

## **PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**DATE:** *September 2023*

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### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS:**

**Grand Meadow Neighborhood Park Concept Plan:** The final community meeting for the Grand Meadow Neighborhood Park Concept Plan will take place virtually on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Surrounded by single-family homes, the nearly ten-acre park is currently designated as a wildflower meadow. Shaped by community feedback, the Austin Parks Foundation, in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department (Department), has developed a concept plan to guide the future development of Grand Meadow Neighborhood Park. The final concept plan will be submitted for Director review and approval in October 2023. **District 2**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/GrandMeadowPark>

### **PLANNING UPDATES:**

**Montopolis School:** City Council approved an ordinance authorizing the dedication of 500 Montopolis Drive as parkland at its September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The Montopolis School property (.852 acres) and the adjacent property (.428 acres), currently the site of the St. Edwards Baptist Church, were previously purchased by the City. **District 3**

**Brodie Oaks PUD:** The Brodie Oaks shopping center redevelopment is a proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) located at Loop 360 and South Lamar, at the site of the former Brodie Oaks shopping center. A third reading was rescheduled from the Council Meeting on August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 21<sup>st</sup>. Council approved the zoning on first reading on December 8, 2022 ([Item 96](#)). A second hearing was approved on May 18, 2022 ([Item 55](#)). Council approved the zoning on the third and final reading September 21, 2023. The PUD includes dedicating 11.6 acres of new parkland, expanding the Barton Creek Greenbelt. The Parks and Recreation Board voted unanimously to recommend the PUD as superior at the September 26, 2022 meeting. **District 5**

**Givens Recreation Center:** The project for the new Restroom, Multi-Use Field to include Lighting, and a Plaza replacement south of Givens Recreation Center is almost complete. The project includes a larger fully accessible restroom adjacent to a new plaza with shaded picnic seating and an accessible walkway that will connect to the recreation center. The project also replaces the under-utilized ballfield with a multi-purpose field, including new fencing and field lighting. Last month the final improvements included the installation of sod, with the remaining items to include the finalization of gas and plumbing lines for the plaza and a final walk through scheduled for the end of this month. The site will host a ribbon cutting celebration in **correlation of National night out on October 3<sup>rd</sup>**. For more information reference the [Givens District Park Improvements | AustinTexas.gov](#) **District 1.**



*Aerial Photos of the Newly Renovated Multi-Use field to Include Restroom Facilities, Lighting, and a Plaza South of Givens Recreation Center*

## DEVELOPMENT UPDATES:

**Dougherty Arts Center Replacement Project:** On September 26<sup>th</sup>, the Dougherty Arts Center Replacement project will be seeking approval of a conditional use site plan from the Planning Commission. This is typically the final step in achieving a site development permit for the project, prior to proceeding with bidding and construction. As designed, the new Dougherty Arts Center is an approximately 50,000 sf facility that will continue its mission of supporting arts access for all in a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment through its five primary programmatic components: the Dougherty Theater, Julia C. Buttrick Gallery, Artist Professional Development, Arts Outreach, and the Dougherty Arts School. The project has a budget shortfall; however, achieving this final step prior to bidding and construction will allow flexibility in the project schedule as funding challenges continue to be addressed. The project team remains committed. **Districts 5 and 9**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/dougherty-arts-center-redevelopment-project>



*Dougherty Arts Center Replacement Project rendering from recent Design Commission Presentation*

**Barton Springs Bathhouse Rehabilitation:** A final hearing for the SOS Amendment was rescheduled from the September 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to September 21<sup>st</sup>. An insufficient number of Council members were present at the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting for a vote to grant supermajority approval, which is required for an SOS amendment to pass. The site-specific amendment was considered by City Council and approved on September 21<sup>st</sup>. The SOS Ordinance amendment allows the rehabilitation of the existing building on the south side of William Barton Drive, new underground water and wastewater service to support the bathhouse structure with adequate fire flow, construction of a fire lane on the west side of the bathhouse for adequate emergency access around the structure, and landscaping around the restroom building and on the south side of William Barton Drive to improve the quality of existing vegetation. The Competitive Sealed Proposal solicitation for construction was posted on June 26<sup>th</sup> and proposals were due on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Two proposals were received and are under evaluation. Construction is anticipated to start in early 2024. Funding for the rehabilitation project is provided through 2012 GO Bond funds, the Historic Preservation Fund, and contributions from the Barton Springs Conservancy. Additional exhibit contributions are provided by the city's Watershed Protection Department and Austin Water Department. **District 8**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/departments/barton-springs-bathhouse-rehabilitation>

**Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Renovation:** After two Open House events at the end of August to kick off the Community Engagement phase for the redesign of Palm Park, additional opportunities for the public to provide feedback will continue through the end of the year. An [online survey](#) is now live to provide community members who were not able to attend the August meetings an opportunity to give their input. Additionally, pop-ups are being held at several community events, and a series of small group conversations will run through the month of October. **District 9**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/palmparkproject>

**Tarrytown Neighborhood Park Playground Renovation:** The renovation is tentatively scheduled for completion on October 15<sup>th</sup> with the re-opening of the playground expected the following week.



