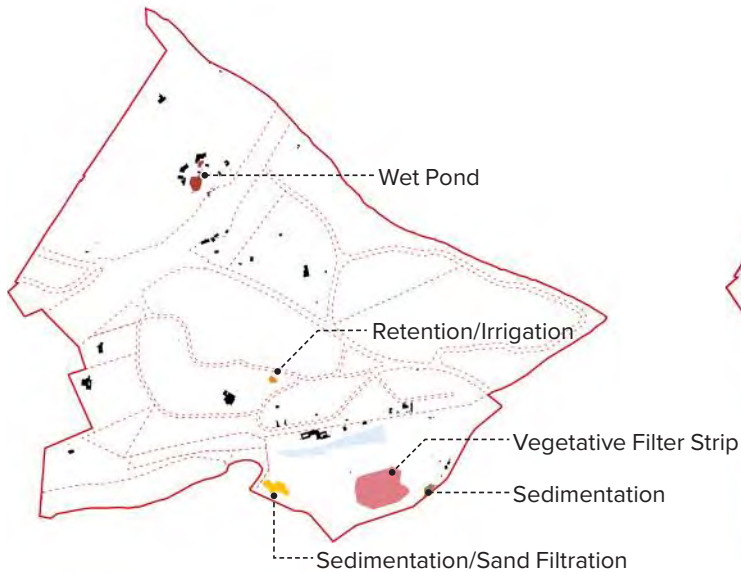
COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS

The Property along the southern and northwestern boundaries is subject to Compatibility Standards. These regulations may have a direct impact on the development or redevelopment of Tracts 1, 14, 17 and 18.

Any development in an SF-6 or less restrictive zoning district located 540 feet or less from property in an SF-5 or more restrictive zoning district/use will be subject to compatibility development regulations. A formal compatibility analysis is recommended.



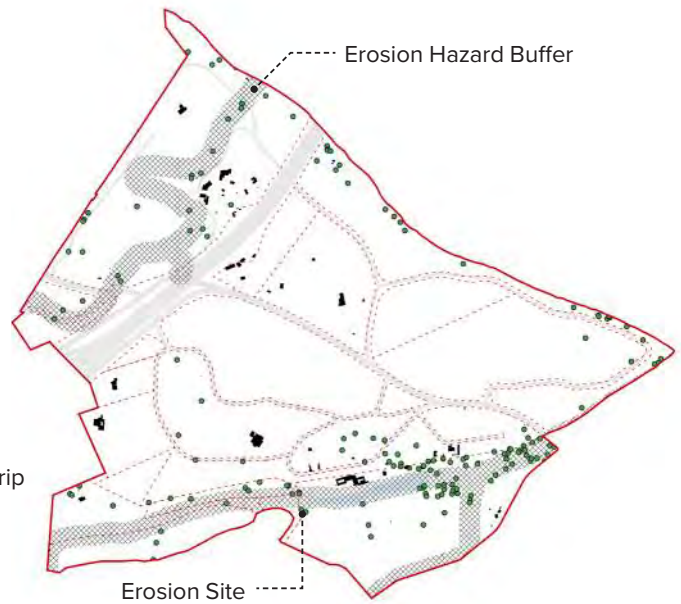
STORMWATER QUALITY CONTROLS



The following building setback and height step-back requirements are triggered because the property is 540 feet or less from property in an SF-5 or more restrictive zoning district/use

- 25 feet from triggering property = No Structures
- 25 feet to 50 feet from triggering property = Two stories or 30 feet, whichever is less
- 50 feet to 100 feet from triggering property = Three stories or 40 feet, whichever is less

EROSION



- 100 feet to 300 feet from triggering property = 40 feet plus one foot of height for each additional 10 feet in distance from triggering property
- 300 feet to 540 feet from triggering property = 60 feet plus one foot of height for each Four feet in addition to 300 feet from property



TRANSPORTATION

Consultation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) or Austin Transportation Department will be required for any development that is proposed within State-controlled or City-owned right-of-way (ROW).

Portions of Barton Springs Road, Lou Neff Road, and Stratford Drive may not be considered Public ROW by the City of Austin, but rather a park roadway. This has design implications on impervious cover and detention and water quality treatment requirements, among other things (public ROW is not considered when calculating impervious cover, but park roads are considered when calculating impervious cover calculations). Parks and Recreation Department should provide definitive information regarding the categorization of these roads and the physical extents of the portions of these roads that are considered park roads.

TREE PROTECTION

Any proposed development or redevelopment will be subject to the current heritage and protected tree regulations per Land Development Code §25-8, Division 3 (above 19 feet height Heritage Trees). A permit granted by the City of Austin Arborist is required to remove protected and heritage trees. An administrative variance is required to remove heritage trees 24 to 30 inches in diameter; Land Use Commission approval is required to remove heritage trees 30 inches in diameter or greater.

Obtaining a tree survey is highly recommended prior to any site design to determine the size, species, and health of existing trees on the property.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A number of parcels also contain existing structures 50 years in age or older; demolition of such structures, along with any structures on the two parcels with the Historic Landmark Combining District in the zoning designation will require approval by the City of Austin Historic Preservation Office and potentially the Historic Landmark Commission. A Certificate of Appropriateness will be required should any changes to existing structures in Historic Landmark Combining Districts be proposed.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Coordination with the Austin Fire Department early in the site design process is recommended to determine if any of the underground storage tanks indicated on the site by City of Austin GIS data contain hazardous materials that require additional buffering, relocation, or removal.

SUBDIVISION AND PLATTING

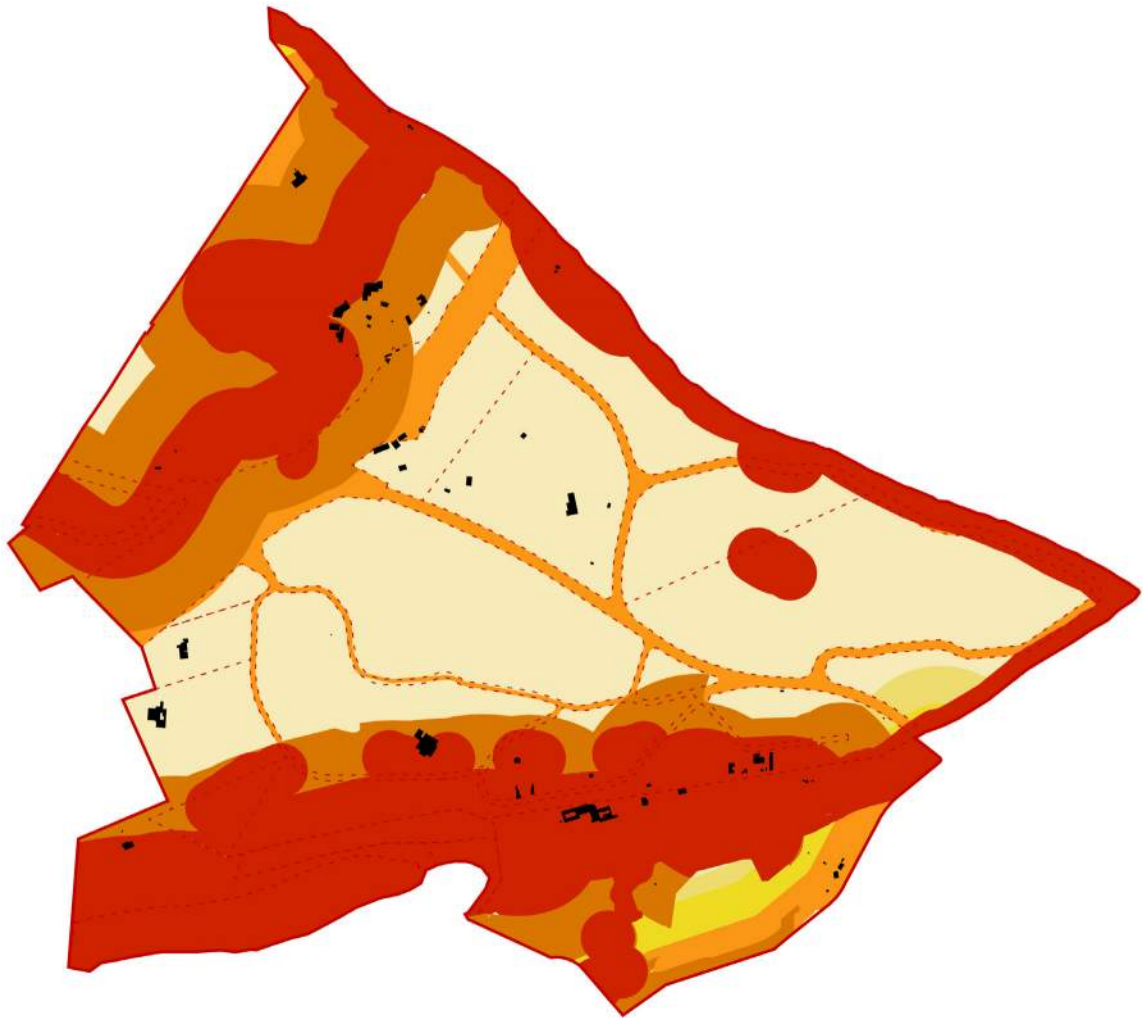
The majority, if not all, of the Property does not appear to be subdivided. Correspondence with the program manager in the Land Use Review Division indicates that the City of Austin and its property, including Zilker Park, is exempt from the requirements of platting. Legal lot determinations and the requirement to subdivide to develop or redevelop, therefore, are not required to obtain the majority, if not all, permits.

In the past, the development or redevelopment of City of Austin-owned parkland encountered one issue related to the subdivision of land regarding Austin Water Utility or Austin Energy utilities crossing lot or tract lines. Although not platted, Zilker Park is made up of multiple tracts of land. Historically, a solution to this issue has been to use a Declaration of Easement, granted by the City of Austin to itself.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Per §25-2-625(D), for tracts with “P” base zoning that are less than 1 acre in size, the site development regulations of an adjoining zoning district apply for a distance of 100 feet into the site. The minimum lot size requirement of an adjoining zoning district does not apply to a use by the City of Austin. For a site one acre in size or greater, site development regulations are established by the approval of a conditional use site plan, which require approval at the Land Use Commission. For a parks and recreation services (special) use, per §25-2-625(E), the minimum site area is 10 acres. Site plans must include the locations of sale of beer and wine, if applicable. The Land Use Commission may not consider a site plan for approval until it receives a recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Board.

Some tracts within the Zilker Park Visioning Plan boundary contain one or multiple site plans in review or approved. This Vision Plan recommends that a civil engineer review existing site plans for total impervious cover proposed or built on each tract to determine how much, if any, impervious cover remains for future projects.



This map shows the intensity of the regulations which apply to Zilker Park.

The regulations, if overlaid in their entirety on one map, indicate that areas that can be developed more than today's condition are limited. This indicates that variances, updates to ordinances, and/or a development agreement for Zilker Park should be examined.

