

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

44

PARTICIPANTS

3

TOPICS

180

ANSWERS

104

REPLIES

66

VOTES

### SUMMARY OF TOPICS

#### WHAT CHANGES NEEDED?

 76 Answers · 49 Replies

As you answer this and all questions, please share with us your perspective as an event attendee, someone who lives near parks that host events, part of an event production team, or some combination of the three.

What, if anything, would you recommend change about events that take place at Austin city parks?

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:41 pm

 0 Votes

Post signs making it easy to check the reservation list and contact local park managers. URL or QR codes should be attached. For instance, I scan the QR code and it takes me straight to a page showing reservations, accepting reservations, and displaying the open hours and rules of that particular venue.

#### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:03 am

Thanks for your comments, Chad. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:58 pm

 7 Votes

They shouldn't be allowed to close down the park for use by the general public for so many days of the year. I live here, and I want to use my parks without having to pay admission fees!

#### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:04 am

Thanks for your comments, Heather. Do you have any suggestions for an appropriate or acceptable number of days city parks could be used for special events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:59 pm

 0 Votes

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I am with Chad, make it easier to check to see if a date is open. Would also charge the organizer of the event a fee if the area is not left as it was before the event. I have hosted events, when over we cleaned and got the site back to original condition. That is being neighborly. If I had not done that and the city had to clean up, there went the deposit.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:05 am  
Thanks for your comments, Gary. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:11 pm

 4 Votes

have security in neighborhood, increase public transportation, give back to the neighborhood for dealing with it, enhance our walk ways, bike lanes, playgrounds, barton springs, SOS, etc.- too much C3 money goes to the city with no earmarked funds that should be directly attributable to giving away our "the people's" park land that has already been paid for and still underfunded by our taxes.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 8:25 am  
I agree with Nicholas you have used the parks as a big money grab for all your other projects and given very little back for the last 50 some years. Zilker will be fenced off until January 2016 the prime months to use the park will be taken away from us. What ever happened to Waterloo Park? The City council should not be able to name anything, not are parks after their old cronies who have been part of the tax waste, I think that belongs to the citizens of Austin. Did you bury Vic at Auditorium Shores, I see you put up two gravestones for him there that park needs to stay Auditorium Shores. I don't see any thing down there for Lady Bird and she cared about this city, not just made a buck off of it.

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:12 pm

 6 Votes

Create routes and access for permanent residents to use exclusively during events. Offer locals discounted admission to events or opportunities to buy entrance early or some other perk. Plan for adequate transit options (including running public transit later and more frequently than usual). Provide early notification of upcoming events and offer residents alternatives/solutions such as driving routes, ride shares, etc. Limit the number of events and duration of events. Consult with residents before scheduling new landmark events.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 11:05 am  
Thanks for your additional comments, D. -Moderator

### Response:

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:12 am  
Thanks for your comments, D. What would you suggest as an appropriate number and duration of events? What mechanisms or forums would you suggest the city use to consult with residents about scheduling new events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:29 pm  
👍 6 Votes

Don't close the parks for such a long time (a whole month, now, for ACL). Vary the location for the lawn-chewing events (the ones that require the entire area to be re-groomed and re-seeded after the event). However, I really do NOT want to see events moved to the out-of-Austin venues, especially Circuit of the Americas. If the really big ones could be moved around to different areas, the pain (for those of us that don't go to those) would be easier to bear. While I'm sure that people who live far north (or far south) wouldn't like it, what's wrong with using the parks farther out? Why not have ACL, as an example, at Mabel Davis one year and then Bull Creek the next? (Just as an example; I realize that neither of those parks are actually equipped to handle a huge event.) Is there a reason the events aren't held at Butler (I think that's the one next to Palmer)?

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:13 am  
Thanks for your comments, Jeanne. What would you suggest as an appropriate or acceptable amount of time for city parks to be used for special events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:40 pm  
👍 5 Votes

Move ACL to CoA. That great lawn is unavailable to us for a full quarter of the year, at a time of year when it's great to be outdoors. Create spaces for other, perhaps smaller events in other parks. I live near Garrison, and, aside from the ball fields, it is a seriously underused park. Since it's next to a high school why not add some skate ramps, a small amphitheater, a space for food trucks next to Manchaca. Give us back Zilker for all 12 months and spread the money around!

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:14 am  
Thanks for your comments, Sheila. -Moderator

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 11:07 pm  
I agree, give us back Zilker for the whole year!!

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:44 pm  
👍 5 Votes

Really the events have all gotten so big, so many thousands of people merging in to one small area, that it is a hard call. When events are indoors they do not get as wild, and even dangerous as they do outside. I have seen fights break out in a blink of an eye, and

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then no security is ever there in time, as people walked away wounded. What is the city counsel really wanting OUT of having so many large attended events? Well besides money...? So why the parks? considered a low cost easy grab space? I agree with limiting and cutting back events, so that the parks are PARKS. Keep ACL. Dump the Trail of Lights already or relocate them. The biggest change I will harp on is giving the people back their parks for park use.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:16 am  
Thanks for your comments, Carolyn. What would you suggest as an appropriate or acceptable number of special events in city parks? -Moderator

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 11:07 am  
Thanks for your additional comments, Carolyn. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 6:17 pm  
👍 7 Votes

When you think of park land that is iconic - think of Central Park in New York City. They have big events and many people attending those events. But, the events do not deny access for the general public for a quarter of a year. Zilker Park should be our iconic park. The people who live in Austin and who have paid tax dollars for the park lands are being denied access. Why not put ACL back to one period of time - and make it as someone suggested one week? And as for the income from these events which bring people into Austin, why is there still such a high property tax rate? Where is all this increased income going? I think that it would be nice if the City of Austin Parks Department could consider those of us who live here. Also, if there is so much money floating around after huge events in our parks, what about adding more park land to the city? And working on improving the parks we have would be nice.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:17 am  
Thanks for your comments, Annette. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 03, 2015 9:42 am  
👍 6 Votes

Austin summer's are hot and we are waiting to enjoy the parks when the city cools down in the fall. Instead of being able to enjoy the beautiful fall weather on the Zilker great lawn, the park closes. Disappointment to our city's park lovers for sure! (You should see how many people are there during pleasant weather spring weekends btw.) With two events --- ACL and the Trail of Lights--- the Zilker lawn is closed practically all fall until January!

Beginning in September Zilker is closed for ACL setup several weeks; it continues to be closed for ACL 2 weeks in October, and it remains closed for ACL take down for several more weeks not to mention for restoration of the lawn which has ended up a mud hole more than once. The problem with ACL in Zilker is that it affects use of the park well

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before, during and after the event. How could the set up and take down be accomplished faster? Could this huge event be moved to auditorium shores next to the lake and further away from neighborhoods? That is if this huge event has to be in the center of our city at all?! Use of Zilker for ACL takes us from the end of September into November. In the past after ACL has gone, instead of removing the fence used to control access the fence stays up over a huge part of Zilker for Trail of Lights in December! Is this a cost issue? ACL should bear the cost of putting up and down the fence asap using extra crews to make the process faster and then to put it up again for TOL? Not much even happens for a while. The fence is just there. Then, we go through a similar process for the Trail of Lights set up, event and take down.