Improvements include expanding the curb to increase play opportunities, new traditional playground equipment at both the 2-5-year-old and the 5-12-year-old play areas with integrated shade, new ADA-compliant sidewalks, a new drinking fountain with a dog bowl feature, stand-alone xylophone and cabasa music elements, and new seating amenities. **District 10**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/tarrytown-neighborhood-park-playscape-replacement>



*Construction is nearly complete on the Tarrytown Neighborhood Park playground renovation.*

## MAINTENANCE UPDATES:

**Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park:** The nature play project at Dottie Jordan playground has been completed. The project included installing a stump table to improve the overall seating and a multiple log balance area. The nature play structures assist in filling in the open spaces on the playground and add a unique nature component. The feedback from the public has been overwhelmingly positive.

**District 1**



*Nature Play Balance Beam at Dottie Jordan Park*

**Annual Maintenance Week:** Mendez Recreation Center recently completed the facilities annual maintenance week. Improvements and repairs to the site included, repainting of the men's and women's restrooms, and repair of the sliding door in the facilities arts and crafts room. **District 3**

**Irrigation Installation Project:** Montopolis Recreation and Community Center completed its irrigation installation project on the multipurpose field. **District 3**



*Irrigation Being Installed on the Multipurpose Field.*

**Security Lighting:** Gus Garcia Recreation Center is currently in the process of acquiring additional security lighting for its back area. This will increase visibility and ensure a higher degree of public safety.

**District 4**

**Cellular Dialer System:** Cellular dialer system has been installed in annex building of the South Austin Senior Activity Center. The system will eliminate the numerous false alarm calls due to defective telephone line. Cellular dialer system was also updated in main building. Wires were rerouted to increase safety and streamline future inspections. **District 5**

**The Greene Room Renovation at Zilker Botanical Garden:** The Greene Room at the Zilker Botanical Garden will be undergoing renovations beginning in early October with preparation work beginning in late September. Construction is expected to be completed by mid-March 2024 with a project cost estimated at \$450,000. **District 8**

## PROGRAM UPDATES:

**District 1:**

**ATX Music Creative Hub Town Hall:** The ATX Music Creative Hub Town Hall for the Asian American Resource Center Music Hub was held on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The event saw over 60 attendees, including local musicians, producers, artists, community members, and notable figures such as Austin Independent School District (AISD) School Board President Arati Singh and Grammy Award-winning singer Sangeeta Kaur. The discussion was led by representatives from EQ Austin and was centered around what the community wants to see from a potential music hub in the city. Each attendee was given the opportunity to speak during their introductions, and the session concluded with a brief discussion of specific needs in the community. 63 people attended the event.





*Sangeeta Kaur Giving Opening Remarks to Gathered Attendees*

**Move Your Way** (CPD – Health Promotions): In collaboration with Austin Public Health, the Department is encouraging people of all ages to become more physically active through a signage campaign known as Move Your Way. Whether it's walking, dancing, roller skating or jumping on a trampoline, all physical activity has health benefits. The campaign kick-off event was held on September 20<sup>th</sup> from 3-6 p.m. at Colony Park District Park. Approximately 75 people attended the event. Event highlights included:

- Health Screenings
- Guided hikes led by Park Rangers
- Music/DJ
- Bounce house
- Healthy snacks
- Ideas to help families be more active
- Sustainable modes of transportation provided by Get There ATX

Additional Move Your Way campaign information can be found at the campaign's website:

<https://www.healthypaceshealthypeople.org/getactive/>



*Move Your Way Campaign Advertisement*

**Art Project for Ageism Awareness:** Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center hosted an Art Project for Ageism Awareness in partnership with Aging is Cool. The event was held on August 26<sup>th</sup> and the photography project focused on helping communities make a statement about aging. This intergenerational project had youth photographers taking photos of 38 Varsity Generation participants from all over Austin. The photos will be displayed as a large-scale black and white portrait mural on October 7<sup>th</sup> at 3710 Cedar St.



*Participants Working with Youth Photographers to Have Their Photo Taken*

**Diez y Seis de Septiembre Celebration:** Diez y Seis de Septiembre Celebration was held on Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 9-11:30 a.m. at Conley-Guerrero Senior Center. Conley-Guerrero Senior Center celebrates Mexican Independence Day with breakfast tacos and Mexican sweet bread w/Agua fresca. Participants played games and watched the movie Flaming Hot at 9:30 a.m. There were 60 participants at the event.

**Take a Loved One (TALO) For a Check Up:** On Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> Turner-Roberts hosted TALO for a Check Up in partnership with Austin Public Health from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Turner-Roberts gymnasium. The event included free health screenings for the public, in addition to free immunization, vision exams, and a giveaway of health resources. Raffle prizes and family activities were included for participants in attendance. The event was well attended by the community.



HEALTH EQUITY UNIT PRESENTS

# TAKE A LOVED ONE FOR A CHECKUP 2023

FREE Health Screenings, Vision Exams, Immunizations, Health Resources, Entertainment, Raffle Prizes, Family Activities and more!