LEGEND

- This area has multiple regulations prohibiting most of development. It is determined as Critical Water Quality Zone, 25-year floodplain, or erosion site.
- This area has a regulation prohibiting development which is Water Quality Transition Zone (WQTZ).
- This area can be developed but has several regulations or under other jurisdiction which needed additional approval.
- This area can be developed but has several regulations such as compatibility standards.
- All of Zilker Park site is within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone or Barton Springs Zone. This limits impervious cover to 40% for commercial and/or multifamily projects.

WATER WITHIN THE PARK

- 1 There is no reclaimed water system within the park at this time. City Code does not allow for these systems in the ecologically sensitive areas of the park.
- 2 There are 13 abandoned wastewater lines and 2 abandoned lift stations within the park. Wastewater outflows into Barton Creek are in disrepair and have caused erosion.
- 3 There is no formal storm sewer system within the park. Stormwater is primarily directed to outflows directly connected to Lady Bird Lake or systems adjacent to the park.

Summary provided below is based on the information available at the time of this report. All existing utilities should be verified prior to actual development of the subject property.

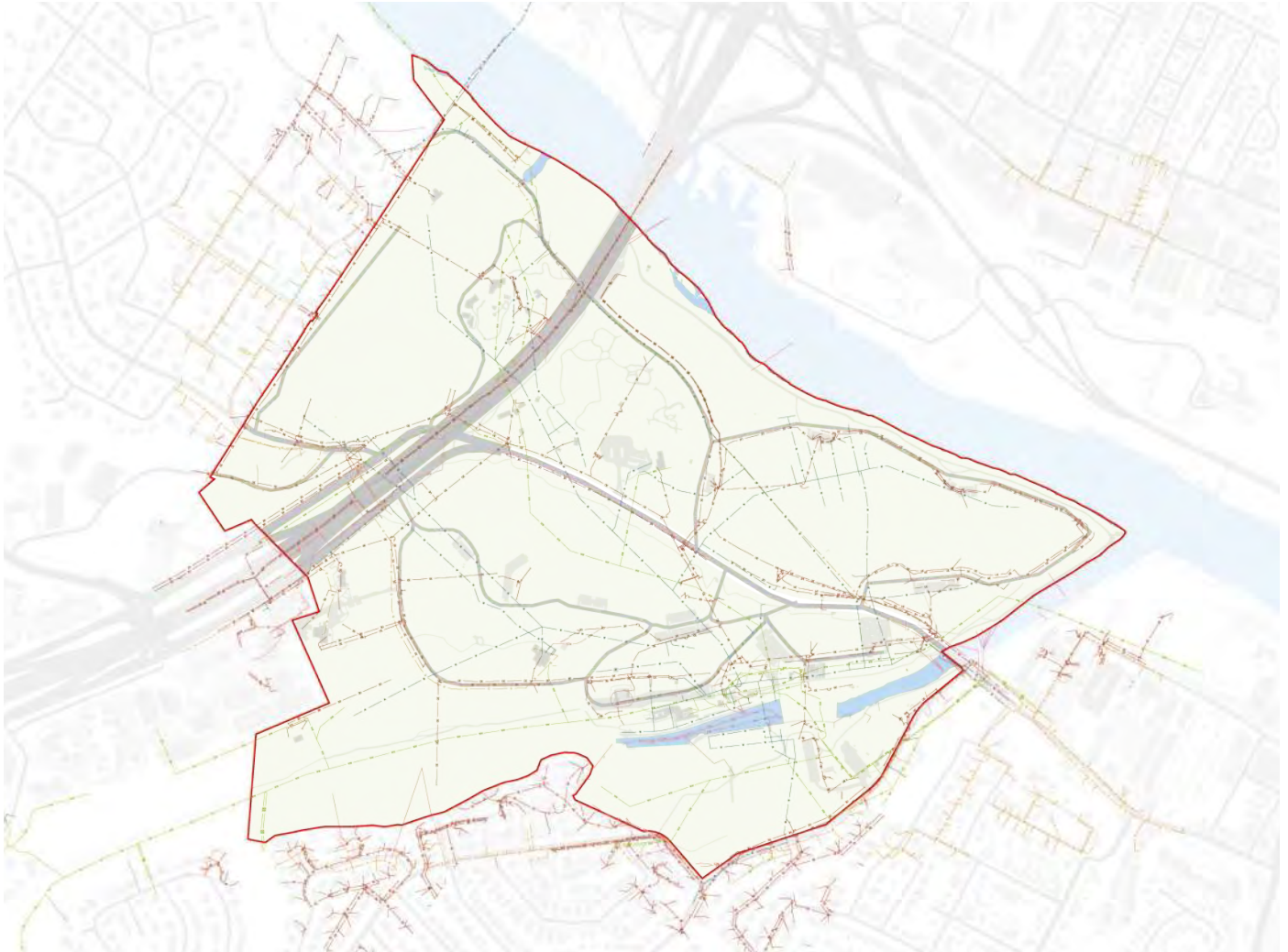
WATER

Austin Water Department (AW) is the water and wastewater service provider for the Zilker Park development. The area of interest is located within the Central South pressure zone. Several AW water and wastewater lines run through and around the park of the proposed site boundaries as as identified below:

- The largest mains within the site are a 12-inch Ductile Iron (DI) and 12-inch Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) water mains associated with project W-1987-2018 and W-1987-1500, respectively that run along South MoPac Expressway Northbound then turn east through the park. The 12-inch PVC main is currently proposed to tie into a proposed 12-inch DI main running along Andrew Zilker Road.
- A 2-inch Cast Iron (CI) watermain associated with Project W-1971-0053 that runs through the park from the Southwestern portion of the park to tie into the existing 3-inch CI watermain located in the central portion of the park. The main ties into the existing 6-inch CI running from the southeastern side of the park to northeastern side park to connect to the existing 12-inch DI running along Barton Springs Road.
- A 6-inch CI proposed for abandonment running from the center of the park to the southeastern portion of the park and ties into the existing 6-inch CI currently proposed to be abandoned and replaced with a 12-inch PVC main associated with Project W-2021-0014 at the Water Intersection 3305 located within Azie Morton Road.
- An 8-inch CI watermain that runs along Stratford Drive from the northwestern to the northeastern portion of the park with an associated project W-1964-1064.
- An abandoned 8-inch CI line located in the northwestern portion of the park running north across the Colorado River from Stratford Drive to Atlanta Street.
- Several interconnecting lines throughout the park that services the existing development.
- There are several existing fire hydrants within the site area.

WASTEWATER

All wastewater located within and around the project study boundary is collected at the South Austin Region Wastewater Treatment Plant through



the AW collection system and is maintained privately or by AW. Below are the wastewater lines:

- An 8-inch Concrete (Conc) gravity main located in the northwestern portion of the park which collects into the Bluffington #1 Lift Station.
- Bluffington #1 Lift Station waste is collected through an existing 8-inch CI force main associated with project A5811 running southeast to tie into an existing 15 PVC gravity main associated with Project A5810.
- A privately maintained lift station (Rollingwood #1), with a 6-inch (UNK) pipe material associated with Project No. 2002-0609 running north from the southwestern portion of the site area and ties into the existing 15-inch PVC associated with project A5810.
- The 15 PVC associated with Zilker Park A5810 ties into an existing 12-inch PVC, which ties into a 12-inch Concrete gravity main associated with Project A5809, which ties into a 10-inch Concrete gravity main associated with project A5808.
- The 10-inch concrete gravity main associated with Project A5808 ties into an existing 10-inch DI gravity main with associated Project S-1992-2011, which ties into the existing 33-inch FRPM gravity main at wastewater manhole (WWMH) number 29127.
- A 36-inch Fiberglass (FG) gravity main located in the southeastern portion of the park with the associated Project W-2001-0036 running northeast through the park and ties into an existing 42-inch Vitrified Clay (VC) gravity main, which ties into the existing 42-



951

feet of the Zilker Loop
Trail lies within an
erosion hazard zone

1007

feet of the Butler Trail
lies within an erosion
hazard zone

8

of 10 pieces
of stormwater
infrastructure lie within
an erosion hazard zone

inch Conc gravity main which ties into the existing 33-inch Fiberglass-Reinforced Polymer-Mortar (FRPM) gravity main associated with Project W-2005-0003 and S-2005-0006 at WWMH # 29127.

- A 24-inch Conc and an 8-inch VC gravity main running along Azie Morton Road along the eastern side of the site area that collects waste from surrounding developments from the southeastern portion of the park.
- A 10-inch Asbestos Cement (AC) main associated with Project A10435 and A10434 that ties into a 10-inch Conc main associated with Project A4430 and A4429 running southeast and ties into an existing 8-inch PVC gravity lines associated with project A4428 and A4427.
- An abandoned 8-inch CI line associated with project A5813 located in the northwestern portion of the park west of South MoPac Expressway Southbound.
- There are several abandoned lines and lift stations located east central of the park and listed as follow:
 - » 4-inch VC abandoned gravity main
 - » 6-inch VC abandoned gravity main
 - » 6-inch Conc abandoned gravity main
 - » 6-inch AC abandoned gravity main associated with project A7344
 - » 6-inch DI abandoned gravity main
 - » 6-inch PVC abandoned gravity main associated with project B440 and A3672
 - » 8-inch Conc abandoned gravity main associated with project A7344
 - » 8-inch DI abandoned gravity main associated with project A7344
 - » 8-inch PVC abandoned gravity main associated with project A4427 and A4428
 - » 10-inch CI abandoned gravity main associated with project A2664

- » 10-inch Conc abandoned gravity main
- » 6-inch DI abandoned gravity main associated with Project S-1977-0001
- » 24-inch Conc abandoned gravity main associated with project A2497
- » Abandoned Zilker Lift Station
- » Abandoned Barton Creek Lift Station
- The state of the pipes out-falling into the creek has caused the erosion issues.

RECLAIMED WATER

According to the AWD Maps, there is no reclaimed water associated with or around the site of interest. The nearest reclaimed water service is an existing 30-inch main that crosses Lady Bird Lake and extends to West Riverside Drive on the east side of South Lamar Boulevard, with a proposed service shown to extend towards South Lamar Boulevard. Furthermore, using reclaimed water within the critical water quality zone is prohibited by City of Austin.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE

Texas One Gas is the service company for the area. Gas service is presently available within the boundaries of the site area and are described as follows:

- A 6-inch Coated Steel (CS) gas line located in the northeastern portion of the site and has a short run from the east to west along Barton Springs Road. The gas line is tied into a 6-inch Polyethylene (PE) gas line at the southern side of Azie Morton Road and Barton Springs Road intersection. The 6-inch CS gas line continuously runs through the park westward across South MoPac Expressway until it reaches the Stratford Drive and Lou Neff Road intersection and starts running along Stratford Drive located northwestern portion of the site area.
- A 2-inch PE gas line located near the eastern side of the site that runs along Azie Morton Road and currently services developments located east of the park.

