




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Kimberly A. McNeeley, M. Ed., CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department 

THROUGH: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, **LMSW**, Assistant City Manager

DATE: October 30, 2023

SUBJECT: **2023 Parkland Dedication Stakeholder Engagement Process**

This memorandum serves as an update on the Parkland Dedication Ordinance ([20220915-053](#)), which directed the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) to conduct a stakeholder engagement process with park, housing affordability, and development stakeholders to explore and make recommendations regarding:

- New methodologies for calculating parkland dedication fees for both residential and commercial properties
- Alternative timing for the City to collect any required fee-in-lieu
- Potential exemptions for commercial developments that produce less than one functional population
- Revisiting parkland dedication requirements for mixed-use developments
- Consideration of any Planning Commission recommendations not already adopted by Council

In response to Council's direction, the Department hired a consulting team to conduct an engagement process and guide the development of recommendations. The results are summarized in the attached report; however, recent legislation impacts this information. House Bill (HB) 1526 was signed into law by Governor Abbott on June 10, 2023. The passage of HB 1526 greatly impacts Austin's Parkland Dedication Ordinance; consequently, most of the recommendations from the stakeholder engagement process will no longer be valid for multifamily, hotel, and motel developments within the City.

[HB 1526](#) and its identical [Senate Bill 558](#) impact Parkland Dedication in cities with populations over 800,000. This includes Austin, Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, and Fort Worth, which is about 25% of the Texas population. Passage of HB 1526 supersedes the City's previous parkland dedication, limiting the City's authority on how parkland dedication can be administered. The bill places both fee and land caps

on the parkland requirements for a new development, creating an inverse relationship between the amount of parkland that may be required for on-site dedication and the density of the development's location in the city. In summary, the new bill will:

- reduce parkland from 9.4 acres per thousand residents under current code to 0.075 acres, 0.75 acres, and approximately 3 acres per thousand residents in the Central Business District, Urban and Suburban zones, respectively.
- likely reduce opportunities to connect with the City's creeks, trails, and open spaces, which provide relief from urban life.
- change new fee amounts collected to an estimated 40-70% of what is charged today per multifamily dwelling.
- pre-exempt the city from requiring parkland dedication from commercial developments, overturning the recent amendments approved by Council in 2022.

The Department is working with several other City Departments and partner cities to draft a new ordinance in compliance with the state legislation. The new ordinance, including the designation of geographic areas for the purpose of fee calculation, must be adopted no later than December 1, 2023, and will apply to all multifamily, hotel and motel plans submitted after January 1, 2024.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6717.

Cc: Jesús Garza, Interim City Manager

City of Austin Parkland Dedication

2023 Community Engagement January – April 2023

Report prepared by: CD&P, a public engagement consultant.

Updated: July 2023

PARKLAND ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 1985



1,800+
acres of
parkland
dedicated to
the city

121
NEW
PARKS or extensions
dedicated or
purchased
through Parkland
Dedication



84
of park
easements **ACRES**



2022: IN ONE YEAR OF HIGH GROWTH

19
ACRES of parkland
dedicated
to the city



10
of park
easements **ACRES**



14
NEW
PARKS or extensions
dedicated or
purchased through
Parkland Dedication



Overview

In 2022, City Council approved an updated Parkland Dedication Ordinance (20220915-053) which included parkland requirements for commercial development. At that time, Council also directed staff to conduct a stakeholder engagement process with parks advocates, housing affordability advocates, and development representatives to explore and make recommendations on

- New methodologies for calculating parkland dedication fees for both residential and commercial properties
- Alternative timing for the City to collect any required fee-in-lieu
- Potential exemptions for commercial developments that produce less than one functional population
- Revisiting parkland dedication requirements for mixed-use developments
- Consideration of any Planning Commission recommendations not already adopted by Council

In response to Council's direction, PARD hired a consulting team to conduct the engagement process and guide the development of the recommendations. The consultants were present in or led all stakeholder meetings. One member of the consultant team was CD&P, a public engagement firm in Austin. PARD also hired Dr. John Crompton, a distinguished professor at Texas A&M University and a subject matter expert on parkland dedication, to consult on the recommendations. The stakeholder process took place between January 24 and March 14, 2023 and included two virtual Community Meetings and 21 separate Stakeholder Interview meetings. Staff received valuable feedback and noted additional topics identified by stakeholders, which have been included here as well. The stakeholder engagement process is summarized on the following pages.

Community Conversations Kickoff Meeting

24 participants

The City of Austin Parkland Dedication Team held a virtual community meeting on January 23, 2023 to provide information about the goals and history of parkland dedication in Austin, the upcoming stakeholder engagement process, and ways to participate. The meeting included a presentation and discussion session, with 73 attendees invited to participate. Discussion topics included:

- Questions about park maintenance requirements and responsibilities
- Clarification about exemptions for affordable housing
- Questions, requests, and recommendations regarding the stakeholder engagement process and timeline
- Questions about parkland dedication fee methodology compared to other Texas cities
- Clarification about parkland dedication requirements

Community Conversations Update Meeting

15 participants

The City of Austin Parkland Dedication team held a virtual community update meeting on March 3, 2023 to update community members on the current stakeholder engagement process, share what the project team has heard from stakeholders, and discuss next steps. This meeting included a presentation and discussion session, with 100 attendees invited to participate (excluding PARD staff). Discussion topics included:

- Request for more detailed information on the 5 directives from City Council, such as exploring the methodology and ordinance language updates
- Request for an FAQs sheet on parkland dedication
- Questions on how PARD evaluates and budgets for park maintenance and that this happens in the spring budgeting timeline
- Clarification that parkland dedication fees cannot be used on maintenance and concerns that PARD will not be able to maintain the extra space with the current budget
- Discussion on the next steps in the engagement process, including delivering a report to City Council for their consideration
- Request to evaluate other fee comparisons, noting we only shared the CBRE top ten real estate markets and the Census Bureau's Building Permit Survey of new housing units per 1,000 residents
 - Suggested the City evaluate the Texas A&M report on residential land and housing development fees in Texas
- Discussion on the two state bills and how it will impact parkland dedication

Stakeholder Interviews

From January 24, 2023, to March 14, 2023, the Parkland Dedication team conducted stakeholder interviews to provide staff an opportunity to collect more in-depth information and discuss concerns and suggestions.

General discussion and comment themes included:

Supportive

- Support for commercial and residential parkland dedication ordinances
- Noted benefits of nearby parkland as an appealing feature for employers, new residents, and tourists
- Noted consistent access to nearby parkland contributes positively to both mental and physical health
- Large Texas cities are experiencing rapid population growth and parkland needs to keep up with this growth

Concerns

- Impacts of development on wildlife and environmental features
- Increasing costs for developers due to parkland dedication fees
- Maintenance of the existing park system
- Clarification of park maintenance and responsibilities
- Impacts on affordability
- Clarification regarding parkland dedication process, fees, and requirements is needed

Suggestions

- Determine fees based on geographic locations
- Changes to the fee methodology
- The Early Determination Letter should include more details about the process
- Look for more opportunities to clarify the process on requirements and fee usage
- New parkland development should take climate change into account

Report

The first part of this report is Staff Recommendations developed after considering stakeholder input and feedback regarding Parkland Dedication. These recommendations are organized into broad categories with descriptions, options for implementation, and the level of staff support that would be needed to implement.

The second part of this report documents the stakeholder engagement process including feedback received.

State Legislation

During the stakeholder process, two bills (HB 1526 and SB 558) were introduced at the Texas Legislature, which impact Parkland Dedication in cities with populations over 800,000, about 25% of Texans. With the passage of HB 1526, the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance will be greatly impacted, and the recommendations from this process will need to be revisited. The passage of HB 1526 prescribes the acreage and fee formulae for Multifamily and Hotel units and limits the city's authority on how parkland dedication can be administered. As such, some of the recommendations in this report may be limited to single family development, and no longer applicable to multifamily or hotel units – specifically, fee calculations and cost of service. The bill also pre-exempts the city from requiring parkland dedication from commercial developments, overturning the recent amendments approved by Council in 2022.

Staff Recommendations

Alternative Methodologies for Fee Calculations

Current fee rates are based on a 5-year average for city-wide acquisitions of parkland. The list below compares the City Council-adopted fees from 2022, which limit the increase to 10% over the previous year, the 5-year average cost to acquire parkland, and the city-wide average value of an acre of land according to TCAD.

- Current Fee (as set by Council): \$166,644 per acre
- 2022 5-year Parkland Acquisition Average: \$365,000 per acre
- 2022 Travis County Appraisal District Average: \$973,463 per acre

Staff received feedback from stakeholders that fees should be based on geographic areas (Central Business District, Urban, Suburban), as land values vary from urban to rural Austin. Under the current ordinance, a city-wide average land value is used to calculate parkland fees-in-lieu; stakeholders felt the average land value is often inconsistent with actual land values. Further, stakeholders noted land values have increased dramatically in the last decade, resulting in a higher city-wide 5-year land value and a rise in the parkland fees-in-lieu. Alternatively, stakeholders suggested basing fees on a 10-year average of parkland acquisitions, rather than a 5-year average, to mitigate the effects of rising land costs.

To better understand the impacts of recommending a change in the fee structure, staff explored another alternative for the fee methodology by evaluating the True Cost of Service in different geographic areas. To define the True Cost of Service, staff consulted with Dr. John Crompton, who recommends the method shown below to determine the actual impact of new developments on the city's current level of park service.

Calculating the True Cost of Service

The True Cost of Service was calculated by combining the cost of parkland acquisition and park development in the CBD, Urban, and Suburban geographic areas of the city to identify the actual cost of maintaining the current level of park service with development to account for population growth.

The following table provides a comparison, on a per unit basis, of the current fees, the True Cost of Service at 5, 10, and 15%, and the fees that would be associated with House Bill 1526. See attached worksheet for True Cost of Service calculations.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \textbf{DWELLING UNIT DENSITY} \\
 \times \\
 \textbf{ACQUISITION} \\
 \left[\frac{\text{TCAD avg land cost} \times \text{number of park acres}}{\text{Population}} \right] \\
 + \\
 \textbf{DEVELOPMENT} \\
 \left[\frac{\text{per acre cost park development} \times \text{number of park acres}}{\text{Population}} \right]
 \end{array}$$

Per Unit Costs	True Cost of Service (TCS)	Current Ordinance Fee Per Unit	Current % of TCS	5% of TCS	10% of TCS	15% of TCS	HB 1526 Fee Per Unit	% of TCS - HB 1526
High Density CBD	\$99,625.37	\$3,801.53	4%	\$4,981.27	\$9,960.46	\$14,943.81	\$1,593.69	2%
Low Density Urban	\$70,536.12	\$6,261.34	9%	\$3,526.81	\$7,053.22	\$10,580.42	\$6,261.34	9%
Med Density Urban	\$55,421.24	\$4,919.63	9%	\$2,771.06	\$5,541.89	\$8,313.19	\$4,919.63	9%
High Density Urban	\$42,825.50	\$3,801.53	9%	\$2,141.28	\$4,282.33	\$6,423.83	\$3,614.49	8%
Low Density Suburban	\$86,310.21	\$6,261.34	7%	\$4,315.51	\$8,630.84	\$12,946.53	\$6,261.34	7%
Med Density Suburban	\$67,815.17	\$4,919.63	7%	\$3,390.76	\$6,781.30	\$10,172.28	\$4,919.63	7%
High Density Suburban	\$52,402.63	\$3,801.53	7%	\$2,620.13	\$5,240.09	\$7,860.39	\$6,275.16	12%

Staff recommends that Council consider the following options for updating the fee methodology, to address stakeholder concerns and to maintain fees consistent with growing parkland service demands:

- Base fees on a percentage of the True Cost of Service with updates as needed
- Compare the current methodology to the actual appraised value of the land when calculating the fee and utilize the lesser of the two
- Maintain current methodology and cap fee increases to a percentage year over year

Include More Details in Early Determination Letters

Early determination letters are a free service meant to provide information to the applicant on whether parkland requirements will be satisfied with land or fees. An interactive fee calculator is also available that allows applicants to calculate fees ahead of site plan submittal.

Stakeholders expressed interest in having more details outlined in the letters for their consideration in development planning.

Staff can provide more details on the intent of the parkland – to provide connectivity, community gathering spaces, an expansion of an existing park, active recreation, dog recreation, etc. Per Code, the information provided in the letters is binding, and staff would like to preserve some flexibility for working with applicants during the site plan process. Flexibility on specifics such as the exact location or exact amount of parkland will allow for changes to the site plan made by the applicant due to other code requirements, market changes, or other site development factors. Maintaining this flexibility helps staff meet multiple review discipline objectives while providing code-compliant parkland.

[Parkland Dedication Fee Calculator](#)

Maintenance Discounts

Stakeholder feedback included requests to credit anticipated park maintenance costs against required parkland fees. Maintenance is not currently factored into parkland dedication requirements. Case law has established that parkland dedication is for new capital expenditures to capture the increased burden on the park system. Currently, the cost of the additional maintenance is included in the City's annual general fund budget. New developments may voluntarily maintain the parkland through an agreement with the Parks and Recreation Department, should developments wish to provide a more customized service for their adjacent parkland.

There is an opportunity for a maintenance discount on the parkland fees through a Parkland Improvement and Maintenance Agreement (PIMA) if the developer prefers to maintain the parkland to a higher standard than PARD. Staff recommends that a clear and consistent methodology be developed to determine exact discounts.

Update the Site Plan & Permitting Process

Parks with Typical Neighborhood Amenities

Neighborhood and pocket parks require full site plan review, increasing the cost and time of their development, hindering the ability to use parkland dedication funds and deliver projects intended for new residents. Staff recommends that park projects with neighborhood park-type amenities, including playgrounds, pavilions, and open field play, be exempt from site plan review and instead permitted under a General Permit. Other related code amendments may be recommended.

Parks with Concept or Vision Plans

Currently, 82% of Austin Parks are over one acre. Park projects over one acre (including updates to an established park) must apply for a conditional-use site plan. Most park projects have gone through a Concept or Vision Planning process that includes community engagement. Staff also propose that approved Concept and Vision Plans may permit development in lieu of an approved conditional use site plan.

Update Affordability Exemptions

Recent changes to the parkland dedication ordinance expanded the affordability exemption to all units participating in a government-certified affordability program. This includes projects with an affordability period of one year, meaning they are exempt from fees at the time of permitting and do not account for their impact on the park system, but may revert to market-rate units after one year. Feedback from the Housing Department suggests the affordability exemption is too broad and not consistent with other programs. Staff recommend updating the ordinance to ensure only truly affordable units are exempt from parkland fees, and that the language is consistent with exemptions provided for the Street Impact Fee. This prevents a short-term affordability loophole from impacting the parkland level of service:

(C) To retain a reduction under this section, a unit of affordable housing must comply with the requirements of this subsection.

- (1) A rental unit must be available for occupancy for a period of not less than 40 years by an occupant whose gross household income does not exceed 60 percent of the median family income for the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- (2) An owner-occupied unit must be available for occupancy for a period of not less than 99 years by an occupant whose gross household income does not exceed 80 percent of the median family income for the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Timing of Fee Collections

Stakeholders requested a change in the timing of fee collection to occur just before the certificate of occupancy is issued. Currently, fees are required to be paid prior to approval of the subdivision or site plan application.

Staff recommends deferred payment options be considered at either the issuance of the Building Permit or within one year of fee assessment, whichever occurs first. To account for the depreciation in fees, a deferral fee should be applied to deferred payments. The applicant should request to defer fees within 30 days of filing for submittal. Additional staff may be required to administer deferred fees. Deferral past building permits becomes exponentially challenging and time-consuming to administer. Certificate of Occupancy is not an established review process and poses the risk of withholding new residents' homes until payment occurs.

Floodplain Credits

The previous 2022 code update included an allowance for partial credit to parkland within the 25-year floodplain if it can be activated safely as determined by the Director. Stakeholders suggested the code should restrict the Director's discretion in determining the creditable floodplain allowance in order to maximize creditable park acreage on a property.

Staff recommends maintaining the Director's discretion in crediting 25-year floodplain for health and safety reasons and allowing up to 25% credit in the 25-year floodplain if recreational and educational opportunities may safely be provided to the community. [Recent Ordinance Updates to the Parkland Dedication Ordinance \(PDF\)](#) (Oct. 12, 2022)

Affordability Discount for Commercial Properties

Stakeholders suggested a 50% reduction on the commercial parkland dedication assessment for those developments that enter into a long-term affordability agreement with the City of Austin. They noted an equivalent affordability offset for commercial properties, mirroring the residential offset, should be implemented. Although there are no current programs that would provide discounts to these types of businesses, PARD is supportive of this concept and will administer the program once these discounts or exemptions are developed. Austin Economic Development Department and Small and Minority Business Resource Department should be involved in developing this program.

Small Business Exemption

The Planning Commission and stakeholders recommended an exemption to parkland dedication requirements for a small business defined as less than 5,000 sq. ft. Staff recommends utilizing the functional population (the number of people counted for a business) calculation for the exemption. If a commercial development size produces less than 1 whole functional population, it should be exempt (2022 fee calculations: retail – **4,256 sq. ft.**, office – **3,827 sq. ft.**, industrial – **10,463 sq. ft.**, hotel – **5,885 sq. ft.**) The numbers will change annually.

Creative Use Exemptions

Live music venues would be exempt from parkland dedication requirements following Resolution No. 20220728-094, which directs the City Manager to create an incentive program for live music venues. The incentive program may include fee waivers that may be applied to the parkland dedication fees for qualifying commercial developments. Using this exemption would require knowing the use of the building prior to construction, as fees would not be collected if the use changes from a creative use space to regular office. Other incentive programs should be considered to encourage the development of creative use venues such as art galleries, art workshops, and theaters.

Note that only new proposed square footage is subject to parkland dedication; art workshops moving into existing buildings would not be affected by commercial parkland dedication. Only newly constructed art, music, and theatre venues developed through the permitting process would be subject to parkland dedication.

Suggestions Without Staff Recommendation

Mixed-Use Developments

Stakeholders suggested mixed-use developments should only be subject to the higher fee of the two assessed for residential and commercial uses.

The impact of a new mixed-use development is the combined impact of the commercial and residential portions of the proposed development. Both the commercial and residential portions of the development will bring new unique park users with impacts on the level of park service provided to the community. If commercial developments within mixed-use developments do not have the same requirements as standalone commercial developments, this may open the ordinance to increased scrutiny as not all developments are being treated equally.

Suggestions Already Addressed

Annual Review of the Ordinance

Stakeholders suggested PARD staff should reassess ordinance efficacy on an annual basis, and present findings to the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) and Planning Commission (PC), including an annual evaluation and update of the estimated telecommuting rates in the Austin metro area.

The formula is written with multiple variables that are updated annually. PARD reports PLD findings annually to the Parks and Recreation Board through the annual report. These findings are also updated annually on the PLD Webpage.

[Parkland Dedication General Webpage](#)

Public Exterior Activity Amenities

Stakeholders suggested the cost or the square footage of public exterior activity amenities provided in commercial projects should be subtracted from the overall parkland dedication or fee requirement. Stakeholders commented that programs like Great Streets or other developments that provide publicly accessible space should be subtracted from the parkland dedication requirement because they serve a similar public purpose and may be better maintained by the property owner, despite not being owned or operated by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Great Streets program serves a different purpose than parkland dedication, which is to improve sidewalks downtown in exchange for entitlements and bonuses. Further, not all Great Streets requirements meet Parkland Dedication requirements, as required by code to receive credit for Parkland Dedication.

However, if the proposed publicly accessible community benefits meet parkland dedication standards, are not counted for other code requirements, and are within a parkland easement, then the costs associated with developing those community benefits are already eligible for up to 100% credit in the code today.

Account for Users Who Work Outside of Austin

Stakeholders suggested an annual assessment to study the formulas that account for users who live in Austin but work outside the park service area, and look at other park users not accounted for. This is already accounted for in the current formula using the latest American Community Survey data, which are updated annually.

