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Executive Summary

The mission of Austin Parks and Recreation (APR) is to inspire Austin to learn, play, protect and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.

In carrying out its mission, APR has established nine permanent concessions in Town Lake Park that provide recreation services. These services include rentals of canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards (SUPs); rowing instruction and memberships; food and beverage sales; short-course golf; excursion boats; and a mini train. The concessions were established pursuant to City of Austin Code Section 8-1-71, which authorizes the director of Austin Parks and Recreation to allow a concessionaire to operate a food or beverage, rental, or service concession in Town Lake Park.

Additionally, Section 8-1-73 requires that on or before January 31st of each year, the director shall deliver a report to the Austin Parks and Recreation Board and the Environmental Commission on the concessions granted under this division. The annual report, prepared under this section, shall include:

- The name of each concession operating in Town Lake Metropolitan Park;
- An income and expenditure statement for each concession;
- The total number of watercrafts rented in Town Lake Metropolitan Park; and
- A statement describing any problems caused or created by a concession.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Board and the Environmental Commission may make a recommendation related to:

- Continuing an existing concession;
- Terminating an existing continuation; and
- Issuing a request for proposal for an expiring or new concession under this division.

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Concession Locations

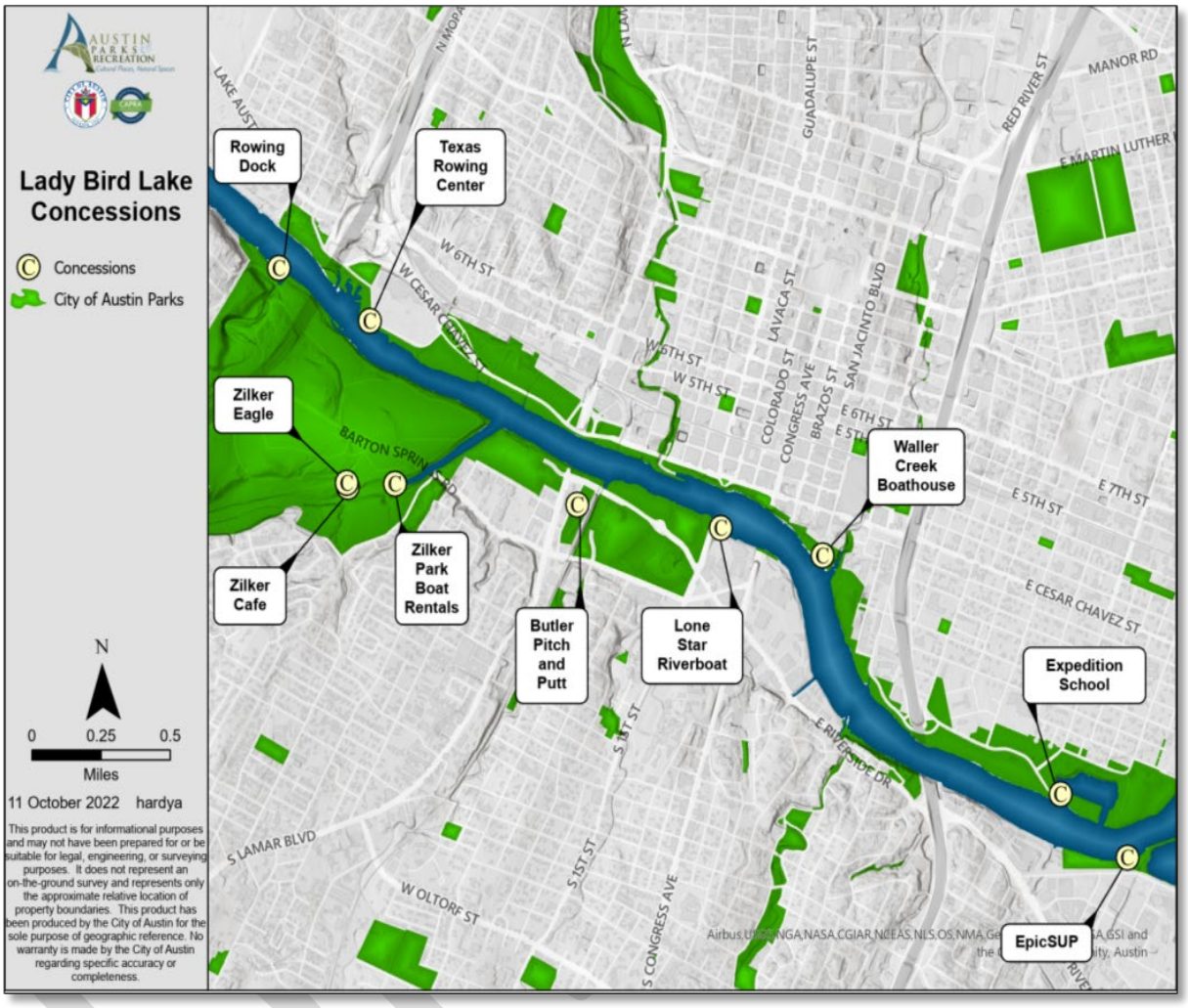

Figure 1. Map of Lady Bird Lake Concessions

Concession Contracts

As of FY25, there are nine concessions operating in and around Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

- Seven provide water-based recreation services, including one or more of the following: rentals of canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddle boards (SUPs), and electric boats; summer water sports camps; rowing and paddling lessons and membership; guided group tours, team-building outings, event space rental; custom paddling events; fitness lessons and indoor rowing fitness studio; and lake excursion cruises. The watercraft concessions include:
  - Rowing Dock
  - Texas Rowing Center
  - Zilker Park Boat Rentals
  - Lone Star Riverboat
  - Austin Rowing Club
  - Expedition School
  - EpicSUP
- Butler Pitch and Putt provides short-course golf, leagues, lessons, food and beverage service, and events.
- Zilker Eagle provides a mini train rides.
- Zilker Cafe (Currently Closed) provides food and beverage services.

Contract Terms

Most concessions in or around Town Lake Park are currently under contract, with the exception of the Zilker Café Figure 2 shows the contractual terms for each of the nine concessions. Additionally, changes to concession contracts in FY25 are discussed below.