September 23 | 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Turner-Roberts Recreation Center  
7201 Colony Loop Dr. Austin, TX 78724

*Take a Loved One (TALO) for a Checkup Event*



**Oakwood Cemetery “To Change” On-line Exhibit:** “To Change” will show Austin’s beautiful natural resources that has attracted people for over 16,000 years. (Indigenous People have been here that long or longer according to archaeologists.) This exhibit will look at land use, demographics, and family histories. It will display the process of digitizing information about the 23,000 “residents” buried in Oakwood Cemetery. Community members give feedback on a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Approximately 400 people viewed the exhibit.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/1243d8347a2e4a4ca61ecd67e50e3d8b>

**George Washington Carver Museum Exhibit Reception:** The opening reception for the Carver Museum new gallery exhibit, *Field Order 15: And Other Broken Promises* had attendees wrapped in deep, meaningful conversation. A powerful and emotional exhibit asked artists to consider what is required for America to atone for the continued denial of full citizenship to Black people and what repair would feel like in the body. The community shed tears and discussed their thoughts and response to the work as a unified community. *Field Order 15: And Other Broken Promises* is on view now through October 14<sup>th</sup> at Carver Museum ATX.



*Reception Guests Discuss the New Exhibit  
Field Order 15: and Other Broken Promises*

**Delores Duffie Recreation Center:** On Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> Delores Duffie Recreation center hosted its special event titled *Painting with Grandparents*, in recognition of National Grandparents Day. The event included about 15 grandparents and children partaking in an opportunity to create artwork while spending quality time with their loved ones. Participants were also provided light refreshments for the activity held in Doris Miller Auditorium 10:30-11:30 a.m.



*Participants from the Painting with Grandparents at Delores Duffie Recreation Center Paint with Their Families*

### **District 3:**

**Development Program at Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center:** Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center recently began their development program this past September. The new program is incorporated into the Out of School Time program held at the site. The program includes curriculum that teaches money management, encourages volunteer work, while offering them community support projects. The intent of the program is to assist youth as they enter the transition from 6<sup>th</sup> grade into 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The program serves as a bridge program for youths transitioning out of the sites after school program into teen and middle school programs, while teaching them independence. The program currently has eight participants registered and is offered weekdays after-school.

**Viva Mexico Celebration:** The Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center's (ESB MACC) 16<sup>th</sup> annual Viva México celebration occurred at the Oswaldo A.B. Cantu Pan American Recreation Center on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 5-9 p.m. Guests at this free outdoor event enjoyed Mariachi and Ballet Folklorico performances, live Tejano and Country music, and a local youth talent showcase including young musicians from Burnet Middle School. The family-focused event also offered a Community Resource Fair with over 15 City departments and non-profits, a family-friendly kids activity tent, and local food and art vendors. Master of Ceremonies, Claudia Talamantez from Univision and Mexican Consul General Pablo Marentes, lead the public in the annual *Grito de Independencia*. The ESB MACC

has partnered with the Pan Am Recreation Center to offer this event for the first time on the iconic Pan Am Hillside stage, where Austin's Latino community has gathered to enjoy live music and celebrate Tejano/ Chicano/ Latino culture for generations. The event was attended by about 700 people.



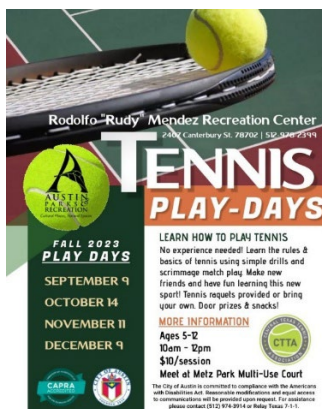
*Flyer with Viva Mexico Graphic 2023*



*Viva Mexico Performer Lesly Reynaga*

**Auxiliary Programs for the Pan Am Recreation Center After School Program:** September marked the return of auxiliary programs for the Pan Am Recreation center after school program. These programs included the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum through the Police Activities League (PAL) program that educates youth participants on how to build using science and technology. In addition, this program includes the Reading Aces and Dream Outside the Box, two curriculums provided by the University of Texas that engage youth participants through reading education and activities that promote positive youth choices and future development. Each of the three programs is offered on various days in the afternoon during the sites after-school, program, and is available as a supporting curriculum for the 48 participants registered in the out of school program.

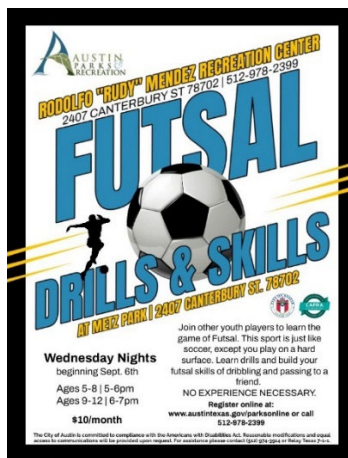
**Mendez Recreation Center:** Mendez Recreation Center will be offering four sessions of tennis play days in the months of the fall at the Multi-Use Court at Metz Park, with one each month from September through December. The program will be open to youths ages 5-12 and will include a registration cost of \$10 per session. The program will be held, Saturday mornings 10 a.m.-12 p.m. on September 9<sup>th</sup>, October 14<sup>th</sup>, November 11<sup>th</sup>, and December 9<sup>th</sup>. There were 11 attendees at the September 9<sup>th</sup> event.