Our city's park lovers are giving up our park for way too long in the fall. The Zilker great lawn is closed way too long. Some benefit for our park lovers should be evident yet I do not see one. Other than to restore the damaged lawn which takes months, the funds disappear elsewhere. Another place for ACL is the best solution for the park and our city.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 03, 2015 7:24 pm  
Exactly! Move ACL back to one weekend in August. This ruins our ability to enjoy our park when it's tolerable outside, during almost all the autumn going into Trail of Lights.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:27 am  
Thanks for your comments, Mary. What other venues would you suggest for ACL in addition to Auditorium Shores? What amount of time would you suggest as appropriate or acceptable for special events in Zilker? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 2:31 pm  
👍 2 Votes

Remember the Aquafest? It got too big and was moved from the shores. How about developing some other riverfront venues? We are loving Zilker park to death. Work with the county to develop the shores of Lake Long and have events out there. There is lots of parking at the expo center.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:27 am  
Thanks for your comments, Katy. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 11:04 pm  
👍 3 Votes

We pay for our parks with our taxes but for large portions of the year--including some of the best parts--the parks are closed and being used for events that require admission. Zilker in particular is usually closed for a month for ACL and often more depending on the degree of damage inflicted on the grass. I have attended ACL for most of its existence, but since the number of patrons has been increased by C3, it has ceased to be the great event that it once was. Also, expanding it to two weekends has increased

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traffic for the neighborhood and increased damage done to the park. When it finally reopens, its time to begin setting up for the Trail of Lights and it is closed again for an extended period. Auditorium Shores is also closed too often. The new leash free zone there is nice, but as I understand it, events such as FUN, FUN, FUN FEST will be allowed to use (and close off ) part of the dog park. The parks should be public and should be for the benefit of the citizens of Austin--not primarily for the enjoyment of tourists and for the profit of promoters!

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:29 am

👍 0 Votes

Thanks for your comments, Karen. What would you suggest as an appropriate or acceptable amount of time for city parks to be used for special events? -Moderator

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 11:19 am

When we're talking Zilker, I'd say a couple of weeks, max! Including preparation and dismantling. There shouldn't be a huge need for restoration if we stop having mega-events on the Great Lawn.

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:55 am

👍 0 Votes

I wouldn't recommend too many changes. I think the City does a good job of balancing concerns of surrounding neighborhoods. I think it's extremely important that these events remain in Central Austin. It's a key part of their appeal. The location also means that the events are accessible by bus, bike, foot, cab, Uber, etc. Moving these events to COTA or the Expo Center would be a really bad idea and would cause much more traffic and pollution. Make sure that the city continues to negotiate a good deal with C3, Transmission and the other promoters to ensure that funds are available for remediation of the impact of the events. Also, it's probably not a good idea to increase the number of events too much, because we want to make sure the park is available for the public, too.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:10 am

Thanks for your comments, Tedd. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 1:22 pm

👍 0 Votes

I also would like the city to ensure local residents have opportunities to engage with the events, as attendees (perhaps with discounted admission, admission as a reward for other civic service, etc.) but also as vendors/exhibitors/performers. Local preference should be established in some way.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:10 am

Thanks for your comments. -Moderator

## Events at Austin's Parks

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 9:15 am

👍 3 Votes

### KEY POINTS (SHORT VERSION):

- PARKS ARE FOR THE PUBLIC, NOT FOR "FOR PROFIT" COMPANIES.
- TAKING AWAY A PUBLIC PARK (THE CROWN JEWEL OF AUSTIN) FOR TWO MONTHS EACH YEAR DURING THE BEST WEATHER TIME OF THE YEAR IS COMPLETELY UNREASONABLE.
- FESTIVALS CAN BE A GOOD THING IN MANY RESPECTS, BUT SHOULD NOT OUTWEIGH THE PUBLIC NEED.
- ROTATE ACL AND OTHER FESTIVALS TO OTHER AREAS YEAR TO YEAR
- MONEY SHOULD NOT DEFINE HOW OUR PARKS ARE BEING USED (WHEATHER THAT BE LACK OF CITY FUNDING TO TAKE CARE OF PARKS OR BIG BUCKS FROM EVENTS)

### LONGER VERSION:

I will echo some of what others have written regarding how our parks are used. But I must say that speaking out outweighs the possible redundancy. The way our parks are used in Austin is a huge issue and it is one that needs to be thoughtfully and decidedly handled. Otherwise, in my opinion, I see our parks gradually being taken away from us more and more. ////

Music is a good thing. Festivals (in general) are a good thing for the city. TAKING AWAY "THE CROWN JEWEL" (AS MANY CALL IT) OF AUSTIN FOR A MONTH AND A HALF TO THREE MONTHS DURING THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PARK WEATHER OF THE YEAR IS COMPLETELY UNREASONABLE. //// (one year with acl setup, the event itself, breakdown of the event, turf rehabilitation, trail of lights set up, the event, breakdown, most or all of the northern lawn of Zilker was closed for close to ninety days!!)

Our parks, and specifically Zilker park, are being overrun with events - THESE ARE PUBLIC PARKS. NOT "FOR PROFIT" VENUES.

I know that C3 (or now Live Nation Entertainment) puts money back toward the city. What does the city pay for during these events? Does what C3 pays balance out with what the city has to cover - more police, more staff to put up and take down signs, traffic issues, etc.?

To me, use of the park outweighs the money.

ACL also closes off good portions of Zilker park on the south side of Barton Springs road. Taking up good portions of the parking during the week and closing the north lot closest to the pool entirely for each three day weekend of the festival. South lot for the Springs stays open for folks going to the pool - if one can get to the pool during the festival and if the lot is not full.

I've read folks on line saying things like .... "hey, it's only six days out of the year" ... well, it's not, it's six days of music and thousands and thousands coming through your neighborhood and six days or more being inconvenienced getting around parts of your

## Events at Austin's Parks

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neighborhood and getting through to the freeway ..... then a month or two months or more of your park being closed down .

Have also heard, "you live in the city, that's what you have to put up with" or "you knew what you were getting into when you bought your house" .... well, we bought a house close to town and close to the park so we could have easy access to downtown and to the park and pool. ACL was one weekend when we moved into our house.

For all of the signage that says not to park in the neighborhoods, there is still plenty of parking going on. If you - the city, ACL folks - are really trying to be good to the neighborhood, and protect the neighborhood - maybe there should be some real enforcement on more streets - not simply enforcement on entrances to the neighborhood that are a block away from ACL.