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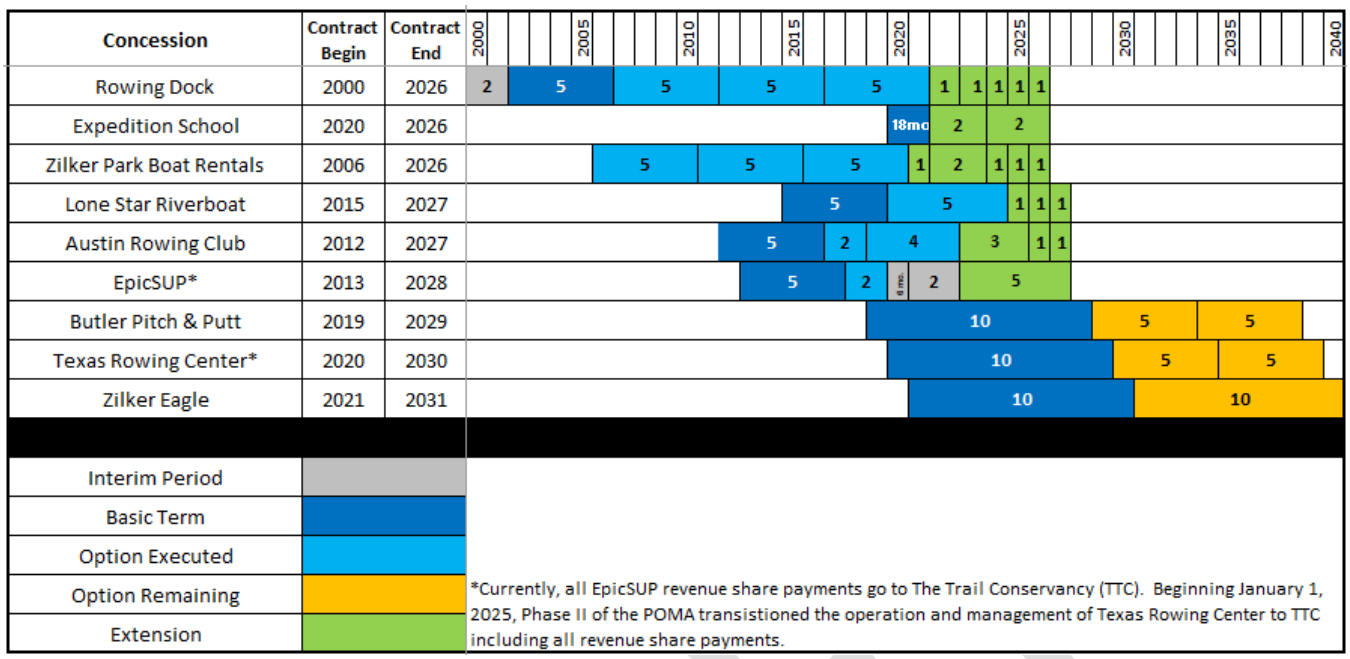

Figure 2. Contract Terms for Lady Bird Lake Concessions

New Concessions

APR did not enter into any new concession agreements in FY25.

Solicitations

Zilker Café

The Zilker Café concession has not been operational since 2016. To meet code requirements and provide ADA accessibility, the building underwent extensive renovations to address its severely deteriorated condition.

In 2019, Austin Parks and Recreation (APR) executed a contract with a vendor to begin operations in January 2021. However, the opening was delayed due to building permitting issues, the COVID-19 pandemic, and an unforeseen requirement for a

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Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow beer and wine sales under the vendor's proposal. APR was unable to obtain the CUP, and the City and vendor mutually terminated the agreement.

In May 2023, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and received one response, which did not meet minimum revenue share requirements. The vendor declined to submit a revised proposal, and the solicitation was canceled. On February 24, 2025, APR released a new competitive solicitation. After extending the deadline to April 3, 2025, one responsive bid was received and presented to the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) on June 23, 2025, for recommendation to City Council.

On August 26, 2025, during a City Council work session, Council members present requested that the solicitation be canceled and directed staff to explore alternative approaches that would make the opportunity more attractive to local vendors. The solicitation was officially canceled on September 4, 2025. APR intends to pursue a vendor once a determination is made on the best contracting approach by the Austin Financial Services, Real Estate Services (AFS). In the interim, the facility is being used to support aquatics programming during Barton Springs Bathhouse renovations.

Contract Extensions

Austin Rowing Club at Waller Creek Boathouse

In late 2021, Project Connect announced plans for a bridge and tunnel across the lake, requiring demolition of the Waller Creek Boathouse. Because demolition was projected for 2024, the solicitation process was paused until details on the transit line location and construction timeline could be confirmed.

On June 16, 2025, an amended extension was executed to clarify language from Resolution No. 20220901-085, which directs the City Manager to coordinate with the Austin Rowing Club to continue and extend the Club's agreement beyond the demolition of the current boathouse. The amendment extends the agreement until December 31, 2027, or sixty days prior to the start of demolition, as reflected in the City's demolition contract and approved permit, whichever occurs first.

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Additionally, APR completed the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process for alcohol sales, which began on June 13, 2024. The site was allowed to continue alcohol sales during the review period. The CUP was approved on January 28, 2025 (SPC-2024-0236A).

Lone Star Riverboat

In March of 2025, APR requested the extension of the operation and management of excursion boat agreement with LoneStar Riverboat be extended until July 31, 2026. APR needed time to determine feasibility of the location due to construction projects and ongoing development of the area and to determine if we seek another concession contract for the location. In October 2025, APR requested the agreement be extended through July 31, 2027, as there are pending capital improvements in the area that were still under consideration. The long-term direction for a concession at this location is currently unknown. The future plans for the area is expected to be finalized in late 2026 or early 2027.

Rowing Dock

In September 2025, APR requested an additional one-year extension to ensure the watercraft amenity is available to the public. The current agreement expires on October 31, 2026. This extension allows time for APR to receive guidance from the AFS on establishing a new agreement for the operation and maintenance of the watercraft concession at 2418 Stratford Drive.

Zilker Park Boat Rental

In January 2025, Austin Parks and Recreation (APR) requested a one-year extension of the current agreement to assess the feasibility of continuing a concession at the Barton Creek location. This evaluation was conducted in collaboration with Austin Watershed Protection (AWP) to address concerns regarding erosion and creek bank

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degradation. See the section, Barton Creek Concession Feasibility, for additional details below. Additionally, please see information below related to the Legacy Concessions for more details.

APR Concession Policy and Procedure Update

APR began work to update the policy and procedures for concessions in the City park system in May 2025. The purpose of this policy is to establish policies and procedures intended to maintain the aesthetic and environmental quality of the Parks System, provide positive recreational experiences to park visitors, and ensure a financial return to the City from park concessions. In accordance with City Code Title 8, the Austin Parks and Recreation Director has the authority and responsibility to execute policies and procedures for concessions in City of Austin parks in accordance with City policies and best practices.

