

austin parks & recreation | fy 2018

# annual report





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# A Note from Our Leadership



## **Kimberly McNeeley, CPRP**

Acting Director, Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Nearly every weekend morning, you can find me, my husband, and our dogs enjoying the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike trail. It's one of my favorite times to take in the nature of our city while spending time outdoors with my family.

As a daily user of Austin's park system, I see firsthand the positive impact that these public spaces have on our community. Our parks and trails provide time for residents to reconnect with nature and each other. Our recreation centers deliver a diverse array of all-ages programming to keep community members active and engaged. And our museums and cultural centers provide inclusive spaces that foster the arts and culture in our neighborhoods.

As the New Year gets underway, I invite you to explore our city's parks and recreation system and discover everything it has to offer. Whether it's joining a fitness class, touring a nature preserve, or visiting an art exhibit, the opportunities for connection are endless.



## **Jane Rivera, PhD**

Chair, Austin Parks and Recreation Board

As Chair of the Austin Parks and Recreation Board, it is my honor and privilege to advocate for our city's park system. Parks are vital to the health and enrichment of our communities, from teaching children to be stewards of their natural environments, to keeping residents of all ages healthy, happy, and connected.

As Austinites know, our parks offer an escape within the city as much as they provide opportunities for people to spend time with each other. My thanks goes out to the Austin Parks and Recreation Department and its many partners in the community who make our city's parks possible. The work we do to develop, improve, and preserve Austin's park system will continue to make Austin one of the best city's to live, work, and play.

# Who We Are

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department has been the trusted steward of the City of Austin's public lands since 1928. As such, we protect and maintain parkland and our urban forest. We preserve trails, and offer a variety of sports, recreation, educational enrichment, arts programs, cultural opportunities, nature and aquatic activities.

**719.25**

Budgeted full-time staff

**1,505**

Temporary and part-time staff

**113**

Units and Divisions







## Mission

To inspire Austin to learn, play, protect, and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.

## Executive Leadership

Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Kimberly A. McNeeley, CPRP, Acting Director

Liana Kallivoka, PhD, PE, Assistant Director

Anthony Segura, Assistant Director

Suzanne Piper, DBA, Chief Administrative Officer

Lucas Massie, M.Ed., CPRP, Acting Assistant Director

## Board Leadership

Parks and Recreation Board

Jane Rivera, Chair

Rick Cofer, Vice Chair

Michael Casias, Board Member

Richard DePalma, Board Member

Tom Donovan, Board Member

Romteen Farasat, Board Member

Dawn Lewis, Board Member

Francoise Luca, Board Member

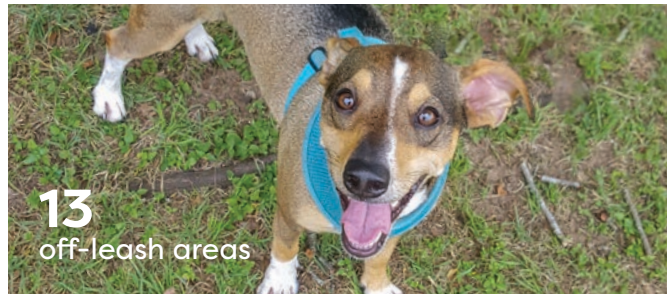
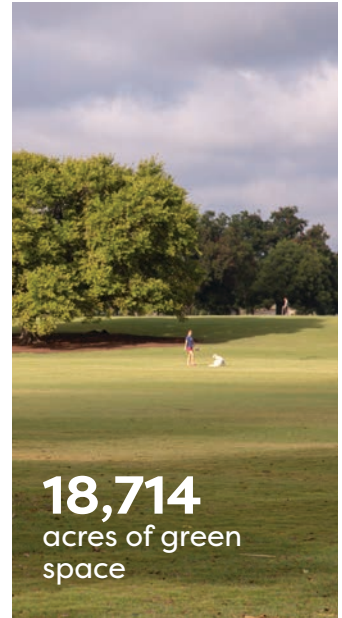
Randy Mann, Board Member

Fred Morgan, Board Member

Frank Ward, Board Member



# What We Do







**122**  
tennis courts



**76**  
basketball courts



**35**  
baseball fields



**47**  
volleyball courts



**26**  
recreation and  
senior centers



**78**  
mixed use fields



**6**  
golf courses



**23**  
soccer fields



**24**  
historic buildings



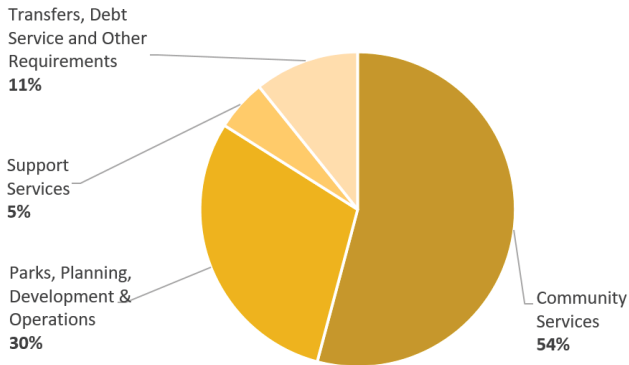
**5**  
historic cemeteries



# FY19 Financials

## Funding by Program

Community Services	\$54,679,962
Planning, Development & Operations	\$30,137,206
Support Services	\$5,333,194
Transfers, Debt Service, and Other Requirements	\$10,865,626
<b>Total Budget by Program</b>	<b>\$101,015,988</b>



## Revenue by Source

Charges for Services/Goods	\$19,195,032
Licenses, Permits, Inspections	\$15,980
Other Revenue	\$302,103
Transfers In	\$1,000,000
Use of Money & Property	\$2,945,746
<b>Total Projected Revenue</b>	<b>\$23,458,861</b>

## Capital Projects by Category

Aquatics	\$5,368,366
Athletics	\$196,353
Buildings and Improvements	\$11,416,875
Cemeteries	\$206,312
Golf	\$284,000
Land Acquisition	\$116,000
Parks	\$19,776,442
Playscapes	\$16,866
Trails	\$1,224,364
<b>Total Projects by Category</b>	<b>\$38,605,578</b>

## Grants

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)	\$750,000
General Fund	\$96,000
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$846,000</b>

## Personnel

Personnel Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	716.25
Grant Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	3.00
<b>Total FTEs</b>	<b>719.25</b>







# Planning Our Parks



## Parkland Acquisition

In Austin, 60% of the city is park deficient. Park deficient areas are defined by Austin residents who live further than a ¼ mile from a park in neighborhoods within the urban core and residents who live further than a ½ mile outside the urban core. The geographic area that defines the urban core is US 183 on the north and east, Hwy 290 on the south and Lake Austin on the west.