My comments have nothing to do with music or folks enjoying music - I like music, a lot. This is about our parks and how they are used and in the end, about our quality of life and peace of mind.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:11 am

Thanks for your comments, Tucker--for clarification, do you live near a park that hosts events, attend events, and/or help produce events at parks? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 6:27 pm

👍 0 Votes

Relocation of events from Zilker Park.

Originally, ACL landed at Zilker Park, despite its problematic access, despite how it takes the park out of service for recreation, and despite neighborhood disruption, because there was no alternative venue of suitable size. Now there is. Circuit of the Americas is an active mega-venue, fully outfitted and regularly hosting large concerts and enormous crowds. Please use it. The only thing lost for ACL is the bling of having the show in the shadow of downtown and in the centerpiece of our parks system. Yet those things are precisely what is wrong with ACL, and losing them would not in any way diminish the musical experience of the festival.

Likewise with Blues on the Green, which began as a quaint little music event and has exploded into an loosely planned and unpredictably attended mega event that breaks down the central city commuting grid every other Wednesday all summer. Somehow, PARD does not even acknowledge it as an event to be counted against the policy limit of major event days at Zilker Park. Reality argues otherwise. Unlike ACL, which cleans up after itself and maintains its fields, BotG just comes and goes. And while major trash may be picked up, users of the athletic fields complain of the broad scattering of bottle caps, toxic cigarette butts, pull tabs, and other trash that can actually be dangerous to players and is in any case unsightly. Let the Blues



## Events at Austin's Parks

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be played in a proper outdoor venue -- COTA.

I personally thing the Trail of Lights is an appalling holiday observance for a community that

thinks of itself as progressive. What does a two-weeks plus worship of the conspicuous consumption of electricity generated primarily with fossil fuels have to do with Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or the holiday season in general? What justifies the obscene consumption of gasoline in the obscene traffic jams that occur on every fair weather night of the Trail? I would say the Trail should be moved downtown, where it could become a business stimulator during what is probably a slow club/restaurant season there. But I think this community has enough on the ball to re-envision how we celebrate the holiday and to put an end to this destructive, throwback event. People go because it is a tradition. Outdated traditions and bad traditions should die and be replaced with worthy ones. We can do better.

Lastly, much is made of the charity work that ACL has performed. They are a legitimate good citizen, and they run their event professionally. But they could so more smoothy in an appropriate location, and none of their charitable fundraising is tied to their location at Zilker Park. It would not be in jeopardy with a move.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:12 am  
Thanks for your comments, Larry. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 9:33 pm

 1 Votes

We need PARD and COA management that is not receiving perks and benefits from promoters. We need leadership that recognizes the need for preservation of neighborhoods and parks. We need leadership that recognizes that for profit promoters are taking advantage of Austin to use the parks as cheap venue and location. We need leadership that recognizes needs and develops ideas to fulfill them. We need leadership that know that new facilities without the budget for maintenance are soon to be rejects. We need leadership to maintain the parks, pools and programs we already have or have recently lost. We need more toilets, benches, educational programs, clean parks, well trained employees and a public input process that is committed to listening and engaging in real dialog.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:17 am  
Thanks for your comments, Peter. Can you clarify what you mean when you say "we need PARD and COA management that is not receiving perks and benefits from promoters?" -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 9:36 pm

 2 Votes

The COA has created a scheme of money laundering involving C#, Austin Parks Foundation and COA. We need citizen input on all monies the COA has available to

## Events at Austin's Parks

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them. Allowing un-regulated, un-audited, un-authorized entities to take control of COA income and dispense it without the control of COA is wrong.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:17 am

Thanks for your comments, Peter. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 4:53 am

 1 Votes

We need for each stakeholder neighborhood to sign off on events. We need to consider the impact on surrounding neighborhoods such as parking, inebriated people wandering about, traffic issues (keeping residents from getting home, etc.), noise and the cumulative effects of all these issues on the nearby neighborhoods. Also the Parks Foundation needs to be monitored for ethics violations-- and make sure the money coming into the parks is not for a vested interest such as C-3 Presents or other interests that make money from our parks.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:18 am

Thanks for your comments, Carol. Can you say more about how you would define a stakeholder neighborhood, and what would constitute their sign off for events (e.g., neighborhood association vote, vote of all neighbors, etc.)? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 9:04 am

 2 Votes

The city needs to change with the times and demands and circumstances and purchase some land outside of downtown for mega events.  
Then start building the subway to get there.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:19 am

Thanks for your comments, Greg. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:49 am

 1 Votes

ACL should have never been expanded to two weekends that is all about money and that should not be the driving force. Also increasing the crowd capacity to 75K is beyond what the park can handle and still have an experience of being able to enjoy the festival.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 11:14 am

Thanks for your additional comment, Steve. -Moderator

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:19 am  
Thanks for your comments, Steve; do you have thoughts on what the crowd capacity should be? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 11:02 pm

👍 2 Votes

Thank you very much for asking these questions and creating a public forum to comment.

ACL is really the elephant in the room here. The arrogance of extending the party for two weeks speaks to the presumption that they are the best game in town and we should all accommodate their great benefit to the city. Because they installed sprinklers and filled hotels they deserve to stay as long as they want? Would it be acceptable to knock it back to one weekend? A dramatic improvement, but it's more than one weekend, it's weeks added up on either end and a lack of use at a time when we've all been waiting for the heat to break and get outside. Move ACL back to Sept., let them bake so they don't all move here, one weekend only. Or, find another venue like Walter E. Long Park or Circuit of the Americas.

Regarding other events, break them up into smaller venues throughout town. City-wide kite festival in your own neighborhood park! We could use an additional Botanical Center. Trail of Lights neighborhood competitions - Best of Austin Awards opportunities. Fun Fun Fun has better music anyway and doesn't shut down the city.

I like seeing the parks used for the things parks are good for - soccer, picnics, laying on a blanket, throwing frisbees, volleyball, even small concerts that are not designed specifically to attract the greatest volume of people.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:17 pm  
Thanks for your feedback and suggestions, A R. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 3:07 pm

👍 1 Votes

Like many others have said, it is unfair for citizens to not have access to public parks for almost 2 months every year because of private events. While events like ACL and Trail of Lights bring in tourism dollars, there has to be a solution that isn't detrimental to Austin residents. Other venues need to be explored, especially for Trail of Lights. While ACL only shuts down Barton Springs Road for 6 days collectively, Trail of Lights shuts down the road for two weeks continuously. This causes ridiculous traffic problems for residents in the area, as well as those traveling in the area during rush hour.