The formula considers the total workforce who reside and work in Austin to find the total number of workers who reside outside of Austin and work in Austin. The formula excludes the number of workers residing in Austin and working outside of Austin because they are already captured in the residential formula. It is well documented that Austin residents who work outside of Austin still use Austin parks outside of work hours, such as evenings and weekends.

Parkland Deficiency Map Audit

Stakeholders noted the parkland deficiency map that is used to require developers to dedicate parkland in deficient areas, is out-of-date and is not reflective of all the green space, trails, and parkland available to Austinites. Some stated that it needs to be audited as part of this process, and rules should be in place to ensure it is updated on a frequent and consistent basis.

The Parkland Deficiency Map and the City's property profile viewer are updated on a regular basis as new parks are acquired throughout the year. Areas within walking distance of parkland are considered deficient park areas if they meet certain criteria. This includes areas within creek buffers and areas within the Critical Water Quality Zone, due to their potential as a greenbelt. This also includes any area affected by a significant barrier to parkland, such as highways, railroads, and high traffic streets. Discrepancies identified in the park deficiency map may be emailed to parkland.dedication@austintexas.gov for review and will be addressed upon confirmation.

[Deficient Park Interactive Map](#)

Hotel Requirements

Stakeholders suggested adjusting or developing a unique parkland dedication formula for hotels in order to assess their unique usage. Stakeholders commented that the full square footage of the hotel is currently being counted toward both residential and commercial parkland dedication requirements. The commercial requirement and fee should be based only on the square footage of the meeting rooms, kitchens, and other rooms excluding the residential square footage. The stakeholders asserted that charging twice for the hotel rooms (as a residential and commercial fee) rather than charging the rooms for the residential fee and commercial space for the commercial fee is double-dipping and overcharging for this particular use.

Hotels are unique in that the square footage of the rooms are occupied by both the visitors (who are assessed under the residential formula) and the workers (who are assessed under the commercial formula). The number of workers required to run a hotel depends on the number of rooms and the square footage of the hotel rooms. If the fee only considered the square footage of meeting rooms, kitchens, and other common areas, it would significantly undercount the number workers required to maintain the rooms. The square footage of the hotel is used to establish the number of workers present, by utilizing Green Building Code metrics for workers per square foot, in the same way, that the number of rooms is used to establish the number of guests.

[The Commercial Parkland Dedication Nexus Study](#) explores the unique usage of hotels further.

Resources

How Fees Can Be Used

Stakeholders asked for clarity on how fees can be used. Generally, fees can be spent on anything that expands access or creates new access to parkland or creates new facilities and amenities. Fees cannot be spent on maintenance or mitigation fees or improvements which are required as part of the site plan process. Please reference the Amenity Booklet and the Nature Play Guidelines for more information. Examples of how fees have been used in the past are included in several online galleries of parks.

[Parkland acquisition and bond spending educational video \(15 min\)](#)

[Parkland acquisition and bond spending trailer \(30 sec\)](#)

[Parkland Dedication Youtube playlist](#) (suite of educational videos on PLD and featured parks)

[Parkland Dedication Residential Storymap](#)

[Parkland Dedication Commercial Storymap](#)

[2020 Parkland Dedication Year in Review](#)

For reference, additional links can be found within the web pages above:

[Parks and Recreation Board Recommendation 20200225-B3](#)

[Parks and Recreation Board Recommendation 20220328-B5](#)

[City Council Resolution 20220407-042](#)

[Parks and Recreation Board Recommendation 20220725-8](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 20220809-10](#)

[SpeakUp Austin! Summary Report & Survey Response](#)

[Ordinance No. 20220915-053](#)

Stakeholder Engagement Process

Purpose

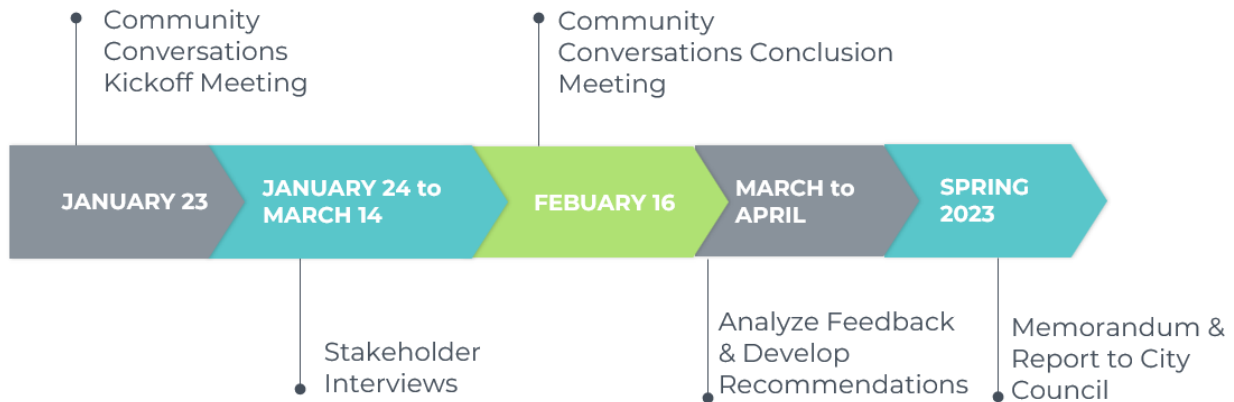
As a part of the September 2022 update to the City of Austin's Parkland Dedication ordinance, City Council directed staff to engage stakeholders on parkland dedication and explore opportunities to update and fine-tune the commercial and residential parkland dedication ordinances.

PART 5. The City Manager is directed to conduct a multi-department stakeholder process to explore potential changes to the parkland dedication ordinance, including but not limited to, exploring and making recommendations on new methodologies for calculating parkland dedication fees for both residential and commercial properties, alternative timing for the City to collect any required fee-in-lieu, potential exemptions for commercial development that produce less than one functional population, revisiting parkland dedication requirements for mixed use developments, and consider any Planning Commission recommendations not already adopted by Council. At minimum, stakeholders from the following communities should be included in any input process: parks advocates, housing affordability advocates, and development representatives.

[Ordinance no. 20220915-](#)

Process & Timeline

The process for community engagement included two larger virtual community meetings – a kickoff meeting and an update meeting to share what we had heard, and a round of stakeholder interviews.



Stakeholders Engaged

Through this process, the following groups were engaged through community meetings or stakeholder interviews:

Development Community

- Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)
- Austin Homebuilders Association
- Coleman and Associates
- Pape-Dawson Engineers
- Endeavor Real Estate Group
- Forestar Group

City of Austin Departments

- Housing and Planning
 - Watershed Protection
 - Development Services
 - Urban Trails Program
-

Parks Community

- Hill Country Conservancy
- Austin Parks Foundation
- The Trail Conservancy
- Ecology Action of Texas
- Creating Common Ground
- Blunn Creek Partnership
- Barton Springs Conservancy
- Austin Outside
- Fruitful Commons
- Austin Ridge Riders
- Save Historic MUNY District
- Charlie McCabe Consulting
- Great Springs Project
- Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association
- Austin Social Sports
- Red Line Parkway Initiative

General

- Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Individual Austin Landowners
- Zilker Neighborhood Association

True Cost of Service Worksheet: Fee Required to Retain the Existing Parkland Level of Service

Please note some numbers have been rounded.

Suburban Level of Service; 7,013 active acres; 6,072 passive acres. Total 13,085 acres

Development Cost of Park Land.

Current Cost of Developing Active Parks is \$350,000 per acre

Cost of Development of Active parks: \$350,000 (Cost per acre) X 7,013 acres = \$2.455b.

Cost of Development of Passive parks: \$50,000 (Cost per acre) X 6,072 acres = \$303.6m.

Total ~\$2.758b.

Asset Value per person: (~\$2.758b./622,215 (pop. In Suburban Austin) = ~\$4,433 per person

Densities of people per residential dwelling: high 1.7; medium 2.2; low 2.8

Level of Service for Development of Park Land:

Low Density: \$4,433 X 2.8 = \$12,412

Medium Density: \$4,433 X 2.2 = \$9,752

High Density: \$4,433 X 1.7 = \$7,536

Cost of Acquiring Park Land.

of residents per acre of Parkland: 622,215/13,085 = ~47.552

Cost per acre (TCAD): \$1.255m

Cost per person of acquiring an acre of Parkland: \$1.255m/~47.552 = ~\$26,392

Low Density: \$26,392 X 2.8 = \$73,898

Medium Density: \$26,392 X 2.2 = \$58,063

High Density: \$26,392 X 1.7 = \$44,867

Total Parkland Dedication Fee to Retain Existing Level of Service:

Low Density: \$12,412 + \$73,898 = \$86,310

Medium Density: \$9,752 + \$58,063 = \$67,815

High Density: \$7,536 + \$44,867 = \$52,403

Urban Level of Service; 1,700 active acres; 1,045 passive acres. Total 2745 acres

Development Cost of Park Land.

Current Cost of Developing Active Parks is \$350,000 per acre

Cost of Development of Active parks: \$350,000 (Cost per acre) X 1,700 acres = \$595m.

Cost of Development of Passive parks: \$50,000 (Cost per acre) X 1,045 acres = \$52.25m.

Total **\$647.25m**

Asset Value per person: (\$647.25m / 341,693 (pop. In Urban Austin) = ~\$1,894 per person

Densities of people per residential dwelling: high 1.7; medium 2.2; low 2.8

Level of Service for Development of Park Land:

Low Density: \$1,894 X 2.8 = \$5,304

Medium Density: \$1,894 X 2.2 = \$4,167

High Density: \$1,894 X 1.7 = \$3,220

Cost of Acquiring Park Land.

of residents per acre of Parkland: 341,693/2745 = ~124.48

Cost per acre (TCAD): \$2.900m

Cost per person of acquiring an acre of Parkland: \$2,900m/124.48 = ~\$23,297

Low Density: \$23,297 X 2.8 = \$65,232

Medium Density: \$23,297 X 2.2 = \$51,254

High Density: \$23,297 X 1.7 = \$39,605

Total Parkland Dedication Fee to Retain Existing Level of Service:

Low Density: \$5,304 + \$65,232 = \$70,536

Medium Density: \$4,167 + \$51,254 = \$55,421

High Density: \$3,220 + \$39,605 = \$42,825.5

CBD Level of Service; 75 active acres; 16 passive acres. Total 91 acres

Development Cost of Park Land.

Current Cost of Developing Active Parks is \$350,000 per acre

Cost of Development of Active parks: \$350,000 (Cost per acre) X 75 acres = \$26.25m.

Cost of Development of Passive parks: \$50,000 (Cost per acre) X 16 acres = \$0.8m.

Total **\$27.05m.**

Asset Value per person: (\$27.05m /20,260 (pop. In CBD) = ~\$1,335 per person

Densities people per residential dwelling: high 1.7; medium 2.2; low 2.8

Level of Service for Development of Park Land:

Low Density: \$1,335 X 2.8 = \$3,738

Medium Density: \$1,335 X 2.2 = \$2,937

High Density: \$1,335 X 1.7 = \$2,269.74

Cost of Acquiring Park Land.

of residents per acre of Parkland: 20,260/91 = ~222.6

Cost per acre (TCAD): \$12,750,000

Cost per person of acquiring an acre of Parkland: \$12,750,000/~222.6 = ~\$57,268

Low Density: \$57,268 X 2.8 = \$160,350

Medium Density: \$57,268 X 2.2 = \$125,990

High Density: \$57,268 X 1.7 = \$97,355.6

Total Parkland Dedication Fee to Retain Existing Level of Service:

Low Density: \$3,738 + \$160,350 = \$164,088

Medium Density: \$2,937 + \$125,990 = \$128,927

High Density: \$2,269.74 + \$97,355.6 = \$99,625



Standard Park Amenities Manual 2022

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NOTES:

This manual provides a guideline of typical park amenities within City of Austin parkland including parks, greenbelts, preserves, plazas, and recreational easements.

The products and examples in this manual are intended to set a minimum acceptable standard for park amenities. Substitutions may be submitted to the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) for approval. Any substitutions require approval from the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department in writing prior to ordering and installing amenities.

Any pricing provided is based on recent projects and is not guaranteed. The pricing is only an estimate for budgeting purposes. Pricing should be verified with the amenity vendor and installer prior to final budgeting.

All work on City of Austin parkland must be approved in writing by the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department prior to amenity ordering. Work approval documentation must include any required site permit, location, installation method, make, model, colors, and any other construction plans associated with the park improvement.

All improvements on parkland are required to meet Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Standard Park Bench - Suburban



Information

Specifications

Standard Length: 4'-0"
Alternate Length: 6'-0"
Model: Pilot Rock Contour Bench or approved equivalent
Recycled plastic timber members (Min. 3" x 4")
Color: Cedar
Frame Finish: Hot-dip galvanized
Mount: In Ground or Surface (Concrete Only)

Product Estimated Cost

4' Length: Material - \$713 each
Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.
4' Length Total Cost - \$1463

6' Length: Material - \$1068 each
Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.
6' Length Total Cost - \$1,818

Additional Requirements

Some benches will require an accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, with a wheelchair space per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Standard Park Bench - Urban

Information

Specifications

Standard Length: 4'-0"
Alternate Length: 6'-0"
Model: Landscape Forms Plainwell Bench or approved equivalent
Aluminum slats without center arm
Color: Powder Coat 'Stone'
Mount: Surface

Product Estimated Cost

4' Length: Material - \$2,760 each
Shipping and Installation - \$900 min.
4' Length Total Cost - \$3,660

6' Length: Material - \$2,720 each
Shipping and Installation - \$900 min.
6' Length Total Cost - \$3,620

Additional Requirements

Some benches will require an accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, with a wheelchair space per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Standard Litter and Recycling Receptacle

Information

Specifications - Standard

Max-R Riveted Round Waste Enclosure w/ 2-Way Access, 32 gallon

Model: X-24104 or approved equivalent

Caramel colored recycled plastic timber slats (Min. 1.75" x 21.625")

24" diameter, 38 7/8" height with lid

Recycled plastic frame, hollow base which will require interior fabricated L-brackets for installation

32 Gallon Capacity, Top opening only, with included 30 gallon black plastic liner can with handles

2-Way Molded Plastic Top, Black

Label option: Landfill/Basura on front or Landfill on front, Basura on back (for use on 2-way approaches)

Mount: Surface

Specifications - Recycling

Max-R Riveted Round Waste Enclosure w/ 2-Way Access, 32 gallon

Model: X-26873 or approved equivalent

Blue colored recycled plastic timber slats (Min. 1.75" x 21.625")

24" diameter, 38 7/8" height with lid

Recycled plastic frame, hollow base which will require interior fabricated L-brackets for installation

32 Gallon Capacity, Top opening only, with included 30 gallon black plastic liner can with handles

2-Way Molded Plastic Top, Blue

Label option: Recycling/Recyclables on front or Recycling on front, Recyclables on back (for use on 2-way approaches)

Mount: Surface

Additional Requirements

Receptacles may require an accessible path, such as concrete or decomposed granite, per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Product Estimated Cost

Standard Receptacle Cost with lid - \$675.24

Recycling Receptacle Cost with lid - \$675.24

Shipping (pallet* rate) - \$775

Total for Pair of Receptacles - \$2,125.48

* Each pallet can fit (5) receptacles.

Standard Litter and Recycling Receptacle - Downtown Squares



Information

Specifications

Model: Landscape Forms Poe Litter Receptacle – Standard Side Opening or approved equivalent

Signage: Standard Sign #17 “Landfill” white text on clear vinyl

Lid & Body Color: Powder Coat ‘Stone’

Model: Landscape Forms Poe Recycling Receptacle – Side Opening with 5” diameter holes (Special Part # PO999-06015-02-2SIGN12) or approved equivalent

Signage: Standard Sign #12 - “Recyclable Material Only” white text on clear vinyl

Lid & Body Color: Powder Coat ‘Stone’

Diverter/Shield/Door Top Plate Color: ‘Bluebell’

Product Estimated Cost

Landfill Receptacle - \$2,470 each, Recycling Receptacle - \$2,550 each

Shipping and Installation - \$700 each

Total Receptacle Cost - \$3,170 - \$3,250 each

Additional Requirements

Receptacles may require an accessible path, such as concrete or decomposed granite, per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Mutt Mitt Station

Information

Specifications

Pet Waste Dispenser and Scoop the Poop sign - \$600 (installed)

Currently supplied by Austin Watershed.

Notes:

- 1) Optional “on leash” or “off leash” sign can be placed above the “scoop the poop” sign.
- 2) Bag dispenser should be set between 15” minimum and 48” maximum above finished grade to meet accessibility standards and on an accessible pathway.

Additional Requirements

Some dispensers must be on accessible route as specified per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Square Pedestal Picnic Table

Information

Specifications

Model: Pilot Rock Square Pedestal Table,
PQT Series or approved equivalent

Size - 48" square

Recycled plastic lumber

Color: Cedar

Hot-dip galvanized frame finish

Mount: In-Ground or Surface (Concrete
Only)

Product Estimated Cost

Standard, 4 Seats

Material - \$1,241 each

Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.

Total Table Cost - \$1,991

ADA, 3 seats

Material - \$1,080 each

Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.

Total Table Cost - \$1,830

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, required for accessible tables per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Pedestal Picnic Table



Information

Specifications

Model: Pilot Rock Pedestal Picnic
Table, PT Series or approved equivalent

Size: Standard - 6' Length

Recycled plastic lumber

Color: Cedar

Hot-dip galvanized frame finish

Mount: In-Ground or Surface

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$1,024 each

Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.

Total Table Cost - \$1,774

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, required for accessible tables per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Standard Moveable Picnic Table



Information

Specifications

Model: Pilot Rock Heavy Duty Moveable Picnic Table, WXT/G-6 PC or approved equivalent

Size: Standard - 6' Length

Recycled plastic lumber: 3" thick min.

Color: Cedar

Hot-dip galvanized frame finish

Mount: Surface

Product Estimated Cost

Standard, 6' Length

Material - \$972 each

Shipping and Installation - \$750 min.

Total Table Cost - \$1,722

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, required for accessible tables per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Standard Charcoal Grill

Information

Specifications

Model: Pilot Rock Charcoal Grill, A-20 Series or approved equivalent

Size: 320 sq. in.

Steel, Color: Black

Mount: In-Ground or Surface

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$311 each

Shipping and Installation - \$150 each

Total Grill Cost - \$461

Notes: Can be mounted for ADA Accessibility

Additional Requirements

Some grills must be on an accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Standard 4-Sided Information Kiosk

Information

Specifications

Model: 'Mesa' by Classic Recreation Systems or approved equivalent
6' x 6' HR-36, 6:12 Pitch, 'Galvalume' Roof,
7'-2" Eave Height, 24 Ga Fascia Trim, 4 Column
Frame: TGIC Poly Powder Coat w/Zinc Rich Primer
Color: RAL7013 (Standard), RAL5024 (Off-Leash
Areas)

(4) Single Sided 3' x 4' Aluminum Cabinets,
Lockable, Acrylic Panes
Mount: Surface on Footings per Manufacturer

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$13,800 each
Engineer's Seal - \$1050
Shipping - \$2,500 each
Installation - \$5,000
Concrete Pad + Footings - \$2,000
Total Cost - \$24,350

Additional Requirements

Kiosks must be on an accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Standard Information Kiosk



Information

Specifications

Model: 'Orlando' by Classic Recreation Systems or approved equivalent
6' x 8' HR-36, 6:12 Pitch, 'Galvalume' Roof,
7'-2" Eave Height, 24 Ga Fascia Trim, 2 Columns
Frame: TGIC Poly Powder Coat w/Zinc Rich Primer
Color: RAL7013

(1) Single or Double Sided 3' x 4' Single Sided
Aluminum Cabinets, Lockable, Acrylic Panes
Mount: Direct Burial per Manufacturer

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$9,500 each
Engineer's Seal - \$1050
Shipping - \$2,500 each
Installation - \$2,000
Footings - \$1,500
Total Cost - \$16,550

Additional Requirements

Kiosks must be on an accessible surface, such as concrete or decomposed granite, per Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Standard Drinking Fountain



Information

Specifications

Model: Most Dependable Fountains
Model: 440 SMSS or 10145 SMSS
Accessible
Finish: Chrome color, Stainless Steel
Options: Pet Fountain, Hose Bib Connection, Bottle Filler
Mount: Surface with stainless steel surface carrier

Additional Requirements

Accessible concrete surface must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).
Drainage to sewer or approved drain field.
Water line connections to be performed by Licensed Plumber.

