

September 23, 2021

To: Claire Hempel, Design Workshop

Zilker Park Stakeholder Values in the Zilker Park Vision Plan

We, the undersigned organizations operating in Zilker Park have identified the following priorities which we hope will be incorporated into the Zilker Park Vision Plan and by which we will assess the draft plans presented to us. These priorities are in alignment with the park needs outlined in the Austin Parks and Recreation Department's long-range plan, *Our Parks, Our Future*.

The Zilker Park Vision Plan should:

- Prioritize creating an inclusive park culture to ensure that all visitors feel welcome and have access to park amenities.
- Protect the water quality at Zilker Park by repairing degraded landscapes, providing green infrastructure, and educating the public about water quality and the environment.
- Maintain and enhance the natural environment of the park, with focus on sustainable systems, native landscaping, and innovative methods for increased visitor use and access to Ladybird Lake.
- Include an improved, accessible pedestrian and bicycle trail system through the park that brings those who walk, bike, or roll from one destination to another, and include associated wayfinding signage.
- Plan for internal circulation of people within the park from parking, transit, or their point of entry to their destinations. We hope the consultant team will explore the expansion of the Zilker Eagle train route.
- Include improvements of the surrounding and internal transportation network including pedestrian and cyclist facilities with an emphasis on alleviating safety concerns and connecting an all ages and abilities network to park attractions.
- Identify new parking solutions including the possibility of parking structure(s) and shared parking (outside the park) with nearby businesses. The parking should serve the whole park including the Great Lawn, Zilker Botanical Garden, Umlauf Sculpture Garden, Zilker Hillside Theater, Sunshine Camps, Butler Trail, and the Girl Scout Cabin. We support the idea that any new parking within Zilker Park be sited in less-environmentally sensitive areas and utilize creative landscaping, including potentially a sunken structure with green roof to be compatible with the nature of the park. Parking areas should connect with internal park circulators to get visitors where they need to go.
- Consider the addition of public lockers, bike racks, and stroller racks in strategic locations near park transportation, and with minimal impervious cover.
- Per the parkland events taskforce recommendations circa 2018, retain the programming currently taking place in the park, including but not limited to the Kite Festival, Trail of Lights, Zilker Musical, Blues on the Green, and ACL Festival.

- Include a plan for an upgraded playground near Barton Springs Pool that serves an interpretive purpose; identify additional play features for children throughout the park.
- Provide interpretive and educational components that engage the public and convey the rich environmental, cultural, and historic heritage of the park. Establish an education and welcome center to orient visitors to park amenities.

In addition to the above, we support ongoing information-sharing among PARD and the park stakeholder groups on topics that affect all groups and their respective planning efforts.

Sincerely,

ABC Kite Festival
Austin Parks Foundation
Austin YMBL Sunshine Camps
Barton Springs Conservancy
Explore Austin
Friends of Barton Springs Pool
Girl Scouts Zilker Cabin
Hill Country Conservancy

The Rowing Dock
The Trail Foundation
Trail of Lights Foundation
Umlauf Sculpture Museum & Garden
Waterloo Disc Golf
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy
Zilker Park Boat Rentals
Zilker Theatre Productions