If ACL and Trail of Lights are to remain at Zilker for the time being, the residents of Barton Hills need neighborhood parking permits during the events that will be enforced. Other neighborhoods in the area have police officers checking ID's to make sure drivers live in the area, but Barton Hills has neither permits nor checkpoints. Leaving and returning to your home during these events is very difficult, especially when there is no

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security presence for traffic and pedestrian control.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:21 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Molleen. Do you any suggestions for alternate venues that should be considered? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 17, 2015 4:51 pm

👍 1 Votes

Just one more addition to the chorus of many voices here that say it is time to move big events out of the public parks, and out of our central Zilker park in particular. ACL and other events that shut Zilker park for months at a time, destroy the great lawn, and bring far more people than can be accommodated, MUST move elsewhere. There are plenty of suggestions for places that could work: expo center; racetrack; backyard, etc, but frankly, it is NOT the job of the city to find the next home for ACL; C3 is perfectly capable of negotiating for a venue that can accommodate hundreds of thousands of tourists for 2 weeks+. I am really shocked that the city and parks department allowed 2 weekends for ACL after we saw what happened during rains.

We citizens are so disappointed to watch the slow process of privatizing our public spaces. And for a few million bucks! For what? The money doesn't come close to making amends for the annual destruction of the lawns, the true cost of all the public safety, -or- the time we lose access to our park. PLEASE KEEP THE PARKS PUBLIC, BEAUTIFUL, AND OPEN YEAR ROUND.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:22 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Phil. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 7:55 am

👍 0 Votes

Moving ACL to CotA would kill it, which would be a shame. I know so many local people of different generations who enjoy it. We owe the Great Lawn to ACL. It was a Great Brown Sticker-burr Patch before. It's the Trail of Lights we can lose. Huge traffic headache during a stressful time of year. One year the city spent a million dollars on it. If you spend time at Zilker, you know that money is needed elsewhere, just to bring landscaping and amenities up to the level of other signature municipal parks. Keep the spinning tree and the yule log.

While we're commenting on parks, please do something about the overgrown tunnel of brush along the hike-and-bike trail between Lou Neff and MoPac. It needs a regular maintenance schedule: it's a park, a disturbed environment, not a natural one. Ragweed, grapevines, privet, hackberry have completely swallowed the remnants of past landscaping projects, and the former viewsheds along the lake. You can barely tell you're walking next to a lake. That's not how it used to be when Austin was slightly more grown-up.

And it's past time to do something with the old landfill. If parking is the highest and best use, fine: lay down some gravel and plant some trees for shade.

## Events at Austin's Parks

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### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:24 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Elizabeth. Do you have suggestions for alternate venues for the Trail of Lights? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 1:06 pm  
👍 0 Votes

Um .. the moon?

## EVENT CHALLENGES

🗨️ 53 Answers · 29 Replies

As you answer this and all questions, please share with us your perspective as an event attendee, someone who lives near parks that host events, part of an event production team, or some combination of the three.

What would you say is the most significant challenge created by the events on Austin parkland?

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:38 pm  
👍 1 Votes

Knowing in advance whether there will be room for your event.  
Worry that attendees and event organizers will respect the nearby neighbors and observe the law.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:56 am  
Thanks for your comments, Chad. - Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:56 pm  
👍 0 Votes

There are so many rules that the city imposes it is very difficult to have an event. Look at the charter of the group, the number of events were cut down from 30 to 25. Why did the city do that? I bet it is because it is work for someone. If we, meaning the city, are worried about the neighbors living around the events, do not have events there. We have plenty of spaces, use all.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:57 am  
Thanks for your comments, Gary. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:57 pm  
👍 6 Votes

That they take away from use of parks by normal city residents during the period of the

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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events.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:57 am

Thanks for your comments, Heather. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:09 pm

👍 3 Votes

i echo Heather... love ACL and have gone every year. I also live and own property in zilker for 10 years. Last year had a person that was drunk attack someone in my yard. Security is a joke and its a little annoying. Most of us in zilker know what to expect and we know we have to "pay" to live here but we do pay high taxes, some of highest in city. 2 weekends is a little much, dilutes the shows and is obviously a big tax on the park grounds. Its now closed 11 days prior to event, the entire event and 2 weeks after. One of the best months to enjoy Zilker is October... Why not have just a 7 day festival and go monday through sunday. Less of a burden, we still get shows, those who love music will still come, security can hold up the 75,000 people that attend daily (haha, its always more like 125,000 when you count the illegal crashers). Far as demographics- im young, sorta hip, enjoy free markets, love the city and generally keep a fair mind about a wide array of topics. ACL at zilker for two weekends is too much of a burden and I wonder if the cheap money today is worth the damage. Could be but it does not seem like it.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:58 am

Thanks for your comments, Nicholas. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:09 pm

👍 3 Votes

They create related capacity issues such as traffic, hotel, dining and mass transit delays. They can negatively impact the ability of locals to commute to work, to recreate, continue daily tasks of living. They can bring increases in crime and noise nuisances to neighborhoods. They can damage the parkland or nearby areas.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:58 am

Thanks for your comments, D. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:20 pm

👍 4 Votes

I really do NOT like that the park is closed for nearly 2 weeks before ACL, and 2 weeks after; this means that the park is closed to regular Austinites for the entire month of October, way too heavy a burden for the return. Any huge festival needs to be

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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done-and-over; this idea of a 2 weekend festival is not a good one.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:58 am  
Thanks for your comments, Jeanne. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:27 pm

👍 4 Votes

I agree that too many events take away park access to residents. Parks were meant for places to connect with nature, meet friends, picknick with family and have space to walk, run or bicycle. When some of the events happen, a resident cannot hardly even go for a swim. I think events need to be kept to a small percent in our public parks. If Austin wishes to contend with its rapid growth, it could build other areas dedicated to Events, much the like race tract. Then it would not need to slice sweeks surrounding any event just for set up and break down.... which is a huge cost. It also takes away from the residents, their park... Lands around Austin are now loosing any open space of which to enjoy as a Park. Creating other areas for events to occur spreads the fun around, the income to local businesses around. I agree that the counsel trim back the events at the downtown parks, for there are too many now and it takes away 1/3 of the time people get to walk in the park each year.

If Austin is the music capital of the world, create a rockin' place to hold these events OTHER than our dedicated park lands. I love music, so keep thinking bigger and beyond the small parcels of parkland left for the massed of high rises. Barton springs already smells like human effluence often, and once we loose that swimming hole.... well....

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:59 am  
Thanks for your comments, Carolyn. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 03, 2015 7:32 pm

👍 4 Votes

There is nothing worse than trying to sit on my balcony enjoying the mild weather, and hearing the back-up beeps of trucks installing stages, etc., for ACL for TWO WEEKS, then right after the festival, way into the night, I can hearing the beeping from my bedroom. It's horrible. I have to wear earplugs. Can nothing be done to stem the noise alone? I mean, the overload of fest-kids walking down the \*middle\* of the street, wandering into traffic, traffic, parking, and cacophony of the multitudes of sounds and stages going on for 3 days - 2 weekends in a row is overwhelming and burdensome. And I LOVE music - and I tend to go to at least one weekend of ACL every year, but enough is enough. We live here. We need some peace and quiet, and access to our parks quicker. One weekend is enough.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:00 am  
Thanks for your comments, Cole. -Moderator

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 2:25 pm

👍 2 Votes

It really bothers me that all the citizens who cannot pony up \$250 are unable to use the park. And the benefits do not accrue to the other parks. Govalle Park, gateway to the new bicycle trail, is shamefully neglected..