In 2018, the Park Planning Division acquired 23.25 acres of new parkland throughout Austin, including:

- Scenic Brook Pocket Park at Oak Meadow Drive, 0.89 acres
- North Star Greenbelt at Gracy Farms Lane, 2.21 additional acres
- MLK Station Neighborhood Park at Alexander Avenue, 7.92 acres
- Bellingham Meadows Greenbelt at Parmer Lane, 12.23 acres

**\$6.95**  
million collected in  
PLD fees

Park Planning collected \$6.95 million in PLD (Parkland dedication) fees between Oct. 1, 2017 to Sept. 30, 2018, a \$2.77 million increase over the previous fiscal year.



## Historic Preservation

In FY17, City Council allotted Hotel Occupancy (HOT) revenue directly to PARD to support historic preservation projects at PARD tourist sites. HOT revenue is an important tool for the promotion of tourism and supports the growth of the tourism, convention and hotel industry. Nearly \$1 million was allocated towards several projects, including the restoration of the Oakwood Cemetery Chapel, the historic Garden Sheds at Mayfield Park, and the historic stone wall and gate at the Elisabet Ney Museum. In FY 18, City Council directed the establishment of the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) funded by HOT revenue and approved approximately \$3 million of the HPF for capital expenditures benefitting PARD historic preservation projects. The increase in funding for capital expenditures from FY17 was 209%. In FY19, PARD's allocation of the HPF reached \$7 million. Sites that will benefit from investment include the Barton Springs Bathhouse, Zilker Café, Downs Field Grandstands, Norwood House, Zilker Clubhouse and Brush Square. The increased funding for PARD's historic preservation initiatives and projects helps PARD be better stewards of our important historic assets, and it allows Austin's parks, museums, and cultural centers to remain top tourist attractions in the city.





## Zilker Caretaker Cottage

The Zilker Caretaker Cottage Restoration received Preservation Austin's 2018 Merit Award. The rehabilitation project adapted a nearly 90-year old historic residence in Zilker Park into the headquarters for Austin's Parks Rangers. The residential building was designed in the "NPS Rustic Style" with Tudor Revival detailing in 1929 by prominent Austin architect Hugo Kuehne and is located adjacent to the north parking lots of Barton Springs Pool. The Zilker Caretaker Cottage rehabilitation project was in process for several years and entailed the restoration of a wooden shingle roof, window and door restoration, masonry cleaning and repointing, and extensive work to improve the grounds and surrounding area. Due to limited funding PARD was only able to complete the design with in-house historic preservation and design services. The restored building is now being used as the headquarters for the Austin Park Rangers that hosts thousands of children each year through programming efforts.



## Cities Connecting Children to Nature

The Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) initiative tackles equitable nature access through a collective impact approach. Great efforts have been made in executing the second year of a 3-year Implementation Plan in the following Priority Areas: **1) Greening School Yards:** Phase I of the Barrington Elementary Green School Park was completed and included a cistern, rain garden, nature trail and native trees. The dedication celebration took place on March 2018 and received outstanding community and partner support. **2) Program and Park Activation:** A series of free weekend events were developed to activate the new Barrington Elementary Green School Park during April and May 2018. Partners included NWF, Park Rangers, Side by Side Kids, YMCA, Families in Nature, Eco Rise, Austin Animal Center and Travis Master Gardeners, and they led hands-on, nature-based activities for park visitors. **3) Policy Tracking:** 2017 marked the 1-year anniversary of the Mayor's Proclamation recognizing the efforts of the CCCN initiative and the signing of the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (COBOR).



## Community PARKnerships

In August 2018, PARD launched the Community PARKnerships program to coordinate the efforts of partners and volunteers with the goal of leveraging outside resources to assist with improving and maintaining parkland. Through the PARKnerships program, community members and business partners can adopt a park, propose enhancements to the park, participate in volunteer days, and donate resources. Recent notable projects include the Trail Bridge at Congress Avenue, Mustang Button Park at Reilly Elementary School, Phase II of Ponciana Park, and the Wooten Neighborhood Park Pavilion.

**20,000**  
Park volunteers

**54,523**  
Volunteer hours

**28**  
Community Activated  
Park Projects



## Planning Our Parks



### Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Master Plan

The Austin City Council adopted the ESB-MACC Master Plan on May 24, 2018. The plan presents design recommendations to better meet the current and future needs of the center.

The process sought public input on programming to guide the expansion of the existing facility, including the addition of new facilities, new shade structures, parking, landscaping and a potential redesign of the plaza.



### Seaholm Waterfront Programming and Implementation Study

Austin Parks Foundation, the Trail Foundation, and PARD completed the planning study for the future of Seaholm Waterfront, the historic Seaholm Intake structure and its surrounding parkland. The study, completed by architecture and urbanism firm Studio Gang, reveals a potential concept for future park improvements and the repurposing of the decommissioned Seaholm Intake structures for public use and recreation. The Austin City Council supported the recommendations of the plan on August 23, 2018.