- A 6-inch CS gas line that runs along South MoPac Expressway Northbound and crosses South MoPac Expressway westward at the Andrew Zilker Road and South MoPac Expressway intersection and runs along Rollingwood Drive to service the developments located west of the site.
- A 2-inch CS gas line running along Dellana Lane with a sharp turn westward at the Dellana Lane and Rollingwood Drive intersection then runs along Rollingwood Drive.
- A 2-inch PE gas line tied into the 6-inch CS gas line, north of the Andrew Zilker Road and South MoPac Expressway intersection that services existing development inside Zilker Park.
- A 2-inch PE gas line tied into the 6-inch CS gas line, north of the Andrew Zilker Road and South MoPac Expressway intersection and runs along Columbus Drive that services existing development inside Zilker Park.

ELECTRIC SERVICE

Zilker Park is located within the Austin Energy service zone. Electric service is presently available within the boundaries of the site area as follows:

- A primary overhead wire located in the western portion of the park that runs north and south along Zilker Clubhouse Road. The primary overhead ties into an existing primary overhead located in Dellana Lane to the south and crosses the Colorado River to the north.
- A primary underground cable that runs along the southern side of Stratford Drive to service the existing development known as Rowling Dock.
- A service overhead wire located in Stratford Drive and Elgin Avenue that services an existing development east of Zilker Clubhouse Road.
- A primary overhead wire that runs eastward from the intersection of Vance Lane and Vale Street to Nature Center Drive that services the existing development enclosed by Nature Center Drive and

UTILITY

South MoPac Expressway. The overhead ties into an existing primary underground cable that ties into an overhead that runs along South MoPac Expressway southbound.

- A primary overhead wire is located at the intersections of Zilker Clubhouse Road and Rollingwood Drive running along Rollingwood, which ties into a primary overhead wire running along Dellana Lane and continues running eastward along Barton Springs Road. The primary turns southeast at the Barton Springs Road and Stratford intersection and cuts across the park to tie into an existing primary overhang west of the Barton Springs Pool, then runs north along Barton Creek to tie into an existing primary at Barton Springs Road and Barton Creek intersection.
- A streetlight overhead running through South MoPac Expressway.
- A primary overhead running along South MoPac Expressway southbound and ties into a primary overhead running along Dellana Lane.
- A primary overhead running along South MoPac Expressway northbound and ties into a primary overhead running along Barton Springs Road.
- A primary underground cable that runs along Stratford Drive from the intersection of S. MoPac Expressway and Stratford Drive intersection and crosses Lou Neff Road and ties into an existing primary overhead at the Stratford Drive and Barton Springs Road intersection.
- A primary underground that ties into the primary underground between Park Road and Barton Springs Road on Stratford Drive and runs along Park Road and ties back into Barton Springs Road on the western portion of the park.
- A service underground cable running along Barton Springs Road between Barton Creek and Stratford Drive.
- Service underground cables along Park Road.

- There exists a primary underground cable located in William Barton Drive in the western portion of the park.
- There exists a primary overhead that runs along Columbus Drive and ties into and services overhang running along Columbus Drive.
- There exists a primary overhead running along Azie Morton Road and Barton Hills Drive in the southwestern portion of the park.
- There exists a primary overhead running between Andrew Zilker Road and Columbus Drive to service existing development.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE

John D. Koughl with MCI has provided an email confirmation that MCI has aerial fiber along Azie Morton Road, however, no service maps were provided. Azie Morton Road is located on the eastern side of Zilker Park and runs north and south between Barton Springs Road and Barton Hills Drive.

STORM SEWER

Generally, there is not a storm sewer system within the Park area, but rather, storm sewer infrastructure associated with direct discharges to Lady Bird Lake, culvert crossings under roads, and connections to the storm sewer systems adjacent to the Park. Storm infrastructure are described below as seen in the City of Austin Property Profile:

- Storm network running along Barton Springs Road and runs from the east to drain into Barton Creek.
- Curb inlets along Barton Springs Road with drainage pipes that runs eastward and drain into Barton Creek.
- A drainage system located in the southeast portion of the park along the development and south on Barton Hills Drive and drainage pipes with header along Azie Morton Road, collecting storm sewer water and discharged into Barton Creek. In addition, the following ponds are identified to be within the Zilker Park area:

- A privately maintained pond identified as a Vegetative Filter Strip (VFS) area located adjacent to Azie Morton Road where it intersects with Lund Street.
- A City of Austin maintained pond identified as a sedimentation only pond area located adjacent to Azie Morton Road east of the VFS mentioned above. west of the VFS area mentioned above.



People enjoying Barton Creek along the degraded shoreline near the Pool Spillway.

FINANCIAL

Zilker Park, like many destination parks in cities across the US, saw temporary closures to Barton Springs Pool, the Zilker Botanical Garden, and the Austin Nature and Science Center, along with a corresponding drop in revenue. Despite the closures in 2020 and into 2021, visitors returned or moved to other destinations in the park or close by, especially Barton Springs Spillway, along Barton Creek, and in Lady Bird Lake. As result, expenses for operations and maintenance in Zilker increased while revenue remained low due to continuing closures and a lack of events. While events have resumed and the Pool, Garden, and Science Center have reopened, record usage at Zilker continues as well.

Funds collected by PARD at Zilker through concession agreements as well as park usage fees (pool admission fees, rentals of picnic sites, event locations like the Zilker Clubhouse or even large multi-day events like the Austin City Limits Music Festival) are paid into the City's general fund, a portion of which are "returned" to the Parks and Recreation Department via annual budget appropriations. The Parks Department, by and large, does not keep any of the fees collected by city ordinance directly but shares in them. This is true for most US city's park fees.

Finally, while nonprofits can raise funds and apply those funds for park improvements, programming, and operations, those funds are a small portion of total park spending. Based on research performed by The Trust for Public Land, six percent of annual spending in the 100 largest U.S. cities for parks comes from nonprofit park organizations. For Austin specifically, TPL's ParkScore index reported in 2020 that 13% of funding came from a dozen park nonprofits, totaling \$20.7M, putting Austin 17th out of 100 in terms of nonprofit funding share. The bulk of this spending is for capital projects by The Trail Conservancy, Waterloo Greenway, Pease Park Conservancy, and others.

REVENUE

This section will detail concession revenue for Zilker Park and event and other fee revenue. Events in Zilker are governed by city ordinances and practices that grew out of recommendations from the Parkland Events report in 2017.

Under chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, public parkland is protected by prohibiting the rental or lease of public parkland. In addition, to change the land from designated parkland, the city would vote to

CONCESSION AGREEMENTS

PARD enters into concession agreements with vendors doing business in the park. Concession agreements within Zilker park boundaries have not been updated since 2012. Additionally, payment structures are inconsistent and the current agreements present challenges to retaining and acquiring new vendors.

CONCESSION	TERM	ANNUAL PAYMENT
Zilker Park Boat Rentals	Originated: 2/2/06; Four amendments to 2/28/21, Extended to 2/28/24 (four amendments)	Minimum of \$18,000. Amounts reassessed 18 months, 36 months and every 12 months thereafter
Zilker Train	Austin Parks Foundation will operate the train. As of 12/1/2022, the train is not yet in operation	Proceeds will go toward operation and maintenance of parks
Zilker Café	No vendor under contract as of 12/1/2022.	\$70,000 (\$17,500 due quarterly)
Rowing Dock	Originated: 11/01/2000, Amended 10 times, expires 4/30/23	\$667/month

change the disposition or not. This limits private entities from taking of parkland and requires all amenities where fees are charged for reservable spaces, such as picnic shelters, Zilker Clubhouse, or other amenities, be for fair use of those facilities.

PARK CONCESSIONS OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council authorizes the Parks and Recreation Department to operate permanent concessions in Town Lake Park/Lady Bird Lake Park area. Town Lake Park is defined as parkland on the north and south banks of Lady Bird Lake (formerly Town Lake) including Zilker Park and Auditorium Shores (City Code Section 8-1-71 to 8-1-73). Located within Zilker Park are four permanent concessions:

- Rowing Dock (kayak, canoe and stand up paddleboard (SUP) rentals)
- Zilker Park Boat Rentals (kayak, canoe and SUP rentals)
- Zilker Café (temporarily closed while awaiting new vendor)

- Zilker Zephyr (new contract with the Austin Parks Foundation, Foundation still working through mechanical and construction issues with the new train)

As shown in the table below, the concession terms that the city uses are traditional and the approach has not been altered in many years.

Permanent concession agreements in Austin parks are generally long-term contracts and held by long-standing operators who pay a combination of annual payments and a percentage of gross sales to the city. Concessions within Zilker Park are governed by the broader city code chapter mentioned earlier.

SUMMARY

- City Council has identified 4 permanent park concessions for Zilker Park
- Each Concession Agreement can take years to complete and are generally 5 to 10 years long
- Payment to the City is inconsistent and often puts financial burden of capital improvements on the vendor

PERCENTAGE OF GROSS	CAPITAL INVESTMENT	EXTENSIONS	OTHER NOTES
10% of revenue *gross revenue defined as gross income excluding sales tax	\$35,000 reinvestment obligations were included in the contract, but that does not represent the total amount of capital investment the business has provided over the contract term. The total amount spent is much more.	Reassess every 12 months	Structures and permanent improvements owned by the City, boats and equipment owned by the vendor.
			Previous vendor owned train.
8% of the gross, payable in an annual lump sum	Any additional equipment required for food services	Up to two 5-year extensions	Pending new vendor
1% of annual net revenue and 8% of annual net revenue above \$80,000, payable in an annual lump sum	The \$102,000 references the required commitments included in Amendment 7 (2012) for parking, etc. However, this doesn't include other optional capital improvements that the vendor has completed throughout the contract term.	Extended 10 times, four were extensions of time up to 4/30/22	Boats and equipment owned by the vendor, as delineated in Amendment 11.

FINANCIAL

OTHER FEE REVENUE IN ZILKER: RESERVABLE FACILITIES, LARGE EVENT PERMITTING

The Parks and Recreation Department's Office of Special Events manages the reservations, scheduling, and fee collection for Zilker Park, as well as other reservable facilities. The City has posted rules and fees on its [website](#). Fees, rules, and procedures are established by city ordinance and are reviewed annually by park staff and the City Council.

In addition to reservable facilities and special events, the Parks Department benefits from the transportation enterprise fund established by the City. Parking meters have been installed and are managed by the Austin Transportation Department with Zilker Park benefiting from the revenue obtained.

Events also create revenue for the City. These revenues, paid through the fees for usage established by the Parks and Recreation Department's Office of Special Events, with review and approval annually through the City Manager's Office, and City Council, are paid back into the City's general fund. The exception is the parking and gate entry fund, which allows fees collected for seasonal (May to September) and partial week (Thursday-Sunday) parking in Zilker lots to remain with PARD.

Large events, including the Trail of Lights, Blues on the Green, The ABC Kite Festival and Austin City Limits Music Festival are subject to the negotiation of an event agreement. Per the parkland event guidelines and ordinances, large events must cover all costs borne by the City as well as provide usage fees as determined by whether tickets are sold and how many days those events take place.