### *Mendez Recreation Centers Flyer for Tennis Play Days at Metz Park*

**Youth Futsal Skills and Drill Program:** The Youth Futsal Skills and Drill Program began on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> at Mendez Recreation Center. The program is run Wednesday evenings from 5-7 p.m. with two separate age groups at Metz Park. Practice for children 5-8 years of age will run from 5-6 p.m. while children 9-12 years of age will practice from 6-7 p.m. Registration is August 21<sup>st</sup>-November 29<sup>th</sup>. Currently, the program has six participants in the 5-8 years of age group and is still accepting registration. There are currently no children 9-12 years of age registered, but registration is still being accepted. Practices are held on the multipurpose court in Metz Park. The program cost is \$10 per participant per month.



*Mendez Recreation youth Futsal flyer at Metz Park*

**Mendez Recreation Center:** Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> Mendez Recreation Center's Varsity Generation Program hosted their Diez y Seis de Septiembre celebration for program participants. Activities included music, piñata and food for the 30 varsity generation participants registered in the sites Varsity Generation Program.

**Mendez Recreation Center:** Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> Mendez Recreation Center hosted its annual 16 De Septiembre. 252 visitors attended through a rain delay as all festivities were moved indoors. Visitors enjoyed live music, three dances by Ballet Folklorico, savory snacks, and 36 participants played lotería games. 32 youth participated in Futsal outdoors on the covered court once the rain cleared. This was the first event and will continue on an annual basis.



*Mendez Recreation Center's Flyer for Hillside Loteria at Metz Park*



*16 De Septiembre Event*



*Ballet Folklorico Performers*

**Mendez Recreation Center:** Mendez Recreation Center began offering its Toddler Nature Day program on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Children will learn and explore tree animals and plants via craft activities, scavenger hunts, short hikes, painting, music, and mini lessons. A snack will also be provided for participants in attendance. The registration cost will be \$10 per child, per month, for children 3-4 years of age. The program is currently full with eight participants enrolled and a wait list for the month of September, and has available spots for the months of October and November.



*Nature Play Program Instructor Getting Ready for the Days Nature Play Curriculum*

**Mendez Recreation Center:** Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> Mendez Recreation Center reintroduced its Skate Crew program. The new program, scheduled for September through November, was initially implemented last school year as part of the sites out of school programming and has returned to the site after last year's successful implementation. Participants learn all about the fun hobby of skating, while getting exercise and practicing safety while using the Recreation Center's equipment. The program runs on the site's new multi-purpose court in Metz Park and is \$10 per month and is run on Tuesdays from 6-7 p.m. during the months of September through November. The program is open to ages 7-12 years of age. There are currently 10 youth participants enrolled in the monthly program, with registration still open.



*Mendez Recreation Center's Participants and Staff Skating During the Skate Crew Program*



**Fiesta Austin Diez y Seis:** The annual celebration of Diez y Seis hosted at Fiesta Gardens West End was held on September 16<sup>th</sup>. There were about 1,500 people at the event. [Fiesta Austin - Diez y Seis](#)

**Texas Craft Brewer's Festival:** The Annual celebration of Texas Craft Brewing Festival is scheduled for September 30<sup>th</sup>. The event is expecting approximately 4,000 attendees. [Texas Craft Brewer's Festival](#)

#### **District 4:**

**Senior Garden Update:** With the help of Community Gardens Program, St. David's Foundation, and Austin Parks Foundation, Virginia L. Brown's Senior Garden received a much-needed makeover. 15 Varsity Generation participants are now enjoying a gardening class hosted by master gardeners. The Garden Club meets every Friday morning from 9:30-10:30 a.m.



*Virginia L. Brown Senior Garden After Planting Tomato Plants in the Garden*

**Master Chef Program:** Beginning August 16<sup>th</sup> and running throughout September 30<sup>th</sup>, the "Master Chef Program" is a program offered at Gus Garcia Recreation Center for youth ages 5-12. While attending the program, 25 participants work together to prepare a complete meal as they learn culinary techniques and healthy eating habits. Classes meet on Saturdays 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and Wednesdays 6:30-8:30 p.m.



*Participants Work Together to Prepare a Meal in Master Chef*

#### **District 5:**

**Qi Gong Fitness Program:** South Austin Senior Activity Center started its Qi Gong Fitness Program on Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. There were 25 participants at the event.

**Ballroom Dancing:** South Austin Senior Activity Center has started a ballroom dancing class on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m. The class is scheduled for the first, second and fourth Wednesday of every month. The program is averaging 33 participants per class.

**Play ATX Basketball Court Improvement Celebration:** The event was held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at Garrison District Park. The celebration of completion of the project is in conjunction with the Austin Parks Foundation and San Antonio Spurs. The event was well attended by the community. [Play ATX Basketball Court Improvements Garrison District Park](#)

#### **District 6:**

**Varsity Generation Program:** Varsity Generation programming is back in full swing at Pickfair Activity Center. Participants meet every Tuesday-Friday from 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. for various activities including Zumba, Ping Pong, Yoga, Tai Chi, and Rummikub during the month of September. These activities are free and open to anyone age 50 and up. There are usually around 10 people who participate in the program.