The chapel restoration is a major milestone in the restoration of Austin's Municipal Cemeteries, which was envisioned in PARD's award-winning Historic Cemeteries Master Plan. The restoration of the chapel and revitalization of Oakwood Cemetery is a testament to the passion and vision of many volunteers, local experts, and city staff who supported the effort to preserve this significant, historic, and sacred site.

## Oakwood Cemetery Chapel

The Oakwood Cemetery Chapel was awarded the 2018 Merit Award from Preservation Austin. The City of Austin built the Oakwood Cemetery Chapel in 1914 to function as a mortuary chapel, but the City converted it to offices in 1944. Under the 2012 General Obligation Bond funding for cemeteries, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) embarked on a full rehabilitation of the chapel including restoration of interior and exterior finishes, including doors, windows, masonry, roof, plaster, interior and exterior finishes and ADA accessibility improvements. Formal work on the chapel began in October 2016, but halted shortly thereafter when archeologists monitoring construction discovered human remains buried beneath the chapel.

After considerable public feedback, PARD recommended the discovered burials within the footprint of the chapel be exhumed, analyzed for identification data, and reinterred within Oakwood Cemetery. After the careful exhumation of graves, the chapel restoration resumed. Completed in July 2018, the Oakwood Chapel will now function as a visitor center, and PARD's Museums and Cultural Centers Division will program the building as a historic site as recommended by the City's Historic Cemeteries Master Plan.





# Developing Our Parks



## Spyglass Trailhead

The renovation of the Spyglass Trailhead at the Barton Creek Greenbelt represents a community partnership between the Hill Country Conservancy, Austin Parks Foundation and PARD. With initial funding from Council District 8, these partners came together to provide a welcoming trailhead entry into the greenbelt. The site features two benches, a kiosk, recycling receptacles, landfill receptacles, bicycle parking, and new park identification signage. Greenbelt visitors are encouraged to ‘leave no trace’ as they move beyond the limestone columns into nature.



## Shipe Neighborhood Pool

The Shipe Neighborhood Pool and wading pool is located in the Hyde Park Neighborhood in central Austin. The facility sits adjacent to the nationally renowned Elisabet Ney Museum and grounds. The pool facility is associated with Shipe Park and occupies the southern edge of the park. The new Shipe Pool facility will boast a new gender specific bathhouse, a lap-recreation pool, and a zero entry activity pool for toddlers and youth. In addition, the unique design will also contain shade structures and incorporate the existing Shipe Park mural in the overall design. Completion of the project is slated for mid-summer 2019.



## Zilker Café

The Zilker Café is a contributing structure to Zilker Metropolitan Park, which is a Nationally Registered Historic District (NRHD) and serves as an ancillary recreational amenity to nearly a million visitors at Barton Springs Pool each year. With design in progress, the café is undergoing a sensitive “rehabilitation” to restore the building’s original mid-century modern character and adapt it to accommodate current mechanical systems and accessibility standards. The Zilker Café will once again serve as a source of sustenance for pool and park visitors while creating a source of revenue for PARD.



## Barton Creek Trailhead Restroom

The Zilker Metropolitan Park Barton Creek Trailhead restroom will serve patrons at one of the primary gateways to the Barton Creek and Violet Crown Trail systems.

Currently, the nearest restroom to the Trailhead is located within the Barton Springs Pool Bathhouse. The new one-story restroom will provide an improved trailhead amenity for trail users. Inclusive in the design of the restroom facility are water quality features, including a rain garden.



## Mayfield-Gutsch House and Walls

For the first time ever, in fiscal year 2017, the Austin City Council allotted Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenue directly to PARD to support historic preservation projects. HOT revenue is an important tool for the promotion of tourism and supports the growth of the tourism, convention, and hotel industry for the City of Austin.

A simple summer cottage converted for year-round use during the early 20th century, the Mayfield-Gutsch House provides the focal point of a formal garden surrounded by a larger natural preserve. Restoration of the historic sheds began in August 2018 and required total replacement of the board and batten siding. PARD's Facility Services team secured long leaf pine from a demolished Macy's Department Store in Brooklyn, NY, to rehabilitate the sheds. The restored sheds and walls exemplify PARD's dedication to being good stewards of all historic resources, regardless of size, and PARD's commitment to high quality restorations to be enjoyed by visitors for decades to come.





# Developing Our Parks



## Montopolis Recreation Center

Construction is underway on a new Recreation and Community Center for the Montopolis Southeast Austin community. The joint use PARD/Austin Public Health (APH) facility, funded by the 2012 bond, will provide over 33,000 square feet of new space, including a commercial kitchen, gymnasium, fitness room, computer lab, conference rooms and educational programming areas.

The building's design seeks to support the initiatives of PARD and APH by fostering mental and physical well-being through community recreation and the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. The construction contract totals roughly \$11 million dollars, and the new facility is expected to be completed in the summer of 2020.

## Parque Zaragoza

With funding allocated from the 2016 Council Block Funding and additional funding from Austin Parks Foundation and St. David's Foundation, PARD was able to transform how the park is used by the community.

The playground was relocated to a more central location. In addition, the installation of a loop walking trail activated the space.

The new playground features a three-bay swing set, an inclusive spinner, and a traditional 5-12 platform structure. The play pieces encourage discovery and imaginative play by incorporating nature elements and panels.





## Violet Crown Trail

The Violet Crown Trail will be a 30 mile regional trail with the first major trailhead at Zilker Metropolitan Park and ending in Hays County. The trail will connect Zilker Metropolitan Park, the Barton Creek Greenbelt, Dick Nichols District Park, Circle C Metropolitan Park and the Veloway.

The section of trail currently under construction crosses through Dick Nichols Park. It will be decomposed granite with concrete sections in right of way and heavy water flow areas. This section of trail ties into four existing sections: 1) the recently completed section from Convict Hill built by Public Works, 2) an existing nature trail to the Hampton Library, 3) an existing loop trail in the park and 4) the section of trail built by Hill Country Conservancy from Davis Lane.