The city has formulas for payment for events that are included in the event agreements, including ticket sales, police, fire, EMS, transportation, and additional parks costs. Any ticketed events have a variable ticket fee assessed as well, often between \$1-\$3 per ticket per day, based on the ticket prices as well as length of the event.

For example, the ACL Music Festival in 2019 paid a total of \$2.4 million in city fees, including:

- \$1.62 million to PARD, including \$1.4 million in ticket fees.
- \$500,000 to Austin Police Department

- \$60,000 to Austin/Travis County EMS
- \$20,000 to Austin Public health
- \$30,000 Transportation fees (including Capital Metro)
- \$110,000 to Austin Fire Department

These are largely to cover the costs that City departments incurred in managing the festival. Additional expenses for security, first aid, inside the festival gates are borne separately by C3 Presents, the operator of Austin City Limits Music Festival.

REVIEW OF EVENTS, PROGRAMMING AGREEMENTS, ORDINANCES THAT AFFECT ZILKER PARK (CITY OF AUSTIN)

Special events in city parkland are governed by a set of ordinances passed by Austin City Council and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department Office of Special Events. Specifically, ordinances limit the number of days of events and the total number of unique events that can take place in Zilker Park, as well as other reservable sites such as Auditorium Shores. The parks department's revised ordinances have existed for some time. They reinforce the cap on large events at Zilker and how they have been managed and regulated.

The 2015 Parkland Events Task Force met over the period of a year and made several specific recommendations, many of which were codified in changes in city ordinances in 2016 and 2017.

- For Zilker Park, the recommendation was to reduce a total of 29 event days in Zilker to 24 through gradual attrition. The listed large events include:
 - » The Austin City Limits Music Festival: 6 days
 - » The ABC Kite Festival: 1 day
 - » Blues on the Green: 4 days
 - » Zilker Relays: 1 day.
 - » The performances at the Zilker Hillside Theater were not considered large events. Generally they have 22 performances per year.

The Task Force recommendations required that the city have its costs covered for hosting large events, as well as making sure that they have plans for sustainability, transportation, and other needs.

NONPROFIT PARTNERS OVERVIEW: PARKNERS

Several nonprofits work to provide programming, operations support, as well as capital dollars in and around Zilker Park. Most are small nonprofit groups that are volunteer in nature and have specific agreements with the Parks and Recreation Department. They are:

- Austin Parks Foundation
- Barton Springs Conservancy
- Friends of Barton Springs Pool
- Girl Scouts of Austin / Girl Scout Cabin
- Hill Country Conservancy
- Sunshine Camp / Young Men's League of Austin
- Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy / Austin Area Garden Council
- Zilker Theatre Productions (Beverly S. Sheffield Zilker Hillside Theater)

PUBLIC FUNDING

With the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, most city parks agencies and nonprofit park partners saw tremendous drops in revenue as most events and in-person programming were. While this is slowly changing with the next phase of the pandemic, it is unclear how quickly such revenues will recover. Further, as documented by the National Recreation and Parks Association and researchers at Pennsylvania State University, economic downturns cause particular challenges for parks systems. Parks and recreation agencies are the first to see budget cuts and the last to see cuts restored, as documented by studies looking at the period 2003-2013.

CONCESSIONS AND EARNED INCOME

Further, any funds collected through concession agreements as well as park usage fees (pool admission fees, rentals of picnic sites, event locations like the Zilker Clubhouse or large multi-day events like the Austin City Limits Music Festival) are paid into the City's general fund, a portion of which are "returned" to the Parks and Recreation Department via annual budget appropriations. The Parks Department does not keep any of the fees collected by city ordinance directly, but shares in them. This is true in most U.S. cities for park fees.

The City of Austin uses a traditional concessions model that focuses on long-term contracts with concessionaires, usually 5 to 10-year terms. These contracts require a combination of annual payments plus a percentage of revenue from the vendors to the city.

In addition, the concessionaires are required to provide capital improvements in the areas of the public realm in which they operate. This is especially true for the majority of concessions that operate at Zilker or in the encompassing Lady Bird Lake Corridor, primarily focused on water-based recreation, including rowing programs, paddling or stand-up paddleboarding.

The City contracted with Huston-Tillotson University to undertake a (Lady Bird) Lake capacity study through its environmental justice academic program. A plan and recommendations, based on study and analysis of vendors, watercraft usage, and enforcement was delivered in January 2023, which will provide input on the possibilities and give more information as to the extent of usage and possible capacity of Lady Bird Lake and connected water bodies. While this is larger than Zilker, it affects the two existing watercraft-focused concessions operating from Zilker.

Apart from the Huston-Tillotson study, there are several key messages provided in the economic section of the Site Analysis and Needs Assessment (SANA) in the spring of 2021:

Both watercraft concessions operating in Zilker Park will be subject to changes in location, operating facilities, and access, based on elements of the vision plan if approved. Temporary or permanent relocation of amenities and access will likely be required.

The Zilker Eagle, as of this writing, is still testing and troubleshooting, but is expected to be operational by the end of 2023. Like watercraft concessions, it will be subject to changes in location, operating facilities, and access, based on elements of the vision plan if approved. Temporary or permanent relocation of amenities and access will likely be required.

For all of Zilker Park, only one location exists for a permanent food vendor at the Zilker Cafe. No vendor is currently under contract after the Department was denied a conditional use permit to sell wine and beer at this location.

SUMMARY

The Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan is for all of Austin. As the first comprehensive planning initiative for the entire park, the planning team recognized a need for comprehensive engagement to all 10 City Council Districts. While the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic limited much of the initial engagement, the planning team completed 5 virtual Community Meetings and a final in-person Open House along with more than 100 in-person pop-ups, and 50 small group discussions. In addition to the community meetings, online surveys, in-person pop-up events, and targeted small group conversations have provided greater access to people across Austin, emphasizing equitable outreach and inclusive opportunities from communities often left out of the conversation of citywide projects. With more than 5,500 participants and more than 8,000 comments received and using an equity-centered approach to explore the input, the process has connected with people across Austin with a vision for Zilker Park to be a park for all of Austin.

CHAPTER FOUR

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Vision and Goals
- Equity and Inclusion
- What We Did
 - Community Engagement
 - Technical Advisory Group
 - Other Opportunities
- What We Heard
- Who Took The Surveys

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

THE VISION AND GOALS

VISION

The Zilker planning team sought a transparent and well-documented community engagement process that engaged the city as a whole and also focused on key groups or people involved with the park, emphasizing equity as part of the process. The process was centered on the guiding values and built on community input throughout.

GOALS

The Zilker Vision planning team committed to creating opportunities for the entire Austin community to provide input on the future of Zilker Park, focusing on areas of accessibility, inclusion, history, and ecology. The community engagement goals included:

- » Educate the community about Zilker Park's history, current City of Austin programs, operations, and future City of Austin operational needs, and provide opportunities for comment.
- » Gather community input, feedback, and stories to develop a plan for the future of Zilker Park that represents the diversity of Austin.
- » Identify and educate the community on environmental considerations and respond to those considerations throughout the project.
- » Utilize equity strategies to develop community connections with and engage traditionally underserved and marginalized communities in Austin.
- » Provide opportunities for engagement that are accessible to all abilities.
- » Identify and engage with PARD Parkners and other organizations, concessionaires, and groups associated with park programming.
- » Connect with communities around interpretive storytelling and placemaking to identify key opportunities in the park.
- » Correct any misinformation about the vision for the park and acknowledge any concerns or challenges identified by community members.

- » Create an environment of excitement for the proposed Vision Plan and future park development.
- » Create community support for the proposed Vision Plan and future park development.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

For any project, the planning team identifies the anchors for making decisions. This decision criteria guides how it will evaluate the input that is received to incorporate it into each stage of the process. For the Zilker Park Vision Plan, the following criteria are considered when consulting the community input:

- » City Code of Ordinances
- » ImagineAustin
- » Strategic Direction 2023
- » Our Parks, Our Future: PARD Long Range Plan
- » Other Department Policies or Guidance, such as the Austin Climate Equity Plan
- » Zilker Park Vision Plan Guiding Principles and Goals
- » Previous rounds of community input

Input received on the draft Vision Plan goes through these criteria to be sorted and coded. All comments are read and compared. Comments in common are counted, though the process is not treated as a vote, since the same participants can share their comments multiple times through multiple methods.

The sorted comments are read through again to identify where consensus can be found, what could be possible, and what may not be possible due to the decision criteria or elements that fall outside the scope of the park plan. Every effort is made to balance competing interests.

The planning team also compares the input received in previous rounds of engagement from public comments and from key stakeholders.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

VISION

The City of Austin focuses on racial equity, recognizing that race is the most consistent predictor across all quality of life outcomes. With the focus on equity defined by the City of Austin Equity Office and a recognition of our conflicted history in this space, the Zilker Park Vision Plan team worked to develop an engagement process that emphasized that Zilker is for all of Austin across all intersectionalities.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles were identified in the Community Engagement Plan:

- » Invite community members that are representative of Austin's demographics, including a wide range of ages, races, ethnicities, abilities and disabilities, and traditionally underrepresented.
- » Reduce barriers to participation by creating a fun, culturally sensitive, inclusive and engaging process that allows for honest feedback.
- » Establish a respectful and reciprocal partnership with the community to better understand resident needs and priorities and to inform the development of the Vision Plan.
- » Increase education and understanding through tailored, engaging content that helps communities develop a deeper understanding of the Vision Plan.
- » Commit to ongoing learning and improving the approach throughout the process.
- » Develop and execute a process that advances systemic equity.

These principles were combined with common best practices of going to where community members are, connecting with community leaders, providing multiple meeting options and times, small group discussions, and disaggregating final data to explore differences among various demographic groups.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

Language access is a key component in outreach and engagement within Austin. It is well-known that many community members prefer communication in their primary language, so the Vision Plan team strived to provide opportunities for information and feedback to these community members for engagement techniques and events. American Sign Language (ASL) were available at each Community Meeting. In addition, various pop-up events were staffed by team members who speak Spanish, Urdu, Arabic, Mandarin, or Korean.

DIGITAL AND NON-DIGITAL ACCESS

The planning team also acknowledges there is a digital divide when it comes to access to online materials. While many individuals do not have home computers, data shows the digital divide is shrinking, especially when considering smartphone access. Online efforts considered accommodations for smartphones where possible, and in-person opportunities were frequent through “pop-up” events throughout the city.