#### **District 7:**

**Viva Loteria:** Northwest Recreation Center hosted Viva Loteria, on September 15<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. This was a virtual event that was free for all ages. 12 Registered participants as well as over 60 afterschool participants played Loteria on Zoom for a chance to win prizes.

**Austin Memorial Park Cemetery Saluting Branches Service:** Urban Forestry will conduct the nationwide Saluting Branches Service held at Austin Memorial Park Cemetery on Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. During this program, 40 participants from private sector professional arborists will assist in providing tree maintenance and care within this cemetery to honor veterans. This will be the third year that the City of Austin has hosted this event.

### **District 8:**

**Goat Cave Karst Nature Preserve:** The Land Management and Nature Preserves Program has released another informational video on YouTube about the Goat Cave Karst Nature Preserve. This is part of an ongoing series of videos that provide potential visitors with the information they need to prepare them for a visit to the preserve. The newest video can be found here: [Goat Cave Karst Nature Preserve](#).

**Austin Cactus & Succulent Society Sale & Show:** The Austin Cactus & Succulent Society hosted its annual Cactus & Succulent Show and Sale on Friday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Zilker Botanical Garden. The event was well attended by the community.

**Austin City Limits (ACL) Load in Commences:** Great Lawn Closes September 25<sup>th</sup>-October 25<sup>th</sup>. Information and interactive maps are available online. [Austin City Limits - Load In Period](#)

**Austin City Limits (ACL):** ACL weekend 1 is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. Weekend 2 is scheduled for October 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. The annual special event at Zilker Park anticipates hosting about 75,000 people per day. Significant traffic and pedestrian impacts are associated with this event. [Austin City Limits - Weekend 1](#)

### **District 9:**

**Casino Night:** On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Lamar Senior Activity Center hosted its annual Casino Royale Casino Night. The Varsity Generation participants played over five Casino Games. Teams competed to win as many raffle tickets as they could for a chance to win over 20 donated prizes. Participants had everything that made them feel like they were in Vegas! Mocktail's, Elvis and gambling. This was our biggest turnout yet. There were over 70 attendees.







*Participants Playing Casino Style Table Games*

**Hancock Recreation Center's Summer Forever and Art Exhibit:** This Summer, youth participants enrolled in Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Camp Centers participated in The Creature Project. Professional artists created their rendition of creatures based off drawings that participants made during camp! On Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m., Hancock had an art exhibit for the participants and parents along with a Summer Forever event. Families celebrated the exhibit and the last day of Camp with games, face painting, balloon art and viewing their drawings and the drawings from the artists! 200 people attended the exhibit and event.





*Pictures of Families and Staff During the Creature Project Exhibit and Summer Forever Event*

**Brush Square Park and O. Henry Museum Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** Austin Parks and Recreation Department celebrated the Grand Opening of Brush Square Park and the newly renovated O. Henry Museum on Sunday on September 17<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. Brush Square has been an Austin Park since 1839 and is once again open to give visitors and citizens a taste of nature right in Downtown Austin. This historic event included tours, activities, and refreshments at the O. Henry Museum. 250 people attended the event. [Brush Square Park Phase I and O. Henry Museum Ribbon Cutting](#)



*Flyer with Image of New Entrance to Brush Square Park and O. Henry Museum*

**Butler Shores Exercise Equipment Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** The Butler Shores Exercise Equipment Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held on September 18<sup>th</sup> and was well attended by the community. The Trail Conservancy funded and managed this publicly accessible trail improvement. [Butler Shores Exercise Equipment Ribbon Cutting Ceremony](#)

### Multiple Districts:

**Movies Nights at Dittmar Recreation Center:** The big screen in your backyard, Dittmar Recreation Center, will have movies in our park this fall by bringing Hollywood movies! Join us in person at the park for the best family-friendly box office favorites from recent years like Pixar's UP, September 8<sup>th</sup>, Hocus Pocus 2, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, and \*Scoob!, October 6<sup>th</sup>. Movies will start at dusk. **Districts 2 and 5.**



*Dittmar Recreation Center Movie Nights Flyer*

**South Austin Recreation Center (SARC):** SARC's Varsity Pickleball is booming! Offered Monday from 3:30pm to 6pm and Friday from 12pm to 3pm, the drop-in program has over 20 attendees each day. The program is a great way for our Varsity Generation to stay active and social at SARC. **Districts 3 and 5.**



*Varsity Pickleballers Enjoying a Game.*



**Request for Applications:** The Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) Office of Special Events will release a public Request for Applications to fill Event Day vacancies under our administrative authority for Annual Special Events at the following two parks with Council Adopted Event Day Limits. PARC will work to engage members of the public and qualified event organizers regarding this exciting opportunity and accept applications for diverse family friendly events.

Engagements will minimally include social media, City PARC Events website, and a list of Austin Center for Events applicants from the previous years, and direct contacts made to the department.