Product Estimated Cost

440 Model - \$3,160 each
10145 Model - \$4,440 each
Pet Fountain - \$1,040
Hose Bib - \$270-\$615
Surface Mount - \$245
Shipping - \$475 min.
Installation- \$1,500
Total Cost with Options - \$6,690-\$8,315

Additional Costs Considerations

Water line to drinking fountain - \$30-\$40/lf
Water Tap, Water meter, and Backflow Prevention, as required - \$6,000-\$8,000
Drainage line connection - \$30-\$40/lf or drain field construction - \$4,600
Concrete pad - \$6/sf

Standard Bike Rack

Information

Specifications

Model: Pilot Rock Saddle Back Bike Rack, SRE/G-3, SRP/G-3 or approved equivalent
2-3/8" Sch. 40 Steel Pipe
Size: 3 Bike Capacity
Finish: Galvanized
Mount: In-Ground or Surface

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface such as concrete or decomposed granite must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$285 each
Shipping and Installation - \$133 min.
Total Cost - \$418



Leisure Games

Information

Specifications

Variable. Obtain approval for products and design from PARD Park Planning or Development.

Product Estimated Cost

Varies

Other Cost Considerations

Access Grading

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Bocce



Chess/Checkers



Gaga Ball Pit



Horseshoes



Disc Golf

Small Pavilion - 12' x 14'



Information

Specifications

Manufacturer: Classic Recreation Systems or approved equivalent
Model: Campion, Mesa, or approved other
Roof: HR-36 or Standing Seam, Color: Galvalume
Trim: 24 Ga pre-finished to match roof
Eave: 7'-2" height
Columns: (4) 6" x 6" steel tube, min 0.120 wall
Frame Color: RAL7013 (standard)
Mount: Footings per Manufacturer
12' x 14' (min.) x 5" width concrete pad required

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface and path must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$15,000 each
Engineer's Seal - \$950
Shipping - \$3,000 each
Installation/Footings - \$5,000
Concrete Pad - 12' x 14' x \$12.50/SF = \$2,100
Total Cost - \$26,050

Notes: Up to (2) Picnic Tables and (1) grill.
Non-standard colors to be approved by PARD.
Pavilion sizes may vary.
Submit for PARD approval.

Building Permit Required.

Medium Pavilion - 20' x 30'

Information

Specifications

Manufacturer: Classic Recreation Systems or approved equivalent
Model: Campion, Mesa, or approved other
Roof: HR-36 or Standing Seam, Color: Galvalume
Trim: 24 Ga pre-finished to match roof
Eave: 8' height
Columns: (4) 7" x 7" steel tube, min 0.188 wall
Frame Color: RAL7013 (standard)
Mount: Footings per Manufacturer
20' x 30' (min.) x 5" width concrete pad required

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface and path must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$31,000 each
Engineer's Seal - \$950
Shipping - \$3,000 each
Installation/Footings - \$8,500
Concrete Pad - 20' x 30' x \$12.50/SF = \$7,500
Total Cost - \$50,950

Note: Up to (6) Standard Picnic Tables and (1) Group Grill. Non-standard colors to be approved by PARD. Pavilion sizes may vary.
Submit for PARD approval.

Building Permit Required.



Mesa Style Pavilion



Campion Style Pavilion

Large Pavilion - 40' x 70'

Information

Specifications

Manufacturer: Classic Recreation Systems or approved equivalent

Model: Campion, Mesa, or approved other

Roof: HR-36 or Standing Seam, Color: Galvalume

Trim: 24 Ga pre-finished to match roof

Eave: 9' height

Columns: (8) 10" x 10" steel tube, min 0.188 wall

Frame Color: RAL7013 (standard)

Mount: Footings per Manufacturer

40' x 70' (min.) x 5" width (min.) concrete pad required.

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface and path must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Material - \$168,000 each

Engineer's Seal - \$2,300

Shipping - \$3,800 each

Installation/Footings - \$20,000

Concrete Pad - 40' x 70' x 12.50/SF= \$35,000

Total Cost - \$229,100

Notes: Up to (18) Picnic Tables and (2) Group Grills. Concrete Pad Design per Structural Engineer. Non-standard colors to be approved by PARD. Pavilion sizes may vary. Submit for PARD approval.

Building Permit Required.



Shade Structure



Information

Specifications

Model: Varies, PARD approval required

Roof: Fabric, Shade Sure, or Equal

Columns: Steel, Powder Coated

Cable: Galvanized

Mount: Per Manufacturer

Product Estimated Cost

Varies By Product

Range: \$20,000-\$100,000

Building Permit Required.

Additional Requirements

Accessible surface such as concrete or decomposed granite must meet the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Bleachers



Information

Specifications

Model: Varies, PARD approval required

Seat: Aluminum

Frame: Aluminum or galvanized steel

Bleachers must meet ICC 300 Standard for bleachers, folding, telescope seating, and grandstands.

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Varies: \$5,000 to \$50,000

Price varies based on bleacher size.

Other Cost Considerations

Concrete Bleacher Pad: \$8-\$12/square foot

Decomposed Granite Pad: \$5-\$7/square foot

Lighting

Information

Specifications

As specified and approved by PARD.

Sports lighting

Security Lighting

Trail Lighting

Specifications

First Light Technologies manufacturers solar-powered, Dark-Sky-compliant, remotely-controlled/programmable, luminaires with high-quality LED lamps that are installed on either 12' poles for "pedestrian-scale" or 20' poles for 'street-scale' lighting (or approved equivalent)

Additional Requirements

Lights must be dark sky compliant and light should not spill into neighboring property. In most situations, a light intensity/luminosity with an average of 0.1 foot-candles is adequate. Uniformity of lighting is not especially critical. Standard park lighting should not exceed 1 foot candle for most applications. All poles should be installed by a contractor an engineered concrete footing.

Product Estimated Cost

First Light Technologies - 20' pole, SCL2 fixture, concrete foundation and installation - \$5650

First Light Technologies - 12' pole, IPL fixture, concrete foundation and installation - \$4420



Fencing

Information

Specifications

Chainlink

Galvanized Steel Wire:

General Use – 2" mesh maximum, 9GA minimum

Backstops – 1 1/2" mesh, 6GA minimum

Tennis Courts – 1 1/2" mesh, 9GA minimum

Posts: Galvanized or SS

Wire Fence

Galvanized Wire (no barbed wire) as specified and approved by PARD

Posts: Wood or Steel, as specified and approved by PARD

Bollard and Cable

Bollard: 8" min., treated pine bollard

Cable: Galvanized Steel, 3/8" diameter min.

Fittings: Galvanized



Information

Specifications

Privacy Fence

Pickets: #2 Grade Cedar, min., 1in. thickness x specified length

Posts: 3" OD, sch 40 galvanized, 8' O.C. max.

Metal Fasteners: Galvanized

Metal Picket

Metal: Aluminum or Steel, 14GA min.

Finish: Painted, Powder Coated, or Galvanized

Split Rail

Cedar, 2 or 3 rail, as specified and approved by PARD

Concrete Footings

Size as specified and approved by PARD, 3000psi concrete



Playscape Equipment



Information

Specifications

Acceptable Manufacturers: Berliner; Burke; Gametime; Kidstruction; Kompan; Landscape Structures; Little Tikes Commercial; Miracle Recreation; Playcraft; Playworld.

Other manufacturers to be approved by PARD.

Safety Surface: Engineered Wood Fiber (EWf) standard, 12" min. depth. See Playground Surfacing section for additional options.

Edge: 8" width Concrete Curb per PARD Standard Detail, 18" depth unless otherwise noted.

Drainage: 4" Gravel with Geo-textile fabric top and bottom with perforated pipe drain per PARD Standard Detail

Product Estimated Cost

Playscape Equipment- \$50,000 minimum

Playscape Shipping - 10% Material Cost

Playscape Installation - 35%-45% Material Cost

Other Cost Considerations

Concrete Curb - \$55-\$65/LF

Concrete ADA Ramp (into play area) - \$1,500 each per play area

Playscape Drainage - \$3,000-\$4,000/play area

EWf Material - \$44/CY

EWf Installation - \$21/CY

Notes:

The minimum acceptable playscape cost is set at \$50,000 to provide sufficient play value for this amenity. Playscape Design requires PARD approval.

Traditional Playscape

Additional Requirements

Play area and play equipment must meet Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS), IPEMA Standards, and CPSC Guidelines. New play equipment installations must pass inspection by a certified CPSI inspector.



Contemporary Playscape



Nature Themed Playscape



Thematic Playscape

Non-Traditional Play Area



Dino-Dig

Information

Specifications

Acceptable Manufacturers: Landscape Structures; UPC Parks.

Other manufacturers to be approved by PARD.

Safety Surface: Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) standard, 12" min. depth. See Playground Surfacing section for additional options.

Edge: 8" width Concrete Curb per PARD Standard Detail, 18" depth unless otherwise noted.

Drainage: 4" Gravel with Geo-textile fabric top and bottom with perforated pipe drain per PARD Standard Detail

Additional Requirements

Play area must meet Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Playscape Equipment- \$50,000 minimum

Playscape Shipping - 10% Material Cost

Playscape Installation - 35%-45% Material Cost

Other Cost Considerations

Concrete Curb - \$55-\$65/LF

Concrete ADA Ramp (into play area) - \$1,500/each per play area

Playscape Drainage - \$2,500-\$3,500/per play area

EWF Material - \$44/CY

EWF Installation - \$21/CY

Notes:

The minimum acceptable playscape cost is set at \$50,000 to provide sufficient play value for this amenity.

Natural materials are acceptable when used in accordance with CPSI guidelines.

Playscape Design requires PARD approval.



Dry Creek Bed



Concrete Climbing Features

Nature Play



Fort Building

Information

Features

Stump jumps, balancing logs, log scrabbles, play bridge, sand pit, boulders, stump play table and chairs, fort building areas, SEL gardens, etc.

Specifications

Manufacturer: Varies depending on feature.
Not always applicable as contractor will build most nature play features on site.

Materials

Wood: Native hardwood and decay-resistant species, such as oak, pecan, eastern red cedar, and juniper. Softer woods can be used, but they will decay more quickly, and will be prone to cracking and splintering more easily. Bamboo poles can be harvested for fort building.

Stone: Natural boulders for climbing and stepping and cut limestone quarry blocks for seating.

Product Estimated Cost

Dependent on size of nature play area, type and quantity of features, and materials used.

Additional Requirements

Bark may be left on, but it is advised that log cuts have chamfered edges (create a uniform 45 degree angle cut all the way around the main cut) that can be sanded to remove sharp edges and sealed with a natural wood sealer, such as Soy Seal or similar.

For more information, including Nature Play Guidelines, please visit the Cities Connecting Children to Nature Initiative web page: www.austintexas.gov/department/cities-connecting-children-nature-initiative

Nature Play designs require PARD approval prior to installation.



Stump Jump



Log Scrabble

Nature Play



Sand Pit



Stepping Stones



Signage



SEL Garden



Balancing Features

Playground Surfacing



Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) – Standard

Specifications

Install per manufacturer's recommendations and PARD Standard Detail.

Installed on a layer filter fabric and drainage rock.

Drainage system required.

Additional Requirements

Height of fall surface will correlate with the thickness of the EWF.

Must be comply with TAS to be an accessible surface.

May be pervious depending on subsurface.

Product Estimated Cost

EWF, Filter Fabric, and Installation - \$7-10/SF

Price varies based on material type and site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading, subsurface prep

Artificial Turf

Specifications

Install per manufacturer's recommendations and according to contract documents.

Additional Requirements

Must have foam or rubber mat below the artificial turf to meet playground safety requirements. Height of fall surface will correlate with the thickness of the pad.

Must be comply with TAS to be an accessible surface.

May be pervious depending on subsurface and type of mat.

Product Estimated Cost

Mat, Fabric, Microbial Sand, and Installation - \$18-23/SF

Price varies based on material type and site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading, subsurface prep



Playground Surfacing

Poured-In-Place Rubber

Specifications

Install per manufacturer's recommendations and according to contract documents.
Typically installed on compacted gravel and compacted road base.
Typically installed with rubber base and colorful topcoat. Topcoat can be difficult to patch and color will fade with time.

Additional Requirements

Height of fall surface will correlate with the thickness of the rubber.
Must be comply with TAS to be an accessible surface.
May be pervious depending on subsurface.

Product Estimated Cost

Rubber Base, Topcoat, and Installation - \$20-\$25/SF
Price varies based on material type and site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading, subsurface prep



Shredded Bonded Rubber

Specifications

Install per manufacturer's recommendations and according to contract documents.
Typically installed on compacted gravel and compacted road base.
Typically easier to patch and repair than Poured-In-Place Rubber.

Additional Requirements

Height of fall surface will correlate with the thickness of the rubber.
Must be comply with TAS to be an accessible surface.
May be pervious depending on subsurface.

Product Estimated Cost

Shredded Rubber and Installation - \$19-\$24/SF
Price varies based on material type and site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading, subsurface prep

Basketball Court



Information

Specifications

Concrete Specifications - City of Austin Standard Specs Series 400

Thickness: 5" min. or per structural engineer

Cross Slope - 1% max.

Finish - Medium Broom

Joints - per detail

Base - per detail/site conditions

Subgrade - per detail

Product Estimated Cost

Price varies based on concrete cost, quantity, site conditions and slab design.

Half Basketball - 48' x 56' - \$48,000-\$54,000 (concrete)

Full Basketball - 56' x 90' - \$90,000-\$100,000 (concrete)

Basketball Goals - \$4,400 each (delivered/installed)

Other Cost Considerations

Access to Court

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Tennis/Pickleball Court

Information

Specifications

Concrete Specifications - City of Austin Standard Specs Series 400

Thickness: 5" min. or per structural engineer

Cross Slope - 1% max.

Finish - Medium Broom

Joints - per detail

Base - per detail/site conditions

Subgrade - per detail

Product Estimated Cost

Price varies based on concrete cost, quantity, site conditions and slab design.

Tennis Courts - 60' x 120' - \$130,000-\$144,000

Tennis Fencing - \$22,000

Tennis Net - \$5,500 (delivered & installed)

Striping - \$1,650 to \$3,300

Full Court Painting - \$5,500 to \$16,500

Price varies depending on type of surface, extent of painting.

Pickleball Court - 30' x 60' - \$33,000-\$36,000

Pickleball Net - \$4,500 (delivered & installed)

Striping - \$1,250 to \$2,500

Full Court Painting - \$4,500 to \$9,000

Other Cost Considerations

Access to Court



Sand Volleyball Court

Information

Specifications

Surface: Sand, 20" depth minimum
underlain with geotextile fabric
Edge: 8" width Concrete Curb per PARD
Standard Detail, 12" depth
Drainage: Perforated pipe drain
surrounded by gravel wrapped in
geotextile fabric per PARD Standard
Detail. Daylight drain pipe in valve box.

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the
Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Excavation - \$8,250 per court
Drainage - \$3,300 to \$4,400
Concrete Edge - 260LF x \$55/LF =
\$14,300
Sand - \$11,000 per court (delivered &
installed)
Equipment- \$4,400 per court (installed)
Total Cost - \$40,000 approx. per court

Notes: Commercial grade posts
mounted in concrete footings per
manufacturer. Commercial net.
Commercial line markings anchored to
concrete edge or ground.



Fitness Equipment



Information

Specifications

Acceptable Manufacturers:

Gametime; Landscape Structures; Kompan, Miracle
Recreation; Playworld. Other manufacturers to be
approved by PARD.

Safety Surface: Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF), 12" min.
depth or Rubber Tiles. See Playground Surfacing section
for additional options.

Edge: 8" width Concrete Curb per PARD Standard Detail

Drainage: 4" Gravel with Geo-textile fabric top and bottom
with perforated pipe drain per PARD Standard Detail
Note: Only required for large fitness areas.

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the Texas Accessibility
Standards (TAS).

Product Estimated Cost

Fitness Equipment - \$30,000 minimum
Equipment Shipping - 10% Material Cost
Equipment Installation - 35%-45% Material Cost

Other Cost Considerations

Concrete Curb - \$55-\$65/LF
Concrete ADA Ramp (into fitness area) - \$1,500/each per
fitness area
Drainage - \$3,000-\$4,000 (for large fitness area)
EWF Material - \$44/CY
EWF Installation - \$21/CY
Rubber Surface - \$20-25/SF

Notes:

The minimum acceptable fitness equipment cost is set
at \$30,000 to provide sufficient recreation value for this
amenity. Fitness Equipment Area Design requires PARD
approval.

Community Garden

Information

Specifications

Dimensions of Raised Beds - 4' W x 6' - 12' L x 18' H (standard beds)

- Wheel Chair Accessible Raised Beds and Raised Beds for Senior Gardens - 4' W x 6' W x 14' H
- Wheel Chair Accessible Paths surrounding raised beds - 4' wide
- Toolshed - 10' x 10' wide
- Drip Irrigation System with Timer
- Irrigation Plan with 1 water tap per 4 four raised beds
- Communal area with picnic tables, greenhouse or potting shed, and perennial plants (fruit trees, bushes and vines, herbs, native plants to attract pollinators)
- Kiosk, built to PARD standards for sharing information about the garden with the community
- Hog wire fence - 4' - 6' H

Garden Bed Materials:

- Untreated Wood
- Concrete Retaining Wall Blocks - \$2.88 per block
- Chopped limestone block - \$210 - \$343/ton

Additional Requirements

- Screened Organic Compost to fill beds - \$46/CY
- Raised Bed Mix - \$64/CY
- Natural Cedar (for Paths and Topping off beds) - \$44/CY
- Decomposed granite for garden paths - \$40/CY

Note:

Community Gardens are proposed and managed through the Community Garden Program.

For more information: www.austintexas.gov/department/community-gardens-program



Concrete Walk & Trail

Information

Specifications

City of Austin Standard Detail
City of Austin Standard Specs Series 400

Walk Width: 5'-6'
Walk Thickness: 4" min.
Trail Width: 8'-12' with 2' cleared shoulders
Trail Thickness: 5" min.
Cross Slope - 2% max.
Running Slope - per plans
Finish - Medium Broom
Joints - Control - 10' max; Expansion - 40' max. spacing
Base - per detail/site conditions
Subgrade - per detail

Product Estimated Cost

Concrete Walk Only - \$8 to \$10/SF
Concrete Trail Only - \$8 to \$12/SF
Price varies based on concrete cost, quantity, site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading
Retaining Walls

Note: Concrete trails are typically designed to allow maintenance vehicle traffic.

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Nature Trail



Information

Specifications

Pedestrian – 6' wide, 8' clear height
Mountain Bike (single track) – 2' to 3' Wide, 10' clear height
Equestrian – 6' wide, 12' clear height

All trails – 2' min. clear shoulder; 20'- 26' selective clearing in wooded areas.

Surface: Natural or Double Ground
Mulch

Notes:

Trail route and clearing limits must be approved by PARD in writing prior to trail construction.

Product Estimated Cost

Nature Trail Only - \$8 to \$12/LF
Price varies based on design, quantity, site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading
Retaining Walls
Clearing

Decomposed Granite Gravel Trail



Information

Specifications

City of Austin Standard Detail 1301S-1
City of Austin Standard Specifications
Series 1301S-1

Trail Width: 8' - 12' with 2' cleared shoulders
Thickness: 4" compacted
Cross Slope - 2% max.
Running Slope - 3% max.
Base - per detail 1301S-1
Subgrade - per detail 1301S-1

Product Estimated Cost

DG Trail Only - \$5-\$7/SF
Price varies based on DG cost, quantity,
site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Concrete Borders - \$45/LF
Grading
Retaining Walls

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the
Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Stabilized Decomposed Granite Trail

Information

Specifications

Stabilizer Solutions Stalok DG Paving or
equal

Trail Width: 8' - 12' with 2' cleared
shoulders
Thickness: 2" compacted
Cross Slope - 2% max.
Running Slope - 5% max.
Base - per manufacturer detail
Subgrade - per manufacturer detail

Product Estimated Cost

Stabilized DG Trail Only - \$17.50/SF
Price varies based on stabilized DG cost,
quantity, site conditions.