- » Additional Outreach and Communication
 - Community Ambassadors
 - Extra Pop-up Events
 - Flyer in Multiple Languages: English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Hindi
 - Small group meetings with community leaders and groups focused on equity and inclusion at Zilker Park



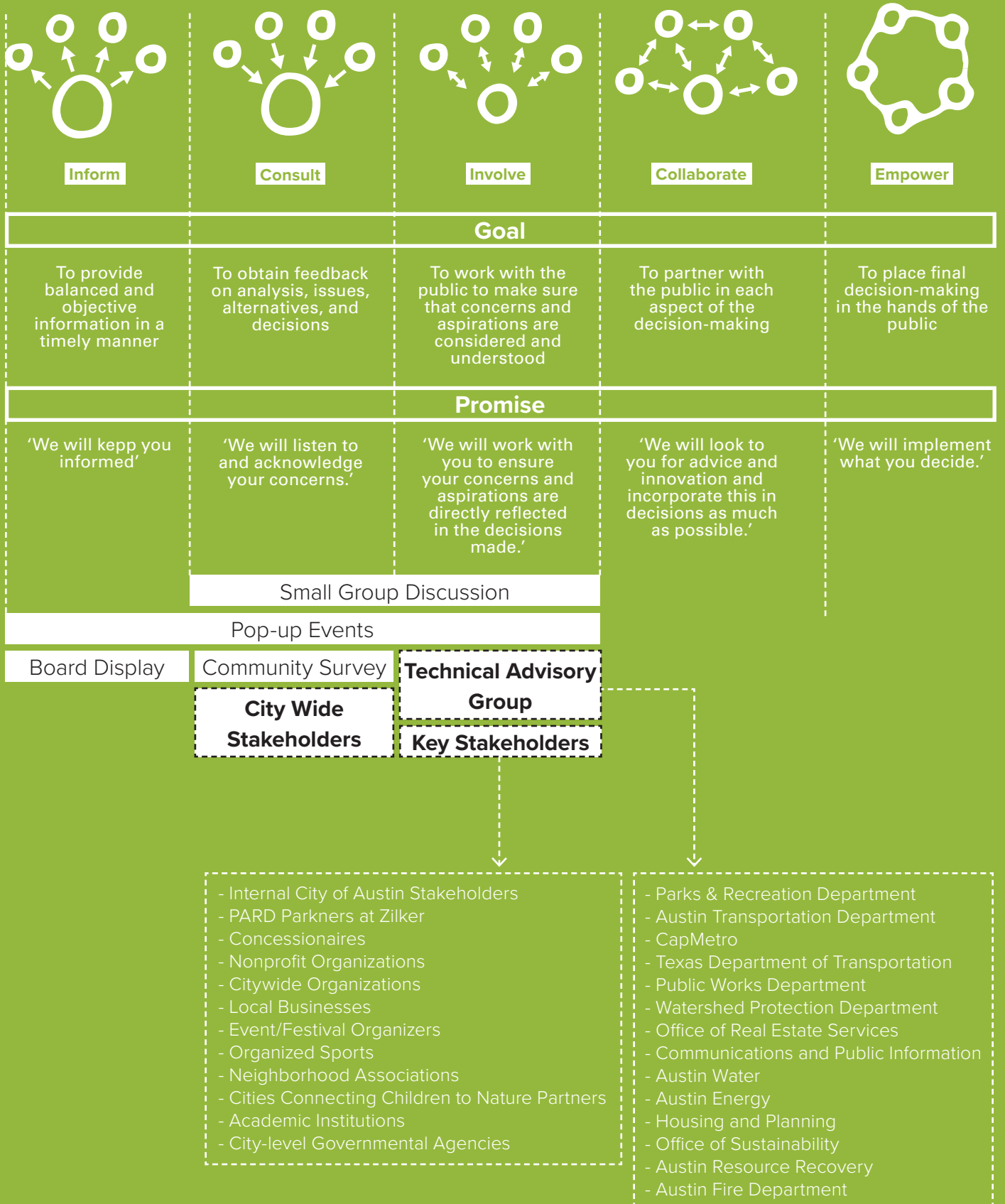
Community Meeting #2 Flyers in Multiple Languages



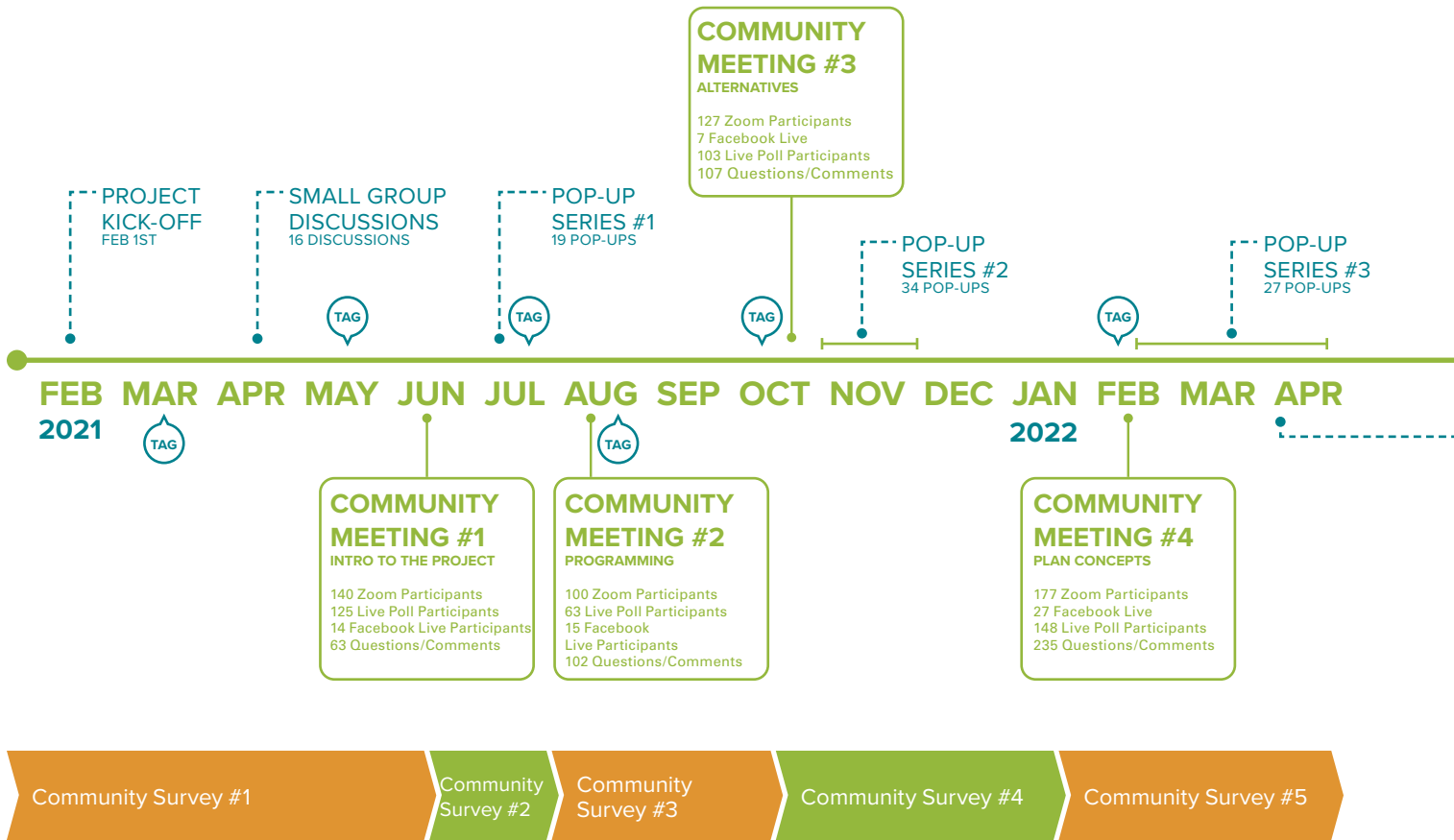
HOW THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INFLUENCES THE VISION PLAN

The project team uses the International Association of Public Participation's Spectrum of Participation to identify the level of engagement. For the public, the plan identified the participation level as "consult" with the purpose of obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions. At the "consult" level, the organization commits to "keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision" (IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation). Additional key stakeholders were noted at the "involve" level, including the Zilker Neighborhood Association and organizations now included in the Zilker Collective Impact Working Group. The team has worked with these organizations to ensure their concerns and aspirations are reflected in the process, even when it may not be possible to include all of them in the plan. As a standard method for identifying criteria-based decisions, the planning team created a set of planning values to guide how input should be assessed. The team presented a draft of these values, called "Guiding Principles and Goals" for community feedback. Since then, the community input and feedback have been explored through the lens of these shared park values.

IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The engagement process from community members included a series of five virtual meetings and one in-person Open House to connect with and receive feedback. To accommodate the special circumstances surrounding COVID-19, each meeting was hosted virtually with one final in-person open house. Each meeting provided information on the status of the planning process and welcomed input that was used in conjunction with feedback from other phases of engagement to help shape the vision plan.

- » Virtual Meeting Format
 - Hosted on Zoom and Facebook Live
 - Live polling and Q&A session
 - Translation and interpretation to ASL, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Hindi
 - Meeting recording, materials, and polling questions posted to the website
- » In-person Open House

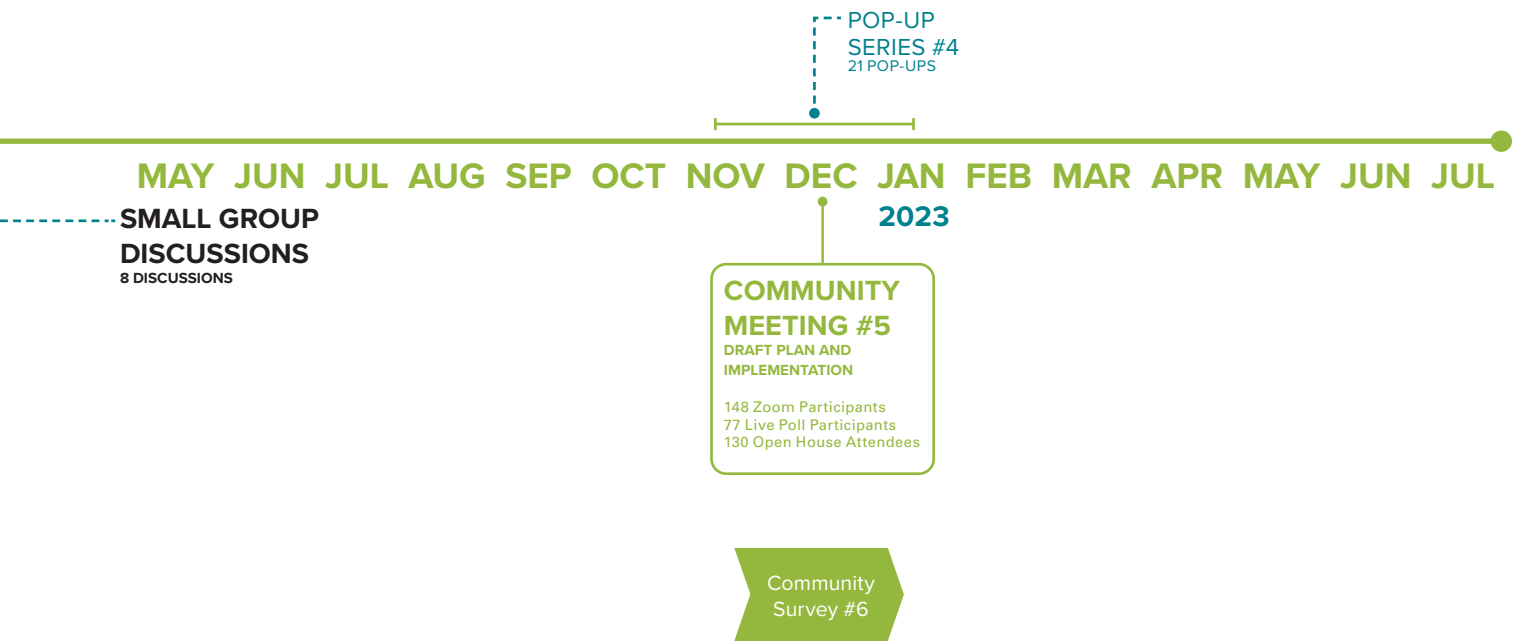
COMMUNITY SURVEYS

A total of six rounds of surveys were available, connecting 16,646 number of touches and/or participants throughout the process. Each survey focused on a different topic: Vision Workshop, Programming, Design Concepts, and Draft Vision Plan. Participants could respond to the survey questions during the live meeting, online, or in-person at various pop-up events held in each district and Zilker Park.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

SPEAKUPAUSTIN

The project team also invited the public to share stories and experiences as well as brainstorming ways “the future of Zilker can be inclusive to all” on the project SpeakUp Austin page. Participants had the opportunity to submit stories throughout the entirety of the vision planning process.