- Fiesta Gardens – Festival Beach at Edward Rendon Sr. Metro Park: Up to five days under City Code requirements.
- Vic Mathias Shores – Auditorium Shores at Town Lake Metro Park: Up to one day available under City Code requirements. **Districts 3 and 9**

**Elisabet Ney Museum Re-Imagining the Ney Draw your Own Path:** This annual event will share the many facets of drawing inside the grounds of the Museum. The day hosted hands-on art projects led by local artists and educators inspiring visitors to “draw their own path”. Local artist collective, Atelier Dojo, was on site to give live sketching demonstrations using Elisabet Ney’s sculptures as models. This event is part of Austin Museum Day and was held on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 12-5 p.m. 200 people attended the event. **Districts 3 and 9**



*Youth enjoying Art Activities at Ney Day 2022*

**Old Bakery and Emporium Museum Day:** On Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> the Old Bakery hosted music by local musician Lucas Julian Carballeira, who studied classical guitar, attaining a BA in Classical Guitar and a master's degree in music theory. During his studies, he spent a year abroad at the Superior Conservatory in Vigo, Spain, under the tutelage of Margarita Escarpa. Throughout his studies, Carballeira traveled all over North America and Europe. He received masterclasses from the top guitarists in the world, including David Russell, Sergio Assad, Lorenzo Micheli, and many others. The event was made

possible by the Economic Development Music Department. 75 people attended the event. **Districts 3 and 9**



*Image of Lucas Julian Carballeira Performing at the  
Old Bakery and Emporium*

#### **Aquatic Seasonal Pools:**

- Due to the ongoing heatwave and sufficient lifeguard staffing, six seasonal pools will extend operations until October 1<sup>st</sup>: Garrison, Northwest, Govalle, Mabel Davis, Shipe, Walnut Creek Pools.
- Fees have been waived through October 1<sup>st</sup> at Garrison, Northwest, Walnut Creek and Bartholomew Pools. **Districts 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9**

**Historic Preservation and Tourism Program Updates:** The Department received an Honor Award for the historic Downs Field Grandstands Rehabilitation by Preservation Texas, a statewide nonprofit organization, at an awards luncheon on September 21<sup>st</sup>. The site was first used in the 1920s by Samuel Huston College baseball and the Austin Black Senators, the first Negro Baseball League team in Austin. Later, the site hosted the original L.C. Anderson's Yellowjackets football team. In 1954, Downs Field was established at the site and named in honor of Reverend Karl Downs (1912-1948), who was President of Samuel Huston College. Today, Downs Field is the home field of the Huston-Tillotson Rams. The project included replacement of the corrugated metal roof and structural upgrades to the steel supports and wood framing, while replicating the original architectural characteristics. The restoration of the grandstands follows a multi-year effort to renovate and enhance the field.

Additionally, Sarah Marshall, the Department Historic Preservation and Tourism Program Coordinator, has been named the chairperson of the *History in Our Parks* advisory committee of the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH), a national organization that provides leadership and resources to make history more meaningful to all people. Sarah was a leader in the development of the History in Our Parks advisory committee, which was formed to address the unique needs and challenges of parks and recreation agencies that care for historic and cultural resources while operating within a

system that is not solely geared towards heritage preservation. She supported early efforts to gather data on the number of parks and recreation agencies that care for historic and cultural resources (such as museums, historic sites, collections, archeological sites, cemeteries, and landscapes), initiate an assessment of their needs and challenges, and explore how AASLH can assist the group. This committee represents members who practice history in a variety of ways in parks programs and in turn, advises the AASLH on the development of programs and services for the group. **District 1, Multiple**



*Downs Field Grandstands before the renovation (left) and after (right)*

**Zilker Shuttle Pilot Program:** The Zilker Park Weekend Shuttle ran its final day of service for the 2023 season on Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup>. The Zilker Shuttle kicked off May 27<sup>th</sup> and ran every Saturday and Sunday, during Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Over 2,700 riders utilized the free parking and shuttle service from One Texas Center to Zilker Park this season, an increase of almost 400% compared to the 550 riders that used the shuttle during its kick-off season, which ran June 25 through September 5, 2022. Significant marketing efforts were made to increase the success of the program, including radio spots on KUTX, social media posts and ads, banners and yard signs placed throughout the park, two large temporary electronic signs placed along Barton Springs Road, messaging on overhead electronic traffic signs throughout the city, eight weeks of over-the-street banner installations at four locations in the greater downtown area, pop-ups near Barton Springs Pool and Barton Creek distributing flyers and answering questions, and staff with spinner promo signage in the park on weekends. Additionally, the program was featured in local news including Community Impact, Austin.com, KVUE, KXAN Austin, Fox7, Austin Monitor, and CBS Austin. **Districts 5 and 8**