Other Cost Considerations

Grading
Retaining Walls

Additional Requirements

Must meet standards specified per the
Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).



Miscellaneous Items



Trees

Shade Trees - \$150 - \$200 per caliper inch

Ornamental Trees - \$215 - \$400, 30 gal, 2" cal.

Notes: For guidance on species selection, see the Preferred Plant List in the City of Austin's Environmental Criteria Manual.

Planning, Design, General Conditions, Overhead

Planning and Design

Vision Plan - \$60,000 (Pocket Park, Small Neighborhood Park) up to \$350,000+ (Metropolitan Park)

Survey - \$3,000/acre to \$10,000/acre

Construction/Permit Documents/Construction Administration (by Consultant) - 15-25% Construction Cost

PARD Project Management - 15% Construction Cost

Public Works Project Management - 15% Construction Cost

Total Project Management Costs - 30% to 50% of Construction Cost

Construction

General Contractor Overhead - 5% to 10% of Construction Costs

General Contractor General Conditions (Mobilization, Insurance, Bonds) - 5% to 10% of Construction Costs

Added General Contractor Costs - 10% to 20% of Construction Cost

Appendix A:

Community Conversations Kickoff Meeting

Community Conversations Kick Off Meeting

Summary Report

Overview

The City of Austin Parkland Dedication team held a virtual stakeholder meeting on January 23, 2023 to kick off a new stakeholder engagement process to explore additional potential changes to the parkland dedication ordinance. This meeting included a presentation and discussion session. Presenters included Randy Scott, Robynne Heymans, Scott Grantham, Tom Rowlinson and Paul Books of the City of Austin Parkland Dedication Team and Arin Gray, a consultant with CD&P.

Attendees

Stakeholders

Name	Organization
Kayla Reese	Austin Parks Foundation
Colin Wallis	Austin Parks Foundation
George Cofer	Hill Country Conservancy
Alina Carnahan	Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)
Sarah Ulusoy	Pape-Dawson
Joy Casnovsky	Austin Parks Foundation
Clark Hancock	Save Barton Creek Association
Christopher Johnson	Development Services
Tom Wald	Red Line Parkway Initiative
Ann DeSanctis	City of Austin Urban Trails
Will Genrich	Forestar Group
Katie Robillard	Austin Parks Foundation
Eric Paulus	Ecology Action
Tymon Khamsi	City of Austin Housing and Planning
Marc Tucci	Austin Social Sports
Christopher Sapuppo	City of Austin Development Services
Sara Wilson	City of Austin Development Services
Lauren Terrazas	City of Austin Councilmember Ellis's Office
Julie Montgomery	City of Austin Chief of Staff for Mayor and Council
Ed Scruggs	City of Austin Councilmember Ellis's Office
Councilmember Paige Ellis	City of Austin Councilmember
Atha Phillips	City of Austin Councilmember Pool's Office
Kurt Cadena-Mitchell	City of Austin Mayor Pro-Tem Alter's Office
Libby Linton	Pape Dawson

David Michael	City of Austin Development Services
Matthew Geske	Austin Chamber of Commerce
Megan Frey	Endeavor Real Estate Group

Project Team

Name	Organization
Randy Scott	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Scott Grantham	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Robynne Heymans	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Justin Schneider	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Tom Rowlinson	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Paul Books	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Tim Dombeck	City of Austin Parks and Recreation
Liana Kallivoka	City of Austin Parks and Recreation
Dr. John Crompton	Texas A&M
Arin Gray	CD&P
Caroline Golden	CD&P
Alyssa Rivas	CD&P

Meeting Summary

The project team reviewed the goals, residential and commercial ordinances, past stakeholder engagement, and methodology for the ordinance. The team also provided an overview of the upcoming stakeholder engagement process, timeline, and how to get involved. The meeting ended with a discussion session, when the team asked participants to share any questions, ideas, and suggestions for parkland dedication. Discussion items included:

- Eric Paulus (Ecology Action) asked how the maintenance of the properties work and how long do these (the agreements) typically last
 - The PARD team responded that land owners may opt to enter into a maintenance agreement voluntarily, there are no requirements for maintenance, and the initial maintenance agreement term is 20 years, with an option to terminate for no-cause with 180 days notice
- Eric Paulus (Ecology Action) asked how do the smaller acquisitions affect the ability of the department to maintain the park system?
 - The PARD team responded by maintenance is funded through the general fund, which is part of the tax base
- Eric Paulus (Ecology Action) asked for clarification regarding property taxes and asked if they pay taxes for the commercial or residential lots but not for the dedicated acres
 - The PARD team responded percent of tax revenue goes to park maintenance group
- Joy Casnovsky (APF) asked how other cities in Texas compare to Austin and what other Cities' formulas are for determining PLD fees?

- The PARD team responded that only a few Texas cities use similar methodology and there is not just one statewide ordinance
- George Cofer (Hill Country Conservancy) asked when will the formula be revisited during this stakeholder engagement process
 - The PARD team responded that input from the stakeholder engagement process could result in suggestions for possible revisions
- Joy Casnovsky (APF) asked about the 12% deficit expected under the current formula
 - Paul Books explained the fee and formula methodology
- Kurt Cadena-Mitchell asked whether the presentation could be distributed
 - The PARD team noted that this presentation would be shared on the PLD community engagement webpage
- Tymon Khamsi asked if the expansion on the affordable housing exemption- was a result of the 2022 stakeholder engagement.
 - The PARD team responded that this is one of the updates to the ordinance as a result of the 2022 stakeholder engagement process and exemptions are not limited to SMART housing anymore and now apply to any federally certified affordable housing
- Tom Wald asked if there was room in this discussion to discuss giving PARD more authority to require where the land dedication occurs on the site
 - The PARD team responded that required land that is dedicated along the red line, if it is adjacent. Commercial parkland dedication gives PARD more ability to access land adjacent to rail lines creeks, etc.

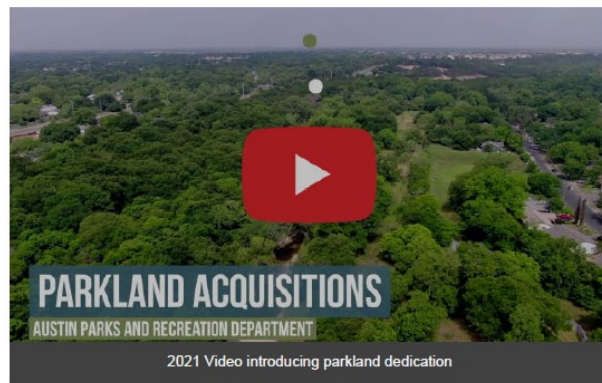
Stakeholder Invitee List

Name	Organization
Alina Carnahan	Real Estate Council of Austin
Dianne Bangle	Real Estate Council of Austin
Frank Fuentes	US Hispanic Contractor's Association of Austin
Richard Grayum	Austin Contractors and Engineers Association
Carol Hadnot	Austin Black Contractor's Association
Melissa Hawthorne	Austin Permit Service
Nhat Ho	Civiltude
Blair McKay	American Institute of Architects- Austin Chapter (Commercial Advocacy)
Silvia Pendleton	Austin Contractors and Engineers Association
Taylor Smith	Austin Board of Realtors
Aletta Sung	Asian Contractor Association
Amanda Swor	Drenner Group
Phil Thoden	Associated General Contractors of Austin
Matt Geske	Austin Chamber of Commerce,
Michele Van Hyfte	Downtown Austin Alliance
Rachel White	Austin Tech Alliance
April Ritzenthaler	Austin Independent Business Association
Marissa McKinney	Coleman and Associates
Megan Frey	Endeavor
Derek Villemmez	DPR
Chris Randazzo	Garza EMC
Emily Blair	DPR
Stephen Retps	DPR
Aan Coleman	Coleman and Associates
Jeff Howard	McLean and Howard, LLC, DAA
T Newton	Johnson Design Group
Info	Austin Tech Alliance
Chi Clee	HKS Architects
Cooper Drenner	Wilhorn Capital
Rich Leisy	Ryan Companies
Bradley Bailey	CBRE
Sarah Ulusoy	Pape-Dawson
Densie Eisman	Austin Hotel & Lodging Association
Gabriele,	Austin Parks Foundation
Colin Wallis	Austin Parks Foundation
Joy Casnovsky	Austin Parks Foundation
Andrew	Tree Folks

Heidi Anderson	The Trail Foundation
Info	Austin Outside
Chuck Smith	Pease Park Conservancy
Melissa Ayala	Waterloo Greenway
James Russell	Austin Trail of Lights
Michael Cannatti	Barton Springs Conservancy
Sydney Garcia	Save Barton Creek Association
Brian Zabcik	Save Barton Creek Association
David Todd	Conservation History Association of Texas
Melinda Chow	Austin Youth River Watch
Luke Metzger	Environment Texas
Carmen Llanes Pulido	Go Austin Vamos Austin
Monica Guzman	Go Austin Vamos Austin
Goerge Cofer	Hill Country Conservancy
Rodney Ahart	Keep Austin Beautiful
Ashley Todd	Friends of Barton Springs Pool
Heath Riddles-Sanchez	Pease Park Conservancy
Joanna Wolaver	Seeds of Change Consulting
Paul DiFiore	PODER
Chisty Muse	Hill Country Alliance
Susana Almanza	PODER
Bill Bunch	SOS Alliance
Kathy Mitchell	Just Liberty
Kathy Miller	Hill Country Conservancy
Colleen Theriot	Norwood Park Foundation
Info	River Watchers
Clark Hancock	Save Barton Creek Association
Andrea Bates	City of Austin Housing and Planning Department
Liz Johnson	City of Austin Watershed Protection Department
Kelly Strickler	City of Austin Watershed Protection Department
Kevin Thuesen	City of Austin Watershed Protection Department
Chris Johnson	City of Austin Development Services
Robert Anderson	City of Austin Development Services
Katie Wettick	City of Austin Urban Trails
Erica Leak	Housing Authority City of Austin (HACA)
Tymon Khamsi	City of Austin Housing and Planning Department

Email Invitation

[View this email in your browser](#)



Parkland Dedication Community Conversations

You are invited to participate in our upcoming community conversations about parkland dedication. During the creation of the recent commercial parkland dedication ordinance, City Council proposed a new stakeholder engagement process to explore additional potential changes parkland dedication. This is an opportunity to evaluate parkland dedication with community stakeholders and explore opportunities for fine tuning the commercial and residential parkland dedication ordinances.

We will be hosting a virtual kickoff meeting **Monday, January 23, at 12:30pm**. We will be discussing the process and timeline and will collect feedback about how you would like to contribute to the discussion.

PLD Conversations Kickoff Virtual Meeting

Monday, January 23, 2023 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

[Zoom Registration Link](#)

Additional Conversations

In addition to the group conversations, we're hoping to have more individual, tailored conversations with you. From January 24 through February 10, we will be scheduling meetings to hear your questions, ideas and suggestions and have an open conversation about parkland dedication. We are happy to come to you, host at a City of Austin office, or meet virtually.

If you are interested in setting up a 30 minute to hour-long meeting either in-person or virtually, please complete this 1-minute form to share your availability: [Sign Up for a Meeting](#)

You received this email because of your interest in last year's commercial parkland dedication. If there are others whom you think would like to participate, please let us know.

[PLD Conversations Webpage](#)

Parkland Dedication

Community Conversations Kickoff
January 23, 2023

Good Afternoon

Introductions



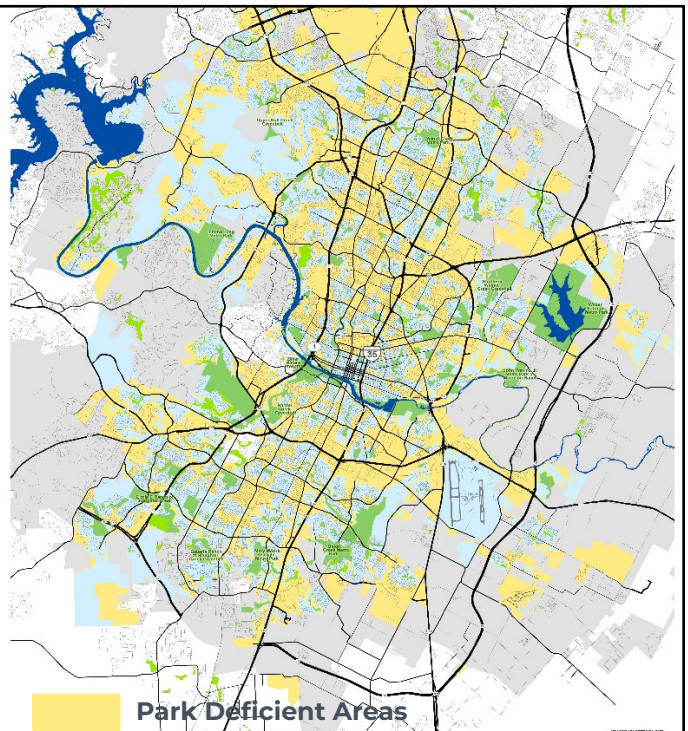
Parkland Dedication (PLD)

Goals
Ordinances
Methodology

3

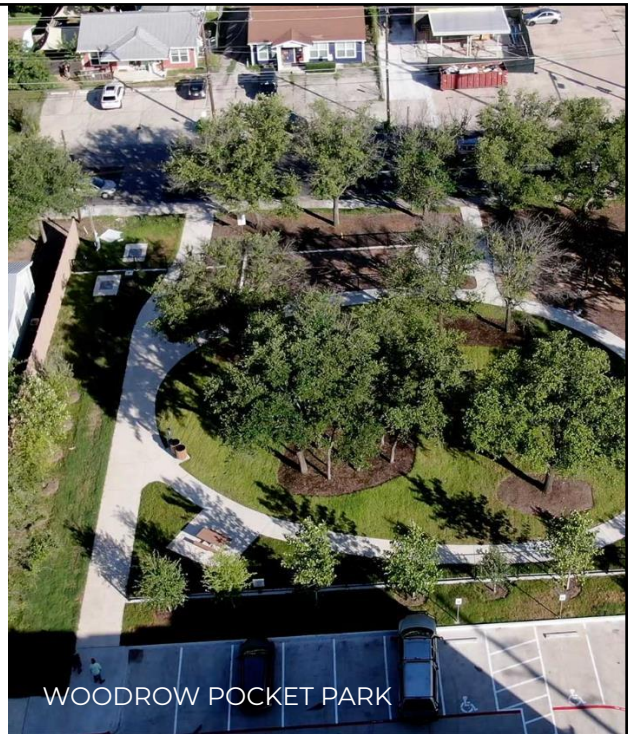
PLD Goals

- Provide parkland within a 5 to 10-minute walk for all Austinites
- Distribute high-quality parkland equitably across the city
- Integrate open space into a compact and connected city



PLD Goals

- Promote the health and well-being of the Austin community and workforce
- Keep park development in pace with rapid development and workforce growth
- Create opportunities for greenbelt and trail connections to serve new developments



PLD Accomplishments

Since
1985

1,800 acres of
deeded parkland

84 acres of park
easements

Covering **121
distinct parks**

Since
2018

An additional **4.3% (40,000)** of Austinites are
within walking distance of a park, totaling 68%



In
2022

19.51 acres of
deeded parkland

10.61 acres of
park easements

Covering **14 new parks**
or park extensions

Residential PLD

BACKGROUND

1985 First COA Parkland Dedication Ordinance

2007 Updated fee and expanded requirements to all new residential development (previously only subdivisions)

2016 Updated the formula and fee for determining dedication requirements

2022 Updated fee, schedule for rate changes, expansion of affordable housing waiver, clarification on dedicated parkland in floodplain



7

Commercial PLD

BACKGROUND

2020 PARD Board recommended PLD Ordinances for commercial developments

April 2022 Council directed City Staff to require PLD for commercial developments

May-Aug 2022 Gathered stakeholder input and developed ordinance methodology

Sept 2022 Approved by City Council

Jan 2023 Commercial PLD take effect



8

2022 Stakeholder Engagement

BACKGROUND

6
stakeholder
meetings

40
stakeholder
groups engaged

321 survey
respondents

How do you think a commercial parkland dedication ordinance might impact a business' operations for employees, visitors, or patrons?

Operations
would worsen
or deteriorate

Operations
would stay
the same

Operations
would
improve

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What We Heard

2022 SURVEY

Common Themes:

Support for
additional parkland
throughout the City

Questions on
tele-commuting

Impacts of
regulatory
concerns

Cost &
affordability
concerns

10

Methodology: Funding Park Systems

3 Options to Fund Parks with Population Growth

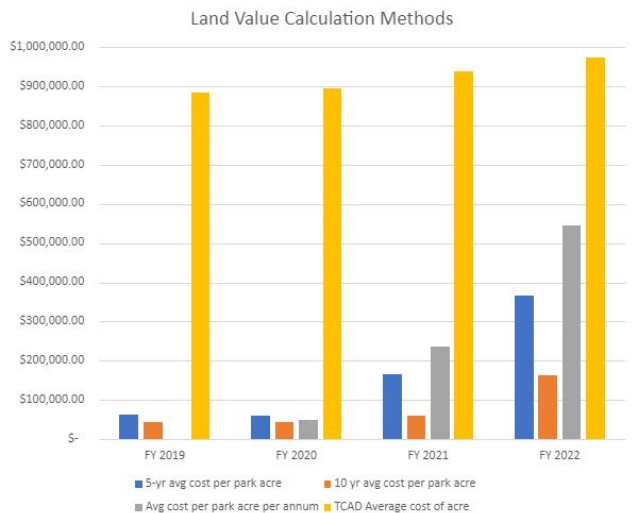
- Increase property taxes → Impacts existing residents to subsidize new residents
- Lower standards for parks and quality of life → Negatively impacts existing residents and new residents
- New development pays for the impact on neighborhood parks through PLD fees → New development pays for itself (similar to transportation and utility development fees)

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Methodology: Fees

- PLD Fee is based on a 5-year average land value
\$166,644 an acre
- TCAD 2022 data
\$973,463 an acre
- If PLD revenue remains at the current rate, the park level of service is anticipated to decline due to population growth

↓ **12% by 2030**



12

Methodology: Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback

- Changed source of data to capture work from home data and adjusted the formula
- Expanded exemption for affordable housing to include all affordable (rather than only certified)
- Applied discounts based on hours of operations
- Adjusted to same LOS as compared to residential
- Changed the fee schedule to be based on the fiscal year of the application (not the year of review)

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2023 Community Engagement

Purpose & Goals
Process & Timeline

14

Purpose of Engagement

- Gather input on current parkland dedication policies
- Explore opportunities to fine-tune the policies

PART 5. The City Manager is directed to conduct a multi-department stakeholder process to explore potential changes to the parkland dedication ordinance, including but not limited to, exploring and making recommendations on new methodologies for calculating parkland dedication fees for both residential and commercial properties, alternative timing for the City to collect any required fee-in-lieu, potential exemptions for commercial development that produce less than one functional population, revisiting parkland dedication requirements for mixed use developments, and consider any Planning Commission recommendations not already adopted by Council. At minimum, stakeholders from the following communities should be included in any input process: parks advocates, housing affordability advocates, and development representatives.

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Goals

- Facilitate a collaborative process to share information and collect input
- Provide meaningful and convenient opportunities for engagement and dialogue
- Increase community awareness about Parkland Dedication
- Identify potential refinements or changes for Council consideration

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Process & Timeline



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Community Conversation

Questions & Comments

Next Steps

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What Do You Think

Is there anything else we should look at as part of this effort?

What are your thoughts on the current ordinance?

Is there anyone else that needs to be added to this conversation?

Do you have any questions?