STORYMAP

The project team used Storymap, which is a web-based application to share maps and narratives about the context of the site.

PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website was updated throughout the process with community engagement opportunities and recordings and presentations from previous meetings. The site can still be visited at [AustinTexas.gov/ZilkerVision](https://austintexas.gov/ZilkerVision).

POP-UP EVENTS

Pop-Up events were organized to connect with members of the community at locations across Austin in all 10 districts and Zilker Park. These stations provided the community with an opportunity to reach a broader audience and receive additional feedback. Overall, the planning team hosted more than 100 pop-up opportunities.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Small group discussions were small-scale, focused conversations around particular topics or subjects. Conversations focused particular interests, such as equity and inclusion, partnerships, ecological uplift, and others. All meetings were documented and posted on the project website for transparency.

PILOT COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

The Department piloted a community ambassador program in summer 2020 based on a similar program from the Office of Sustainability during the Climate Equity Plan process. Two ambassadors were selected who interviewed 10 community members each about Zilker Park, providing in-depth input that could have been missed otherwise.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP



Site Visit with TAG Members

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was comprised of City of Austin representatives from various departments who provided technical expertise on different elements and concerns in and around Zilker Park. The members of the TAG ensured the planning team understood the relationship with Zilker and other City of Austin goals, policies, plans, and constraints. All meetings were recorded and posted for review by community members.

TAG MEMBERS

- » City of Austin: Parks & Recreation Department, Austin Transportation Department, Public Works, Watershed Protection, Office of Real Estate Services, Marketing and Communications Office, Austin Water, Austin Energy, Housing and Planning, Office of Sustainability, Austin Resource Recovery, and Austin Fire Department
- » Other Governmental Entities: Capital Metro and TxDOT/CTRMA
- » Meetings
 - Meeting #1, March 3, 2021
 - Meeting #2, May 5, 2021
 - Meeting #3, July 7, 2021
 - Meeting #4, August 18, 2021
 - Meeting #5, October 27, 2021
 - Meeting #6, February 23, 2022
 - Meeting #7, October 18, 2022



OUTREACH AND MEDIA

Various methods were used to share information on the process and engagement opportunities to reach broad audiences across all 10 districts. All promotional materials and content were translated into Spanish and available in other languages upon request.

MEDIA

Press releases were distributed prior to each community meeting to share details, project background, and to raise awareness about the upcoming input opportunities. Several major media outlets covered and highlighted the planning process.

- Austin American-Statesman
- Fox 7
- KXAN
- The Austin Chronicle
- Community Impact
- Austin Monitor
- Austin Culture Map
- Towers
- Patch
- KAZI
- KVUE
- Reporting Texas (The University of Texas at Austin)
- Austin ParksCast
- Univision
- KUT

SOCIAL MEDIA

The City shared updates, community meeting details, and other opportunities on all of PARD's social media accounts, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Nextdoor.

EMAILS

PARD staff sent email notices to community members across several mailing lists. The email notices contained information about the project and engagement opportunities including, community meeting schedule and materials, survey links and results, and pop-up event schedules. Newsletters from facilities across the Department also shared information about the Zilker Vision Plan process.

SIGNS AND BANNERS

Signs and banners were placed in high-traffic areas throughout Zilker Park to promote the project website and engagement opportunities. Each sign had a QR code for park users to easily access the survey and project website using their phones throughout Zilker Park and in all metropolitan and district parks. The Department also invested in Over The Street banners through the Transportation Department.

FLYERS

The City distributed flyers with project information at the various pop-up events, parks facilities, and numerous local businesses throughout Austin.



WHAT WE HEARD

SUMMARY OF BASELINE SURVEY

- 1 4,062 Participants, 10,253 Views, 4,606 Comments
- 2 Most of the visitors use personal vehicles to get to Zilker Park but mostly walk, jog, or run within the park.
- 3 The biggest obstacle of visiting the park is lack of parking but with better trail connections, the visitors would walk, bike, or use public transit more.

COMMUNITY SURVEY I: BASELINE

[View Full Result](#)

The first survey was for setting up the baseline. It opened in November 2020 and has received over 108,000 responses from over 4,000 survey takers. Those who answered were mostly long-term Austinites, mostly white, within income over \$100,000. This determined a baseline of who were needed to reach out more to participate in the process. Below are the answers that had the largest percentages:

- » What would encourage you to walk, bike, or use public transit more to travel to the park? **19% Better Trail Connection**
- » When visiting Zilker Park, how do you get there? **86% Personal Vehicle**
- » Once at Zilker Park, how do you move around the park? **97% Walk, Jog, or Run**
- » What are your favorite recreational amenities or activities? **61% Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, 61% Barton Springs Pool and Bathhouse**
- » What would you like to see improved at Zilker Park? **56% Restrooms**
- » If you do not visit or avoid visiting, why? **54% Lack of Parking**

COMMUNITY MEETING I: VISION WORKSHOP

This meeting focused on the overall Guiding Principles and Goals of the Zilker Park Vision Plan. During the meeting, the project team introduced the project, reviewed the results of the Baseline Community Survey, shared an overview of the Site Analysis and Existing Needs Report, and asked for feedback through polling questions and a live Q&A session.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Support for improved access to the park through transit and improved options for parking
- » Comments regarding large events in the park (funding, traffic, operation hours, accessibility, environmental impact)
- » Opposition to Zilker Café Conditional Use Permit

- » Questions regarding equity of engagement efforts
- » Ideas on how to generate funds for the park (pool operations, event days, allocation of funding, food/concessions)
- » Concerns for environmental impacts to Barton Springs Pool

OUTCOMES

- » Input received from Community Meeting #1 showed overall support for the Draft Guiding Principles and Goals from most participants. This informed the next phase of the plan and allowed the project team to develop concepts for potential programs including enhancements, amenities, activities, events, traffic, and parking.

[Meeting Recording](#)
[Meeting Presentation](#)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

140

Zoom Participants

125

Live Poll
Participation

14

Facebook Live
Participation

63

Questions/
Comments

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SURVEY 2

- 1 833 Participants, 370 Comments.
- 2 30% of the visitors spend money on pool entry and 24% on parking.
- 3 38% of people visit more than weekly.
- 4 61% of the visitors drive to Zilker Park.

COMMUNITY SURVEY 2: VISION

[View Full Result](#)

The responses received from the second community survey combined the results of the live polling exercise during the meeting and the online survey posted to the website after the meeting. The purpose of this survey was to gain an understanding of the community's top values within Zilker Park, mobility and usage patterns, and overall feedback on the Guiding Principles and Goals and Vision Plan process.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Barton Springs Pool, ACL Festival, and activities on the Great Lawn are the top favorite experiences for park visitors
- » Traffic congestion and lack of parking are the biggest barriers to enjoying the park
- » Overall support for the Draft Guiding Principles and Goals; additional feedback helped refine and improve them
- » Comments regarding improvements to transit opportunities

COMMUNITY MEETING 2: PROGRAMMING

The focus of the second community meeting was to share information on current park programming and get feedback from the community on future programming considerations. The meeting included information on input received from the first community meeting and survey, an overview of current programming, a review of other similar parks, and a discussion on current funding and strategies.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Support for additional cultural events and educational programs to make all Austin residents and visitors feel welcome
- » Support to improve park accessibility through transit upgrades

- » Comments and ideas regarding inclusivity in the park
- » Support for improvements to park amenities (restrooms, trails, parking)
- » Comments regarding equity of engagement efforts

OUTCOMES

Input received during Community Meeting #2 showed support for improvements and changes to programming at Zilker Park. During the meeting, the project team expanded the ideas presented through thoughtful discussion about strategy and priorities with the community. The input was used to form recommendations for future programming and design alternatives to support these programs, including enhancements, amenities, activities, events, traffic, and parking.

[Meeting Recording](#)
[Meeting Presentation](#)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

100
Zoom Participants

63
Live Poll
Participation

15
Facebook Live
Participation

102
Questions/
Comments

WHAT WE HEARD

SUMMARY OF SURVEY 3

- 1 820 Participants, 370 Comments
- 2 Facilities: Provide accessible land and buildings for diverse recreation for all and parks maintenance throughout the city.

COMMUNITY SURVEY 3: PROGRAMMING

[View Full Result](#)

The purpose of the third community survey was to evaluate current and future programs of Zilker Park through understanding community preferences and priorities.

- » Several comments expressed a preference to move festivals, large events, and parking from the Great Lawn
- » Support for additional restrooms, nature parks, and walking trails
- » Support for improvements to accessibility through ramps, handicap parking areas and paved trails
- » Comments about disapproval of parking as a funding source and requests for more information about anticipated revenue from each funding source

COMMUNITY MEETING 3: ALTERNATIVES

The third community meeting focused on design alternatives for improving mobility and transportation, programming, environmental features, historical resources, and more. The meeting gave an overview of activities to date and input received and presented design alternatives that considered programming, accessibility, mobility, transportation and ecology. Participants answered live poll questions and shared comments via chat during the discussion.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Suggestions and ideas regarding parking and transit improvements such as shared parking garages, increased connectivity through trails and shuttle systems
- » Support for ecological enhancements such as a buried parking area with a green roof and trees, phytoremediation, and climate change mitigation

- » Comments about the relocation of Austin City Limits and Trail of Lights
- » Support for improvements to park amenities such as restrooms, volleyball courts, trails, car, and bike parking; and ideas for additional amenities like lockers, pickleball and tennis courts
- » Questions regarding the source of funding options are coming bonds, general funds, or community fundraising
- » Comments and ideas for additional programs such as educational programs and cultural events to make the park more inclusive

OUTCOMES

The feedback received during Community Meeting #3 provided ideas to refine the design alternatives presented and offered new ideas for accessibility, transit and ecological enhancements, preferred park amenities, and programs, and additional connectivity opportunities.

[Meeting Recording](#)
[Meeting Presentation](#)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

127

Zoom Participants

103

Live Poll
Participation

6

Facebook Live
Participation

107

Questions/
Comments

SUMMARY OF SURVEY 4

- 1 955 Participants, 3,902 Views, 1,304 Comments
- 2 Several comments expressed the need for focusing on improvements to the ecological health of the park and reducing parking space and large events.
- 3 Participants support reducing pavement and increasing trees in the park.

COMMUNITY SURVEY 4: ALTERNATIVES

[View Full Result](#)

Due to the complexity of the project, multiple survey versions were created to provide varying levels of input from participants.

- » Support for utilizing some of the underused parts of the park for park programming, while keeping other spaces for less activity
- » Support for food and vendor options limited to 1 or 2 areas
- » In the Nature Preserve Zone, participants are most interested in exploring new trail entrance(s) to the Preserve
- » In the MoPac Zone, participants are most interested in exploring non-vehicular/active transportation paths
- » In the ZBG Zone, participants are most interested in exploring changes to landfill area by removing waste materials or adding soil
- » In the Great Lawn Zone, participants are most interested in exploring non-vehicular/active transportation paths
- » In the Polo Field Zone, participants are most interested in additional safe crossings on Barton Springs Road
- » In the Barton Springs Zone, participants are most interested in ways for increasing ecological function
- » In the Trailhead Zone, participants are most interested in increasing ecological function

COMMUNITY MEETING 4: PLAN CONCEPTS

The fourth community meeting focused on presenting three design concept themes: Stitch, Edges and Regenerate. The meeting gave an overview of activities and community input received to date and presented the elements of the three concepts. Participants answered live poll questions and shared feedback via chat during the discussion.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Suggestions and ideas regarding inclusion of diverse demographic participation such as additional pop-up locations and alternative community meeting times

- » Request for specific details regarding pavement square footage, cost of elements and funding for each concept
- » Support for the land bridge and underground parking
- » Support for preservation of natural and cultural heritage
- » Concern for relocation of the hillside theatre due to traffic noise and location inconvenience
- » Support for dedicated bike lanes for the hike and bike trail

OUTCOMES

The feedback received during Community Meeting #4 helped in the development process of the draft Zilker Park Vision Plan. The feedback provided ideas to refine the design concepts and shared views on preferred park elements and overall design.

[Meeting Recording](#)
[Meeting Presentation](#)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

177

Zoom Participants

148

Live Poll
Participation

27

Facebook Live
Participation

235

Questions/
Comments

WHAT WE HEARD

SUMMARY OF SURVEY 5

- 1 708 Participants, 858 Comments, 6,485 Views
- 2 Concept A: 74% of participants like the land bridge concept
- 3 Concept B: 50% of participants like the additional pedestrian/bike bridge connections across Barton Creek
- 4 Concept C: 55% of participants support the boardwalk on Lady Bird Lake

COMMUNITY SURVEY 5: PLAN CONCEPTS

[View Full Result](#)

To assist community members with different ways to think through the concepts, multiple versions of the survey were created to allow community members to share in ways they preferred.

WHAT WE HEARD: CONCEPT PREFERENCE

- » 35% of participants showed support for the idea that Concept A: Stich best meets the overall guiding principles and goals, 27% answered Concept B: Edges best meets the goals, and 21% answered Concept C: Regenerate best meets the goals
- » Support for keeping the rugby field, polo field, and disc golf course
- » Support for clearing invasive species, preserving water quality, and restoring the natural environment of Zilker Park
- » Conflicting opinions for the use of parking garages and Zilker Park for large events such as Trail of Lights and ACL
- » Support for the Great Lawn remaining an off-leash dog area
- » Preference for minimal impacts to the park
- » Debating result between keeping Zilker Hillside Theater where it is (52%) and desire for the new location (48%)
- » Concern for reduction of car lanes on Barton Springs Road
- » Preference for the kayak/stand-up paddleboard/canoe access to be near Butler landfill, east of MoPac
- » Preference for keeping Stratford Drive in its current alignment and allowing access to vehicles

COMMUNITY MEETING 5: DRAFT PLAN

The community was invited to participate in Meeting #5 (offered virtually and in-person) to review the draft Vision Plan and provide input.

VIRTUAL MEETING

During the virtual meeting, participants were split into breakout rooms where they listened to four 25-minute presentations about the draft plan's different aspects, including Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Nature and Ecology; Accessibility and Mobility; and Finance and Implementation. A brief Q&A session followed each

presentation with a final Q&A session with participants back in the main room.

OPEN HOUSE

In addition to the virtual meeting, the team hosted an in-person open house at McBeth Recreation Center in Zilker Park, where community members were encouraged to ask questions, visit with project team members, and provide feedback.

- » Saturday, December 10, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
McBeth Recreation Center
2401 Columbus Dr., Austin, TX 78746

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Concern over the costs of parking and equitable access to the park
- » Investment of PARD time and funding to support large events
- » Comments regarding tradeoffs of using space for new purposes and losing original function (e.g., Moving the amphitheater)
- » Landfill restoration process to support plants and wildlife
- » Discussion about the planning process, regulations, and collaboration with organizations and non-profits
- » Questions about spillway restoration: the impact of high traffic and dogs on the spillway
- » Questions/concerns about traffic impacts of parking and accessibility solutions
- » Impacts of mobility and accessibility on the ecology of the park
- » Questions about parking access to specific areas within the park
- » Concerns over the safety of parking plans and access during events
- » Ease of using shuttles for people with a lot of equipment, dogs, etc.
- » Funding and Implementation
 - Questions regarding funding availability and the timeline for implementation
 - Pricing strategy for parking
 - Discussion about consolidated sports area – space availability, terrain change, costs, parking
 - Costs and benefits of moving ACL to another park

OUTCOMES

With 130 attendees, the open house had representation from every council district in Austin. The highest number of attendees came from district 5 (25%) and the lowest from district 6 (2%). 298 written comments were collected during the open house with many more in-person discussions.

The feedback received during Community Meeting #5 helped finalize the draft Vision Plan, which will be reviewed by various boards and commissions and ultimately presented to the City Council for adoption.

[Meeting Recording](#)
[Meeting Presentation](#)

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

148

Zoom Participants

77

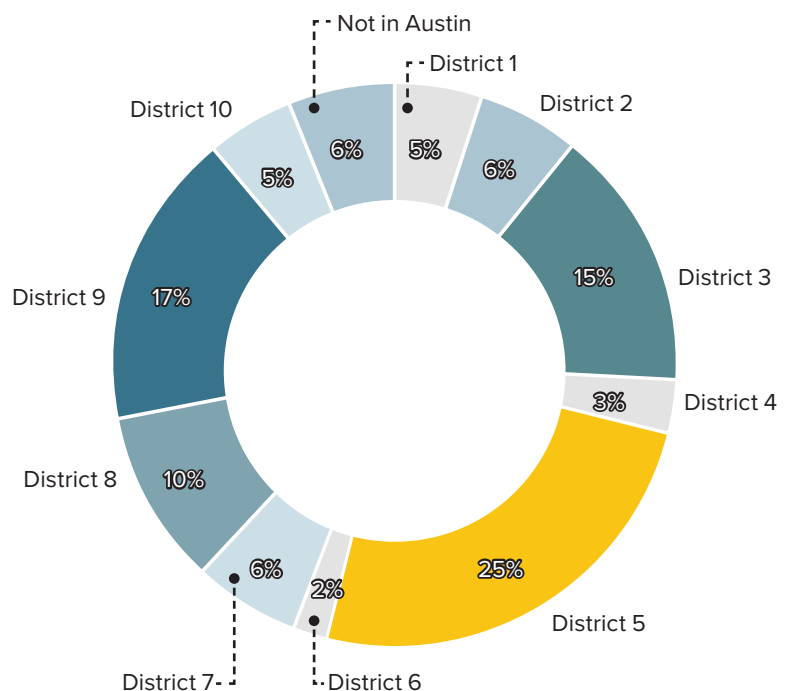
Live Poll Participation

130

Open House Attendees

298

Questions/
Comments from
Open House



WHAT WE HEARD

SUMMARY OF SURVEY 6

- 1 2,898 Participants, 3,430 Comments, More than 2,300 Commenters, 26,904 Views
- 2 Draft Plan was available to comment on from November 15, 2022 to January 8, 2023
- 3 Online Survey was from November 15, 2022 to January 9, 2023
- 4 The project team released 7-min draft walk through video online with the draft document
- 5 There are more than 6,000 views on the draft walk through video.
- 6 About 30% of commenters reside around Zilker Park (Zip Code: 78704, 78745)
- 7 About 85% said they see challenges in using the new or updated spaces.

COMMUNITY SURVEY 6: DRAFT VISION PLAN

There were several opportunities to provide input on the initial draft Vision Plan, including leaving a comment on the full draft plan document, reviewing the draft plan map, and completing the online survey. In addition to these opportunities, the community was encouraged to connect with the project team through community meetings, pop-ups, and the project email. Multiple Austin media outlets also shared about the opportunity to provide feedback.

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Among survey participants, 23% were ages 25-34, 19% were 35-44, 16% were 45-54, 16% were 55 - 64, 9% were 65-74, 8% were 18 – 24, and 4% were other.
- » 52% of participants were female, 42% were male, 6% preferred not to answer, and 2% were other.
- » Among participants, 68% were white, 14% were Latinx or Hispanic, 14% preferred not to answer, 3% were Asian/Asian American, 2% were Black/African American, 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1% Race or Ethnicity not listed.
- » Zip Codes: District 5 had the most participants (20%), followed by District 9 (15%), not sure (15%), District 8 (10%), I do not live in Austin (7%), District 7 (6%), District 3 (5%), Others (5%), District 1 (4%), and District 4 (4%).
- » Over half of the respondents said they were most excited about the land bridge (55%), followed by the reestablished banks of Barton Creek (49%) and the new pedestrian/bike bridges (39%). The sports area and welcome plaza had the fewest responses, with 9% and 4%, respectively.
- » About one-third of respondents said Accessibility (36%) “Fulfills” the vision plan’s guiding principles and goals, followed by Nature and Ecology (34%), Sustainability (27%), Diversity Equity and Inclusion (24%), and History and Culture (23%).
- » About one-third of respondents said they were “unsure” that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (36%) fulfilled the draft plan’s guiding principles and goals, followed by History and Culture (34%), Sustainability (28%), Nature and Ecology (34%), and Accessibility (27%).
- » Nearly half of the respondents said Sustainability (46%) “Does not fulfill goal” in the draft vision plan, followed by Nature and Ecology (44%), History and Culture (43%), Diversity Equity and Inclusion (40%) and Accessibility (37%).