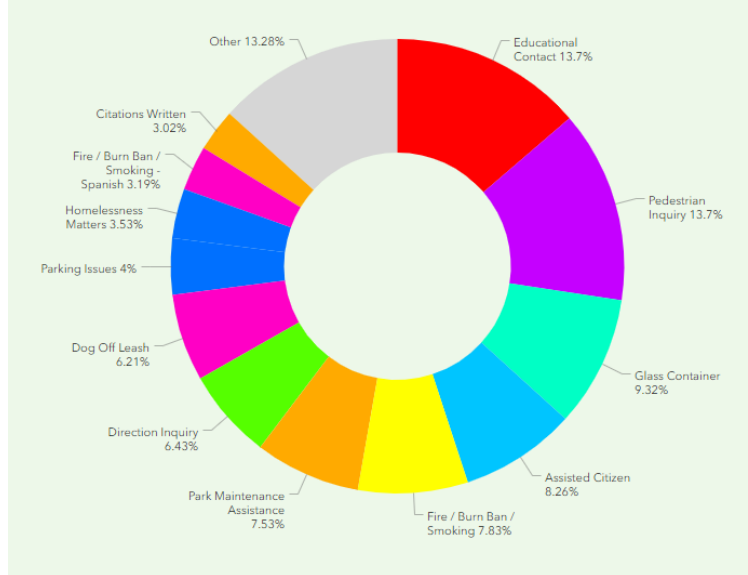


*Advertisement for the Zilker Shuttle in Zilker Park, 2023*

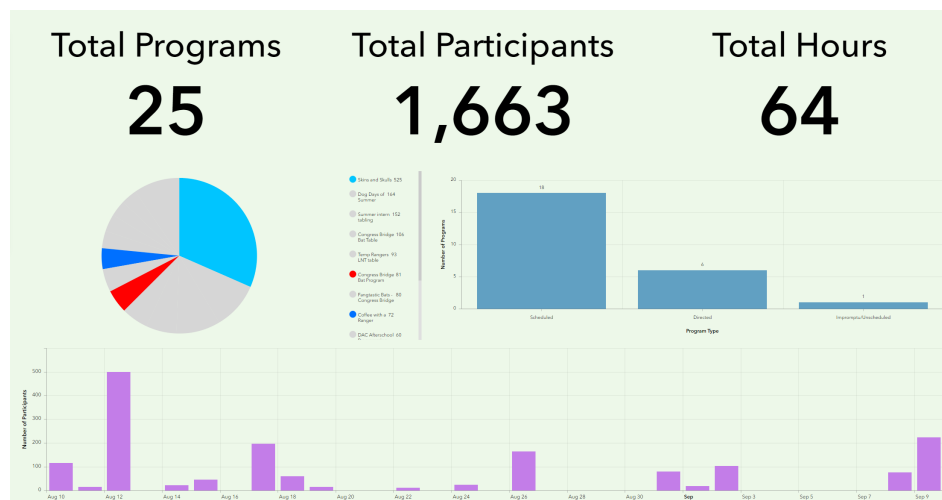
### **All Districts:**

**Land Management and Nature Preserves Website Update:** The Land Management and Nature Preserves Program has begun website updates to facilitate a better user experience and organize information in a better way so that constituents have an easier time navigating material. The link is found here: <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/natural-resources-and-nature-based-programs>.

**Park Rangers Contacts and Program Updates:** The Austin Parks and Recreation Park Rangers reported 4,013 contacts with park visitors for the reporting period of Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup> totaling 35,339 contacts for the entire fiscal year. During this timeframe, Park Rangers offered information, assistance, programs, and conservation services within parks maintained by the Department. Park Rangers handled daily operations including 2,350 contacts regarding laws, safety, service, and education. 146 contacts were logged for off-leash dogs during this timeframe, totaling 2,381 contacts with park visitors about off-leash dogs since October 2022. Park Rangers also conducted 25 programs totaling 64 hours with 1,663 participants. Programs focused on Leave No Trace recreational practices and responsible recreation.



*Pie Chart of Total Percentages of Park Visitor Contact Categories with Park Rangers from August 10 to September 10*



*Graph of Total Programs, Participants, and Hours of Park Ranger Programming from August 10 to September 10*

## ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES:

**Annual Desk Reviews:** Contract Monitoring is an ongoing process throughout the term of the contract. An annual desk review of the contracts is performed to monitor compliance. Working collaboratively, the contract manager and contract staff utilize the scope of work and the agreement's terms and conditions in evaluating whether all contract requirements and deliverables are met. In evaluating compliance, close attention is given to requirements such as Living Wage and MBE/WBE Program Compliance. The annual review, along with the day-to-day monitoring, allows the contract manager to alert the contractor to any performance that deviates from the contract requirements. The information derived through desk reviews enables PARD to assess performance, identify any compliance problems,

determine need to renew or continue the contract or determine the need for an on-site review. For FY23, the PARD Contract Unit will complete approximately 300 desk reviews to fulfill the monitoring requirement. The associated contracts include, but are not limited to, master, interlocal, interdepartmental, parkland improvement, license, athletic field use and service agreements.

**Zilker Train:** After facing some challenges and setbacks, the Austin Parks Foundation has reported that their plans to restore the Zilker Train are officially back on track. Since their last social media post, they have partnered with a local group of engineers, who have the experience and expertise to deliver a safe, functioning train, and the work is already underway. The train coaches were recently transported to an off-site facility to be retrofitted with airbrakes to ensure they're safe for passengers. They'll also receive new electrical wiring for lights and a PA system. In August, APF provided an update on the train's operational progress. The Foundation has a website that provides details on opening and activities related to the train at <https://www.zilkertrain.org>.

**Recreation Management System:** In October 2022, the Department began working with a CTM project manager to establish timeline and deliverables for the solicitation scope of work. The solicitation was published on June 5, 2023, and was extended and closed on July 20, 2023. Six proposals were received, and all proposals were deemed responsive. The evaluation process, led by Central Procurement, is in process. The Department will continue to utilize RecTrac services throughout the solicitation process until a recommended vendor is established.