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Next Steps

- Schedule an interview
- Join our meeting on Feb. 16

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Schedule an Interview

We want to hear your questions, ideas, and suggestions and have an open conversation about parkland dedication



Contact our consultant:

Alyssa Rivas

512-533-9100

arivas@cdandp.com

<https://bit.ly/ParklandConversation>

Appendix B:

Stakeholder Interviews

Hill Country Conservancy

Meeting Details

Feb. 6, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.

Central Market, 4001 N Lamar Blvd, Austin, TX 78705

Attendees

Stakeholder: George Cofer – Hill Country Conservancy

Project Team: Randy Scott, Tom Rowlinson, Paul Books – City of Austin;
Arin Gray – CD&P

After brief introductions, the current parkland dedication team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The remainder of the meeting included answering questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- George noted the Violet Crown trail has benefited from parkland dedication
- George shared his support of parkland dedication
 - Believes the metric rather than the price of land is the best approach
 - Supports the commercial requirements and noted the commercial ordinance is long overdue considering the proportion of land being used for commercial purposes
 - Noted that until City Council funds the Parks Department, we must use parkland dedication
- The team discussed Dr. Crompton's involvement with the stakeholder engagement process and that he will develop a comparison of the actual cost of park development is (including metro and district parks)
- George suggested the process should consider other ways the data could be verified in addition to Dr. Crompton reports
 - Discussed other cities ordinances including those in place in Fort Worth, Dallas, and Houston
 - PLD staff noted that they will gather Dr. Crompton's comparison of these parks
- The team discussed the bill regarding parkland dedication that was filed on Jan. 23 and noted the early determination is being questioned
 - Mentioned the Barton Springs Park and the federal overlay and BCP was developed to meet acreage requirements (30,000); Wants it to be a people park with the birds, not just a bird park
 - Discussed Waterloo Greenway and what it would be without parkland dedication

- George suggested PARD develop a comparison of Waterloo Greenway with and without parkland dedication
- George shared ideas for other stakeholders that may be interested in learning more, including visiting with recipients of improvements through the PLD ordinances:
 - Trail Conservancy
 - Pease Park CEO
 - Waterloo Greenway
 - Great Springs project
 - Austin Parks Foundation
 - Parks and Recreation Board members
 - Greg Weaver at Catellus
 - Hill Abell who was connected to Trek
 - Barton Springs Conservancy
 - Trail Groups such as Ridge Riders
 - Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Sunshine Camp
 - Del Valle Community Coalition
 - Vamos Austin
 - Travis County Audubon
 - Mayor Richard Turner
 - Charlie McCabe
 - Churches that have an environmental/park focus

Austin Parks Foundation (APF)

Meeting Details

Feb. 7, 2023 at 11:30

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Attendees

Stakeholder: Kayla Reese, Joy Casnovsky – Austin Parks Foundation
Project Team: Randy Scott, Tom Rowlinson, Paul Brooks, Robynne Heymans – City of Austin; Arin Gray – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- APF is supportive of the current PLD ordinance and doesn't have any recommended changes
- APF noted that it has been challenging to address misinformation about the impact of parkland dedication fees and how it has been correlated to increased housing prices
- APF noted that when looking at formula and projections for revenue and if you look at fee structure for parks, residential development is more important whereas opportunities from commercial ordinance is best for trail and greenbelt connections
- APF noted that parks are a feature people love about Austin rather than it being a challenge for affordability
- Robynne offered to share information for APF to review about the impact of the bills that were filed recently regarding parkland dedication
 - Arin noted Dr. Crompton's work about the relationship between parkland dedication fees and affordability
 - Joy noted that it appears that removing parkland dedication will do more harm than good
 - Robynne noted that markets set the price, not the fees associated with parkland dedication
- Kayla noted that parkland dedication challenges profit rather than affordability and having parkland is only benefiting development
- Austin Outside will be reaching out to their contacts to encourage them to schedule stakeholder meetings and will add a note that the deadline will be extended
 - APF noted they have been discussing internally other groups that are not necessarily parks organizations and suggested other groups like advocacy or children's groups that use parks

- Tom noted that we've added contacts the distribution list and are trying to reach out but would appreciate any contacts
- Arin asked what they would like noted for the current ordinance
 - APF staff noted that they have been able to leverage PLD funding for projects they are supporting
- Arin asked if it would be easy to pull information about on how PLD has impacted their organization
 - APF could summarize this and provide information via email
 - Team to follow up with email and request this information
- APF noted they aren't involved in other side of PLD and fee collection but they do see benefit in fee or land dedication
 - Paul noted that assembling fees can be a challenge for particular areas or project
- APF noted that they understand restrictions but have had requests or questions about projects for particular areas
- APF asked why decision was made for 27 nexus areas rather than 7 areas
 - PLD staff noted that Dallas has 7 nexus areas whereas Austin has 27 to address goals of having folks within walking distance of a park
 - APF will follow up with Katie to see thoughts on this
- APF noted they want to support and advocate for parkland dedication and parks needs
- APF provided suggestions for additional stakeholders to meet with:
 - Austin Tenant's Council
 - Children-focused organizations
 - Housing organizations
 - Foundation Communities
 - Explore Austin

The Trail Conservancy

Meeting Details

Feb. 7, 2023, at 2:30 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Charlotte Tonsor

Project Team: Randy Scott, Robynne Heymans, Paul Books – City of Austin; Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinance and the stakeholder engagement process in 2022. The team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Charlotte supports the ordinance and noted that the Trail Conservancy receives funding from the Parkland Dedication (PLD) ordinance and the ordinance given them opportunities to create and fund projects
 - Charlotte added that her only concern with the PLD funding process was what the co-managing would look like but it has worked really well
- Randy asked what would need to be improved or needed and how PARD can make the funding process easier for them
 - Charlotte suggested PLD might have a letter or documentation describing the funding process and documented in a formal manner
- Charlotte and PLD staff discussed a project that the Trail Conservancy is waiting on the City legal department to approve
- Caroline asked what her biggest challenges are considering the City's rapid population growth.
 - Charlotte noted that keeping up with the trails to different park spaces has been a challenge and that the capacity of trails, the widening of trails and the environmental factors that are hard to work around downtown
 - Charlotte added that they are working with the City of Austin Watershed department to build trails and have these wide enough in the future
- Caroline asked if there are any trail gaps in their system

- Charlotte noted that trail gaps are not an issue for them or have recently addressed to handle more pedestrian use
- Caroline asked about trail gaps without the PLD ordinance.
 - Randy noted that without PLD, the City would never be able to afford to address these trail gaps
 - Paul added all trails are all central to Austin and PLD is working to implement more trail plans all over the city
- Caroline asked if Charlotte had any suggestions on residential and commercial requirements
 - Charlotte did not have any suggestions
- Charlotte asked if there are any distance maximums considered in the PLD funding process
 - Randy noted it depends on the area of land and what sort of businesses are there (residential or commercial)
 - Paul mentioned that Butler Trail has residential and commercial
 - Charlotte asked if there was any opportunity in the Holly area
 - Randy mentioned RBJ could be an opportunity if land is acquired
- Randy noted bills that were filed that could eliminate commercial PLD, reduce residential PLD fees significantly and eliminate the option to acquire land
 - Charlotte asked what other logical way there could be to fund parks
- Charlotte asked to be sent contacts from Austin Parks Foundation and Hill Country Conservancy who are actively engaging in the stakeholder engagement effort

Ecology Action of Texas

Meeting Details

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at 2:30 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Eric Paulus – Ecology Action of Texas

Project Team: Paul Books, Scott Grantham and Randy Scott – City of Austin; Caroline Golden - CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Eric noted his concern about existing park system being maintained, particularly maintaining pocket parks, and asked how maintenance is managed
 - Randy noted maintenance is determined annually and that developers can also agree to maintain parks
 - Eric asked about the process to confirm maintenance is being performed
 - Randy noted that the City has an inspection process to keep up with parks maintenance.
 - Paul noted that these inspections are also included in construction of the parks
- Eric asked for clarification of who is required to pay fees in-lieu of land dedication for residential developments and when this is required
 - PLD team noted any residential development is required, and fees in lieu or acquired land are collected at the site plan level
- Eric asked how often a developers dedicate land versus pay a fee
 - Scott noted that it is dependent on land size and location
- Eric asked about amenities included in dedicated areas and whether they include playgrounds and open spaces as well
 - Randy noted that many multifamily developments have dog parks, sand volleyball courts, whereas single-family subdivisions usually have playscapes
- Eric asked if these parks are still considered city property

- Randy noted that parks are city property unless an HOA manages over the park
- Eric noted his challenges with misleading signage at City parks and facilities restricting access or activities like biking – one instance at a small City park that had been signed as private and another at a bike trail trying to restrict bikers
 - Randy said there should be no restriction on access to City parks and asked for additional details about the park
 - Scott added that when designing the park, they try to avoid using fencing unless it is a dog park or has been requested to have a fence
- Eric asked about staff opinion on the PLD commercial ordinance
 - Scott noted that Randy and Paul really made this ordinance happen
 - Randy noted importance of commercial ordinances in connecting greenbelts and trails and challenges in doing this prior to commercial ordinance
- Randy shared information about the Nexus Study for commercial PLD and Dr. Crompton's work to develop the ordinance formula and methodology
- Eric noted his concern that the ability for wildlife to survive in the city is diminishing and wildlife protection is a benefit of PLD
 - Randy noted that the greenways also give the opportunity for habitats for wildlife in the city
- Eric asked if there will be an update after this meeting.
 - Caroline noted that information will be shared with everyone via email and on the Parkland webpage about the upcoming date for the update meeting
- Caroline asked what Eric thinks his biggest challenges are with increased development and population growth
 - Eric noted the ability to have more space in parks and wildlife in the city with the rapid population growth.
 - Randy mentioned that PLD ordinance is set up to be a 50/50 split for developers and taxpayers. This is making it fair for the existing residents
- Paul noted that one of the amendments being considered by the planning commission is that PARD that they must give 50% credit on the floodplain.
 - Randy added that you would get 2 acres of creek coverage on 1 acre of land; the amendment would minimize their ability to access to the creek
 - Eric mentioned that he would be opposed to that amendment for planning purposes
- Caroline noted the two recent bills filed in the state legislature regarding parkland dedication

- Randy and Scott provided of how the bills would impact parkland dedication in Austin
- Eric suggested meeting with Montopolis Community Development Corporation – montopolis.org

Creating Common Ground

Meeting Details

Feb. 8, 2023, at 4 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Stakeholder:	Ted Siff – Creating Common Ground
Project Team:	Randy Scott and Paul Books – City of Austin, Caroline Golden - CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Ted is the former executive director of the Austin Parks Foundation and has been in support of the ordinance since before it was created
 - Ted added that he wants to be an advocate in this stakeholder engagement and be involved in engagement process
- Randy provided information about funding options and Dr. Crompton's work for the City
 - Paul shared information about the City's Nexus Study
- Ted thinks there is justification for the city to require developers to pay for impacts of development, including impacts on streets, lighting, and parks
 - Noted this is consistent with Austin's overall approach to development
 - Noted that fees may be higher than initially expected due to inflation and population growth
- Randy discussed the two bills that have been filed regarding parkland dedication and how it would negatively impact PLD ordinances across the state
- Randy noted that housing prices are determined by the market and not based on parkland dedication fees/ordinances and sees the value of sharing information about this with affordable housing groups and development communities
- Ted shared information about Austin Outside and suggested meeting with those groups and noted that outreach for this effort will be done by his independent coalition

COA Housing and Planning

Meeting Details

Feb. 9, 2023, at 12:30 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Mee

Attendees

Stakeholder: Tymon Khamsi

Project Team: Randy Scott, Robynne Heymans, Paul Books– City of Austin, Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Tymon noted he reviewed recent amendments to the ordinance such as capping the cost per dwelling unit as it increases over previous year and noted amendment change to expand of exemption of affordable housing may address affordable housing concerns
- Tymon noted his role is to respond to changes in code
- Tymon noted that environmental resilience and development of affordable housing are artificially pitted against each other
- Tymon asked what the challenges the commercial ordinance addresses
 - Randy noted expanded exemption for affordable units
 - Randy noted the Nexus Study developed recently Dr. Crompton's work for the City, and the commercial ordinance targeting population of folks using park system around work
 - Scott noted that prior to commercial requirements, commercial developments could block investment City had made along greenway for trails and greenbelts
 - Robynne provided an overview of a trail/park that was created through PLD and shared information about the Parkland Dedication Story Map: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6ecfdc874970482ca41e654ea39d32b8>
- Tymon asked about the exemptions for affordable units and if it applies to a development that uses a density bonus
 - Robynne noted that with the most recent changes applies across the board to any units
 - Randy noted about complex that was 80% MFI where the market was dictating their rent

- Scott noted that the PLD team is attempting to find as much available parkland near affordable housing units to avoid contributing the park deficiency around affordable housing
- Tymon asked about the revenue of residential dedication versus commercial dedication
 - Randy noted that PLD team only has projections at this point, which is around \$2.7 million annually
 - Paul noted that the formula for determining commercial versus resident considers access to parks
- Tymon noted their department has a short list of affordable housing developers they talk to and plan to share contact information for PLD team
- Scott asked Tymon about contact information for tenant's councils, renters councils, or other similar groups and any resources his team has
 - Tymon noted his team is working on developing these resources now
- Tymon noted that he does not think the road to affordable housing is by removing cost of development or public goods and knows the PLD is not what makes housing affordable or not affordable
- Caroline asked if Tymon had any suggestions to improve the ordinance
 - Tymon noted that capping rate of growth would be favorable by developers and that a waiver for affordable housing is great but could limit park availability near affordable housing
 - Randy asked whether street impact fees are waived for affordable housing
 - Tymon said these is waived for affordable housing and noted he can

RECA

Meeting Details

February 10, 2023 at 11 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Questions:

- Has the city considered different acquisition fees based on the geographic area of the development? park acquisition?
- How does the spike in fees year over year align with PARD's goal of walkability to parks for affordable housing developments?
- If you capture a one-time cost for the next 30 years, but the developer will maintain the park for the next 30 years, how does the maintenance cost factor into fee requirements?
- Is a five-year average of previous purchases appropriate for accurate land value for fee methodology?
- Are hotels impacted by both commercial and residential parkland dedication requirements? Is it appropriate to collect fees for workers and guests?
- When are fees determined? When you have a site plan submitted or approved or subdivision submitted or approved? At the year of application or the year of review?
- Can the early determination letter include details about what will be required, where park will be dedicated or the fees required?

Comments:

- Participants noted concerns about how changes are implemented and uncertainty about requirements, particularly:
 - Whether you are grandfathered into the new ordinance
 - When fees are "locked in" or applied
 - When land dedication versus when a fee-in-lieu will be required
 - Whether hotels are affected by both residential and commercial ordinances
- Participants noted parkland deficient map appears to be outdated and doesn't include recently established parks.
- Participants noted that fees have significantly increased and are straining development in the City
- Participants noted that the maintenance of dedicated parkland ultimately becomes the responsibility of developers through maintenance requirements or because of lack of proper maintenance by the City, regardless of whether land dedication or a fee is required

- Participants noted concerns and suggestions about the average cost per acre used to calculate fees, including:
 - The increase in cost per acre is a result of the majority of recent parkland acquisition by staff being made in areas of Austin with higher land values, which results in a higher fee City wide, regardless of the comparable values in the geographic area of each specific development
 - For example, the same parkland fees are applied to \$4000 per month units downtown as market rate units in another area (where rent may be \$1,000/mo) which results in a disproportionate impact to low income units when fees are increased City wide
 - Factors such as zip code, urban versus suburban areas, downtown versus other areas should be considered for the fees required – suggested to create various fees for different districts of town
 - The application of 5-year averaging on city wide parkland acquisition is not representative of the actual land value changes in different parts of the City
 - The 5-year average calculation does not appear to appropriately evaluate the data set – consider coordination with a professional regarding best practices to analyze similar data
 - Audits should be conducted to determine whether the value paid for the parkland is really in line with market land values – If audits show that land value are not actually in line with market, those values should not be used in averaging calculation. Consider audit as a cross check for proposed average land value determined and fee set
- Participants noted that City fees impact affordability.
 - Over the duration of the permitting process in Austin, fees increase significantly and rents must be raised to create enough value to make the project financially feasible
 - Developers utilize investment models that project investor and lender returns based on costs and anticipated rents, and when fees (costs) increase, you must increase rent to meet the same return that was feasible at the time of land purchase
 - If development models cannot show a decent return, investors will not invest in real estate development projects nor will lenders agree to lend money to develop those projects, resulting in loss of total development units
- Participants noted concern that as property taxes, property insurance and interest rates increase, rents will hit a ceiling and there will not be an option to raise rents as a response to increased fees, which would result in projects not being developed.

- Participants suggested including waivers for fees based on the percentage of affordable units, similar to how Austin Energy has waivers for fees based on a percentage of affordable units
- Participants noted that the parkland early determination letter lacks detail about the land dedication or fee process, which impacts planning efforts of developer and design team
 - Suggested that this letter should have information about what will be required, where park will be dedicated and the fees required
- Participants noted fees should be set based on the earliest application date rather than the date of approval
- Participants requested that City Staff let RECA review draft code language before it goes to council

Anonymous Central Austin Landowner

Meeting Details

February 14, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Central Austin Landowner who asked to remain anonymous
Project Team: Randy Scott; Robynne Heymans; Paul Books – City of Austin,
Caroline Golden - CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Stakeholder noted he finds the current ordinance difficult to follow and make sense of as a citizen and suggested a summary of high-level information
 - Robynne shared a link to the Storymap and the calculator that PLD staff developed to determine the cost of land
 - Stakeholder also noted that the website appears to have broken links to a lot of resources but thinks GIS feature is great
- Caroline asked what the stakeholder thinks the City's biggest challenges are considering development/ population growth
 - Stakeholder noted that affordability is a big challenge, especially affordable housing for the middle class
- Caroline asked about any suggestions to improve the current ordinance
 - Stakeholder suggested a system to trade parkland credits – for example, he heard of an arrangement in the St. Edwards area where a property owner dedicated land in exchange for credits they can give to developers
 - Randy noted he is aware of arrangements like to for impervious cover
- Caroline asked if the stakeholder knew of anyone else we should speak with as part of this stakeholder engagement effort
 - Stakeholder noted that there are several large developers that do a lot of work locally who could share their thoughts
 - Stakeholder suggested team meet with Endeavor and Austin Commercial

Blunn Creek Partnership

Meeting Details

Feb. 14, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Stakeholder:	David Todd – Blunn Creek Partnership
Project Team:	Robynne Heymans; Paul Books – City of Austin, Caroline Golden - CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- David shared his background as an environmental lawyer, longtime Austin resident, and environmental advocate and noted his involvement in Blunn Creek Partnership and fundraising for upkeep of Stacey Park
- David noted his interest in PLD due to his observations of impact of development on parks and open spaces in Austin
- Caroline asked about David's thoughts on the current ordinance
 - David noted that he supports the idea of having developments contributing to budgets that will create recreational land and preservation for the growing population, however, he thinks more can be done
 - Noted that he is not seeing the offsetting land protection we would expect based on the development and growth in Austin
 - Noted that large acquisitions of land have been through bond programs rather than PLD and developers are not carrying their fair share
 - Noted it's a balance and that this shouldn't be so expensive that it's prohibitive but there is equity here that is lost
 - Paul noted that the City uses a factor of 9.4 acres per 1,000 people for level of service, which doesn't account for district and metro parks, and district and metro parks were chosen not to be included because there was a policy decision to remove some burden on new development to pay for larger acquisitions