## Dove Springs Recreation Center

After several years of community engagement, planning, and design, the Dove Springs Recreation Center Expansion project is now under construction. The scope of the recreation center project includes the build-out of a new dance and fitness studio, a large covered porch, commercial grade kitchen, mobile study area for visitors, reconfiguration of staff spaces and control desk, as well as building systems and accessibility improvements to meet current code requirements. The project is on track to achieve LEED Silver certification and is being supplemented by a \$500,000 Urban Indoor Grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.





## Waterloo Park, Waller Creek District

The Waller Creek District is a special project and will result in over \$200 million invested in this important, downtown parks district. The program reached a significant milestone in 2018 with the commencement of construction in Waterloo Park. This redeveloped park space will include a major performance venue, children's play areas, open lawn, food trailers, and interior trails.







# Caring for Our Parks



Before



During



After

## Homeless Camp Cleanups

In February and March 2018, PARD grounds team members were asked to clean up a homeless camp in the Williamson Creek Greenbelt. This camp was extremely large, covering areas on both sides of the creek with large debris, trash, furniture, and hazardous items.

It took substantial effort and more than 30 days to coordinate the cleanup due to the size and complications of the area. The camp's location within the greenbelt prevented any vehicle larger than a utility terrain vehicle to gain access. This tripled the amount of work necessary to remove trash and debris from the campsite area.

Crew members withstood rain and cold temperatures and used teamwork to get the job done. It took a total of 124 grounds crew members across four days to clean the area and create a place that the public could enjoy again.





## Homeless Camp Cleanup

Williamson Creek  
Greenbelt



**124**  
Staff members



**24.5**  
30-yard dumpsters



**1,010**  
Bags of debris



**3,200+**  
lbs. of bulk items



**500+**  
Syringes recovered



**34**  
Vehicles



**15**  
Utility terrain vehicles



**2**  
Skidsteers

## Graffiti Abatement

Dealing with graffiti remains a full-time job for PARD's Operations and Maintenance staff. The Graffiti Team has four full-time employees and one supervisor to ensure that graffiti found on City of Austin parkland is removed promptly and efficiently.

The Graffiti Team removes graffiti with chemicals and power washers. After removal, the team adds a sacrificial coating to ensure that no trace of the vandalism is left behind.

On average, the team removes 4,000 to 5,000 square feet of graffiti each month and covers an average of 10,000 to 12,000 square feet each month.

**4,000 - 5,000**  
Square feet of graffiti removed monthly



# Keeping Austin Swimming



**51**  
Aquatic facilities



**642,004**  
Public Pool visits



**973,715**  
Visits to Barton Springs Pool



**36**  
Full-time employees



**800+**  
Temporary employees



**800**  
Swim Team participants



**300**  
Project Safe participants



**288**  
Swim Safe participants



**2,000**  
Learn-to-Swim participants



## Dove Springs Swims

Dove Springs Pool took center stage at this summer's *Dove Springs Swims*. Presented on four nights in July at the City of Austin's Dove Springs Pool, the free performance showcased neighborhood residents and pool users alongside Aquatics staff for an audience of more than 2,000 attendees. Accompanied by live original music by Graham Reynolds and underwater lighting design by Stephen Pruitt, participants and the audience alike experienced a joyous celebration of the public gathering space of Dove Springs Pool.

The July 14 performance featured pre-show entertainment by Cecilia + the Broken Hearts and the Tiarra Girls performed on July 15th.

Forklift Danceworks engaged the community by collaborating with the Dove Springs Recreation Center Advisory Committee, River City Youth Foundation, Dove Springs Proud, the Freddy Zamora Jr. Foundation, Dove Springs Ducks, and GO! Austin / ¡VAMOS! Austin.









## Aquatic Master Plan

On February 1, 2018, City Council approved and passed the Aquatic Master Plan. The Master Plan was designed to provide guidance and decision making tools to plan for and create a future aquatics system that will be Equitable, Financially Sustainable, Environmentally Sustainable, and Operationally Sustainable.

### The Aquatic Master Plan:

- Outlines the public engagement process
- Incorporates stakeholder feedback
- Outlines the mission, vision, values, and goals for Austin's Aquatic System
- Recommends standards for pool classification
- Establishes data driven decision making tools
- Outlines the historical and cultural significance of Austin's swimming pools
- Recommends actions for an equitable and sustainable future aquatic system



## SwimATX

SwimATX: 2018 was the third year of SwimATX, a partnership between the City of Austin, the YMCA of Austin, and the Austin Independent School District. In the program's three years, the Aquatic Division has worked with Reagan High School, LBJ High School, and Eastside Memorial High School. During school hours, the program teaches high school students the lifesaving skill of swimming, provides an opportunity for students to earn their lifeguard certification; provides an opportunity for high school students to gain employment as a lifeguard with the City of Austin and/or the YMCA; and allows students to earn PE credits. The 2017-2018 school year proved to be the most successful year for the program with over 80 students participating in the program. Of these participants, 35 received their American Red Cross lifeguard certification, and the City of Austin employed 20 SwimATX lifeguards in the 2018 summer season.



# Golf in the City

Golf ATX, the City of Austin's Golf Division, operates six public golf courses and one short course and serves a large and diverse golf public. Golfers of all ages and skill levels visit the Golf ATX courses weekly to play recreationally and competitively. Through August 2018, over 245,000 total rounds of golf were played on the six courses.

Golf ATX holds ten golf tournaments and seven junior golf tournaments that include the prestigious Firecracker Open and the City Championships. Participation numbers included 993 adults and 228 junior players.

In 2018, over 320 golf outings were hosted on the Golf ATX courses ranging from golf tournaments, charity events, middle and high school matches, alumni events and company outings. In addition to tournaments, the golf courses also hosted a 5K, a high school cross country meet, and a disc golf championship. The Golf ATX courses also host several area men's and women's golf associations and leagues who play weekly on our courses.