The original policy and procedures were superseded on March 12, 1998, and adopted by Council Resolution 900312-25. APR presented the revisions and introduced a framework for establishing a Legacy Concession to the Park's Board on August 25, 2025, and the Environmental Commission on September 17, 2025.

Austin City Council approved the revised policy under resolution 20251106-043, Appendix 1, on November 6, 2025. Following Council feedback, the approved framework for consideration of a legacy concessions includes:

A Legacy Concession is an existing concession operating in the Parks System under an agreement with the Department that:

- Has been continuously owned and operated in the same park location by the same person, Local Business, or a family member of the person or owner of the Local Business for at least 20 years;

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- Has operated under the same or a similar name throughout its existence;
- Contributes to the City's history and culture, as determined solely by the Department; and
- Has maintained its physical features in good condition.

APR anticipates establishing its first legacy concession with Zilker Park Boat Rental in early 2026.

Parkland Operation and Management Agreements

Austin Parks and Recreation has committed to growing partnerships in accordance with direction from the Long-Range Plan and City Council (see "The Basis for PARKnerships" on the Austin PARKners website). The department leverages partnerships in service of APR goals and the City of Austin's Strategic Direction 2023. In March 2020, Council **Resolution No. 20200312-041** specifically directed the City Manager to work with established parks nonprofit partners, including The Trail Foundation (now The Trail Conservancy, or TTC), to create opportunities for partnership agreements that would benefit the community.

APR and TTC developed a Park Operations and Maintenance Agreement (POMA) for the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail and the surrounding Town Lake Metropolitan Park with direction from boards and commissions and City Council (see "TTC Timeline" on the POMAs website). As a prerequisite, TTC had to meet the strict Partnership A criteria outlined in APR's partnership configurations (see "Partnership Configurations" on the Austin PARKners website). Executed in June 2022, this formal partnership agreement outlines terms for transferring key rights and responsibilities from the City to TTC in phases.

The POMA grants TTC the ability to be assigned and to manage existing concessions in TTC's park operations area starting in Phase II. TTC's process for procuring and

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managing concessions must comply with City code. All concessions revenue is restricted for TTC's operations and maintenance of the park. The POMA provides no City funding to TTC.

Following the process outlined in the POMA, TTC notified the City on March 31, 2024, of its desire to move to Phase II in all four geographic zones as established in the POMA and sought approval to proceed effective January 1, 2025. The City verified that TTC had met all conditions prerequisite to initiation of Phase II, and on May 24, 2024, the City approved TTC to move to Phase II in all four zones on January 1, 2025, pending approval of required policies and procedures related to activities within Phase II. Additionally, the City instructed TTC to cover Phase II standards, roles, and responsibilities in TTC's 2025 Annual Implementation Document (AID), their operations and maintenance plan for the coming calendar year. TTC submitted the 2025 AID to APR on October 1, 2024, the deadline established in the POMA.

The City of Austin has begun assigning responsibility for concessions to TTC as outlined in the POMA. As of January 1, 2025, TTC now manages the Texas Rowing Center (TRC) watercraft concession along with EpicSUP. Per the POMA, TTC now receives the revenue generated by both concessions, which is restricted to TTC's ongoing operations and maintenance of the Butler Trail and Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

POMA Concessions

EpicSUP

EpicSUP is a former subcontractor with Hosteling International-USA (HI-USA), a group that held a license agreement with APR for use of the building at 2200 S. Lakeshore Blvd. When the hostel closed in 2020, due to COVID-19, HI-USA terminated its agreement with the City, and accordingly, the subcontract with EpicSUP was also terminated. The vendor has continued providing watercraft concession services as a

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result of Council Resolution No. 20201112-071, which authorized EpicSUP to operate first through a temporary concession permit and then through a contract with The Trail Conservancy (TTC).

In 2021, plans were announced that Project Connect would require a bridge and tunnel to be built across the lake, necessitating the demolition of the Waller Creek Boathouse. The site at 2200 S. Lakeshore Drive, near where EpicSUP operates, was identified as a potential site for a new boathouse. Because of the uncertainty surrounding the plans for Project Connect, Council Resolution No. 20220901-085 directed the City to coordinate with TTC to extend the contract with EpicSUP until such time as the site is redeveloped. Accordingly, a contract extension was executed in early 2023, and the extension will allow EpicSUP to continue its operation for a period of up to five years.

Texas Rowing Center

Texas Rowing Center (TRC) at 1541 West Cesar Chavez Street, offers a variety of services that promote the sport of rowing, including equipment rentals of canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddle boards (SUPs), coaching, private lessons, classes, and memberships. On August 27, 2020, after a competitive solicitation process, a management and operation contract for a boating concession contract was awarded to Texas Rowing Center with an initial period of ten years and two five-year optional extensions. In FY25, the management and operation revenue concession contract with Texas Rowing Center was assigned and assumed by TTC as outlined in the POMA phase II (POMA).

APR staff will continue to monitor the contract deliverables of these two contracts and work directly with TTC to ensure ongoing management of the concessions and timely submission of all required reporting.

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Problem Areas, Challenges, and Strategic Actions

Audit of Agreements with Trail Conservancy

In March 2020, Council Resolution 20200312-041 directed the City Manager to collaborate with nonprofit organizations that have established relationships with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (APR). The resolution aimed to create opportunities for agreements that benefit the community and to clearly define roles and responsibilities between nonprofit partners and APR. As a result of this directive, APR launched the Parknership Program, which includes Park Maintenance and Operations Agreements (POMA) with nonprofit partners. Prior to this initiative, APR worked with nonprofits on park projects without formal agreements. To address this gap, Parkland Improvement Agreements (PIAs) were introduced to formalize capital project arrangements and were incorporated under the broader POMA framework.

On February 5, 2025, the City received a report containing several allegations involving The Trail Conservancy (TTC) and APR. These allegations included a lack of transparency regarding APR funding, financial mismanagement and instability at TTC, and ethical violations by a former APR Director as well as former TTC officers and Board members. In response, the City requested the Austin Public Health (APH) Internal Auditor to conduct an audit of APR's POMA with TTC, including PIAs for the Rainey Street Trailhead and Holly Street Project.

The audit was conducted throughout the remainder of calendar year 2025. In January 2026, APR received the APH Internal Auditor's report detailing findings and recommendations. APR is currently reviewing the report and drafting formal responses to address the identified issues.

Austin Rowing Club

A Right to Assurance was initiated June 20, 2024, to confirm ARC's intent to meet its contractual obligations. The primary concern involved ARC's failure to follow required

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procedures for seeking repairs, leaving the shoreline and wetlands remediation plan unresolved.