- David noted funding is a big problem for parks and parks have traditionally been underfunded
- David noted that the neighborhood to the east of I-35 near him has seen lots of development recently but there hasn't appeared to be offsetting investments in parks and open space in the area
 - Noted he tried getting protection of a tract of land that was zoned civic but it's being developed and constructed now
 - Robynne mentions that the parks in the eastside corridor are small pocket parks or small areas and offered that the PLD team speak with his neighborhood association about parks that are being developed in their area
- David asked how PLD selects sites and mentioned that their neighborhood has been trying to speak with PARD about protecting the headwaters of Blunn Creek at an old AISD site
 - David added that he is concerned that if a development was required to pay a fee in-lieu rather than a at this location, the headwaters and heritage trees would not be protected
 - Paul noted that dedication occurs at the point of zoning or subdivision and the location he is referring to will likely be required to dedicate parkland based on the early determination letter provided to the developer of the site recently
- Caroline asked about any suggestions he has for changes to the ordinance
 - David noted that inner city neighborhoods suffer especially when in-lieu funds are used in suburban areas rather than the urban core
 - David added that in-lieu funds haven't kept up with the price of land and should be updated to reflect actual cost
 - David noted that the City needs to be careful about the credits that are given for non-park properties for things like water quality controls and floodplain set asides since it results in mistrust of the system
- The PLD team noted the state bills that were filed recently and how those would impact PLD in the City
 - David noted he does find this disappointing but not surprising
 - David noted his ideas regarding protecting parkland in Austin:
 - Noted that one of the top amenities attracting people to Austin is likely the parkland
 - Noted that the City retains some independence over public health and safety that the state cannot intrude upon
 - Noted that tighter restrictions should be applied to protect Austin's amenities

- Caroline asked what David thinks the City's biggest challenges are considering population and development growth
 - David noted developers do not need to be baiting into coming to Austin but the City is making great efforts to incentivize developers
- David noted that he would like to know what he can do to support PARD on these issues
 - Robynne noted the APF's efforts
- Caroline asked for suggestions for additional stakeholders to speak with
 - Paul noted the neighborhood groups David spoke mentioned
 - David noted additional stakeholders to reach out to:
 - Bill Bunch
 - Ted Siff
 - George Cofer
 - Mary Arnold
 - Robin Rather

City of Austin Watershed Department

Meeting Details

Feb. 15, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Kelly Strickler, Erin Wood, Liz Johnston and Nick Kincaid –
City of Austin Watershed Department

Project Team: Scott Grantham, Randy Scott, and Robynne Heymans -
City of Austin, Caroline Golden CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Caroline asked if the Watershed team had any further questions about the overview of background and current engagement efforts.
 - Kelly noted the new floodplain credit works operationally, since it is fairly new in the ordinance
 - Nick noted they support this new floodplain credit since it was a concern in the past and asked if there was anything they can help with on this 25-year floodplain credit process.
 - Randy noted that giving additional credit means that Parks and Recreation (PARD) will receive less floodplain in acquisition. He noted that it has worked well so far especially when trying to connect greenways.
- Erin asked if parkland dedication has adopted criteria about how recreational and educational opportunities are defined for floodplain
 - Randy noted they do have adopted trail criteria but not as many materials such as specific signage
- Erin asked if parkland dedication would take floodplain if only nature trails were possible
 - Erin noted this was a thought she had if there were any specific criteria for 25-year floodplains versus the 100-year floodplains
 - Randy noted they have collected floodplain for years and looked into 25-year floodplain when building a new trail and Randy mentioned that buffering has been a concern with trail plans
- Nick noted accessibility as an issue and if Watershed can collaborate with PARD to make some of these areas more accessible for the amenity space
 - Randy noted that PARD could utilize this help

- Scott noted that he has experienced instances when irrigation planting is required and hinders the process and noted he thinks some sort of partnership with Watershed would benefit them
- Caroline asked what their thoughts are on the current parkland dedication ordinances
 - Nick asked if parkland dedication considers erosion patterns or hazards when reviewing floodplain
 - Randy mentioned that they do take this into account when reviewing plans in a floodplain and noted this also adds in to the reason of a floodplain credit number.
 - Randy noted that this ordinance was made to not have any roadblocks in their way when trying to connect greenways
 - Liz mentioned that more sites are applying due to new watershed regulations that were passed by council
- Caroline asked what they think the City's biggest challenges are considering rapid population growth and development.
 - Erin mentioned competing priorities (housing cost, trails, water quality, energy, water utilities, etc) and noted that it is hard to know what the highest priority is
 - She noted that the cost of housing has been a bigger concern than the actual price of land and noted that she is grateful to partner with parks and recreation on some issues
 - Randy noted Dr Crompton's help with research on parkland dedication and suggested his research could benefit their department.
 - Erin mentioned she is aware of Dr. Crompton and would like to review his research as well

Barton Spring Conservancy

Meeting Details

Feb. 16, 2023 at 10 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Mike Cannatti – President/Board Chair of Barton Springs Conservancy

Project Team: Randy Scott, Robynne Heymans and Paul Books – City of Austin, Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Caroline asked Mike what his thoughts are about the current parkland dedication ordinances.
 - Mike noted that he is a very enthusiastic supporter of any funding for Austin parks and noted that he has followed along on all Parkland Dedication changes and requirements
 - Mike asked if the commercial ordinance overtook the residential ordinance
 - Randy noted that the commercial ordinance did not diminish the residential ordinance and that the commercial ordinance was developed to allow for more land to be acquired along industrial buildings, retail, etc.
 - Randy mentioned Dr Crompton's work and research that has been completed for the commercial ordinance.
- Mike noted he is curious to know about the two state legislature bills that were filed recently
 - Randy discussed the two state bills that have been filed and how these would impact parkland dedication in Austin
- Caroline asked what Mike thinks the city's biggest challenges are considering population growth and development
 - Mike stated that the city is behind on keeping up with greenspaces
- Mike asked about required sidewalks as a fee in parkland fees.
 - Robynne noted that the sidewalk requirement may still be an active fee for any new site
 - Randy mentioned that sidewalks are created when the City develops a park

- Mike noted that there is a fee in lieu that allows them to opt out of land dedication, and asked if it is still active.
 - Randy noted that he will take this down and get back to him with a response.
 - Robynne provided an overview of what they do at time of site plan review.
- Caroline asked Mike if he had any other suggestions of people, we should speak with in this stakeholder engagement process
 - Mike suggested Austin Outside and speaking with Mary Arnold

Austin Outside

Meeting Details

Feb. 21, 2023 at 2 p.m.
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Beth Larkin – Austin Outside
Project Team: Randy Scott, Robynne Heymans, and Paul Books – City of Austin, Arin Gray and Alyssa Rivas – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Beth spoke to the background of her organization, Austin Outside and explained that Austin Outside is a coalition of non-profits and businesses and their mission is to champion vibrant and thriving outdoor places for all in Greater Austin
- Beth noted that Austin Parks Foundation and Travis County Park Foundation are their two partners that help organize and gather information for legislative efforts
- Beth noted that they will help distribute information and that she is getting information from Kayla at Austin Parks Foundation.
- Beth stated that her current thoughts on the parkland dedication ordinances are coming as a Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) partner on the project side
- Beth noted that she understands developers' concerns for increasing costs.
- Beth noted that she does think there could be more clarity on how parkland dedication funds could be used exactly as well as transparency on where funds are available and how they are used
 - Robynne shared the GIS map link with the group.
<https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebcf27f09c704e78843b71f7b0361b1c>
- Beth noted that she has several members that are very interested in accessing these funds and hoped there are opportunities to identify how PARD can be a gate opener not a gatekeeper
- Beth believes her partners would prefer a more streamlined process as it takes so long to get through planning, permitting, and building phases
- Beth asked if trying to spend the funds expeditiously was a problem
 - Randy noted that it used to be but no longer is a problem
 - Randy also shared that they have matched the most recent Bond funds of \$40,000. This makes them able to leverage \$75,000 on parkland acquisition

- Randy noted that PLD staff would be glad to work on how to streamline this and remove the red tape
- Beth noted the park deficient map will be helpful for partners to identify what is available and what areas might need other funds
- Randy noted that Paul is working on a equity tool to identify priority areas
- Beth asked if PLD felt that because the PLD fees are limited to local areas it is impacting their ability to provide an equitable approach
 - Randy noted it is keeping the funds where the development is occurring
 - Randy also noted that the fact that affordable housing is exempt is an impact to equitability for parks
- Discussed that PLD fees are a one-time fee and that is not impacting the cost of housing over time (driven by market and many other factors)
 - Beth noted she would be happy to share this information with her partners and the Austin community to keep correct information about these ordinances
- Beth asked if PLD could revisit allowing PLD fees for maintenance requirements
 - Randy shared that it is a legal ruling but that the current legislative bills have maintenance included
- Alyssa asked what the City's challenges are given the rapid population growth and development
 - Beth shared that communication and misinformation are challenges noting that things are happening so quickly
 - Randy noted that they would like to work with their partners to get accurate information out
- Alyssa asked if Beth had input or suggestions on improving neighborhood parks
 - Beth suggested making people aware of all parks that are around them and noted that having access options to get there and safety is important.
- Beth asked when considering creeks and water quality how PARD can build trails near water when Watershed wants development at least 50 feet away
 - Randy noted it is a challenge and that with Atlas 14 several 100-year floodplains became 25-year floodplains and that they are working closely with Watershed to work through these types of concerns and find solutions that work for both departments

Fruitful Commons

Meeting Details

Feb. 22, 2023 at 11 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Jodi Lane - Executive Director

Project Team: Alyssa Rivas - CD&P, Robynne Heymans and Paul Books - City of Austin

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinances. The team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Jodi Lane has been an architect since 1991 and became involved with vision planning in the city of Austin and noted her current efforts are to provide resiliency with food in the community in east Austin on public parkland
- Alyssa asked what Jodi's thoughts are on the current parkland ordinances
 - Jodi mentioned that her most recent encounter with understanding the parkland dedication ordinances was with the south-central waterfront project with the city and noted that it was a in-depth process with a lot of rules that were hard to understand at a first glance
 - Jodi added that at the time, commercial requirements were not in place and made this difficult
 - Paul noted the actual land value is the same, including commercial developments and that the commercial requirements gives the City the ability to acquire land in commercial development areas
 - Jodi noted she is glad to hear this and explained how a development was starting to go up around a senior center and when Fruitful Commons proposed to partner with this developer to create a community garden in this area, they were turned down
 - Jodi suggested that more of information about why PLD is needed should be promoted and noted she knows the ROI is greater for developments because of the benefits Fruitful Commons provides in the communities with these developments
- Alyssa asked what Jodi thinks the City's biggest challenges are considering new development and population growth

- Jodi stated that the biggest challenges she has seen is affordability and “green gentrification” and noted that she believes if Austin cannot stay affordable, the city will lose its culture
 - Jodi added that “green gentrification” has been happening a lot in East Austin, the parks are not just standard green space and they includes higher-end architecture and amenities
- Alyssa noted the recent parkland dedication bills filed and asked Jodi about her thoughts and familiarity of the state legislature bills that have been filed.
 - Robynne noted the impacts of the bills on parkland dedication in Austin
 - Jodi noted she is against these bills and does not understand why there needs to be bigger opportunity to take away green space in the urban core
 - Jodi asked about the urban core greenspace and if there are any calculations based on climate change involved in this process
 - Robynne and Paul stated said they use maximum surface temps in certain community areas specifically areas that are highly prioritized
 - Jodi asked about what is being done to respond to the bills filed
 - Robynne noted the City’s intergovernmental department is helping them with this
 - Jodi noted that she is gladly an agricultural parkland partner

Austin Ridge Riders

Meeting Details

Feb. 23, 2023 at 11 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Cullen McMorrow – Austin Ridge Riders Trail Programs
Director

Project Team: Alyssa Rivas – CD&P, Thomas Rowlinson – City of Austin

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinance and the stakeholder engagement process in 2022. The team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Cullen McMorrow has been involved in trail stewarding for 7-8 years
- Alyssa asked Cullen what his thoughts are on the current ordinance
 - Cullen noted that he was not too familiar with the specifics of the ordinance
- Cullen asked if the Parkland staff sees a preference from developers for dedicating land vs paying a fee in-lieu
 - Tom noted that most developments will pay the fee instead dedicate land and added that the Parkland staff considers park deficient areas for land dedication versus fee requirement
- Cullen mentioned that he has spoken to the Parks Department about specific parkland areas and has been told that there are funding issues that prevent his request from happening
 - Tom explains bond funding is usually spoken for in long time projects and parkland dedication depends on new developments in the area
 - Tom added that the funding and fees are usually spent on long time projects first
 - Tom offered to talk with Cullen more about this or specific parks that are being planned
- Cullen noted that there are other cities who label bike parks as tourism benefits, and therefore, they do not have to go through the parkland dedication process
 - Tom noted that when parks are acquired, it is usually not for a programmatic use
- Alyssa asked Cullen what he thought the City's biggest challenges are considering development and population growth
 - Cullen has seen population growth positively impact the Mountain Bike group

- Cullen mentioned that East Austin has been neglected historically and seen parkland decline there
 - Cullen noted that has been trying to push the Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt more and develop it as a real trail system
 - Tom noted he thinks the Parks Department is trying to make this happen, even as more of an urban trail opportunity
 - Cullen noted he has talked to the neighborhood association on this and was told they are waiting on permitting
- Cullen suggested there be new planning of the biking trails on maps and to include the difficulty level of some of the trails.
 - Cullen noted he wants to see more funding on these trails
- Alyssa asked Cullen if there is anything we can do to make the ordinance clearer
 - Cullen suggests having specific examples of how parkland dedication funded parks in the city or to spread more awareness of these parks.
 - Tom shared a story map with information about this:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6ecfdc874970482ca41e654ea39d32b8>
- Alyssa noted there were bills filed recently that would impact parkland dedication in Austin and asked if Cullen had thoughts on these
 - Tom provided more information about these bills and noted their potential impacts to Parkland Dedication in Austin
 - Cullen noted Austin Outside and Austin Parks Foundation have been great about updating members about everything going on in the stakeholder engagement process and updating groups about the state bills

Zilker Neighborhood Association

Meeting Details

Feb. 27, 2023 at 4 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Robin Rather

Project Team: Thomas Rowlinson – City of Austin; Alyssa Rivas – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinance and the stakeholder engagement process in 2022. The team reviewed how stakeholder engagement shaped the current ordinance and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Robin noted she is familiar with Parkland Dedication with her work in the Zilker Vision Plan
- Robin noted that she believes the City should go back to what the Parkland Dedication staff originally recommended over what City Council decided on the ordinance requirements
 - Robin noted she thinks that affordable housing being exempt is not fair when parks cannot be dedicated in these areas
- Robin noted that PARD has been underfunded for too long and noted that she thinks this tremendously affected the Zilker plan
- Robin noted that climate and equity are different but believes both of these points should be aligned with the Parkland Dedication fees
- Tom noted that the fees have been front and center due to comments from the development community and noted that PARD wants to explain that this does not affect the cost of living in Austin and convey why our city needs parks.
- Robin mentioned she has been working closely with developer communities to have data to support their concerns about fees.
 - Robin noted that there is data of Parkland Dedication that shows how this benefits Austin residents such as health, lifestyle, population growth, mental health, economic growth, etc. and COVID proved these points.
- Robin asked about Statesman PUD Parkland Dedication Fees
 - Tom noted that they were supposed to pay a fee-in-lieu for the remaining balance.
- Robin mentioned that having affordable housing in the Zilker neighborhood is a main priority and that she never wants this to be a setback.

- Robin noted she does not think that parkland dedication fees impact developer profits and that it has been difficult for many years now with Austin's expansion
 - Tom noted there are some provisions in place to waive fees for affordable housing projects
- Robin noted that she supports Parkland Dedication and PARD
- Robin also noted that climate mitigation should be talked about more and Austin losing so many trees in the recent ice storm is an example of why there needs to be climate mitigation strategies in place
- Tom noted the City has met with UT Austin students and they mentioned more parks and trails would be beneficial to them
- Tom shared information about how the 2 state bills that were filed would impact Parkland Dedication in Austin and other cities ordinances across the state
 - Robin suggested calculations be done regarding how much developers actually spend on Parkland fees and compare their total profits
- Robin asked about fees for park maintenance
 - Tom noted that fees can only go to new parks and added that this has been a concern shared often and noted PARD is still trying to think on how to improve this
- Robin suggested that there should be a summit about Parkland Dedication to educate the community and supporters and to emphasize the focus on mental health, rapid population growth and climate mitigation

Save Historic Muny District

Meeting Details

Feb. 28, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Mary Arnold

Project Team: Robynne Heymans and Randy Scott - City of Austin; Alyssa Rivas - CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Mary shared information about the history of parkland dedication in Austin, including the “Green Council” in 1985 who fully supported Parkland Dedication and David Green from Texas A&M who was involved in the first parkland dedication ordinance
- Mary noted that she was on the Parks board from 1978 to 1984 and then went into the Planning Commission in 1985 and noted large support for this ordinance and said she believes this has been nothing but good for the City
 - Mary mentioned that in 1985 a lot of subdivision construction was happening in the city and setting aside land in these subdivisions was the main goal of this ordinance
- Mary noted that one of her concerns over the years was that PARD would set money aside and would use the funds on a larger park and that she had the impression it was not going to neighborhood parks
 - Randy mentions the requirements for expenditures have been updated since then and now, expenditures have to be sent in a general area of where they are generated from
- Alyssa asked Mary what she thinks the biggest challenges of population growth and development in Austin
 - Mary noted she thinks there still is room for green space here regardless of population growth and noted she has seen and noted she has seen struggles with keeping up with population growth
- Alyssa asked Mary if she has any input on how to improve neighborhood parks.
 - Mary noted her issues with the fact that many neighborhood parks do not have enough sidewalk access and noted how Reed neighborhood Park always seems to have construction
 - Mary added has reported it but there has not been any help with this and noted they were denied access to the pool due to lack of lifeguards

- Randy mentions that the city has tried to improve older neighborhoods with sidewalks
- Alyssa noted the state bills to Mary and asked about her familiarity of them
 - Mary asked about the numbers of these bills
 - Randy stated they were SB 558 and HB 1526
 - Randy explained how these bills would impact Parkland Dedication in Austin and in the State of Texas
 - Mary asks why these bills were initiated and filed
 - Randy noted concerns about the current ordinances in Austin
 - Mary asked if other cities would be impacted because of these bills
 - Randy noted that cities in Texas of more than 800,000 people (Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, Houston) will be impacted if these bills are passed
 - Mary asked if there have been conversations with Austin legislatures
 - Randy noted efforts by City's intergovernmental team
 - Mary noted she would like to talk with legislatures about this issue

Charlie McCabe Consulting

Meeting Details

March 2, 2023 at 3 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Charlie McCabe - Parks, Open Space & Placemaking Consultant

Project Team: Randy Scott, Paul Books and Justin Stewart – City of Austin; Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Charlie noted that he was Executive Director of APF from 2005 to 201 and he currently works as a consultant for parks, non-profit organizations, and city parks
- Caroline asked Charlie about his familiarity with the City of Austin parkland dedication ordinances
 - Charlie noted he is familiar with the ordinances in Austin
 - Randy mentioned that Dr. Crompton from Texas A&M is involved in this process and helped develop the commercial ordinance requirements and noted that Dr. Crompton believes this commercial ordinance can be used as model across the United States in other parkland dedication ordinances
 - Charlie noted he gave Dr. Crompton a lot of data about cities that are using parkland dedication currently and noted that a lot of cities have updated parkland dedication ordinances to reflect a range of residential and looking to incorporate commercial
 - Charlie noted that he does see parkland dedication in cities with high growth rates which triggers acquiring parkland as the new focus point and has not seen that in cities that are fully built out but those cities tend to have a lot of impact fees for housing
- Charlie asked about restrictions regarding the use of parkland dedication fees and if Austin is still confined to buffer area
 - Randy confirmed that the City is still using expenditure criteria that need to go to residents that generate fee
 - Randy noted the fee has to go to new facilities, expanding existing facilities and addition to parks

- Charlie noted he is most familiar with Atlanta's ordinance and they divided city into 4 geographic areas that give more latitude and matched 4 base planning areas in City of Atlanta
 - Charlie noted that this gave more latitude to apply funds in surrounding area, not necessarily limited to specific neighborhood neighborhood
 - Paul showed the planning areas with funds that create smaller buckets across Austin and noted it can take longer to accumulate funds that can be expended on larger projects
 - Randy noted that when they do look at expending the fees, they look at physical barriers like I-35, Mopac or other major arterials where people can't physically cross
- Charlie asked if there's still a timeframe to expend the funds received from fee-in-lieu from development
 - Randy noted the city tries to expend within 5 years and if development hasn't built out, they have a 180-day window to ask for a refund
- Charlie noted that the city is taking advantage of other impact fees of interest in both Austin and other Texas cities
 - Randy noted parkland dedication is not under impact fees, rather in health and public safety and discussed hot taxes and how there has been tax money from hotel use identified for park improvements centered around visitation
- Charlie noted that he does monitor this in Austin and said Austin has done a good job of updating the ordinances frequently
 - Charlie added he has read portions of Dr. Crompton's latest analysis and when looking at fees, they are looking along the lines of some other funding mechanism
 - Randy noted California has Quimby act but they also allow park impact fees
 - Charlie added that they expanded the definition of open space in California, it is not as strict of a definition of parkland compared to the definition in the Texas Constitution
 - Randy noted that Paul conducted an analysis and found the amount of land in the floodplain and noted that when they developed the commercial parkland dedication, they looked at Atlanta's park impact fee and ordinance
 - Randy noted that the city has worked with folks from different organizations for using City funds to continue their fund raising efforts to parks, which helps in expending available funds
 - Charlie noted that all of those points seem positive and likes that direction
- Charlie noted that he does read what Dr. Crompton writes and he's done a lot for Texas cities as well as a good job of keeping track of what can be effective
 - Charlie mentioned how he helped the City of Ft. Worth with analysis of open space acquisition and took another look at San Antonio. It's impressive with what they've been able to do with sales tax, bonds, and other things to acquire a huge amount of development rights to property out where their water is.