**Watercraft Concession at 2418 Stratford Drive:** Due to the cancellation of the solicitation by Central Procurement and the need to resolicit, the contract with the current vendor, Rowing Dock, was extended through October 31, 2023. Additionally, in July 2023, PARD staff requested that the Contracts and Concession Committee and Parks Board recommend City Council authorize an additional one-year contract extension with the Rowing Dock. The extension request that was recommended by PARB and approved by City Council on September 21, 2023. The additional one-year extension will assist the Department in providing quality recreation services while giving the City time to resolicit a concessionaire for the Stratford Drive location.

**Zilker Café:** A new solicitation was developed to operate and maintain the food and beverage concession on the north side of Barton Springs Pool in Zilker Park. The scope of work for the solicitation was presented to the Contracts and Concession Committee on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and published on May 30, 2023. Central Procurement held a pre-proposal meeting on June 8, 2023, and proposals for this solicitation were due by July 25, 2023, following a two-week response extension. One proposal was received, and Central Procurement is currently conducting the evaluation process.

**Swim ATX:** This agreement is an interlocal agreement with the Austin Independent School District (AISD) for SwimATX, a year-long swim lesson program that includes the 36-hour lifeguard certification course, which will be provided to the students of select AISD high schools. The interlocal agreement was presented to the Contracts and Concessions Committee on May 19, 2023, and was approved by the Parks and Recreation Board on June 26, 2023, and subsequently approved by Council on July 20, 2023. It will be presented to the AISD Board of Trustees in September.

**Interment Services International:** In June 2013, City Council approved a five-year contract, for \$3.8 million, with Interment Services International to provide interment and burial services for City of Austin cemeteries. In 2018 and 2021 respectively, with the direction to return to Council for approval of contract



extension options, City Council approved a three-year extension option and a two-year option. With one five-year extension option remaining, cemetery staff estimates the need to continue to outsource these services for another two years. The lingering economic conditions resulting from the pandemic created challenges and obstacles for Cemetery Operations to fully hire the necessary staff to train for the additional interment/burial services. In addition, the same complications resulted in longer than anticipated supply chain issues with purchasing and acquiring the necessary equipment and machinery necessary to perform these duties and to ensure proper staff training operations. At the end of the two-year period, the Parks and Recreation Department plans to transition all burial and interment services to City personnel. An extension to the contract allows staff time to absorb the increased responsibilities and duties associated with the mandated operational expansion along with current job duties and responsibilities. Without this extension, the contract for burial and interment services expires November 28, 2023. PARB recommended that Council approve the execution and negotiation of the amendment on August 28, 2023. The amendment is scheduled for Council action on October 19, 2023.

**End-of-Year Deadlines for Financial Services:** The FY2023 Year End Close process is underway. The Financial Services Division is in constant communication with PARD staff, addressing purchasing and accounting-related activities and their corresponding deadlines for the remainder of the current fiscal year. The deadlines, within the end-of-year schedule, are important to ensure any needed procurements are completed in time to utilize the current fiscal year funds, as well as ensuring the department's ability to manage the budget and fund balances.

**City of Austin Financial Managers Forum:** On a quarterly basis, the City of Austin Financial Services Department hosts a city-wide Financial Managers Forum to share financial information and best practices. The August forum included presentations on the following:

- Fiscal Year 2023 Year End Close procedures
- Travel advances
- UKG timekeeping system approval requirements
- New Bank Reconciliation Tools (Dashboards)
- Update on GASB 87 Lease Reporting Requirements

**Hiring Success:** PARD Human Resources Division for FY has had a successful year in hiring for regular employees as well as summer temporary employees. For FY 2023 The PARD HR Employment team reduced regular FTE vacancies from 156.5 (20.6%) to 90 (11%), below the City vacancy rate of 13.6%. In cooperation with Aquatics the Department successfully hired approximately 1,200 summer temporary employees which includes close to 1,000 lifeguards, which in turn not only allowed the City to open all pools, but also to keep several additional pools open through September. To date, the PARD HR Payroll team has successfully entered over 1,000 summer bonuses.



*PARD's Employment team attended a job fair at Travis Highschool on Saturday September 9.*

**Greenbuild International Conference + Expo:** Several staff members of the Department Development Division will attend [GreenBuild](#) in Washington DC from September 24 through September 29. Greenbuild is the world's largest green building conference and expo in the world. Multiple Department staff members attending hold positions on committees collaborating at the conference, including Engineer Sarah Talkington, chair of the LEED Steering Committee, Assistant Director Liana Kallivoka, who serves on the LEED Fellow Committee, and Division Manager Lindsey Machamer, who is part of the Resilience Working Group. Sarah Talkington will also present on LEED v5 Development at the conference on September 27. Staff will also attend meetings for the [Sustainable SITES Initiative](#) and the [International WELL Buildings Institute](#).

**National Recreation and Park Association Conference and Expo:** Several staff members from various Divisions within the Department will attend the conference either in person (Dallas, Texas) or virtually from October 9<sup>th</sup> through October 12<sup>th</sup>. The National Recreation and Parks Association Conference is the premier event within the Parks and Recreation profession. Multiple Department staff members attending hold positions on committees collaborating at the conference, are presenting at the conference and/or are earning continuing education credits.