

# PARKS ARE ESSENTIAL



## We Need Our Parks

Through the outbreak and ongoing fight against Covid-19, Austin's parks are a shining beacon of recreation, relaxation and hope. These facilities touch every aspect of our lives, promoting clean jobs, and keeping our children safe and happy.

## Our Parks Need Us

Despite being a constant source of respite over the past few months, Austin's parks need our help! Park usage has exploded over the past four months, causing strain on some of the city's most important infrastructure. To support our parks, Austin Parks Foundation is requesting a **\$4.4 million increase to PARD's budget** to fund the safety and sustainability of Austin's trails, greenbelts, youth programs and facilities. APF supports:

### TRAILS OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

We must **increase funding for trails O&M by \$1.4 million**. Due to Covid-19, trail usage has increased exponentially. Additionally, volunteer hours dedicated to maintaining our parks and trails have decreased almost entirely. Trails maintenance jobs are high-quality, green jobs that promote multi-modal transportation and public health. An increase of \$1.4 million would fund new equipment and work hours to simultaneously increase the level of service on our trails, and also combat joblessness.

### INCREASING PARK RANGERS

We can promote safety, education, and sustainability in our parks by **adding \$1.2 million to hire 10 additional park rangers**. More park rangers - charged with patrolling parks, educating visitors, and maintaining parks facilities - will increase the quality and sustainability of our cherished parks assets.

### SUPPORTING PARENTS

By **adding \$1 million to temporary staffing budgets** at recreation centers in underserved areas, we can support parents and kids no matter how AISD and traditional childcare facilities proceed this fall. PARD plays a major role supporting parents in our community, and additional funding will give them the flexibility to respond to changing needs, and hire bilingual staff to support diverse programming.

### INVESTING IN REPAIRS

PARD needs **an additional \$800,000 for one-time repairs** to put toward the deferred maintenance backlog. New HVAC systems are desperately needed in many of PARD's East Austin facilities. Plus, aging lighting structures in parks and outdoor sports facilities are becoming a hazard.

### ENDING THE HIRING FREEZE

Certain PARD positions charged with Capital Improvement Projects that are only partially funded by the General Fund are key, and need to be reinstated.