- Randy and Charlie discussed the use of sales tax in San Antonio for park funding
- Randy noted bills that were filed recently and proposed changes to parkland dedication

Great Springs Project

Meeting Details

March 7, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Lyda Creus Molanphy

Project Team: Randy Scott, Paul Books, Justin Stewart – City of Austin;
Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team provided an overview of the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process and spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Lyda noted that she does not have any specific language suggestions for the team regarding the ordinance and added she is thrilled that the city has residential and commercial parkland dedication ordinances
- Lyda noted that the mission of the Great Springs Project is to put additional land into conservation and build spring trail
- Lyda suggested to provide more clarity regarding the fee process, maintenance and operations and noted it would be a good idea to present how fees in Austin compare to other cities
- Lyda asked how they can support parks and recreation in the most successful implementation of parkland dedication
 - She noted that she worked with the City of New Braunfels on an ordinance and developers didn't feel like they received enough credits
 - Randy noted that in Austin they are receiving almost double credit if they build park facilities
- Lyda asked what goals parkland staff has for the southern side of the City
 - Randy noted how parkland dedication is used in south part of city, mainly to build greenway connections and noted that the commercial parkland dedication ordinance has made this easier
 - Randy provided specific examples for large single-family developments and multi-family developments
- Lyda asked about priority of trail development especially around the floodplain.

- Randy noted he recently had a meeting with Austin Ridge Riders to gather funding for a bike/park plan and had some illustrations mainly focused on the east side of Austin, where mountain biking is utilized at the southern Walnut Creek Trail
 - Randy noted PARD staff have worked closely with Hill Country Conservancy and their projects have been expanded thru PLD
 - Randy noted that in long range plan PARD staff identify major creek corridors that are high priority for trail development
- Lyda asked about the City's target for 2023 parkland dedication
 - Randy noted that the City doesn't have targets for parkland dedication and it's totally dependent on where development occurs
- Lyda asked about forecasting for parkland dedication fees
 - Randy noted that commercial requirements are not anticipated to generate a lot of funds, but rather is critical in addressing trail gaps along greenways due to commercial development
- Lyda noted that Great Springs Project is very active on the ground, working closely with Austin Outside and Urban Trails Program and that it's good to hear there's been a lot of PLD work specifically with Hill Country Conservancy and asked how PARD works with specific organization
 - Randy provided examples of how funding from parkland dedication fees are used by organizations to fund projects
- Caroline noted that there are bills that were recently filed that would impact parkland dedication in Austin
 - Randy shared information about proposed changes to parkland dedication in bills and noted this impacts more than 25% of all Texas residents and would ultimately impact other cities in the State
- Lyda asked about presentation from the Update meeting being available online

Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association (BCNA)

Meeting Details

March 8, 2023 at 12 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: Ingrid Weigand – Head of BCNA Parks Committee, Matt Coldwell – Vice President of BCNA

Project Team: Alyssa Rivas – CD&P, Robynne Heymans – City of Austin

After brief introductions, the project team the purpose and goals of the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Ingrid asked about the state legislature bills regarding parkland dedication and how this would affect the current parkland dedication ordinance
 - Robynne discussed how this will affect the City of Austin parks and the parkland dedication ordinance requirements
 - Ingrid asked why this community engagement process is currently still active when there are two state legislature bills that are being discussed next week
 - Robynne noted that City Council directed this community engagement process be conducted before the bills were filed
 - Ingrid noted her biggest concern is that the Parks and Recreation Department will have to end up paying developers. She believes the city already has parkland that is not yet developed
 - Matt noted these are his concerns as well and thinks if these bills pass, parkland dedication will be very minimal
- Ingrid discussed the current Copeland area and how there has not been any movement and noted this is why she is concerned about developers having more control on parkland dedication and negotiations
 - She noted she is in need of funding to maintain and preserve this park
- Matt asked about the stance the city has on the state legislature bills and how they have approached speaking about this to others
 - Robynne noted the intergovernmental department has been speaking to representatives and noted that the parkland dedication team has developed information about how the bills would impact parkland dedication
- Ingrid asked if there has been any support from the other cities that will be impacted by these state legislature bills
 - Robynne noted that the other cities will be as impacted as Austin and they have not expressed too much interest

- Ingrid asked about PUDs being considered if the state legislature bills are passed
 - Robynne noted that she is not sure about this at the moment.
- Ingrid suggested that the current ordinance should be a little tighter with developers and require maintenance fees
- Alyssa asked if they had any suggestions to improve access to neighborhood parks
 - Matt suggested that there be more creation of urban trails to improve the disruption of trails to park spaces
 - Matt mentioned West Bouldin Creek and how they would like to have an easement for a park trail that is continuous throughout the Bouldin Creek area
 - Ingrid noted that creating more connectivity for neighborhood pocket parks is needed and good starting point
 - Robynne shared a map of pending trails and connections to come in the Bouldin Creek area
- Alyssa asked what they believe are the biggest challenges the City of Austin is facing considering new development and rapid population growth
 - Ingrid discussed that the challenges she sees are affordability and homelessness and noted that the homeless population has over taken a lot of parks in the city
 - Matt noted that the challenge of just trying to manage what the city already has is prominent and added that the police force being understaffed right now seems to have affected the safety and cleanliness of some parks
 - Matt added that parks and recreation can hopefully implement trail managers or park rangers.
- Ingrid suggested that parks and recreation re-evaluate what they charge event organizers for the use of parks and noted event organizers should pay for all maintenance and up keep of the park not just restoration fees
- Ingrid added that she believes conservancy groups are taking away from the parks and recreation department and suggested that all proceeds need to be going to the parks and recreation funds

Home Builders Association of Greater Austin

Meeting Details

March 14, 2023 at 4 p.m.

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stakeholder: David Glenn, Scott Turner, Shawn Kirkpatrick, David Hartman

Project Team: Randy Scott, Tom Rowlinson – City of Austin;
Caroline Golden – CD&P

After brief introductions, the project team reviewed the current parkland dedication ordinance and the stakeholder engagement process in 2022. The team provided an overview, the purpose and goals, and reviewed common themes, questions, and suggestions from the current stakeholder engagement process. The team spent the remainder of the meeting answering stakeholder questions and discussing ideas and suggestions about parkland dedication.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Participants suggested PARD create a chart of the number of acres of parkland per 1000 compared to other cities on lists referenced in Update Meeting
 - Randy noted this information may be available by Trust Republic for Land
- Participants suggested PARD ask for data on the demand for land in Austin from the Austin Board of Realtors
- Shawn asked about parkland dedication as it related to affordable housing and whether exemptions apply for the entirety of the development or only affordable units in the project
 - Shawn noted SMART housing can be difficult to work with
 - Randy noted that exemptions don't only apply to SMART housing and now only needs to be affordable by government certification
 - Tom noted LIHTC fits under this as well
 - Shawn noted LIHTC is only for multifamily
- David noted one thing HBA is looking for is stability in how the fee is calculated and they are concerned about yearly increases in fee
 - David added that Austin area is currently in a housing crisis and HBA is concerned about folks being priced out of the market

- David requested something more predictable and stable than 10-year average
 - David suggested involvement of a third-party than can appraise parkland specifically
- David added that Austin Real Estate Center did a study reviewing development fees and parkland dedication fee seems to be an outlier in this data:
https://www.hbaaustin.com/uploads/1/3/6/8/136826201/2022_central_texas_ho_using_development_fees_analysis.pdf
- David noted that Austin is desirable but so are other cities and it would be interesting to see fees compared to other cities like Denver, Charlottesville and Nashville
- Randy noted that drastic increase in fees are partially related to first 5-years falling off the acquisitions averages that had no bond money contributions
- Scott noted that he agrees with the Mayor that fee methodology should be adjusted
- Shawn noted that with every hundred residents, the fee works out to be around \$12/per square foot, which is much more than what you would pay for just the land being acquired
 - Shawn noted this is disproportionate to what developments are paying for just the land
 - Shawn noted developments fulfill their obligation by creating parkland and this should fall to other funding streams of the City
 - Shawn noted he will share his calculations with the PLD team
- Shawn asked if the City would rather have land dedicated or the fee
 - Randy noted the City would rather have parkland dedicated
 - Shawn noted this should be 'either-or' rather than combination required
- Randy noted PARD does incentivize development by providing comparison of the City's cost to develop parkland versus the developers' cost and that credits are provided and noted these figures are available every year
- Shawn noted that current process impacts what the development is rather than it being a negotiated mix and noted that this can be determinant of what options are available to developers and noted a simplification of the process is needed
- Randy provided information about dedication of land in the floodplain and that the majority of land being dedicated is unencumbered land that is undevelopable
- Scott recommended the City conduct a Speak Up! Survey to collect feedback
- David asked if any ordinance changes are proposed

- Randy noted this stakeholder engagement process will ultimately result in suggestions that could result in amendments, but at this point, PLD team is collecting input
- Randy noted that PLD staff welcome written comments and additional meetings to discuss input
- David noted that they will develop formal comments and suggestions for inclusion in final report to City Council
 - Shawn noted he will add his calculator to the formal comments

Appendix C:

Community Conversations Update Meeting

Community Conversations Update Meeting

Summary Report

Overview

The City of Austin Parkland Dedication team held a virtual community update meeting on March 3, 2023 to update community members on the current stakeholder engagement process, share input received, and discuss next steps. This meeting included a presentation and discussion session.

Attendees

Stakeholders

Name	Organization
Alina Carnahan	Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)
Ann DeSanctis	City of Austin Urban Trails Program
Atha Phillips	City of Austin – Councilmember Pool’s Office
Christopher Sapuppo	City of Austin Employee
Cullen McMorrow	Austin Ridge Riders
David Glenn	Home Builders Association of Greater Austin
Ingrid Weigand	Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association
Kayla Reese	Austin Parks Foundation
Joy Casnovsky	Austin Parks Foundation
Libby Linton	Pape Dawson Engineers
Lyda Creus Molanphy	Great Springs Project
Marissa McKinney	Coleman and Associates
Sarah Campbell	
Sarah Ulusoy	Pape Dawson Engineers
Will Genrich	Forestar Group

Project Team

Name	Organization
Randy Scott	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Scott Grantham	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Robynne Heymans	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Paul Books	City of Austin Parkland Dedication
Liana Kallikova	City of Austin Parks and Recreation
Dr. John Crompton	Texas A&M University
Arin Gray	CD&P
Caroline Golden	CD&P
Alyssa Rivas	CD&P

Meeting Summary

The project team reviewed the parkland dedication goals, residential and commercial ordinances and methodology for the ordinance. Additionally, the project team explained the purpose of the stakeholder meetings, what feedback has been received so far and what steps will be taken next. The meeting ended with a discussion session. Discussion items included:

- Alina Carnahan noted that she had hoped to see more detailed questions and information to address the 5 directives from City Council in the stakeholder meetings such as exploring the methodology and ordinance language.
- Kayla Reese asked about the FAQs sheet from the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) and when this will be made available.
 - Arin noted that the PARD is working on this and will share information as it is available.
- Marissa McKinney asked how PARD budgets for maintenance and noted her concern that the budget will not cover extra/new parkland.
 - Randy mentioned that maintenance budgets are usually discussed in the spring time during budget season.
- Lyda Creus Molanphy asked what the next steps are of this engagement process.
 - Arin stated with next steps will include the report for city council that includes much more detail. Also noted that city staff will also follow state legislature's upcoming decision.
- Ingrid Weigand discussed that she wanted to follow up on the comment about the parkland dedication fee going towards maintenance efforts. She noted that she believes PARD's budget is constrained as more parkland is added and development should be responsible.
- David Glenn requested a comparison of fees in Austin compared to other cities and noted the Texas A&M real estate study that says that Austin's developer fees are 137% higher than other Texas cities.
- Lyda Creus Molanphy asked for a high level explanation of the bills and how it will impact parkland dedication.
 - The team shared that they are following the legislation and will share updates as they are available.

Stakeholder Invitee List

Name	Organization
Sarah Ulusoy	Pape-Dawson
Alina Carnahan	Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)
Goerge Cofer	Hill Country Conservancy
Kayla Reese	Austin Parks Foundation
Joy Casnovsky	Austin Parks Foundation
Eric Paulus	Ecology Action of Texas
Tymon Khamisi	City of Austin Housing and Planning
Christopher Johnson	Development Services
Tom Wald	Red Line Parkway Initiative
Tim Dombeck	Parks and Recreation
Liana Kallivoka	Parks and Recreation
Dr. John Crompton	Texas A&M University
Ann DeSanctis	Urban Trails
Will Genrich	Forestar
Katie Robillard	Austin Parks Foundation
Marc Tucci	Austin Sports and Social Club
Christopher Sapuppo	City of Austin Development Services
Sara Wilson	City of Austin Development Services
Lauren Terrazas	City of Austin Councilmember Ellis's Office
Julie Montgomery	City of Austin Chief of Staff for Mayor and Council
Ed Scruggs	City of Austin Councilmember Ellis's Office
Paige Ellis	City of Austin Councilmember
Atha Phillips	City of Austin Councilmember Pool's Office
Kurt Cadena-Mitchell	City of Austin Mayor Pro-Tem Alter's office
Libby Linton	Pape Dawson
David Michael	City of Austin Development Services
Matthew Geske	Austin Chamber of Commerce
Clark Hancock	Save Barton Creek Association
Megan Frey	Endeavor Real Estate Group
Chris Randazzo	Garza EMC
David Todd	Blunn Creek Partnership and SRCC Neighborhood Association
Kelly Strickler	Watershed Protection Department
Mike Cannatti	Barton Springs Conservancy
Beth Larkin	Austin Outside
Jodi Lane	Fruitful Commons
Cullen McMorrow	Austin Ridge Riders - Trails Program Director
Robin Rather	Zilker NA
Mary Arnold	Save Historic Muny District

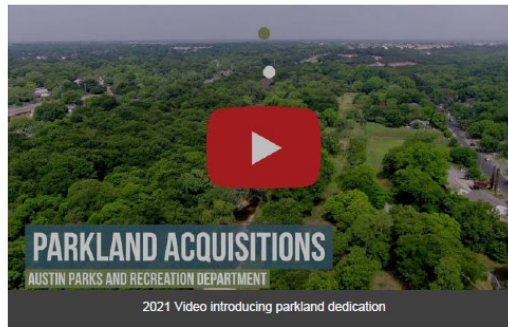
Charlotte Tonsor	The Trail Conservancy
Ted Siff	Creating Common Ground
Charlie McCabe	Charlie McCabe Consulting LLC
Lyda Creus Molanphy	Great Springs Project
Ingrid Weigand	Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association
Derek Villemez	DPR
Dianne Bangle	Real Estate Council of Austin
Frank Fuentes	US Hispanic Contractor's Association of Austin
Richard Grayum	Austin Contractors and Engineers Association
Carol Hadnot	Austin Black Contractor's Association
Melissa Hawthorne	Austin Permit Service
Nhat Ho	Civiltude
Blair McKay	American Institute of Architects- Austin Chapter (Commercial Advocacy)
Silvia Pendleton	Austin Contractors and Engineers Association
Taylor Smith	Austin Board of Realtors
Aletta Sung	Asian Contractor Association
Amanda Swor	Drenner Group
Phil Thoden	Associated General Contractors of Austin
Matt Geske	Austin Chamber of Commerce,
Michele Van Hyfte	Downtown Austin Alliance
Thom Singer	Austin Tech Alliance
April Ritzenthaler	Austin Independent Business Association
Marissa McKinney	Coleman and Associates
Emily Blair	DPR
Stephen Retps	DPR
Aan Coleman	Coleman and Associates
Jeff Howard	McLean and Howard, LLC, DAA
T Newton	Johnson Design Group
Chi Clee	HKS Architects
Cooper Drenner	Wilhorn Capital
Rich Leisy	Ryan Companies
Bradley Bailey	CBRE
Densie Eisman	Austin Hotel & Lodging Association
Gabriele	Austin Parks Foundation
Andrew	Tree Folks
Heidi Anderson	The Trail Foundation
Chuck	Pease Park Conservancy
Melissa Ayala	Waterloo Greenway
James Russell	Austin Trail of Lights
Michael Cannatti	Barton Springs Conservancy
Sydney Garcia	Save Barton Creek Association
Brian Zabcik	Save Barton Creek Association

Melinda Chow	Austin Youth River Watch
Luke Metzger	Environment Texas
Carmen Llanes Pulido	Go Austin Vamos Austin
Monica Guzman	Go Austin Vamos Austin
Rodney Ahart	Keep Austin Beautiful
Ashley Todd	Friends of Barton Springs Pool
Heath Riddles Sanchez	Pease Park Conservancy
Joanna Wolaver	Seeds of Change Consulting
Paul DiFiore	PODER
Chisty Muse	Hill Country Alliance
Susana Almanza	PODER
Bill Bunch	SOS Alliance
Kathy Mitchell	Just Liberty
Kathy Miller	Hill Country Conservancy
Colleen Theriot	Norwood Park Foundation
Andrea Bates	City of Austin Housing and Planning Department
Erica Leak	City of Austin Housing and Planning Department
Liz Johnston	City of Austin Watershed Protection Department
Kevin Shunk	City of Austin Watershed Protection Department
Robert Anderson	City of Austin Development Services
Katie Wettick	City of Austin Urban Trails
Erika Lopez	City of Austin
Mary Marrero	City of Austin
Mendy Marshall	City of Austin Parks and Recreation
Lauren Gaetano	City of Austin Parks and Recreation
Kathleen Schneeman	Explore Austin
David Glenn	Home Builders Association of Greater Austin
Amanda Brown	HD Brown Consulting
Sarah Campbell	City of Austin Watershed Department

Email Invitation

From: Austin Parks and Recreation Department <PLD.commercial@austintexas.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 8:17 AM
To: Alyssa Rivas
Subject: Parkland Dedication – Update Meeting Reminder

[View this email in your browser](#)



Parkland Dedication Community Conversations Update Meeting Reminder

Thank you to all that have participated in the Community Conversation meeting and stakeholder interviews. Our team has received valuable input and feedback.

A virtual Community Conversations Update Meeting will be held from **12:30 – 1:30 this Friday, March 3** to share what we heard and next steps.

PLD Conversations Update Meeting

Friday, March 3, 2023 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

[Zoom Registration Link](#)

If you have not been able to participate, we hope you can join us for this meeting. We will share an overview of the process and highlights of what we have heard and learned and then open it up for additional feedback.

Please forward this email and spread the word to any contacts that may be interested.

If you have any questions or comments before this meeting, please contact our consultant Alyssa Rivas at 512-533-9100 or arivas@cdandp.com.