A coordination meeting was held on June 4, 2024, during which the site plan was reviewed, and maintenance responsibilities were clarified. Phase 1 of the restoration project was completed in May 2024 and included rotating the launch dock by 90 degrees and replacing the Candock system with EZ Docks. An RFP for Phase 2 was issued on June 7, 2024, with proposals due July 10, 2024. Phase 2 construction proceeded from December 2024 through September 2025, meeting the project timeline and resulting in issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

A subsequent report dated October 7, 2025, confirmed that shoreline restoration had been completed and approved. However, the APR Project Manager identified the installation of an unapproved 160 square foot building, along with an AC unit and charging station, none of which were included in the permitted site plan. The City Land Development Code (Chapter 25 – Zoning/Use and Development Regulations) limits structures for this application to a maximum of 48 square feet. As a result, the building and AC unit were removed in November 2025. A determination regarding permitting requirements for the remaining electrical component is still pending.

Expedition School

In September 2025, The Expedition School (TES), located near Holly Shores Lagoon at Festival Beach, reported a safety concern related to an encampment near their operations. TES staff observed that persons experiencing homelessness had set up a tent in the narrow space between two storage containers used for boats and equipment. Staff noted that this area is frequently accessed for equipment storage and emphasized the importance of maintaining a safe environment.

Following the report, APR staff visited the site multiple times to assess the situation and engage with any persons present. As of the most recent inspection, the persons previously observed near the boat ramp are no longer present. APR will continue to monitor the area and address any future concerns as they arise.

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Additionally, APR engaged in ongoing discussions throughout calendar year 2025 with TES regarding potential alternate locations outside the Holly Shores Lagoon for constructing a dock to support continued operation of the temporary watercraft concession. On September 5, 2025, APR issued a letter to TES confirming its decision to maintain concession operations at the Holly Shores Lagoon location. Subsequently, on December 29, 2025, TES submitted a Letter of Intent to the APR Director indicating its decision not to continue operations at the Holly Shores lagoon location upon contract expiration on April 28, 2026.

Zilker Eagle

The Zilker Eagle experienced several operational challenges during FY25. From January through March 9, 2025, the Austin Parks Foundation (APF) reduced operating hours to complete essential engine and track maintenance. In April 2025, a rider safety complaint was reviewed by the APR safety team. After observing train operations, the team determined the risk was minimal, citing appropriate train speed and rider education measures.

On August 28, 2025, APF notified APR that the train would not operate on Wednesdays and Thursdays through September 9, 2025, due to a shortage of qualified train operator and a temporary pause in hiring and operations until after the Austin City Limits Music Festival in October. APR requested clarification on operator qualifications, and APF provided the job description, noting specific physical requirements for operating the locomotive. Additionally, between June and October 2025, APF implemented multiple closures to address track damage and complete necessary repairs, ensuring continued safe operations.

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Waterway Ban

Heavy rainfall across the Austin area on July 4, 2025, resulted in high and swift water conditions combined with significant debris, rendering recreational, commercial, and navigational use of all waterways, including creeks within the City of Austin, unsafe. Affected waterways included Bull Creek, Barton Creek, Lake Austin (from Mansfield Dam to Tom Miller Dam), Lady Bird Lake, and the Colorado River downstream of Longhorn Dam.

On July 7, 2025, the City issued an emergency order prohibiting all commercial, navigational boating, and recreational activities on these waterways. APR watercraft concessionaires were notified to suspend operations until the ban was lifted the following day. As a result, the excessive rainfall and temporary lake closures significantly reduced operations during the peak July 4 holiday period.

Unpermitted Commercial Activity on Parkland

Due to ongoing construction along, I-35 and the closure of the Waller Beach Boat Ramp at Waller Beach at Town Lake Metro Park for construction staging, APR has observed an increase in unpermitted vendors operating at the Festival Beach Boat Ramp. Identified violations include:

- Conducting unpermitted commercial activity for compensation;
- Referencing Festival Beach Boat Ramp and Parkland in business websites, social media, and promotional materials; and
- Using City-managed docks, ramps, and Parkland for commercial purposes without proper authorization.

APR Park Rangers collaborate with Lake Patrol when possible and educates unpermitted businesses on City Code requirements related to commercial operations on Parkland. Additionally, APR continues to issue cease-and-desist letters to businesses found in violation and encourages the public to report suspected unpermitted activity on Parkland by contacting 311.

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Barton Creek Concession Feasibility

On January 24, 2025, the APR staff-initiated discussions regarding the vulnerability of the Barton Creek area, specifically focusing on the restoration of creek banks near Barton Springs and around the Zilker Park Boat Rental watercraft concession located on Barton Creek in Zilker Park, off of Andrew Zilker Rd.

On March 3, 2025, the Austin Watershed Protection (AWP) team provided guidance indicating that the continued degradation of creek banks is primarily due to uncontrolled recreational use by general park visitors, rather than a direct stream bank erosion issue that would fall under the Stream Bank Restoration Program.

AWP recommended a collaborative approach led by APR, with technical input from the Applied Watershed Science team to address riparian and creek health. Additionally, AWP's erosion staff and policy team will be available to provide expertise on bank restoration and assist with any code compliance questions as needed in the future.

Barton Creek Streambank Restoration

In May 2018, a slope failure occurred during a flooding event along Barton Creek adjacent to the Ann and Roy Butler Trail, opposite Lou Neff Point. Approximately 230 linear feet of streambank was affected. Austin Watershed Protection, APR, and The Trail Conservancy collaborated to develop solutions to stabilize the slope and protect the trail.

Construction for the bank restoration began on November 4, 2024, addressing previous slope failures and severe erosion along the east bank of Barton Creek. As of December 2025, the project has achieved the following milestones:

- Site preparation completed
- Storm drain installation under the new spur trail completed

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- Placement of boulders to stabilize the waterline completed
- Installation of structural elements and soil lifts ongoing
- Slope reconstruction ongoing

Substantial completion of construction is anticipated by Spring 2026.

Watercraft Census

APR tracks the number of watercrafts in each concession's inventory and has reported these numbers in the annual concession report since FY11. Table 4 records the number and type of rental crafts in use at the six water APR-authorized recreation concessions in FY25 and Table 5 accounts for the total number of boats for each over the last five years. Beginning late FY25 APR began collecting the total number of watercraft rentals, rowing shells, rowing barges and coaching launches. The total FY25 inventory of watercrafts is 2,099.

Table 4. FY25 Watercraft Inventory, by Type of Boat and Concession

Type of Boat	Austin Rowing Club	EpicSUP	Expedition School	Rowing Dock	Texas Rowing Center	Zilker Park Boat Rentals
Kayaks	174	31	26	194	158	65
Stand-up Paddle Boards (SUP)	145	150	39	251	413	85
Canoes	0	0	6	27	18	55
Rowing Shells	65	0	0	0	160	0
Electric Boats	13	0	0	0	0	0
Coaching Launches	11	0	0	0	10	0
Rowing Barges	2				1	

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Totals	410	181	71	472	760	205

Table 5. Total Boat Inventory, for Concessions Over the Last Five Years

Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Boat Inventory	1,924	2,316	2,374	2,165	2,099

APR staff began compiling peak usage numbers in FY18, in response to the Environmental Commission's questions regarding lake capacity and safety. Table 6 provides the numbers of rentals during weeks of peak usage, as reported by the concessionaires. The numbers represent the total rentals by each concession during designated eight-day periods including spring break (mid-March), Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day. Table 7 provides the total number of rentals for FY25 for each location. Rental activity on these holiday weeks can vary each year due to weather. Nevertheless, the totals for FY25 are down about 3.48% from FY24 inventory totals.

Table 6: Watercraft Rented During FY25 Weeks of Peak Usage, by Concession

Holiday Week	EpicSUP	Expedition School	Rowing Dock	Texas Rowing Center	Austin Rowing Club	Zilker Park Boat Rentals	Totals
Spring Break	374	82	1,743	3,174	1,597	1,911	**8,881**
Memorial Day	523	83	2,210	4,942	1,774	1,594	**11,126**
Fourth of July	203	8	372	2,408	729	407	**4,127**
Labor Day	328	92	1,366	2,289	1,359	885	**6,319**
Totals	**1,428**	**265**	**5,691**	**12,813**	**5,459**	**4,797**	**30,453**

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Table 7: Total Rentals for FY25, by Concession

Type of Boat	EpicSUP	Expedition School	Rowing Dock	Texas Rowing Center	Austin Rowing Club	Zilker Park Boat Rentals	Totals
Canoes	0	22	3,142	3,001	0	1,936	**8,101**
Kayaks	4,445	767	23,379	23,655	19,738	17,900	**89,884**
SUPs	4,428	191	12,926	32,856	5,197	9,043	**64,641**
Electric Boats	0	0	0	0	7,361	0	**7,361**
Shells	0	0	0	3,605	5,867	0	**9,472**
Totals	**8,873**	**980**	**39,447**	**63,117**	**38,163**	**28,879**	**179,459**

The total number of rentals for FY25, including shells, is 179,459. This is the first year the shell total was included in the overall rental numbers. Next year we will be able to make a comparison to this year's numbers.

APR will continue to monitor the number of boats in the concessions' rental inventories.

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Concession Sales, Payments, and Expenditures

Figure 3 below provides gross sales (reported sales plus sales tax) generated by each Town Lake Park concession, as well as reported expenditures and payments to the City. EpicSUP, Texas Rowing Center (TRC) and the Zilker Eagle do not make payments to the city.

	Butler Pitch and Putt (Pecan Grove Golf Partners)	EpicSUP	Expedition School	Lone Star Riverboats	Rowing Dock	Texas Rowing Center	Austin Rowing Club at Waller Creek Boathouse	Zilker Eagle	Zilker Park Boat Rentals
Gross Sales	$3,162,289	$239,133	$16,687	$965,154	$1,561,592	$2,213,668	$3,521,710	$673,691	$822,596
Reported Expenditures	$2,081,685	$179,217	$11,138	$932,214	$1,304,846	$1,935,634	$3,680,983	$572,637	$589,319
Payments	$270,181	$29,312	$1,553	$96,953	$149,523	$297,949	$266,423	$-	$75,506

Figure 3. FY25 Gross Sales, Payments, and Reported Expenditures, by Concession.

In FY25, gross sales totaled $13,176,519 for the nine concessions. The past two years saw a decrease in previously reported watercraft activity over the previous year. Figure 4. below shows the gross sales over the past five years.

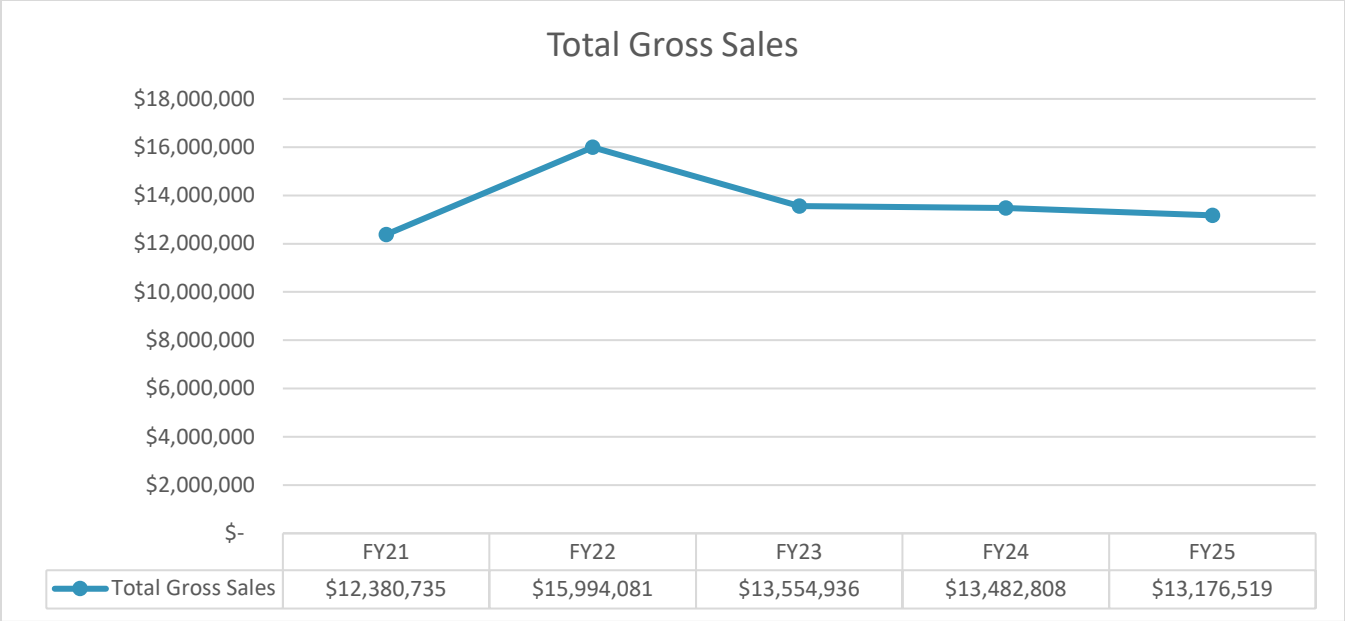

Figure 4. Total Annual Gross Sales Since FY21

Revenue Share Payments

The revenue share for each concession is determined by a unique formula negotiated in each individual contract. The Expedition School, Zilker Park Boat Rentals, and EpicSUP remit a percentage of gross revenue monthly, and the other concessions pay a monthly flat fee in addition to an annual lump sum payment based on total annual revenue. Tables 1 and 2 provide the revenue share formulas required for each concession.