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:00 am  
Thanks for your comments, Katy. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 9:28 pm

👍 2 Votes

The noise. The VERY LOUD noise. It has gotten worse each year. I love living close to the park. It's cool to be able to walk to ACL, not worry about parking. But it is insane that the music from a mile away is louder than the conversation I am trying to have with my family INSIDE my own home.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:01 am  
Thanks for your comments, Liz. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 06, 2015 2:33 pm

👍 2 Votes

The traffic around Zilker is very troublesome during ACL. I regularly jog on the Hike and Bike Trail and find it impossible during ACL. Hate to miss my jogs. Hate the damage invariably done to the grass at Zilker. Perhaps ACL should move to Formula One. My other big objection is to the Ferris Wheel at Christmastime. It dwarfs the Zilker Christmas Tree which I have enjoyed for a great many years. Let the Zilker Christmas Tree be unencumbered by additional stuff.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:02 am  
Thanks for your comments, Clare. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:50 am

👍 1 Votes

Traffic can be a bit of an issue. Any way the city can work with Cap Metro, B Cycle, and other transportation providers to minimize the impact of traffic in the area is helpful. I think the loss of the park for a few days is a concern, but it is outweighed by the benefits. I used to play soccer at Zilker Park before ACL Fest and before the irrigation and other upgrades made possible by C3 and PARD. It used to be a terrible place to play soccer. The grass was in really bad shape, there were huge holes, rocks, stickers, weeds,



## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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etc. The condition of the lawn and the park in general is MUCH better now than it was before the upgrades were made. Hopefully the same will be said for Auditorium Shores after the repairs are done there.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 2:40 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Tedd. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 6:15 pm  
👍 3 Votes

With events at Zilker Park, traffic is a terrible problem.

Barton Springs Road (BSR) is the only South Austin connection to Mopac north of Loop 360. It is a critical commuter arterial for all of 78704 and points west, particularly during the long evening and morning rush hours, but increasingly at all hours, due to the extreme congestion being created on South Lamar by the recent rush of redevelopment. Yet BSR is routinely closed or disabled by special events at Zilker Park during hours when it is most critical to the function of the roadway grid, affecting the entire area from Enfield Road to 360 and from Congress Avenue to Westlake Hills. There is no reasonable alternative route, and the redirection of its traffic onto other out-of-the-way and already congested alternative routes causes those alternatives to break down to gridlock.

ACL closes the road completely for six full days, including two Fridays, inducing congestion that lengthens the commutes of every vehicle passing on Lamar, Cesar Chavez, and Mopac by around 20 minutes, and with impact that extends far beyond those major roadways.

The road remains open for Blues on the Green shows (4-6 per year), but it is effectively closed, as passage through the park in the presence of so many unchannelled pedestrians typically takes half an hour. Even the Umlauf Garden Party has imposed delays of 20-30 minutes, as traffic gets backed up into the Robert E. Lee intersection, inducing gridlock. The Mayor's annual bash, a recent mega-event that, like the Blues on the Green, is apparently not an event according to PARD, similarly shuts everything down.

But by far the worst offender is the Trail of Lights. For over two weeks, the busiest traffic weeks of the year, as people head out to shop and socialize for the holidays rather than staying home after commuting, the Trail not only closes the road completely, but it also subjects the entire district to an incredible crush of attendee car traffic. In the first year after its revival, it repeatedly brought Mopac to a complete halt all the way to Far West Boulevard, well into the evening. The only respite has been from bad weather.

The holiday season is above all else a time to connect with friends

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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and family. But for anyone living in western 78704, inviting anyone over for a visit is unconscionably rude, as it subjects guests to standing in gridlocked traffic, sometimes for hours. We invited a family to our home for a dinner during one Trail night. These are people who are compulsively punctual, yet they arrived well over an hour late, having taken one hour and forty-five minutes to reach Barton Hills from Koenig Lane at Airport. It is no better when it is time to leave, or for neighborhood residents trying to get out to visit others. It is manifestly unfair to hold people living in entire huge areas of the city virtual prisoners in their neighborhoods for the sake of an event like this. And though the intended audience is families, if I lived elsewhere in the city, I would never subject my family to the aggravation of sitting in almost interminable traffic jams to walk through a display of light bulbs. Families with children are much less likely or able to take mass transit to an event than patrons of a young adult music event like ACL.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:52 am  
Thanks for your comments, Larry. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 9:25 pm  
👍 2 Votes

Greatest challenge is that citizens are removed from using and enjoying the parks when Private / for Profit/Exclusive events are allowed to happen in the park. The loss of access, clogged streets, neighborhoods clogged with parked cars because the city does not offer parking are all offensive to neighborhood living.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:52 am  
Thanks for your comments, Peter; do you live near parks that host events? Do you attend events, or do you help produce events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 8:52 am  
👍 2 Votes

I say move ACL somewhere else outside of downtown and do away with trail of lights permanently.

Why is Zilker Park always closed and fenced off?

Why is it closed to the public for four months out of the year? Starting in September until January.? It is a vital resource to the community. As our city grows bigger and denser and more hectic it is increasingly important to have a refuge. A respite place. A place to commune with nature., A place to escape, place to stretch out, a place to enjoy predictably all year long. If you live in the city and you want to be in an open space you would have to drive to Zilker or 10 or 15 miles out of town. It's crazy that we close such a vital resource off to taxpayers, to the community for more then 30% of the time. The Trail of lights is ridiculous: the city has a crew of four guys and takes three weeks to set

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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up and three weeks to year down.

And after the party tomorrow where there's all kinds of trash left over. It's all the wire twists and bottle caps and bolts and woodchips and cigarette butts and plastic thingies that get glossed over. It's important to have a well balanced lifestyle but Zilker Park is way out of balance.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:03 am

Thanks for your comments, Greg. Suggestions as to where to move ACL? Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:42 am

👍 1 Votes

Managing growth of the event. I think that the early days of ACL when the crowd numbers were lower was a more satisfying event. There is this dynamic that bigger is better and I think that it is a slippery slope. I also think that making huge amounts of money hosting these events should not be the driving force. For me ACL has lost its luster because it is catering to a younger crowd and I keep getting older. Ideally I would like the festival to be set up more for listening pleasure than loud and outrageous behavior.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 11:04 am

Thanks for your comments, Steve. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 3:15 pm

👍 1 Votes

Challenge, Challenge is that big money is big influence. The parks already have a clear mandate. It is to provide for a natural, healthy, beautiful environment for the use of the citizens of Austin and friends. It has been compromised by \$\$\$money and the influence that money buys. The challenge is to remove the for profit events, make the parks available to everyone all the time and rehabilitate or remove the infected management.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 3:42 pm

Thanks for your comments, Peter. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 11, 2015 5:39 pm

👍 1 Votes

I'm a daily Zilker Park user, where I take my dogs for a walk. ACL does a lot for Austin and music lovers and Chamber of Commerce types, but very little for either the park or the public. Yes, irrigation upgrades and weed control have certainly helped the park turf. But I suggest that's self-serving on the festival promoter's part, since they benefit from

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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green grass, too. Heavily-used water fountains (especially the one near Rock Island) work intermittently, and the lower bowl used by dogs hasn't worked all year, so, so much for improved plumbing. Several manmade ruts in the turf from last year's festival didn't heal before the park closed in September for this year's festival.