[Zoom Registration](#)

[PLD Conversations Webpage](#)



Recent Parkland Dedication parks in Bradshaw Crossing

Parkland Dedication

Community Conversations Update
March 3, 2023

Good Afternoon

Introductions



Parkland Dedication (PLD)

Overview

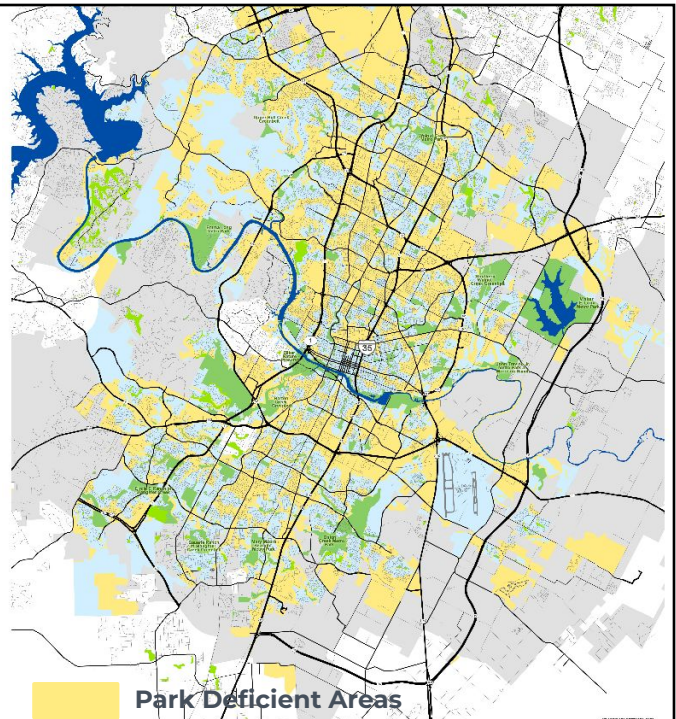
2023 Stakeholder Engagement

Open Discussion

3

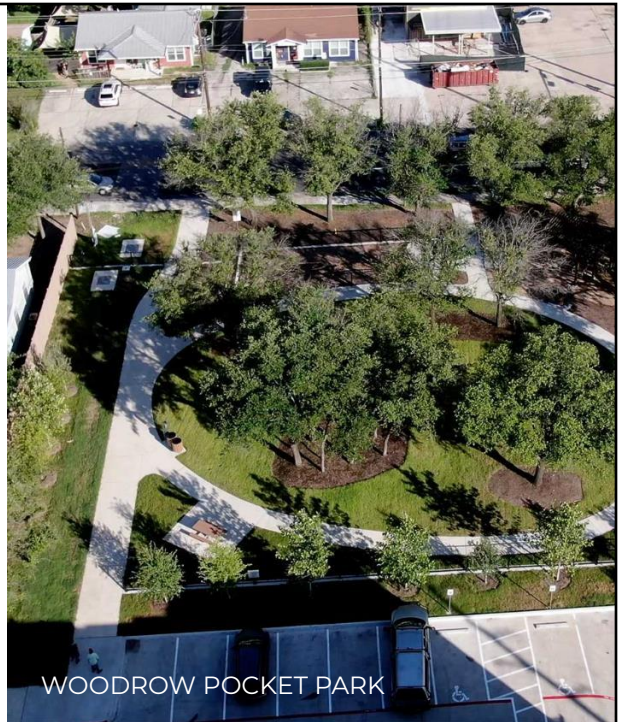
PLD Goals

- Provide parkland within a 5 to 10-minute walk for all Austinites
- Distribute high-quality parkland equitably across the city
- Integrate open space into a compact and connected city



PLD Goals

- Promote the health and well-being of the Austin community and workforce
- Keep park development in pace with rapid development and workforce growth
- Create opportunities for greenbelt and trail connections to serve new developments



Parkland Dedication Accomplishments

Since
1985

1,800 acres of
deeded parkland

84 acres of park
easements

121 distinct parks either
dedicated or purchased
through parkland dedication

Since
2018

An additional **4.3% (40,000)** of Austinites are
within walking distance of a park, totaling 68%



In
2022

19.51 acres of
deeded parkland

10.61 acres of
park easements

Covering **14 new parks**
or park extensions

Residential PLD

BACKGROUND

1985 First COA Parkland Dedication Ordinance

2007 Updated fee and expanded requirements to all new residential development (previously only subdivisions)

2016 Updated the formula and fee for determining dedication requirements

2022 Updated fee, schedule for rate changes, expansion of affordable housing waiver, clarification on dedicated parkland in floodplain



7

Commercial PLD

BACKGROUND

2020 PARD Board recommended PLD Ordinances for commercial developments

April 2022 Council directed City Staff to require PLD for commercial developments

May-Aug 2022 Gathered stakeholder input and developed ordinance methodology

Sept 2022 Approved by City Council

Jan 2023 Commercial PLD took effect



8

Methodology: Funding Park Systems

3 Options to Fund Parks with Population Growth

- Increase property taxes → Impacts existing residents to subsidize new residents
- Lower standards for parks and quality of life → Negatively impacts existing residents and new residents
- New development pays for the impact on neighborhood parks through PLD fees → New development pays for itself (similar to transportation and utility development fees)

9

2023 Community Engagement

Recap
What We Heard

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2023 Stakeholder Engagement

Purpose:

- Gather input on current parkland dedication policies
- Explore opportunities to fine-tune the policies

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Kick-off
meeting
participants

17

stakeholder
meetings

31

stakeholder
meeting
participants

28

Organizations
engaged

11

What We Heard

Common Themes:

**Support for
commercial and
residential parkland
dedication
ordinances**

**Concerns about
impacts of
development
on wildlife and
environmental
features**

**Suggestions for
changes to fee
methodology**

**Clarification
needed on
requirements**

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What We Heard

Common Themes:

**Concerns about
park maintenance
and
responsibilities**

**Concerns about
increased costs
for developers**

**Noted benefits of
parks as
appealing feature
for employers,
new residents,
tourists**

**Concerns about
impacts on
affordability**

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What We Heard

**Clarification on process
& requirements**

- Code criteria outlines how reviewers determine parkland dedication requirements
- The fee rate is established at the time of submittal following recent code amendment by City Council, on the recommendation of the real estate community
- Early determination letters – more details requested
- Hotels: Fee structures follow both residential and commercial rates and the total fee will be combination of both requirements – one based on guests (residential), and one based on worker-commuters (commercial)

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What We Heard

Clarification on maintenance

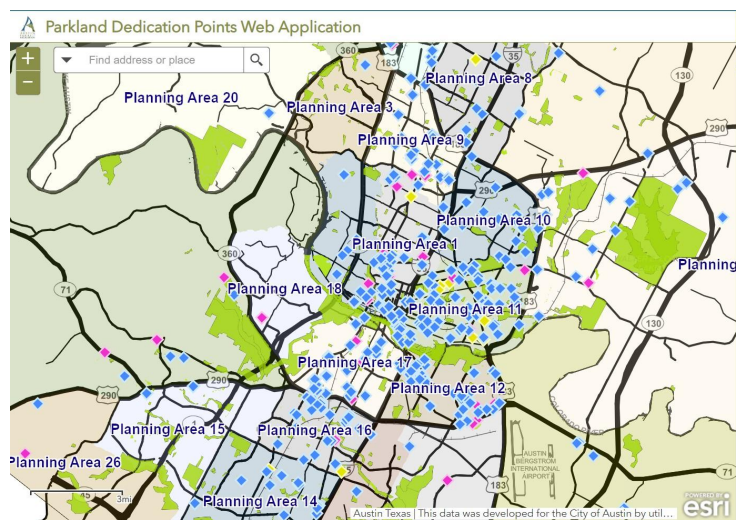
- Maintenance is not a development requirement for newly dedicated parkland – the cost of additional maintenance is covered by the City's general funds
- New developments may voluntarily maintain the parkland through an agreement with PARD, should developments wish to provide a more customized service for their adjacent parkland
- Maintenance may not be factored into parkland dedication requirements as it is not a capital expenditure as established by case law
- Staff is open to recommendations and suggestions on maintenance

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What We Heard

Clarification on process – how funding from PLD can be used

- Staff will outline requirements and clarify how funds can be used



Parkland Dedication Cases in central Austin since 2017

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What We Heard

Questions and concerns about fee methodology

- Current fees are based on city-wide acquisitions for a 5-year average – currently \$166,644 per acre
 - TCAD 2022 data \$973,463 an acre
- City previously considered basing the fees on a third-party appraisal cost for the site being developed, but didn't as the fees would be much higher
- Consideration for evaluating different fees based on geography will be included in the report to Council

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What We Heard

Concerns about increasing costs to develop

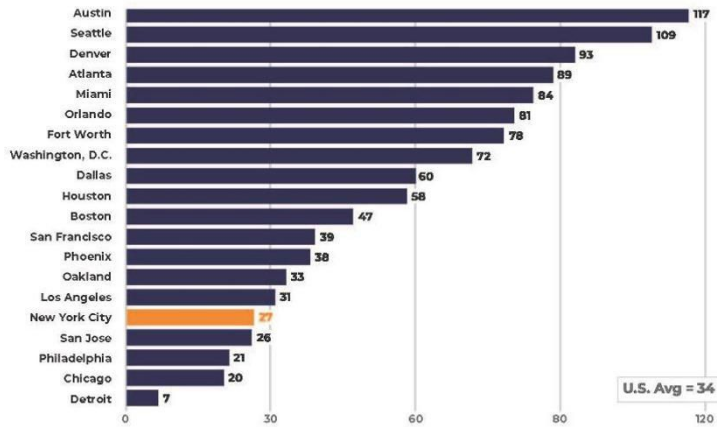
- Changes in the fee rate in recent years are based on land values and increasing cost to develop parkland
- Fees must reflect the cost of the service for which they are being required
- Parkland Dedication puts a portion (<50%) of the burden of new parks needed due to growth on the developer

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What We Heard

Concerns about increasing costs to develop

Figure VIII: New Housing Units per 1,000 Residents in Major U.S. Cities (2011-2020)



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Survey (BPS) County Annual Files (imputed); U.S. Census Bureau Delineation Files March 2020; NYC DCP Housing Database Q4 2020; U.S. Census Bureau Redistricting Data Files 2021. New housing units measured as authorizations for new units by building permits.

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What We Heard

Concerns about increasing costs to develop

Top 10 most preferred markets

- 1 Dallas / Ft. Worth
- 2 Austin
- 3 Miami / South Florida
- 4 Los Angeles
- 5 Nashville
- 6 Atlanta
- 7 Charlotte
- 8 Phoenix
- 9 Boston
- 10 Raleigh - Durham



2023 U.S. INVESTOR INTENTIONS SURVEY

Source: U.S. Investor Intentions Survey, CBRE Research, December 2022.

CBRE

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What We Heard

Concerns about impacts
on affordability

- Affordable housing is exempt under current code
- Parkland Dedication reduces need for more property taxes on existing residents to fund parks needed due to growth

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Suggestions: Reporting to Council

- Consider geographic locations when determining fees (CBD/Urban/Suburban)
- Consider more details in Early Determination Letters: Include details about what will be required, where the parkland will be dedicated or the fees required
- Look for opportunities to clarify process on requirements and how fees can be used
- Gather additional feedback on maintenance of parks and suggestions for improvements

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What Do You Think

Are we missing anything?

Has this process been helpful?

Any additional suggestions?

Do you have any questions?

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Next Steps

- Develop Stakeholder Engagement Report for Council
- City will follow state legislation – SB 558 & HB 1526

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Appendix D:

Additional Feedback



Real Estate Council of Austin
City of Austin Parkland Dedication Recommendations
March 2, 2023
Related to Ordinance 20220915-053

Council Ordinance 20220915-053 charged City staff with gathering feedback on the parkland dedication ordinance, specifically calling out **five directives** (numbered below).

The Real Estate Council of Austin's initial responses are below.

The February and early March presentations and stakeholder meetings held by the Parks and Recreation Department and a private community engagement firm did not solicit feedback on any of the council directives, including the nearly 20 Planning Commission recommendations. RECA is providing specific feedback on these directives, but are very concerned that the stakeholder process did not build in questions and feedback on the directives. More discussion with practitioners is necessary to develop comprehensive solutions that include meaningful community feedback before staff makes any changes or recommended adjustments to the parkland dedication ordinance.

For clarification, the italicized text below is taken directly from City documents (from the ordinance or a Planning Commission recommendation), and the non-italicized text represents the recommendation of the Real Estate Council of Austin.

Council Directive 1: *"Exploring and making recommendations on new methodologies for calculating parkland dedication fees for both residential and commercial properties"*

The parkland dedication formula needs to be reconsidered on both the residential and commercial sides.

Parkland dedication fees should be based on consistent, transparent, and predictable criteria. The City's current methodology of using the cost of acquisition of land is not nor can it be considered consistent, transparent or predictable. The value of land is market driven by forces that are inherently inconsistent and can be volatile. This metric should be reconsidered. Precedent has been set by other Texas cities and states across the country with alternate methodologies, such as flat rates per unit to fees set by density with specific limitations on how much the fees can be increased per year to capped assessments of each development. Further study should be done on this directive.

Council Directive 2: *“Alternative timing for the City to collect any required fee-in-lieu”*

Fees should be assessed immediately before certificate of occupancy.

As discussed during the commercial parkland dedication process, parkland dedication fees should be assessed at the beginning of the project for clarity and predictability, and should be charged before final certificate of occupancy. Requiring payment at certificate of occupancy also ensures that the fee collected is used for the new residents when they move in—paying an impact fee before there is any actual impact on the parks system is not necessary. Austin Water charges the utility impact fee at the time of meter pulling, which happens at the very end of the development process (usually immediately before the certificate of occupancy is issued), which is when the impact to the utility system is realized. Downtown density bonus fees are also charged immediately before issuance of certificate of occupancy. Any major changes to the project (e.g. significantly more or fewer units, different unit types, different product type mix) between the initial assessment and the payment can be accounted for at the time of payment.

Other large cities in Texas charge the parkland dedication fee at building permit issuance, as does Austin Transportation Department for their street impact fee. Both building permit issuance and certificate of occupancy are better than what we have today, but we feel certificate of occupancy is more in keeping with the charge being levied when the impact is being realized, which is when people move in to the property.

Council Directive 3: *“Potential exemptions for commercial development that produce less than one functional population”*

An exemption for small businesses needs to be made.

Small businesses are essential to a thriving Austin. Small businesses are often started on razor-thin margins, and especially those that are started with few employees have substantial barriers in the current environment that pose risk to their ability to stay open within the first year. Commercial projects under a certain square footage or with less than one functional population per the City’s calculations should be exempted from the parkland dedication requirements to ensure that the City is not unintentionally stymying small businesses from developing. If there is an important trail connection or space on the property that the City would like to acquire, it should utilize the parkland dedication fees-in-lieu collected by other projects and/or previous or future park bond funding. The City of Austin Economic Development Department and Small and Minority Business Resources Office should both be consulted in ways to prevent disincentivizing small business development through a burdensome parkland dedication fee on particularly small businesses.

Council Directive 4: *“Revisiting parkland dedication requirements for mixed use developments”*

Mixed-use developments should only be charged for the most impactful use of the two uses.

Mixed-use developments are an important feature of a growing Austin that bring together many of the city’s priorities, including the building of more housing units. The office or commercial components of mixed-use developments usually have peak staffed times between 9am and 5pm, whereas most residents of an apartment or condominium complex are home and have leisure time before and after business hours. Those individuals are most likely to use the parks at different times of day, and thus the larger of the two parkland dedication requirements (i.e. either residential or commercial) should be the requirement that is applied to the property, rather than treating the project as if all users would be using the park at the same time (and thus would have a higher total impact). This concept has precedent in how the City manages parking and traffic analysis and is appropriate to apply to parkland dedication as well.

Council Directive 5: *“Consider any Planning Commission recommendations not already adopted by Council”*

Planning Commission’s additional recommendations should be considered and adopted.

Several of the [Planning Commission recommendations](#) either passed as part of the Ordinance 20220915-053 or are otherwise included in the recommendations above as part of the Council charges. All of the Planning Commission recommendations should be incorporated into the parkland dedication ordinance changes. Specifically of importance to this organization (outside of those addressed elsewhere in this document) are the following changes:

- *PARD staff shall reassess ordinance efficacy on an annual basis, and present findings to PARB and PC, including an annual evaluation and update of the estimated telecommuting rates in the Austin metro area.*
 - All data and efficacy should be evaluated on an annual basis, and the affordability impact statement of the program should be produced by the Housing and Planning Department on a consistent basis.
- *Consider allowing partial credit for parkland within the 25-year floodplain if it can be activated safely as determined by the Director.*
 - While this was discussed and somewhat implemented in Ordinance 20220915-053, allowing for additional credit for this type of parkland and restricting the Director’s determination to limit the allowance of this credit to

only potentially unsafe locations will allow for maximization of limited space on a property.

- *Use a 10-year average to calculate the cost of acquiring parkland in the formula.*
 - This should be one of the potential considerations for Council Item 1, but ultimately the fee should not be based on projects acquired by the City, as they represent a small sample size and the acquisition and calculation are not transparent and consistent.
- *The cost or the square footage of public exterior activity amenities provided in commercial projects shall be subtracted from the overall parkland dedication or fee requirement.*
 - Programs like Great Streets or other developments that are providing publicly-accessible space should be subtracted from the parkland dedication requirement, because despite not being owned by the Parks and Recreation Department, they serve the same public purpose and are able to be better maintained by the owner of the property.
- *Consider adjusting or developing a unique parkland dedication formula for hotels in order to assess their unique usage.*
 - Discussed more below.
- *Insert , “M) if the applicant agrees to a private Parkland Improvement and Operations Agreement approved by PARD, the amount of parkland owed may be reduced by a minimum of 10% and up to a maximum of 25% at the discretion of the Director based on the estimated value of the approved Agreement”*
 - Reductions in park requirements or fees-in-lieu for maintenance agreements should be put into place to incentivize owners to maintain the parkland adjacent to their properties and reduce the burden on the Parks and Recreation Department to maintain hundreds of pocket parks across Austin that have been acquired because of the parkland dedication program. This will help the City reduce its massive parkland maintenance backlog at no taxpayer cost. Quality and safety of available parkland is at least as important as quantity for residents, commuters, and visitors.
- *In the annual assessment consider modifying formulas to account for users who live in Austin but work outside the park service area and look at other park users not accounted for.*
 - Ensuring that the commercial parkland dedication formula subtracts residents who work in other cities and thus use those park amenities (i.e. the opposite of the commuters who are counted as part of the City’s commercial parkland dedication formula) will provide a more accurate picture of the parkland use imposed by commercial projects.

- *Provide a 50% reduction on the commercial parkland dedication assessment for those developments that enter into a long-term affordability agreement with the City of Austin.*
 - An equivalent affordability offset for commercial properties, mirroring the residential offset, should be implemented. Austin Economic Development Department and Small and Minority Business Office should be involved in discussions about implementing this reduction.

Additional Items for Consideration (in addition to the 5 Council charges):

Hotel Use: The full square footage of the hotel is currently being counted toward both residential and commercial parkland dedication requirements. The commercial requirement and fee should be based only on the square footage of the meeting rooms, kitchens, and other rooms excluding the residential square footage. Charging twice for the hotel rooms (as a residential and commercial fee) rather than charging the rooms for the residential fee and commercial space for the commercial fee is double-dipping and overcharging for this particular use.

Parkland Deficiency Map: The parkland deficiency map, used to require developers to dedicate parkland in deficient areas, is out-of-date and is not reflective of all the green space, trails, and parkland available to Austinites. It needs to be audited as part of this process, and rules should be in place to ensure it is updated on a frequent and consistent basis.

Overall Cost: Parkland, either through fees or land dedication, should never reduce the number of housing units able to be developed as part of a project. It is counter to the City's overall goals of increasing the amount of housing within Austin and should be weighed accordingly. Projects that are not able to move forward because of the expense of parkland dedication fees, or those that must reconfigure and reduce unit count on the project to accommodate an on-site park, limit the private market's ability to help Council reach its housing goals as laid out in Imagine Austin and the Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint.