



# City of Austin

## Recommendation for Action

**File #:** 24-5068, **Agenda Item #:** 121.

7/18/2024

### **Posting Language**

Conduct a public hearing in accordance with Texas Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 26 to consider a resolution authorizing permanent and temporary changes of use of dedicated parkland, known as Waller Beach at Town Lake Metro Park, to allow Austin Energy to use approximately 13,116 square feet of parkland for subterranean electric duct bank and approximately 10,973 square feet of parkland for staging, access, and a temporary work area.

### **Lead Department**

Parks and Recreation Department (Department), Office of Real Estate Services.

### **Fiscal Note**

This item has no fiscal impact.

### **Prior Council Action:**

May 30, 2024 - City Council set the date and location of this public hearing for July 18, 2024, at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX.

### **For More Information:**

Lead Department - Parks and Recreation Department, Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager, (512) 974-9452; Gregory Montes, Program Manager, (512) 974-9458. Lead Department - Office of Real Estate Services, Michael Gates, Officer, (512) 974-5639. Sponsoring Department - Austin Energy, Karen Poff, Principal Engineer, (512) 322-6464.

### **Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:**

March 27, 2024 - Recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board on a vote of 9-0, Recommendation No. 20240327-5.

### **Additional Backup Information:**

Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code provides that the use of parkland for non-park purposes may be approved upon findings that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the parkland and that all reasonable planning has been undertaken to minimize harm to such land.

Due to growth in the Austin Downtown Network area, Austin Energy (AE) recently completed the construction of a third network substation in the Rainey neighborhood. The Rainey Street Substation at East Avenue and River Street allows AE to provide continued reliability to existing customers and to support future growth. Over the past five years, AE has been working to design and construct civil duct banks to support the nine electric service lines from the Rainey substation and to create an accessible and maintainable duct bank system that AE will use to provide distribution power to the downtown grid. Determination of the duct bank alignments has faced significant challenges and delays with the development of the Project Connect Blue Line project and the TXDOT expansion of IH-35. After evaluating various alternative duct bank routes, AE is requesting to utilize parkland to provide electric duct banks to downtown. Specifically, the project will include the installation of a nine-inch by five-inch electrical conduit duct bank along the bank of Lady Bird Lake in the City of Austin Waller

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Beach at Town Lake Metropolitan Park (Park), south of Cesar Chavez, between Brazos St and Trinity Streets. Approximately include 772 linear feet of the duct bank will be installed via micro-tunneling at a depth of 20-40 feet below ground level, which will not disturb the surface or impact Park trees. Approximately 241 linear feet of the duct bank will be installed via open cuts in right-of-way at the Brazos St cul-de-sac and in the Park in front of the Waller Creek boathouse. Construction is anticipated to last 160 days and will include a minor re-route of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail at the exit shaft near the boathouse.

The Parks and Recreation Board reviewed the project at the March 27, 2024, and provided a recommendation to City Council. This item is brought forward because there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the dedicated parkland and all reasonable planning has been and will be taken to minimize harm to such lands. The dates of public notification in the Austin American-Statesman were June 23, June 30, and July 7, 2024. Upon approval of this item, the Department will collect \$1,770,993 as mitigation for the permanent and temporary uses of parkland.