Golf ATX promotes junior golf by organizing the Austin Junior Golf Camp with 360 campers which leads into the Summer Junior Golf Tour series and beginner junior clinics prior to each tournament. Golf ATX hosted the Division 1A, 2A, 3A UIL State Championship bringing both boys and girls teams from across the state to the courses, with 432 players total. Golf ATX also partners with the Southern Texas PGA's junior program, First Tee of Austin, and U.S. Kids Golf.

Player Development remains a major focus for the Golf Division. Nearly 100 Range Grinder and two free monthly public clinics were conducted in 2018 with 771 total participants. One of the free monthly clinics targets women interested in learning the game. The Golf Division also hosted eleven free PE clinics for City employees and the City Olympics golf tournament at Jimmy Clay.



**245,000**  
Rounds of golf played



**771**  
Clinic participants



**360**  
Junior golf campers





## The Golf ATX Experience

In September, each pro shop received a new survey kiosk. The survey invites customers to join the Golf ATX contact groups and provide feedback on their experience with Golf ATX. Responses are collected and reviewed by staff on a monthly basis so that Golf ATX can continue improving and providing the best golf experience in Austin.

The Golf Division continues to reach new and existing customers through various marketing efforts. Engagement and followers have grown on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and the Golf ATX website continues to be a resource to the Austin golfing community. Along with social media, radio, and print campaigns, Golf ATX was featured on KLBJ's 19th Hole radio program.

In addition, Hancock Golf Course became a pay station operation in February with the installation of a pay station for green fees at the first hole.

At Grey Rock Golf Course, a new 10,000 sq. ft. putting green officially opened in April 2018. Other construction projects include repairs and improvements to cart paths, irrigation systems and drainage, green and sod repairs, flower beds, and the relocation of the Morris Williams fuel station.



# Austin's Historic Cemeteries



## Cemetery Operations Overview

The City of Austin was founded in 1839 and shortly thereafter, the State of Texas deeded what is now known as Oakwood Cemetery to the City. Today, City of Austin Cemetery Operations, a division of the Parks and Recreation Department, operates five municipal cemeteries and maintains two family cemeteries. Cemetery Operations is located at Austin Memorial Park and the staff manages the grounds, administrative operations, burials, and historic resources.

The municipal cemeteries include: Austin Memorial Park Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, Oakwood Cemetery, Oakwood Annex Cemetery, and Plummers Cemetery. The family cemeteries include the cemetery at Longview Park and the Stanley-Nolen Cemetery at Garrison Park.

**5**

Municipal  
cemeteries

**2**

Family cemeteries  
on parkland

**179**

Years of history

**\$2.5 mill.**

FY18 Operating  
budget

**13**

FTEs in ground  
maintenance

**5**

FTEs in admin and  
management

**1**

FTE Environmental  
Program Coordinator





## Serving the Community

The Cemetery Operations administrative staff continues to serve the community of Austin and has increased its level of care to the 400+ families that arrange interment services every year across all of the City's municipal cemeteries. Staff assists with interments, pre-need planning, grave location, monument setting and leveling, grave revegetation, and the sale of invertible vases.

Cemetery Operations Maintenance cares for a complex natural and built landscape that consists of 200+ acres of cemetery grounds, more than 80,000 burials, and five historic buildings located across the city of Austin. Maintenance opens the gates of each municipal cemetery 365 days per year.

### Cemetery Operations

**7**

Total cemeteries

**80,000+**

Graves

**400+**

Interments each year

**200+**

Acres of cemetery grounds

**5**

Historic buildings

**365**

Days gates are open







## Cemetery Operations Successes

Cemetery Operations continues to implement recommendations from the Historic Cemeteries Master Plan including hiring an Environmental Program Coordinator to address the conservation of historic resources through a newly developed Historic Cemetery Conservation Program, working with the community to revise the Cemetery Rules & Regulations, and completing the Oakwood Cemetery Mortuary Chapel rehabilitation project.

The division has also worked to improve operations by hiring and training new staff (4 new administrative FTEs and 2 new grounds maintenance FTEs in FY18), beginning Phase II of the Cemetery Information Management System (CIMS) software program, and developing a 5-Year Cemetery Operations Strategic Plan.

### FY18 Successes

- Hired an Environmental Program Coordinator to conserve historic resources
- Trained new administrative staff (4 new administrative FTEs in FY18)
- Developed Historic Cemetery Conservation Program
- Working with the community to update the Cemetery Rules & Regulations
- Oakwood Cemetery Mortuary Chapel rehabilitation project
- Rehoused historic monuments stored at Oakwood Annex Cemetery
- Established a Cemetery Lot Improvement Process
- Began Phase II of the Cemetery Information Management System (CIMS) software program to streamline records
- Passed 2014 Cash Audit
- Developed 5-year Cemetery Operations Strategic Plan
- Cleaned up the cemetery at Lonqview Park



# Events in Our Parks

PARD's Office of Special Events manages the execution of both small and large scale event planning. Annually, Austin parks are home for events, festivals, and concerts serving more than 1 million attendees. Large scale event planning requires careful and deliberate consideration of many details including park protection, scheduling, safety and security planning, insurance coverage, road closures, special needs access, temporary permits, transportation and shuttle services, waste management, and much more.

**2,000**

Picnic and facility bookings

**700**

Sound, alcohol, and moonwalk permits

**14**

Special ceremonies, openings, and ribbon cuttings



**651**

Days used for filming

**\$18,000**

In donated filming fees

**\$1.2 million**

Ticket fees remitted to the Parks & Recreation Department









# Creating Community through Recreation

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department's Community Recreation Division operates 20 community recreation centers and three senior centers across Austin. PARD's Community Recreation Division offers diverse programs and activities like gardening and cooking, dance and art classes, special events, team sports, and group fieldtrips. Recreation Centers offer a place for Austinites of all ages to come together and connect with each other and their community through fun, recreational activities.



