



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, LMSW, Assistant City Manager

From: Jesús Aguirre, MBA, CPRE, Austin Parks and Recreation Director

Date: September 25, 2026

Subject: **Update on Passive Parks and Public Information Tools**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on tools for accessing public information on passive parkland in Austin. Passive parks are essential to a well-balanced park inventory, providing connections to nature, vital green infrastructure benefits, and passive recreation opportunities for the city. Austin Parks and Recreation may categorize a park as a passive park when its intended use emphasizes conservation and natural features that support low-intensity, informal recreation, such as greenbelts and nature preserves. In addition, a park may be categorized as a passive park when it provides public access to newly acquired parkland until funding is identified and development begins.

Austin Parks and Recreation updated the [Passive Parks Web Application](#), [Parkland Acquisition and Dedication GeoHub page](#), and the attached Passive Parks PDF map to improve public understanding and access to Austin's passive parks. Additionally, the mapping process established new working definitions and updated acreage, and park counts for passive and developed parks.

Passive Parks provide essential relief from urban life by connecting Austinites to native landscapes, creeks, forests, and wildlife. These parks are minimally developed, either in perpetuity or until development funding becomes available. Passive parks offer a wide range of low-impact outdoor recreation opportunities such as hiking, birdwatching, forest bathing, and picnicking.

- **Greenbelts and Nature Preserves** (112 parks; 7,955 acres) protect forests, trails, and ecologically sensitive areas in perpetuity. These lands are maintained in a natural state and are intended to remain minimally developed, providing opportunities for low-impact recreation. They are essential to the city's environmental goals, helping preserve ecological habitats, improve air quality, and strengthen resilience to flooding and extreme heat.
- **Neighborhood, Pocket, District, and Metropolitan Parks** (69 parks; 778 acres) serve as flexible public spaces until the formal development process begins. These properties, often located in residential areas, are open and managed for public use until development funding is available and public input on park design can occur.

Date: September 25, 2026
Subject: Update on Passive Parks and Public Information Tools

Developed Parks (245 parks; 9,837 acres) include built amenities and facilities that support structured recreation, community programming, and a broad range of activities. These parks balance active and passive uses while providing essential social infrastructure for communities.

The online maps display only parks that are continuously open to the public. Properties temporarily closed because of construction, demolition, or safety concerns are not shown. An upcoming social media campaign will support online mapping tools by highlighting specific passive parks and land banking strategy.

Should you have any questions, please contact Liana Kallivoka, Assistant Director of Austin Parks and Recreation, at Liana.Kallivoka@austintexas.gov.

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Deborah Thomas, City Attorney
Erika Brady, City Clerk
Jason Hadavi, City Auditor
Mary Jane Grubb, Municipal Court Clerk
Judge Sherry Statman, Municipal Court
CMO Executive Team
Department Directors

Attachment: Passive Parks PDF Map