Finally, the park isn't closed for just a few days, it's closed for three weeks prior to ACL, two weeks for ACL and another three weeks or more after ACL...minimum eight WEEKS. Then it's usually closed for six weeks after that to set up and break down the Trail of Lights. That's three and a half MONTHS, not counting days when it's closed for 5k runs and park maintenance and Blues on the Green concerts, etc.


For all the city's supposed dog-friendliness, the two best dog walking areas -- Zilker and Auditorium Shores -- are now profit-making event venues where public access is restricted either by time (Zilker) or area (AShores). And now, development in another area of the city is closing off another prime dog-walking area. (Can you sense my frustration???) I live close enough to the park to hear the concerts, but far enough that it isn't the problem for my neighborhood as it is for others, thank goodness.

In my book, either ACL needs to go back to one weekend or move to a facility set up to handle it. Or alternate years between the two. I suggest that the city keep Zilker park closures to no more than one month TOTAL during the year. Meantime, public-spirited organizations and/or individuals could sponsor park fundraisers to help with maintenance costs. There are lots of ways to raise the money to keep the park in top shape without closing it for private events constantly. It is time to make a change.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 11:02 am  
Thanks for your comments, Laure. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 5:32 pm  
 0 Votes

I've run Neighborhood Events in Northwest Park - 500 folks. Utilities are a problem, only one plug. Limited space for functions needing tents. Trouble getting catering into the park. Gott'a rent your own PortaPotties and hand wash. Coordination with Park Staff is hard, only personal cell phones if you can get their number "Well, where can we put tent stakes?" is hard to get answered. Gott'a insure the City.

I used to fly my balloon at Zilker, now that's got a \$500 fee for a non-commercial launch. And Insurance to cover the City. Round Rock welcomes us.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 12:57 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Joseph. -Moderator

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 12:57 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Joseph. -Moderator

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 11:59 am

👍 0 Votes

I attended ACL Fest for the first time in 2015. The organizers did a good job and the City's shuttle service was well organized and quite comfortable. Regarding the impact of large festivals like this on area parks: I noticed how trampled Zilker Park was during ACL Fest. It was dry and dusty. I would only hope the City assesses a fee that covers the cost of "preparing and repairing" parkland, and event-by-event, depending in large part upon anticipated attendance. Also, I attended the Austin Chronicle Hot Sauce Festival last summer at Fiesta Gardens, and the grounds were completely dry and trampled. With so many people packed into these parks - which is a good thing for the festivals - some emphasis on healthy tree maintenance should be emphasized I suspect. More shade = happier festival goers. Regarding the grass and dust reduction - that is a tough one that must leave to the experts. Charge 'em, smiles.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 12:58 pm

Thanks for your comments, Carolyn. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 12:04 pm

👍 1 Votes

It is inappropriate to have a private, for-profit event take over Zilker Park for that length of time, displacing not only individuals who use the trails and parks but especially the children who use the soccer fields. These parks are primarily for use by the citizens of Austin, and ACL blocks that use for too many weeks.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 1:01 pm

Thanks for your comments, Marian. Would you offer a suggestion for how much time parks should be used for major events that prohibit other uses of the park? -Moderator

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 1:00 pm

Thanks for your comments, Marian. Would you offer a suggestion for how much time parks should be used for major events that prohibit other uses of the park? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 2:16 pm

👍 0 Votes

Uncertainty in the permitting process is a big issue. Producers of these events spend MILLIONS of dollars improving City infrastructure (thank you for the lawns C3) to be met with ever shifting rules and requirements. Yes, ACL is hard on the grass, but folks seem to have forgotten that there was no grass just a field full of burs before C3 installed sprinkler systems, top soil and sod. I think the City has found a good balance between using the parks for special events and having them be open for the public.

### Response:

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 3:15 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Mary. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 5:15 pm  
👍 1 Votes

ACL has become a menace. It takes over Zilker park for more than three weeks and the park cannot reopen for weeks afterward.

The event should be moved out to the formula one racetrack where it will not be so disruptive to our neighborhoods and our park.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:13 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Robert. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 18, 2015 4:13 pm  
👍 0 Votes

I agree with the comments about getting ACL out of Zilker. The park is out of commission for 3 months during the best time of the year between ACL and Festival of Lights. I used to be OK with ACL, and have come to hate it. When ACL was expanded to two weekends, I came to totally oppose ACL being at Zilker. They are certainly too big for their britches. Festival of Lights takes weeks to set up and take down. Cars should be prohibited at ALL TIMES from going through the park during Festival of Lights. In terms of Auditorium Shores, my suggestion is the city should just pave it over and forget it as a park, as about every 3rd weekend the park is shut down for some event that shuts down the park for days and days, and of course trashes it. Events need an events venue, not a park.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 19, 2015 12:14 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Alton. Do have suggestions for appropriate venues?  
-Moderator

## EVENT BENEFITS

🗨️ 51 Answers · 26 Replies

As you answer this and all questions, please share with us your perspective as an event attendee, someone who lives near parks that host events, part of an event production team, or some combination of the three.

&nbsp;

&nbsp;

What would you say is the most significant benefit from events on Austin parkland (like ACL)?

