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## \$6M Zilker Clubhouse rehab to address facility deterioration, vandalism incidents



By **Ben Thompson** | 10:21 AM May 19, 2026 CDT  
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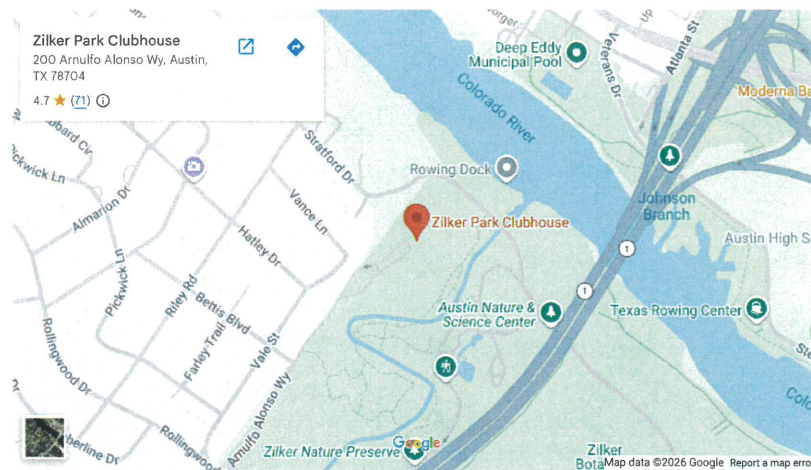
The historic Zilker Clubhouse is undergoing a \$6 million project for facility improvements and security upgrades. (Courtesy city of Austin)



Austin officials will spend \$6 million to renovate the [Charles Page Zilker Clubhouse](#). Years of deterioration and multiple recent break-in incidents have damaged the historic structure.

### What's happening

The nearly 100-year-old clubhouse, located in the Zilker Nature Preserve west of MoPac, is situated at Zilker Park's highest point and has traditionally served as an event venue.



The property requires multiple maintenance updates including a roof and lighting replacement; restoration of features like windows, doors and ironwork; parking improvements; accessibility upgrades and the installation of heating and air conditioning systems. Repair needs were also identified at Lookout Point, situated nearby in the preserve.

A city-backed [restoration project](#) came together years ago after community outreach, but never advanced. After the project was rebid in 2025, Austin Parks and Recreation is now readying for construction on the clubhouse later this year. That work will address maintenance concerns and add new deck and lawn areas.



"This project will benefit the community by retaining the site as an affordable rental venue, while enhancing the flexibility of the site to hold many types of group events," city staff reported.

City Council authorized a \$6.07 million contract for the work with Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, the highest scorer in a [public solicitation](#). The project is funded with historic preservation dollars from Austin's hotel occupancy tax revenue and is expected to be completed next year.

### A closer look

While the clubhouse rehabilitation will address longstanding structural needs, the project is also aimed at deterring vandalism, which has become a frequent problem for the historic site.



A series of recent break-ins caused "significant damage" to the building and surrounding features, Parks Director Jesús Aguirre said in a [memo](#). Those incidents prompted the city to close and board up the facility last year and extend security patrols to the property.

The upcoming project will also add security enhancements for the clubhouse and surrounding property "to deter future vandalism and reduce the need for continued security expenditures," city staff said. That'll include a security system with cameras and alarms, a non-climbable steel fence around the site perimeter and a new driveway gate. Park rangers will also continue to patrol the area after construction is complete.



The city closed the Zilker Clubhouse area and increased security around the facility after recent break-ins and vandalism. (Ben Thompson/Community Impact)

### Offering input

Council member Paige Ellis, who represents much of Zilker Park, including the preserve and clubhouse area, said she's excited to see the long-awaited improvements and safety upgrades.

"This is a very important moment, not only for protecting the history of the Zilker Preserve and the Zilker Clubhouse, but making it safer and more accessible to all," she said May 7. "We've had a lot of complaints over the years of folks going there after hours and breaking into vehicles that are owned by the city, and a couple other alarming situations that have happened out there."



Ellis also thanked Zilker-area residents for alerting the city about issues at the park, which she said will "help make sure that the Zilker Clubhouse continues to shine for decades to come."

By **Ben Thompson** Government Reporter

Ben joined Community Impact in January 2019 after graduating with a degree in journalism from Northeastern University in Boston. He spent more than two years reporting on Montgomery County and The Woodlands area before moving to Austin in 2021 to cover City Hall and other news throughout the city. Contact Ben with questions, tips or feedback at [bthompson@communityimpact.com](mailto:bthompson@communityimpact.com), and follow him on X, formerly known as Twitter, [@BThompson\\_CI](https://twitter.com/BThompson_CI).

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