**857,232**

People used Community Recreation Centers in FY18

**295,542**

People attended programs and events in FY18

**7,413**

Volunteers at Community Recreation Centers in FY18







## Gaga Ball Pits

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department's "Gaga Ball" project was the \$20,000 winner of the National Parks and Recreation Association's Meet Me at the Park voting contest that occurred during Earth Month in April.

Gaga Ball has been dubbed a kinder, gentler version of dodge ball. The game is played with a soft foam ball, combining the skills of dodging, striking, running, and jumping, while trying to hit opponents with a ball below the knees.

With the \$20,000, PARD was able to build Gaga Pits in recreation centers across the city, giving kids a chance to get out and play.

## Back to School Bash

Each year, Dove Springs Recreation Center collects backpacks and school supplies for AISD students. Backpacks are then distributed to students at the annual Back to School Bash at Mendez Middle School in August before the school year begins.

The event is a successful collaboration between the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, the Dove Springs Advisory Board, and Mendez Middle School.

More than 3,000 backpacks were given out to students in 2018 to help them get ready for the school year.

## Bilingual Fitness Classes

South Austin Recreation Center has partnered with local nonprofit WeViva to provide accessible and affordable bilingual fitness and nutrition classes to area residents.

Classes are targeted toward Spanish-speaking community members and those in lower-income neighborhoods.

In FY18, WeViva's weekly Zumba class had 475 participants having fun and getting healthier through regular physical activity.



## Hillside Concert Series Celebrates 60 Years of Tejano Music

The Oswaldo A.B. Cantu Pan American Recreation Center celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Hillside Concert Series, the longest running live music series of outdoor concerts featuring Mexican American music and Tejano legends. The series, with funding from Austin City Council, brought in Tejano artists in celebration of this historical event. Concerts happen every Tuesday in July at the Oswaldo A.B. Cantu Pan American Recreation Center and are free and open to the community.



## Bringing Seniors Together

Bringing Seniors Together is an initiative aimed at partnering with senior programs to offer monthly fellowship among seniors. These events give seniors a chance to interact with peers from around the city while enjoying free fun, prizes, and food. In addition, Senior Center staff worked with PARD's Community Engagement team to engage seniors in the community. More than 1,200 seniors participated in surveys and focus groups to provide their input on Senior Center programs and operations.



## Teen Turn Up Events

Teen Turn Up is a youth development program offering teen participants a way to interact and create friendships with other teens around the city. This monthly program occurs every fourth Friday of the month with free, creative, and fun activities, prizes, and food. In 2018, Teen Turn Up events included pool parties, movie nights, laser tag, dances, and more. A teen survey was also developed to gather input from teens on what types of activities they would like to see at future Teen Turn Up events.







# Connecting Our Community through Programs

## Stronger Austin Collaboration

The Austin Parks & Recreation Department is proud to work alongside nonprofit It's Time Texas (ITT) to be a founding partner in the Stronger Austin Initiative. As a department whose mission is to serve the health and well-being of all residents, PARD collaborates with partners who share the same goals.

Through the Stronger Austin Initiative, PARD now has long-term sustainable partnerships with ITT, the University of Texas, the Central Texas Food Bank, Austin Public Health, and others, all working in unison with the same vision of improving community health. This collaborative approach gives PARD the freedom and flexibility to do more with its resources and have a greater collective impact on the community.

**1,118**

Adults participated in free fitness programs

**1,697**

Youth participants received free fitness and nutrition classes



## Adaptive Sports

Through a partnership with Lone Star Paralysis Foundation, PARD hosted the 2nd Annual Eastside Classic Wheelchair Basketball Tournament.

Five teams of mixed-gender athletes between 12 and 60 years of age from Austin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi participated. First place tournament bragging rights goes to the San Antonio Spurs.

## Art in the Park

2018 marked the 26th anniversary of Art in the Park, an event held by the McBeth Recreation Center in partnership with VSA Texas. Held at the west end of Fiesta Gardens, more than 1,000 youth, teens, and adults with disabilities came out to participate in a day of art, music, and fun. This grassroots festival truly captures the spirit of Austin with its combination of the arts, music, and the outdoors. Art activities and entertainment by local arts organizations, community groups, and Austin Recreation Centers filled the program, with fun, laughter, and play to be had for all those who attended.

## Teen Enrichment

Eighteen young men and women of the Roving Leader program were invited to participate in the 2018 Kingsman's Talk and Hats and Heels events at Huston-Tillotson University.

This annual event empowers and builds self-confidence in teens through panel discussions. Topics include challenges that teens face day to day, such as bullying, racism, and gentrification. Teen participants also learn ways to build a positive self-image and prepare for the workforce.





**305**

Inclusive training hours provided to PARD staff on inclusion, diversity, positive behavioral support, and program-medication planning for youth and adults of all abilities and disabilities.

**1,698**

Youth received 50% discount toward youth program registration costs through the PARD Youth Financial Assistance Program

**1,999**

Youth participated in free, supervised active play, games and enrichment activities in the Summer Playgrounds Program

**478**

Teens in Community Outreach Programs – Roving Leader, Teens in Leadership Training (TILT) and Totally Cool Totally Art (TCTA)

**2,438**

Youth and adults attended Keep Austin Playing, an annual, interactive playdate event encouraging active play and healthy lifestyles

**88,734**

Free, nutritious meals served in partnership with Central Texas Food Bank to youth attending PARD afterschool and summer programs

**4,445**

Hours of assistance providing assessments and program modification plans for youth and adults of all abilities and disabilities





## Tournament Reservations

Krieg Athletic Complex hosted over 40 local, regional and national tournaments, including having the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) 2018 Pro Beach Volleyball Tour which returned for a second year in May 2018. AVP is the premier national professional beach volleyball league, featuring the very best players from across the country. This year's tour of 250 professional sand volleyball athletes and over 3,500 spectators was televised on NBC Sports Nation and streamed on Amazon Prime worldwide.