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:37 pm  
👍 2 Votes

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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It brings neighbors together and builds fellowship. It helps a community develop a shared sense of identity. I'm a combination of all 3.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:36 am

Thanks for your comments, Chad. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:51 pm

👍 2 Votes

Events on park grounds add to the richness of things to do in Austin. Part of living in any community is access to and enjoyment of, fun or personally rewarding events. As someone who's sat on the grounds during ACL and enjoyed the music and six months later stretched out on a blanket under a sky full of kites at the Kite Festival, parks and a variety of events in the parks is fantastic.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:37 am

Thanks for your comments, Les. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:52 pm

👍 0 Votes

The benefits are pretty obvious. We get to go to the park and have fun. I attend park events, I have hosted park events and have produced park events. All the events are meant to provide fun. As a city, we get recognition for providing a place for the fun.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:41 am

Thanks for your comments, Gary. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 3:55 pm

👍 2 Votes

They bring money into the city.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:42 am

Thanks for your comments, Heather. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:15 pm

👍 0 Votes

Although I rarely attend events in the parks, I know that they add to the richness of life in Austin. Several of them also bring visitors (and \$) to Austin, as well as serving to

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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attract new businesses.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:42 am  
Thanks for your comments, Jeanne. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:22 pm

👍 3 Votes

money, new residents and something to be proud of- definitely a perk of living in this fine city. Humans have a hard time understanding their impact though- and a better, unbiased look at the impacts would be nice so we can counter balance. ACL is great but two separate weekends with 5 days in between is a lot to contend with being we only really have ONE PARK in Austin. ONE PARK. October is the best month for that park... and then you turn it over to Trail of Lights soon after. TOL is a joke and should certainly be carved down to 5 days total and a higher admittance. Some traditions need to die to be replaced by more efficient, healthier and relevant events. Keep em coming but lets get smarter about it.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:44 am  
Thanks for your comments, Nicholas. - Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:30 pm

👍 0 Votes

Benefits are offering people new talents exposure to present and play for large audiences.... which is what I tend to think Austin as being... a place where the greats began..... I have seen so many early rising musical wonders get their breaks and places to sing, play and rick right here in town. Austin is a creative mecca, and should remain so without stripping away at what we have for the people here. Parkland to enjoy just as residents.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:45 am  
Thanks for your comments, Carolyn. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 02, 2015 4:35 pm

👍 3 Votes

you asked how the parks benefit. THEY DON'T.  
A small group of people make money while everyone else is inconvenienced.

### Response:



## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:46 am  
Thanks for your comments, Sheila. - Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 04, 2015 2:22 pm  
👍 0 Votes

They create visibility, encourage tourism and therefore money into the city. Living near Zilker park, I used to enjoy ACL until the organizers were allowed to admit too many people and sequester the park and Barton Springs road for too many days.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:48 am  
Thanks for your comments, Katy. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 05, 2015 6:34 pm  
👍 2 Votes

I enjoy attending the Jazz Festival in New Orleans. The event is held at a horse racing track and there is ample space for guests and vendors. ACL like Austin has changed. We need to look at what other cities do that have similar events. I have live in the Barton Hills neighborhood for 28 years and have seen the changes that events like ACL, Trail of Lights, Blues on the Green and the Kite fest have gone through and those changes in my neighborhood too. It is time to move major events to a venue that can better handle it. Zilker Park was not designed nor intended to hold 100,000 plus people at an event. There are other options like the Circuit of America, Travis County Expo Center, or the city could take a larger park land space and designate it for these larger events. It is getting old having the guests that attend these events invading my neighborhood and having to accommodate them. What other neighborhood is subjected to this?

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 9:48 am  
👍 0 Votes

Thanks for your comments, Gail. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 07, 2015 10:45 am  
👍 1 Votes

Well, I met my wife at ACL Festival, so that's been the biggest benefit to me personally! I think festivals and events like ACL Fest and Fun Fun Fun Fest provide a great activity for Austin residents and tourists. I've had friends and family visit during both of those festivals and we had a great time and made some great memories. They are an important part of what makes Austin a great place to live. I also think they provide an important economic benefit for the city in terms of tax revenue and for local businesses.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 2:39 pm  
Thanks for your comment, Tedd. -Moderator

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 6:14 pm

👍 1 Votes

Events such as ACL and Blues on the Green, keep Austin's music culture alive. Having the events at Zilker Park brings a lot of life to the downtown area. I love seeing people bike and walk. I wish the buses would run later instead of just having a shuttle drop people off at Republic park. We need to improve public transportation and then people won't be forced to park as close as possible, disrupting the neighborhoods closest to the park. Maybe even setting up shuttle services from different sides of town, like a park and ride or the same system you see for the F1 race.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:47 am

Thanks for your comments, AV. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 6:32 pm

👍 1 Votes

ACL and Blues on the Green do contribute to the Austin music scene. Blues provides a chance to see good bands for free and at a decent hour, which is a nice thing. But nothing about those events requires them to be tied to Zilker Park, where they cause such severe problems (traffic, loss of recreational use of the park, noise and neighborhood disruption).

ACL in particular has been a model of citizenship by investing in Austin's parks and providing opportunities for other fundraising. But none of that need be tied to Zilker Park.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:47 am

Thanks for your comments, Larry. Do you have specific suggestions as to what other venues would be suitable for these events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 08, 2015 9:21 pm

👍 3 Votes

There is no benefit to having exclusive events that only those that can afford it can attend. The PARKs are not the place for private corporations to make money. Events that are free and open to all are appropriate to the parks. In that light, community identity, sharing of ideas and public interaction are the benefits.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:48 am

Thanks for your comments, Peter. What alternative venues would you suggest for paid events currently at the parks? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 8:58 am

👍 0 Votes

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The only benefit I see from that thing ACL at Zilker Park is that the lawn is nicely maintain. Full of tiny little trash pieces but well-maintained. There's almost as much little trash pieces as there is grass. But the schedule of maintenance and irrigation system is second to none. Now if we can only have a vacuum cleaner to pick up all the trash. It would be absolutely perfect lawn.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:51 am

Thanks for your comments, Greg. Are you primarily an event attendee, or do you also live near a park that hosts events or do you help put on events? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:35 am

👍 0 Votes

Being able to share the park with so many people that would otherwise not enjoy this beautiful space is important in the sense that we all pay for the park but only a small percentage actually use it. All of the activities that are held at Zilker Park are part of that experience.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 09, 2015 10:51 am

Thanks, Steve; are you primarily an event attendee, a resident near parks with events, or an event producer? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 10, 2015 9:06 pm

👍 2 Votes

Why is this question geared towards people who actively participate in or live near the events? What about the rest of us in the city who pay for these parks, and then are unable to use them on any given weekend because of this or that event? Furthermore, the music events don't promote Austin's music culture. There's rarely a local band to be seen on the stage. These events promote the music business at large, which has always had very little to do with Austin's music scene.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 13, 2015 9:31 am

Hi, Frances--sorry for the confusion. This question is meant for any member of the public, rather than only those who live near parks with events. Can you identify any benefits associated with these events? If not, please see the other pages within this topic to post comments. Thanks. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 14, 2015 5:19 pm

👍 0 Votes

Major events like ACL disrupt much of the City while benefiting tourists from places like Dallas. The music gets to my house and I'm 5 miles away.

### Response:

## Events at Austin's Parks

Closed Dec 01, 2015 · Discussion · 44 Participants · 3 Topics · 180 Answers · 104 Replies · 66 Votes

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 12:54 pm  
For clarification, are you saying the most significant benefit from events on Austin parkland is economic from the tourism it attracts? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 2:00 pm  
👍 1 Votes

As a long time Austin resident and neighbor to Zillker Park--I am in the Barton Heights/Zilker Neighborhood-- I feel like I have to escape the hords of people walking through the neighborhood as well as the traffic and parking problems are horrendous. The signs are not obeyed. I do not like that we have no access to most of Zilker for a month during the nicest time of year. I believe the crown jewel of Austin should not be for RENT for private music festival bike races etc. Zilker park is for all Austinites.....