Table 1. Required Monthly Fees and Formulas for Annual Revenue Share Payments to the City, by Concession

Concession	Monthly Payment to the City	Annual Lump Sum Payment
Butler Pitch & Putt	$10,417/month	6% of annual gross revenue (gross sales minus sales tax) exceeding $694,444
Expedition School	+10% of monthly gross revenue	n/a
Lone Star Riverboat	$1667/month	10% of annual gross revenue (gross sales minus sales tax) greater than $200,000

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Rowing Dock	$667/month	1% of annual net revenue (gross sales minus sales tax) plus 8% of net revenue greater than $80,000
Austin Rowing Club	$1000/month	1% of annual net revenue (gross sales minus sales tax) less than and up to $80,000 plus 8% annual net revenue greater than $80,000
Zilker Park Boat Rentals	10% of monthly gross revenue	n/a

Table 2. Required Monthly Fees and Formulas for Annual Revenue Share Payments to The Trail Conservancy and Austin Parks Foundation

Concession	Payment	Managing Organization	Annual Lump Sum Payment
EpicSUP	13.5% of monthly gross revenue	The Trail Conservancy	n/a
Texas Rowing Center	$1,500/month	The Trail Conservancy	1% of annual net revenue (gross sales minus sales tax) plus 12% of net revenue greater than $80,000
Zilker Eagle	Net Revenue share after expenditures	Austin Parks Foundation	n/a

In FY25, the total payments to the City were $1,187,401. Of the FY25 revenue, $887,908 went to the City's general fund and $270,181 (from Butler Pitch and Putt) went to Golf ATX, an enterprise division of APR. The Trail Conservancy was paid $29,312 from EpicSUP and $13,500 from Texas Rowing Center. Austin Parks Foundation collected $101,054. The total FY25 revenue for concessions was $1,158,089.

Figure 5. below shows total revenue payments over the last five years.

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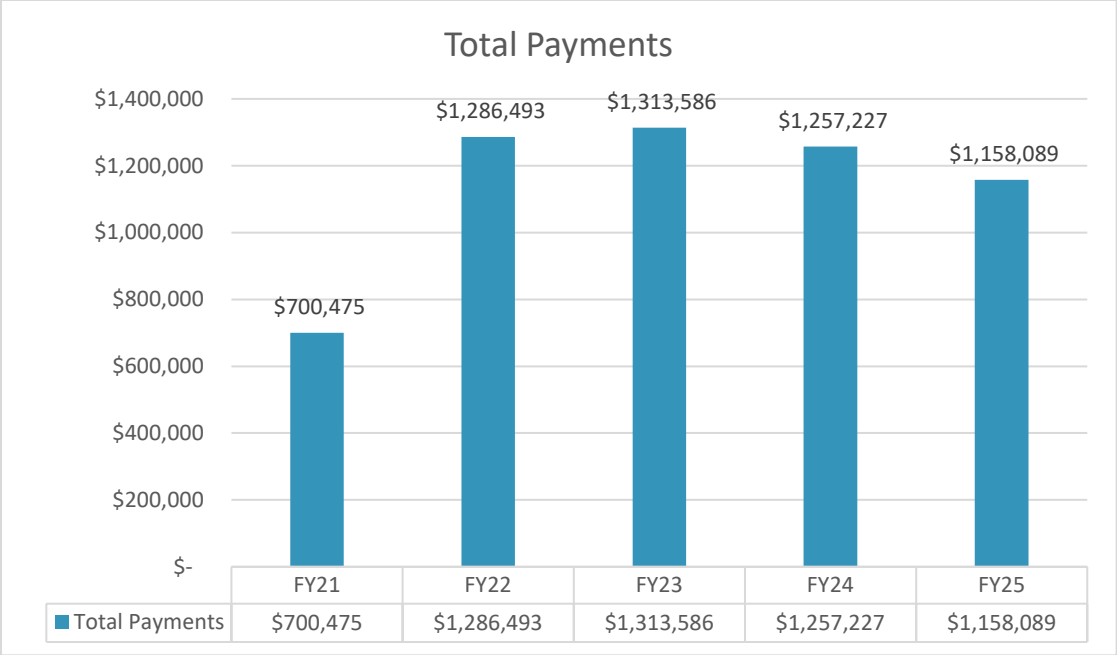

Figure 5. Total Concession Payments, FY21 - FY25

Table 3 below shows the breakdown of revenue payments for each concession over this period.

Table 3. Payments FY21 - FY25, by Concession

Concession	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Butler Pitch & Putt	$98,204	$184,032	$227,266	$255,218	$270,181
EpicSUP*	$53,302	$72,284	$49,173	$42,302	$29,312
Expedition School	$6,086	$4,519	$4,750	$2,712	$1,553
Lone Star River Boat	$10,002	$68,786	$99,561	$93,662	$96,953
Rowing Dock	$138,037	$256,927	$262,403	$175,953	$149,523
Texas Rowing Center**	$188,896	$453,171	$322,984	$359,170	$297,949
Austin Rowing Club***	$114,359	$184,451	$247,901	$237,925	$266,423
Zilker Park Boat Rentals	$91,589	$134,608	$99,548	$90,285	$75,506
All Concessions	**$700,475**	**$1,358,777**	**$1,313,586**	**$1,257,227**	**$1,158,089**

*All EpicSUP revenue share payments are included in this table are paid to TTC.
**As of Jan 1, 2025, TRC revenue share payments will also go to TTC.
***Austin Rowing Club Total reflects the FY24 Lump Sum payment.

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Capital Improvements and Equipment Updates

A capital improvement is a durable upgrade, adaptation, or enhancement of a property that increases its value, often involving a structural change or restoration. Concessions are required to provide basic repairs and routine maintenance of the premises, and these expenses are captured in the expenditures reported above in figure 3. Capital improvements implemented by the concessionaires add to the value of the site and any structures thereon and provide enhancements for customers while also reducing costs to the City. The reported capital improvements and equipment updates for FY25 are listed below:

Butler Pitch and Putt – $102,928

Improvements to the property include new outdoor refrigerator; tree removal; replacement of roadside shrubs bordering course; sod replacement; irrigation work; and pump motor repair.

