



PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD RECOMMENDATION YYYYMMDD-XXX

Date:

Subject: Zilker Park Polo Field Parking

Motioned By:

Seconded By:

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]*

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 (ZPWG Final Report June 19, p. 10)

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 resolved 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 (600-1000 spaces) is available at the Butler Landfill gravel lot and (Exhibit A & ZPWG June 2019 Report p.8)

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 Austin City Council direct the Parks and Recreation Dept. (PARC) to close parking on the Zilker Park Polo Field 100% beginning Aug. 1, 2023, except for use as an overflow parking area during advance-scheduled special events (namely, Zilker Hillside Theater, Blues on the Green, Zilker Tree Lighting, Trail of Lights, Zilker Kite Festival, Zilker Botanical Gardens Spring Event, and Austin YMBL Sunshine Camps events)
2. Recommends that PARC 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 that shuttle service be continued on weekends, including Fridays, through the end of Sept. 2023
5. Recommends shuttles drop off near the entrance to Barton Springs Pool, when possible, to increase visibility and convenience of shuttle usage
6. Recommends restoration of the Polo Field ecological surface through irrigation and/or seeding be performed as needed by PARC’s routine maintenance after special events are concluded
7. Recommends that an internal park shuttle service be instituted in 2023, including pick-up along Stratford Drive locations (parking under Mopac and at Butler Landfill) to transport people to other areas of the park including Barton Springs Pool, Zilker Botanical Gardens, the playground, and picnic areas, and
8. 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]*

DRAFT