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 3:16 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Marcia; do you have suggestions as to what alternatives there might be? -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 2:09 pm  
👍 1 Votes

I am a third generation Austinite, and a long term resident of the Zilker Neighborhood. I am a HUGE fan of Austin City Limits. I think it is a very well run event and I'm so glad to have it in the neighborhood. I actually find the no-parking signs and road blocks put up for the event to be MORE irritating the problem they are trying to solve. It brings me great joy to see our parks being enjoyed by so many people in such a short space of time. We are so lucky to have such great outdoor spaces and I love to see them getting utilized!!

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 3:15 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Mary. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 2:30 pm  
👍 2 Votes

Public events definitely increase awareness of Austin in the world at large. I have enjoyed many events at Zilker Park, including ACL, Zilker Hillside Theater, Blues on the Green, Kite Festival, etc. I also live in the Zilker neighborhood. Though I love these events, it's time to reassess the use of the park for private profit festivals and/or not-so-subtle advertising blitzes that make up the Trail of Lights. It's also time to pull back from the policy that allows a public park to be completely or partially fenced off for any more than one weekend. Zilker Park, and other parks in Austin, should remain open to the public (mostly) year-round. No single entity should be able to fence off major areas of our parks for months at a time. Allowing ACL to take control of the park for months -- literally a month of setup and festival going, then several months waiting for the grass to grow... The combined ACL/Trail of Lights closes off the great lawn of Zilker, a city gem, for \*\*3 months\*\*, during the best weather of the year. What income can possibly offset the loss of our park, and all the repeated damage to the grounds caused

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by hundreds of thousands, for 25% of the year? This is far too much overuse in a sensitive area. I'm fine with a 1-weekend festival, and maybe 5 days on either side of that for setup and takedown. If a profit-making festival like ACL cannot fit into those parameters, then it has obviously gotten too big for the park, and it needs to be held somewhere else. Ideas: Circuit of Americas, The Backyard, etc. Don't get me wrong: I love ACL and enjoy the many visitors to Austin even when my neighborhood is full of tourists. But shutting down and essentially destroying the beauty of a prized central park for months every year is not my idea of appropriate use. Sincerely, Phil

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 3:14 pm  
Phil, thanks for your comments. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 15, 2015 10:24 pm  
👍 2 Votes

If referring to ACL, the benefits seem to extend largely to the guests, those promoting the event, and the performers. The population of Austin has made other venues in Zilker Park untenable (kite festival, trail of lights), diminishing the success and enjoyment of these events, thereby lacking obvious benefits. Equally, our traffic problems are exponentially worse every time a large event is held in the park as Barton Springs Rd. is a major thoroughfare, despite it's meager size. Certainly a centrally located park has numerous opportunities to benefit a city, but we've exceeded the capacity of Zilker. Perhaps having kite, lights and other festivals in numerous parks throughout the city at the same time would actually bring neighborhoods together, rather than cramming an entire city in one spot, bottle-necking traffic and parking, tying all the kites in one big knot and losing small children in dark crowds.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 2:15 pm  
Thanks for your comments, A.R. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 12:47 pm  
👍 2 Votes

I strongly oppose the use of city parks for private entertainment events like ACL. As a nearby resident and daily, year-round swimmer at Barton Springs, I regret the loss of availability of our public lands. The crowds have terrible effects on the grounds and destroy the lawns and hurt the heritage trees and all the natural life that should be cultivated here. The traffic and NOISE are awful impositions on the neighborhood. ACL should be moved out to the F1 track or the Tony Burger Center or to City Park. It has no place in our residential neighborhood.

Worst part is that PARD pretends that this is a boon to Austin and to Zilker Park. The not-for-profit Austin Parks Foundation gets the \$4.5 million a year that ACP pays to the city and it does not go to Zilker Park as it should. That money should be used for ongoing maintenance, training and better pay for lifeguards and staff, keeping both entrances of the pool open 24x7, and for protecting the upstream aquifer. IT should not be used to initiate new construction projects in the park.

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October and November are the most lovely times in the park. The ACL fest and the secular Trail of Lights festival prevent the public from using it and contribute to automotive pollution. Keep the park open to the public and to us voting and tax-paying residents. Do not privatize the park.

### Response:

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 2:07 pm  
Thanks for your comments, Karen. -Moderator

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· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 2:02 pm

👍 1 Votes

Benefit to who?

I suppose the most significant general benefit to Austin for popular events like ACL is that they add to the vitality and cultural relevancy of the region. High profile events that draw visitors from the Silicon Valley, etc., add to the "buzz" and reputation of Austin as a music town and put it on the map as place worth considering to live, work, vacation, etc.

All other benefits are derived primarily by special interests; the promoter, homeowners who rent out at \$1000K per night, the short term festival rental brokers (AirBnb, HomeAway, Den, etc), vendors at the event, and just generally the economic activity (money) generated by attendees staying in hotels and eating at restaurants, taxes collected by the city, etc.

None of these "benefits" have anything to do with ACL being held at Zilker, unless you think people would stop coming if it were held elsewhere in Austin more suitable to the 60K+ crowds, or the promoter cancels the event if it cannot be held in Zilker. It's too much of a cash cow, so that wouldn't happen.

I'm actually not sure how it benefits the ACL experience to be held in Zilker. Access is a problem. There is no parking. Extensive fencing must be employed. Most shade trees are enclosed in the VIP "private" areas for the wealthy or used by food vendors, and not accessible to the general public. The grass is dead by day 3 (or a mud pit if it rains), and the density of the crowd poses a huge risk. No contingency plans for rained out events, as happened in 2013. Most folks attending the event are partying heavily and don't seem to mind or think it is part of the fun...There are far better venues in Austin to view fantastic musicians up close any day of the week as opposed to the ACL experience.

Benefit to the park? Other than whatever money Austin Park Service makes off the deal to repair the damage done, there is utterly no benefit to the trashing of Zilker Park.

Benefit to me as a homeowner whose front door is less than .3 miles from the entrance? No benefit whatsoever, unless you consider a forced exodus from my home once a year a benefit. Having to show identification to a police officer so I am allowed home after running my errands. Living around sound checks and intrusive lighting in our living room into the night during set up and break down of event stages, around street closures and being cut off from access to Mopac, the neighbors trying to "sell" all the parking on our street, etc. The opposite of someone's comment of "bringing neighbors together and building community", in fact, it pits pro ACL neighbors (the vocal minority) against the majority of neighbors who would prefer the event be held in appropriate venue.

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Parks are NOT venues to be closed for special interests.

**Response:**

· Citizen · (Postal Code: unknown) · Oct 16, 2015 2:07 pm  
Thanks for your feedback, Carla. -Moderator