## Tennis Partnership

National Junior Tennis and Learning is a network of community tennis organizations that develops the character of young people through tennis and education. The network serves all youth regardless of income, race or gender. In the summer of 2018, it served 2,614 youth.



## Youth Sports

Athletic Programs staff partnered with the Greater East Austin Youth Association to secure \$50,000 in grant funding from the Austin Parks Foundation to make improvements to Mabson Ballfield located in east Austin. The projects consists of adding shade structures, new bleachers, and an upgraded scoreboard.

### Athletic Programs

**15,531**

Youth participants

**92**

Contracted instructors

**115,000**

Volunteer hours for programs and park maintenance

**32%**

Increase in tennis facilities usage

**1,475**

Teams in adult sports leagues

## Arts, Museums, and Culture

PARC's Museums and Cultural Programs Division gives voice to Austin's imagination, abundant nature, and colorful past. The Museums and Cultural Programs Division consists of three City of Austin Cultural Centers (the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, the George Washington Carver Museum, Cultural, & Genealogy Center, and the Asian American Resource Center), as well as the Dougherty Arts Center, the Zilker Hillside Theater, the Elisabet Ney Museum, the Old Bakery & Emporium, and the Susanna Dickinson and O. Henry Museums at Brush Square.



### Learning Lab at AARC

The Asian American Resource Center (AARC) hosted the Smithsonian's pilot Learning Lab conducted with four Asian American Museums and Cultural sites across the nation.

Ashley Naranjo from the Smithsonian's Department of Education joined AARC staff to conduct a workshop with K-12 teachers to help build an Asian Pacific Islander curriculum, accessible to all teachers on the Smithsonian's website. Hannah Huang and Eric Oeur performed an outstanding job of building a framework for that curriculum by outlining the history of Asians in America.



### Community Service Award

The University of Texas' Division of Diversity and Community Engagement and the Office of the President honored the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, the Asian American Resource Center, and the George Washington Carver Museum, Genealogy and Cultural Center with its esteemed Community Service Award at the 12th annual Community Leadership Awards ceremony on Thursday, May 10 at the Etter-Harbin Alumni Center.

Austin's Cultural Centers were especially honored to be the only organizations awarded that evening.





**\$6,465,259**

Museums & Cultural Programs  
(MCP) Division budget

**1,302**

Programs accessible to tourists  
at MCP sites

**53.25**

Full-time staff

**3,622**

Total rentals

**400,648**

Visits to educational & cultural  
facilities

**15,502**

Creatives who found a place at  
PARD to work

**35,530**

Tourists who visited an  
MCP site

**3,570**

Volunteers who kept creative  
fires burning

**97%**

of participants report an  
improved quality of life

**98%**

of participants  
increased their  
knowledge and  
understanding of  
culture, history, and  
art at a Museum or  
Cultural Center



## 40 Years of Art at the Dougherty Arts Center

The Dougherty Arts Center celebrated its 40th Anniversary on September 29, 2018 with a community gala featuring the Dougherty Arts Center's new interactive community arts room.

A total of 576 community members ate delicious bites, shared birthday cake, played in a synthesizer petting zoo, rocked out to live music by Midnight Butterfly, danced to vinyl spun by DJ CASS&DRA, created glow art on a giant Spirograph, grabbed butterfly selfies, made prints, and painted pet rocks.

All in all, it was a fitting occasion in which to celebrate the Dougherty Arts Center and all those who have supported the arts in Austin over the last four decades.





## Historic Preservation Funds at Work

In 2018, Austin City Council voted to award Historic Preservation funds to the Parks and Recreation Department including \$750,000 for the restoration of the O. Henry Museum.

This 1886 building was the personal residence of William Sydney Porter, better known as O. Henry, the famous short story writer and master of the twist ending.

The project includes restoration to the existing structure, as well as the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and automated systems of the building. Preservation architects Limbacher & Godfrey have completed 30% of the schematic design. The project is on schedule to be completed by the end of 2019.

## The Austin Police Department Cadets Tour Museums and Cultural Centers

Austin Police Department cadets journeyed to the Carver Museum and other places of cultural interest in our city, including the Asian American Resource Center, to learn more about Austin's cultural communities.

"I am pleased to report that Site Coordinator Para Agboga shared insights with APD cadets during a tour of the Carver Museum—a place to explore social history, affirm cultural traditions, and appreciate aesthetic expressions of the African American population. In fact, at the Carver Museum, we create community by offering opportunities for building the 'cultural competency quotient' of our City's residents and future police officers too", said Carver site manager Bamidele Demerson.

# Preserving Nature in the City

Austin's parkland provides some of the first and best opportunities to enjoy and connect with nature in the city. The Natural Resources group works to provide a safe enjoyable space where people can connect with nature through the Austin Nature and Science Center, Zilker Botanical Garden, Beverly Sheffield Splash Exhibit, Austin's Nature Preserve System, Community Gardens, Park Rangers and the Urban Forestry unit.



## Urban Forestry

The Forestry team maintains and enhances Austin's urban forest, providing social, economic, and environmental benefits to Austin's residents.

**288,000**

Trees on parkland maintained

**1,511**

Young trees maintained

**2,533**

Trees inspected

**3,201**

Trees pruned

**1,340**

Trees watered

**552**

Trees removed

## Wood Reclamation

Urban Forestry hosts a Wood Reclamation Day each month, where members of the public collect large wood pieces that were removed from parkland and reuse them for milling or artisanal projects. Participation in this event has grown by more than 550% over the last fiscal year, from just over 8 tons reclaimed in the first quarter to 54.6 tons reclaimed in the fourth quarter.

## Tree Climbing Classes

Climbing arborists from the Urban Forestry unit led public tree climbing classes at the Camacho Activity Center and Emma Long Park, and they also facilitated "Kids' Climbs" at Nature's Way Preschool throughout the year. In addition, staff provided instruction at the International Society of Arboriculture's Women's Tree Climbing Workshop and the City of Austin Park Ranger Cadet program.

