



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-1043, Agenda Item #: 41.

2/5/2026

Posting Language

Authorize the negotiation and execution of a revenue legacy concession contract with Zilker Park Boat Rentals to operate and maintain a watercraft concession at the Barton Creek location within Zilker Metropolitan Park for an initial term of 10 years with up to two five-year extension options, with total revenue generated to be determined upon completion of negotiation and execution of the contract. Funding: This contract will generate revenue for the Austin Parks and Recreation Operating Budget.

Lead Department

Austin Parks and Recreation.

Fiscal Note

This contract will generate revenue for the Austin Parks and Recreation Operating Budget.

Prior Council Action:

December 15, 2005 - Council approved the negotiation and execution of a revenue concession contract with Zilker Park Boat Rentals on a 5-1 vote with Mayor Pro Tem Thomas off the dais.

November 6, 2025 - Council approved Resolution No. 20251106-043 adopting the Policies and Procedures for Concessions in City Parks (Concession Policy), which establish a legacy concession category and the criteria for qualifying for this new category.

For More Information:

Inquiries should be directed to Suzanne Piper, Chief Administrative Officer, Austin Parks and Recreation, 512-974-6753, Suzanne.Piper@austintexas.gov; or Denisha Cox, Contract Management Supervisor II, Austin Parks and Recreation, 512-974-6718, Denisha.Cox@austintexas.gov.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

January 26, 2026 - to be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board.

Additional Backup Information:

Austin Parks and Recreations' (APR) Concession Policy defines a legacy concession as a concession currently operating in a City park pursuant to a concession agreement with APR that has been continuously owned and operated in the same park location by the same person or a family member for at least 20 years; has operated under the same or a similar name for the entirety of its existence; contributes to the City's history and culture, as determined by the APR Director in their sole discretion; and has maintained the physical features of the concession in good condition.

Zilker Park Boat Rentals (ZPBR), located along Barton Creek just downstream from the Barton Springs Swimming Pool in Zilker Park, has served the Austin community since 1969. Originally established as a canoe rental service, the concession has expanded to include kayaks and stand-up paddle boards, supporting outdoor recreation and tourism in one of the City's most iconic parks. The business has remained under

continuous family ownership and was the first boating concession to operate on Lady Bird Lake.

On February 28, 2006, the City entered into a revenue concession agreement with ZPBR. The initial term expired on March 1, 2011, and included two optional five-year extensions. Since then, the City has approved four additional extensions beyond the original agreement term, with the current extension set to expire on February 28, 2026.

The Director of APR has determined that ZPBR meets all the criteria established in the Concession Policy for a legacy concession, and approval of the negotiation and execution of a legacy concession contract with ZPBR aligns with the Concession Policy's goals and objectives.