POP-UP SERIES

Overall there were 4 rounds of pop-up series for the vision plan process. After the first pop-up series where community members were encouraged to provide feedback primarily through the survey (paper or online), the planning team heard comments were being missed and that participants who did not want to complete the survey did not have a clear way to share their thoughts. For the last two pop-up series, participants have been encouraged to share comments that are written down and posted, provide feedback on proposed amenities, respond to the survey, or review the full draft plan in person at the pop-up or online after. All comments collected are then entered on PublicInput.com and associated with the particular pop-up.

- » Series 1: 19 Pop-Ups (June 30 to August 8, 2021)
- » Series 2: 34 Pop-Ups (August 10 to October 4, 2021)
- » Series 3: 27 Pop-Ups (October 25, 2021 to January 9, 2022)
- » Series 4 : 21 Pop-Ups (November 15, 2022 to January 8, 2023)

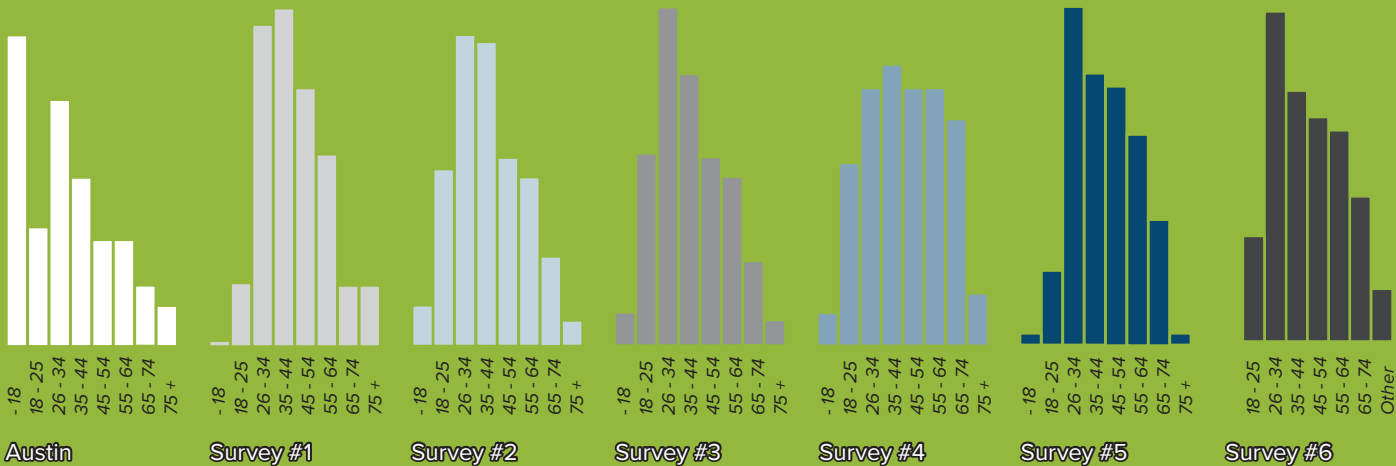
ADDITIONAL METHODS

Community Meetings and Surveys are still relied upon for connecting and hearing community voices. Additional methods are also used to reach community members who are often underrepresented in meetings and surveys. These methods included pop-ups in key locations, small group conversations with community leaders, and community ambassadors to connect more deeply and directly with people who may not participate otherwise. These efforts and the exploration of the comments are balanced with overrepresented demographic groups to seek a better understanding of thoughts from all of Austin.

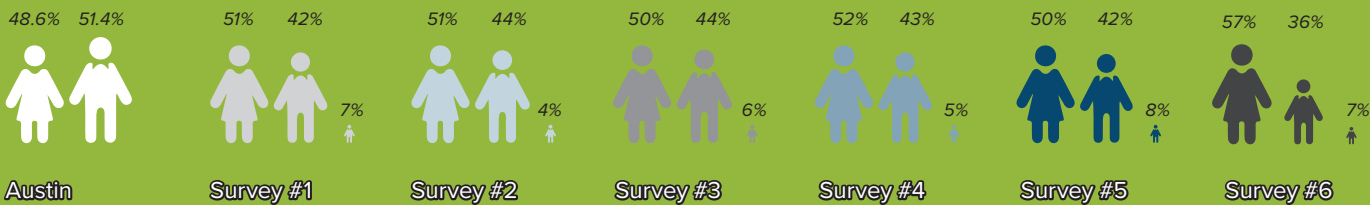


WHO TOOK THE SURVEYS

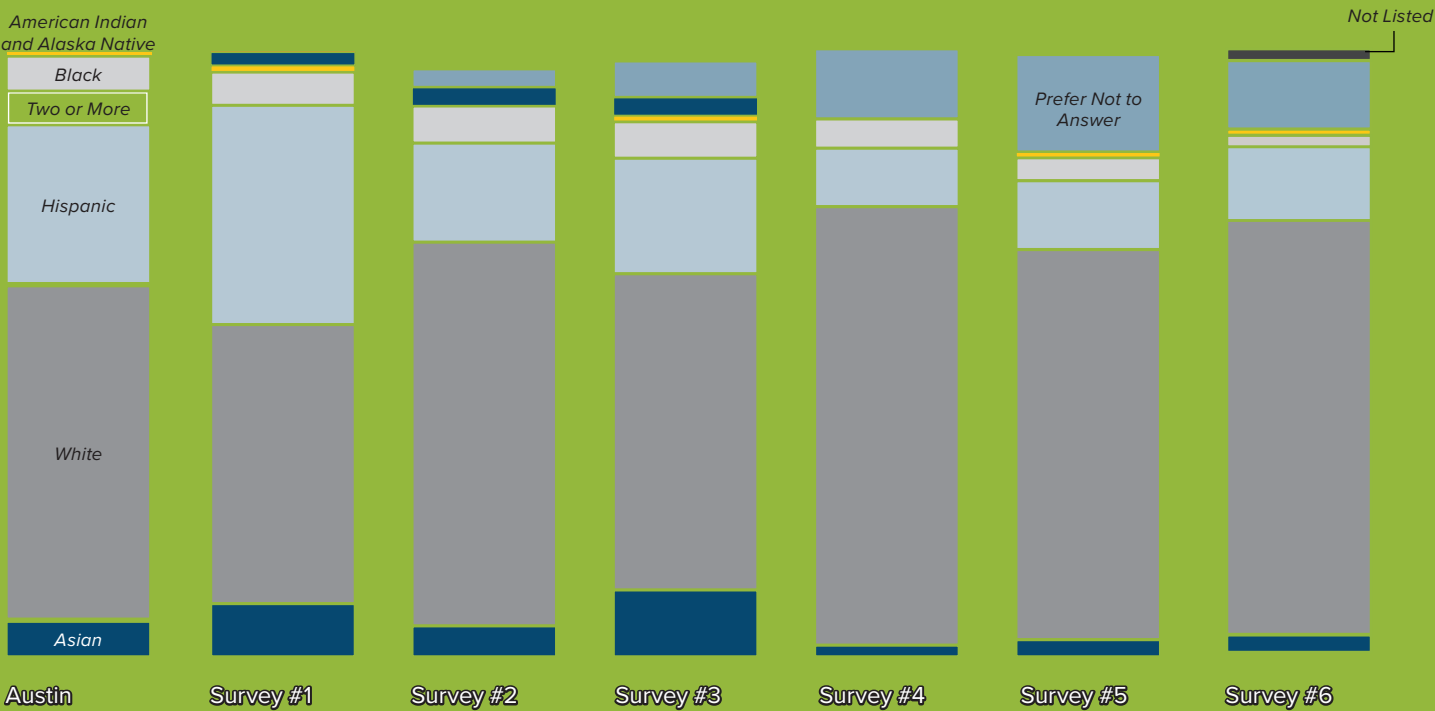
AGE



FEMALE, MALE, OTHER

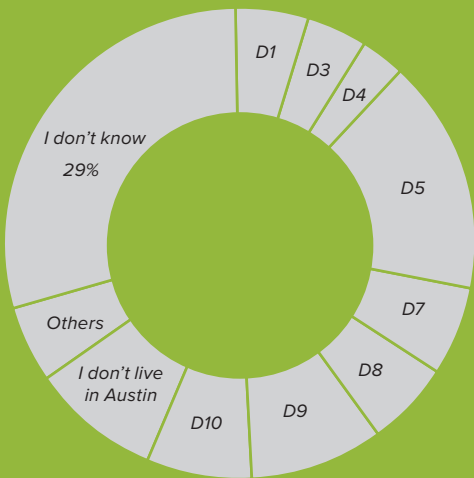


RACE/ETHNICITY

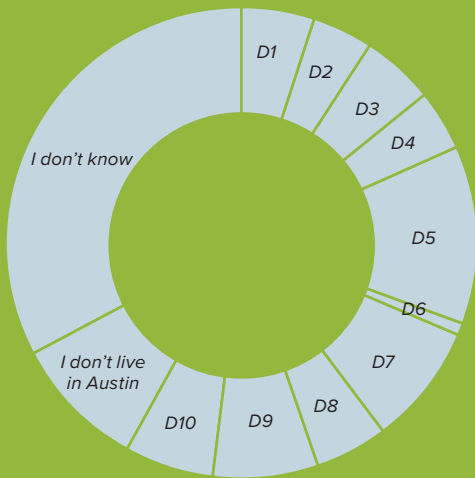


COUNCIL DISTRICT

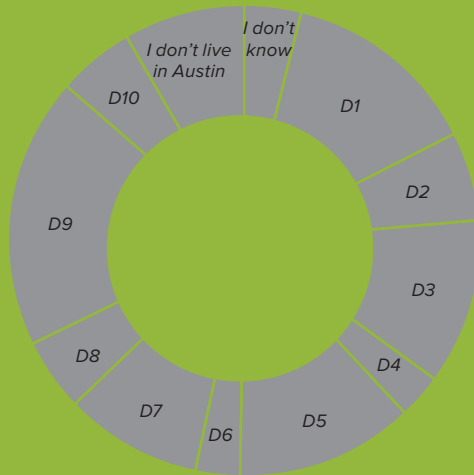
Survey #1



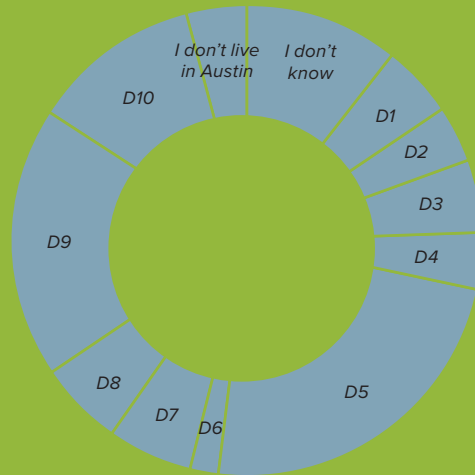
Survey #2



Survey #3



Survey #4



Survey #5



Survey #6