## Oak Wilt Prevention

Urban Forestry staff are administering fungistatic treatments for Oak Wilt Disease at Grey Rock Golf Course and Garrison District Park. 55 trees have been treated to date. Since 2017, 143 oaks have been removed from these two properties. Oak Wilt has also been recently identified at Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park.







## Austin's Park Rangers

Park Ranger programs focus on the conservation of habitat and wildlife, such as snakes, bats, and native flora. Rangers lead hikes, climbs, archery, fishing and Leave No Trace programming on their own and in partnership with recreation centers, the Austin Nature and Science Center, and the Camacho Activity Center. The focus of every Ranger led activity is on conserving Austin's natural spaces and recreating responsibly. Park Ranger programs, like cave open houses, nature preserve tours, sound walks, and Bark Rangers all incorporate Leave No Trace to impart stewardship and land ethics to participants.

**52,617**

Total contacts on Austin parkland

**42,371**

Educational contacts

**3,619**

Dog off-leash contacts

**801**

Total public programs

**33,211**

Program contacts

**280**

Volunteers







### **Caving with the Austin Park Rangers**

Park Rangers hosted their first Cave Open House in February 2018 at a cave on South Austin parkland, with 60 residents participating in the tour.

### **Adventures at Camacho Activity Center**

Camacho Activity Center partners with Martin Middle School on a Therapeutic Nature Immersion program to offer students of varying physical and cognitive abilities experience in hands-on experiential outdoor learning. The program promotes health and increases self-confidence and self-reliance in a structure that removes the pressures often associated with a traditional classroom setting. Camacho Activity Center also hosted Dirt Divas, a club for girls that develops their independence by exploring a variety of outdoor recreation activities, such as archery, caving, rock climbing and biking.

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### **Improving Zilker Botanical Garden**

Zilker Botanical Garden gathered stakeholder feedback through community engagement sessions and focus groups that now sets the stage for a review of the site and potential opportunities.

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### **Exploring Nature at the Austin Nature & Science Center**

The Austin Nature & Science Center (ANSC) hosted 250 field trips for schools from the Greater Austin Area, serving 6,491 students from Title 1 schools. Students got to explore and appreciate nature in a fun and educational way. The ANSC also recently updated exhibit signage to include Spanish language signage, making the exhibits more accessible and representative of the Austin Community.

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### **Three Decades of Preserving Nature**

The Austin Nature Preserve System celebrated 35 years in 2018. The preserves were created to foster significant natural communities, species, and unique natural features. The Nature Preserve System is managed in perpetuity for the primary benefit of those features and to provide educational, scientific, and aesthetic benefit for the people of Austin.





**242,365**

Visitors exploring wildlife and nature at Austin Nature & Science Center



**124,896**

Visitors enjoyed the grounds at Zilker Botanical Gardens



**450**

Volunteers at Camacho Activity Center and Austin Nature & Science Center



# Engaging Our Community

The Austin Parks & Recreation Department's Communications & Engagement Unit supports an Austin community connected to its parks and recreation system through meaningful stories, collaborative dialogue, and community engagement. In FY18, the Communications & Engagement team worked with community members, the media, and partner organizations to inform and educate residents about Austin's parks system.

## The Community Engagement process

The Communications & Engagement Unit uses the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum to engage the Austin community and define its role in all public participation processes. This tool guides PARD in involving and empowering community members in projects that impact their communities and public spaces.







**25,043**

Facebook followers

2017: 19,966



**6,012**

Twitter followers

2017: 4,925



**3,041**

Instagram followers

2017: 2,304

## Awards

PARD's Communications & Engagement Unit is an award-winning team whose work has been recognized across numerous graphic design, communications, and community engagement projects. In FY18, the Communications & Engagement Unit received awards for the following projects:

- **Directline E-Newsletter**  
2018 Award of Excellence, NAGC Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards
- **FY 2017 Annual Report**  
2018 TAMI Award from the Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers
- **In the Parks: Leave No Trace video**  
2018 Award of Excellence from 3CMA, City County Communications & Marketing Association



# Management Services

## Fostering Growth and Opportunity

The Austin Parks & Recreation Department's Management Services unit helps job applicants become employees and provides PARD employees with opportunities for growth and advancement.



**1500**  
Temporary  
employees hired

**27**  
Permanent  
employees hired

**26**  
Employees  
promoted

**7**  
Internal employee  
transfers

## Safety

PARD's Safety team proves that small teams can accomplish great things. In FY18, the Safety team inspected 474 sites, which included parks, recreation centers, trails, pools, and senior centers. The Safety team also taught 48 classes which ranged from Active Shooter, to CPR/First Aid, to Hazardous Material Communication, to Safe Driving classes. In total, they trained 593 PARD employees, making the workplace safer for PARD staff and the community.

**474**  
Safety inspections  
performed

**48**  
Safety classes  
taught

**593**  
PARD employees  
trained on safety





# Financial Services

## Contracts, Procurements and Grants

PARD sustained partnerships with 40 nonprofit groups and 68 individual recreation professionals to provide services to Austin residents at no cost to the department. The department was also successful in obtaining three new grants: Conservation Education in 3M Communities, NRPA 10-Minute Walk and FTA Senior Transportation – Enhanced Mobility, with a total value of \$127,368.

**\$127,368**

In new grant funding

**40**

Nonprofit partnerships maintained

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## Office of Performance Management

The Office of Performance Management implemented a major upgrade of RecTrac, PARD’s customer registration and reservation system. PARD delivered service through multiple mechanisms, both online across 10 system modules and in person at 47 unique park locations.

**1,661**

Programs managed in RecTrac

**11,950**

new RecTrac customer households

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## Accounting

In FY18, PARD’s Accounting team consistently processed all Accounts Payable (AP) invoices within the state mandated AP 30-day turnaround requirement. For the most recent quarter, the error rate in processing AP invoices was at 2%, well below the benchmark rate of 3%.













[austintexas.gov/parks](http://austintexas.gov/parks)

