



**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD RECOMMENDATION YYYYMMDD-XXX**  
*[XXX is the agenda item number]*

Date: June 26, 2023

Subject: Zilker Park Polo Field Parking

Motioned By: Holly Reed (D10)

Seconded By: Lisa Hugman (D6)

**Recommendation to Eliminate Parking on the Zilker Park Polo Field**

*Whereas the Austin City Council, on June 28, 2018, directed the City Manager to form the Zilker Park Working Group to, inter alia, “**Make recommendations to establish a plan to permanently remove parking on the Polo Fields, taking into consideration possible strategies to reduce parking demand and utilization of transportation demand management strategies.**” Resolution number [20180628-072](#). (Zilker Park Working Group Final Report, June 2019; page 8) [[https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Projects/ZPWG-Summary\\_and\\_Personal\\_Statements\\_Final\\_Revised.pdf](https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Projects/ZPWG-Summary_and_Personal_Statements_Final_Revised.pdf)]*

*Whereas the Zilker Park Working Group, in their final report of June 2019 recommended a timeline for closing the Zilker Park Polo Field as an overflow parking area by May 1, 2022 after securing an equivalent number of viable, preferably offsite parking alternatives to the reduced parking that will accommodate the displaced parking, and that are similar to the displaced parking in affordability, convenience, and usability (ZPWG Final Report June 2019, page 13.)*

*Whereas One Texas Center, owned and operated by the City of Austin, has a capacity of 850 vehicles and 750 available parking spaces for vehicles not owned by the City and stored at the garage*

*Whereas the One Texas Center external car parking garage has been identified to meet the recommendation for “an equivalent number of viable, preferably offsite parking alternatives to the reduced parking that will accommodate the displaced parking and that are similar to the displaced parking in affordability, convenience, and usability.”*

*Whereas the Austin Parks and Recreation Department [PARC] is committed to eliminating parking on the Zilker Polo Field, but at the same time ensuring that parking alternatives (shuttle, public transportation, remote parking, etc.) are available and convenient to use (see Exhibit A)*

*Whereas summer temperatures and the lack of irrigation on the Polo Field makes routine weekly use for parked cars more damaging ecologically than during other times of the year*

*Whereas any further delay in reducing parking during this summer’s heat will be seriously damaging to the Polo Field.*

*Whereas only two more special events (Zilker Hillside Theater and Blues on the Green) are planned for summer 2023, which would need the Polo Field for overflow parking*

*Whereas the need to secure an “equivalent number of viable alternatives” to parking on the Polo Field appears to have been solved and should not require further delay in closing the Polo Field to visitor parking during the summer of 2023*

*Whereas a capacity of 750 parked cars at One Texas Center with a shuttle bus service of 2 vehicles, each operating at 30 minute intervals, delivers service of 15 minute intervals from free parking located one mile from the entrance gate to Zilker Park*

*Whereas additional parking is available at the Butler Landfill gravel lot and near the north entrance of the Roberta Crenshaw Pedestrian Bridge*

*Whereas it is in the interest of all residents of Austin to create a scalable mass transit solution for Zilker Metropolitan Park to address a growing population*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Board:

1. Recommends that the Parks and Recreation Dept. (PARD) close the Polo Field parking lot 100% by July 15, 2023 except for use as an overflow parking area during advance-scheduled special events (Zilker Hillside Theater and Blues on the Green)
2. Recommends that PARD direct Zilker Park visitors during peak use summer days in 2023 to the availability of off-site parking and shuttle service at One Texas Center through a program of increased marketing and special promotions such as:
  - (a) several large banner signs announcing the shuttle service at One Texas Center;
  - (b) promotional days when a stamped shuttle ticket gives the individual free admission to one of the park’s resident operations (eg. Barton Springs Pool, Zilker Botanical Garden, Austin Nature and Science Center, the Zilker train when operational.)
  - (c) prominent signage on all faces of the Zilker Shuttle;
3. Recommends the Zilker shuttle buses operate continuously rather than on the hour, to encourage use of the shuttles
4. Recommends shuttles drop off near the entrance to Barton Springs Pool
5. Recommends restoration of the Polo Field ecological surface through irrigation and/or seeding be performed as needed by PARD’s routine maintenance after special events are concluded
6. Recommends that an internal park shuttle service be instituted on 2023 summer weekends with pick-up along Stratford Drive locations (parking under Mopac and at Butler Landfill) to transport people to other areas of the park with stops at key areas including Barton Springs Pool, Zilker Botanical Gardens, the playground, and picnic areas, and
7. Recommends if transportation management is required, the design and operation of the shuttle service be moved under the Austin Transportation Dept.

**Vote**

For:

Against:

Abstain:

Absent:

Attest: *[Staff or board member can sign]*

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