Rowing Dock – $80,887

Improvements to the grounds; dock and building repairs; purchase kayaks, SUPs and paddles; computer and website upgrade.

Lone Star Riverboat - $55,000

Improvements to the property include replacing deck-rite waterproof roof; update generator to fuel injected Wester Beke 15; upgrade speaker & audio/PA system.

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Texas Rowing Center - $171,994

Improvements to facility and dock repairs; rowing shell purchases and repair; purchase rowing equipment (riggers); upgrade rowing trailers; paddling equipment and vests; rowing and launch safety purchases; SUP/kayak/canoe repairs and renovation.

Austin Rowing Club - $55,803

Improvements included replacing two overhead rolling bay doors; removal of bulkhead; dock project permitting; anchoring of two public docks; improving drainage and landscaping along trail; replacement of ERV and air handler to improve efficiency.

Zilker Park Boat Rental - $500

Improvements included replacement of wood and painting.

Public Benefit

Many of the concession contracts include requirements for public benefit, such as programming for underserved youth and seniors. Among these, the contract with Austin Rowing Club includes specific requirements to provide a minimum of $40,000/year in programming for underserved youth and designate 10% of annual rowing revenue toward financial assistance for rowing memberships, lessons, or camps. APR's vendors typically provide benefits over and above what is required, partnering with community youth groups to provide free or discounted services and with environmental groups for lake cleanup activities.

The self-reported FY25 charitable contributions by the Town Lake Park concessions are summarized below.

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Austin Rowing Club

Provided free programming and discounts to youth and community groups; provided full and partial scholarships for families with demonstrated financial need; hosted lake and trail clean-up events; provided youth programming to underserved youths through the Rowing in Schools Experience (RISE) program at Murchison and Martin middle schools, and the STEM to Stern science and water safety program at Martin Middle School.

Butler Pitch and Putt

Provided passes for free rounds and clinics to local youth programs and non-profit fundraising events; provided cash donations to local charities on behalf of Business League winning teams; waived venue rental fees for Tito's Shorties Classic charity event.

EpicSUP

Hosted monthly and Earth Day lake cleanup events; donated SUPs for events for Operation Get Out and Dam That Cancer; donated gift cards to local charities for fundraising events.

Expedition School

Provided free guided paddle sessions to individuals with severe cognitive disabilities and individuals with visual and hearing impairments; provided discounts for economically disadvantaged schools, individuals, and families; held outdoor education programs for AISD educators and middle and high school students;

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hosted monthly lake cleanup events; submitted weekly water quality test data to LCRA.

Lone Star Riverboat

Donated free passes to local schools and nonprofits for fundraising events, discounts given to seniors, provided reduced price tickets for bat watching cruises for the Education in Action summer program.

Rowing Dock

Provided free equipment rentals, staff labor and paddling instruction to non-profit organizations and schools including Texas School for the Deaf, Austin Sunshine Camps, Texas River School, Exploration Austin, Austin Angels, Flatwater Foundation and Austin Nature & Science Center; hosted nonprofit fundraising events, including Paddle for Puppies (benefiting Austin Pets Alive!) and the Earth Day Lake and Land Clean Up (benefiting The Trail Conservancy); Provided direct cash contributions to fund programming for Texas River School, The Trail Conservancy, Explore Austin and Flatwater Foundation. Continued to support military personnel, first responders, teachers, college students and the Texas Outdoors Woman Network with discounted rentals.

Texas Rowing Center

Provided scholarships for youth rowing programs, summer camp scholarship and scholarships for student with disabilities or underserved populations, and adaptive

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programs; Texas River School, and-TRC High Performance, a non-profit that supports elite rowing athletes training for the Olympics and World Rowing Championships.

Zilker Park Boat Rentals

Donated free watercraft rentals for Keep Austin Beautiful lake cleanup efforts; youth camps, such as Austin Sunshine Camp and Big Brothers Big Sisters; Youth Forest Council; and APR summer camps and after-school programs.

Zilker Eagle

Provided free tickets to be used during the third Wednesday of the month during community hours; provided discounted school group and birthday tickets; free tickets for children under two years of age.

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Concessions Outside of Town Lake Park

Short-Term Permits

In addition to the concessions discussed above, which operate under long-term contracts, APR offers short-term permits for temporary concessions and commercial uses. Permits are issued for a period of either one day or six months, and the types of concessions and commercial activities that are authorized include food trucks, vending or merchandise sales, fitness trainers, performing artists, and group tour operators. Permit fees are based on the term, the use, and the type of park. For example, six-month permits are $1500 for metropolitan parks and $500 for all other parks. The total collected in FY25 from commercial use permits was $25,308.

Details regarding the temporary concessions in Town Lake Park, including types of permits, park areas affected, and names of vendors, are included in Appendix 1.

Concessions at Golf Courses

APR also collects fees from three vendors that operate concessions at City golf courses: two are food and beverage concessions and one is a driving range. The total FY25 revenue collected from the golf concessions was $472,258. These funds are included in the Golf ATX budget.

Additionally, since February 2021, the food and beverage concession at Lions Municipal Golf Course has been operated by Save Historic MUNY District (SHMD), which contracts with a vendor for services and receives 10% of the vendor's net revenue. In FY25, SHMD received $88,106. Per the City's contract with SHMD, the proceeds shall be used only for improvements to the MUNY golf course infrastructure or to upgrade or replace equipment.

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Parks and Recreation Board Recommendations

Staff presented the FY24 report to APRB on January 27, 2025, and the board voted 7-0 with one vacancy and Board Members Becker, Reed and Taylor absent, to recommend to Austin City Council the creation, continuation, termination or status of a concession including issuance of a Request for Proposal for a concession in Town Lake Metropolitan Park for inclusion in the joint report between the Parks and Recreation Board and the Environmental Commission that is provided to the City Council annually.

Environmental Commission Recommendations

APR staff presented the FY24 report at the February 5th and February 19th meetings. The Environmental Commission voted 8-1 on February 19th on Motion No. 20250219-002 to recommend continuation of the concession contracts on Lady Bird Lake (Town Lake) Park with the following conditions:

1. Request City Council initiate a code update to reflect: A.) Concessions report to the Environmental Commission shall include concessions from parks and other than Lady Bird Lake, B.) Only be presented an environmental impact assessment of those concessions.
2. The Environmental Commission requests City Council initiate the establishment of a citizen advisory commission to assist with the oversite of the concession in all CoA parks and public lands. The new Commission or committee shall include a member of the Environmental Commission, Parks Board, and other related commissions and boards.
3. Address the erosion around Lady Bird Lake and report on the revenue used from the concessions to repair the erosion.
4. Delay the implementation of Phase II of the Trail Conservancy POMA until it can be examined to determine the impact on the Environment within the Park and the ability of the Trail Conservancy to meet its environmental requirements based on its current finances.

The joint report was provided to the City Council on February 24, 2025.

In FY25, APR staff carefully considered the Environmental Commission recommendations:

1. Request Council initiate a code update to reflect: A.) Concessions report to the Environmental Commission shall include concessions from parks and other than Lady Bird Lake, B.) Only be presented an environmental impact assessment of those concessions.

On April 11, 2025, and May 27, 2025, APR inquired about the status of the Environmental Commission's request for City Council to initiate a code amendment that would:

A) Require the Concessions Report presented to the Environmental Commission to include concessions from all parks, not only those on Lady Bird Lake; and

B) Limit the report to an environmental impact assessment of those concessions.

As of this report, APR has not received any additional information from the Environmental Commission or City Council regarding action on this request.

2. The Environmental Commission requests City Council initiate the establishment of a citizen advisory commission to assist with the oversite of the concession in all CoA parks and public lands. The new Commission or committee shall include a member of the Environmental Commission, Parks Board, and other related commissions and boards.

On April 11, 2025, and May 27, 2025, APR inquired about the status of the Environmental Commission's request for City Council to establish a citizen advisory commission. As of this report, APR has not received any further information from the Environmental Commission or City Council regarding action on this request.

3. Address the erosion around Lady Bird Lake and report on the revenue used from the concessions to repair the erosion.

APR collaborates with Watershed Protection to evaluate erosion concerns and develop recommendations for remediation. Revenue generated from APR concessions is deposited into the City's General Fund and is not allocated specifically for erosion repair. Additionally, In FY25, APR posted the Community PARKnerships Year End Review with information on partners' work which included capital projects, smaller-scale physical park improvements, ecological restoration, parkland stewardship, green workforce development, programming, and public art.

4. Delay the implementation of Phase II of the Trail Conservancy POMA until it can be examined to determine the impact on the Environment within the Park and the ability of Trail Conservancy to meet its environmental requirements based on its current finances.

As noted in the Park Operations and Maintenance Agreement (POMA) section above, TTC submitted its 2025 Annual Implementation Document by the October 2024 deadline in accordance with Phase II requirements. In July 2025, the City executed an Assignment and Assumption Agreement transferring the Texas Rowing Center (TRC) concession contract to TTC under the terms of the POMA. TTC now assumes full responsibility for TRC's concession operations and management, subject to compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, including those outlined in the POMA. All revenue generated from this concession is dedicated to the maintenance of the Butler Trail and Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

Appendix 1. Austin Parks and Recreation Concession Policy and Procedure Update

Appendix 2. Temporary Concessions and Commercial Use Report FY25

Temporary Concession Permits and Commercial Use

Temporary concession and commercial use permits are required and issued to applicants for commercial activity needs that benefit the public's recreation experiences at approved City of Austin park locations. Permits are granted for either single-day or six-month use.

Revenue for Temporary Concessions and Commercial Use

Net Revenue: $25,307.85

Summary of Revenue for Temporary Concessions

Temporary Concession Permits
Total Permits Issued: 53

- 6 Month Total Revenue: $19,809.20
    - Fee/Permit: $500.00 – $1,500.00
- Single Day Revenue: $1,950.00
    - Fee/Permit: $50.00 – $100.00

Commercial Use Permits – Instructor led groups (six month)
Total Permits Issued: 16

- Total Revenue: $3,048.65
    - Fee/Permit: $50.00
    - Fee/Sound Permit: $20.00
    - Fee/Attendee: $0.45/Attendee
- Group Attendees: 5,126 participants

Performing Artist (single day)
Total Permits Issued: 50

- Total Revenue: $500.00
    - Fee/Permit: $10.00
    - no charge if full rain out

Temporary Concession Permits – Six Month and Single Day

- Concession permits are issued for commercial activity (vending, merchandise sales, etc.) in the park system. Six-month and single-day permits are available.

Park Area	Vendor

Zilker Park – District or Metro	Southside Flying Pizza Lady Bee's Shaved Ice Sno Mo Il Panini Casey's New Orleans Sno Balls Certified Country
Town Lake – District or Metro	None
Northwest – District or Metro Parks	None
Northeast – District or Metro Parks	Southern Soul Bowl
South – District or Metro Parks	None
Downtown – District or Metro Parks	None
Roy G. Guerrero Metro Park	None
Zilker Park Area – Other	Cannone
Town Lake – Other	Sweet Frida
Northwest – Other	Austin Duck Adventures
Northeast – Other	None
South – Other	None
Downtown – Other	None

Targeted Concessions

- APR invited vendors to apply for temporary concessions in parks with high pedestrian traffic through a Request for Applications (RFA) process. The following sites were targeted:
    - Zilker Metropolitan Park

Commercial Use – Fitness Instructors and Instructor-Led Classes

- Commercial use permits are issued for instructor-led classes and exercise groups in the park system for two permit terms: January–June and July–December.

Park Area	**Vendor**
Beverly Sheffield NW District Park	Rah! Fitness
Butler Shores	Dog Training Elite – Dog Training
Circle C Metro Park	Camp Gladiator
Dick Nichols	Fit4Mom
Dove Springs	Austin Parks Foundation Fitness in the Park
Northwest, Walnut Creek, Garrison	Sit Means Sit – Dog Training

Zilker	Austin Parks Foundation Fitness in the Park

Performing Artists – Balloon Artist and Face Painting

- Performing artists are permitted to entertain in the parks using single-day permits.
- Performing Artists permits have increased with Zilker Eagle operation.

Appendix 3. Austin Lake Water Protection Plan and Marine Waste Information

Lone Star Riverboat Cruises

Lone Star Pump-outs: January 2023-October 2025

2025	2024	2023
October 24	September 26	February 15
November 24	August 6	March 21
January 25	July 15	May 11
March 13	June 17	June 8
April 17	May 26	August 7
May 25	April 5	September 5
June 5	March 12	
July 3	February 26	
Aug 20	January 5	
Sept 15	October 31	
	October 4	

Notes: Lone Star Riverboat operates two holding tanks with a capacity of 200 gallons each, and each date listed above represents a single 200-gallon pump-out. In compliance with contract requirements, Lone Star provides Austin Parks and Recreation (APR) with all invoices from its hauler, Sellman Enterprises, Inc. Septic Services, along with waste tracking forms for hauled liquid waste. Documentation of these activities, dating back to 2015, is maintained on file.