

## DESIGN OPTION NARRATIVES: Dougherty Arts Center at Butler Shores Park

In May 2019, City Council directed PARD to proceed with preliminary design for the new Dougherty Arts Center on Butler Shores Park, but also asked that this analysis include the following criteria:

- **2019 Planning Commission recommendations**, including incorporation of a parking and transportation demand management strategy for the entire arts complex
- **2019 Design Commission recommendations**, including the provision of access to the site from both Toomey Rd. and Riverside Dr. and integration of a district parking structure
- **The possible relocation or reconstruction of the existing PARD Main Office building** to allow for adjustments to the location of the DAC and to reduce traffic impact on Toomey Rd.
- **The location of a parking structure away from Toomey Rd.**, or consolidation of parking with others in the area
- **Exploring revenue-financed, underground parking** and
- Mechanisms by which the City could engage **philanthropic interest in the DAC project**

In response, and through a robust series of community engagement meetings in Fall 2020 through Spring 2021, the project team developed four (4) different scenarios which address all the topics above differently. Additionally, the team coordinated with the developer for the adjacent 218 S. Lamar PUD to secure 30 spaces for PARD/DAC use as well as 50 discounted visitor spaces on a daily basis. It should be noted that, in addition to above, the following criteria and constraints emerged as primary drivers of the design options:

- Eligibility of the existing PARD Main Office for listing on National Register of Historic Places
- Preservation of existing heritage trees
- The DAC's relationship to the existing ZACH building & the existing ZACH ground lease boundary
- Feasibility of underground parking locations
- Car pick-up and drop-off to support youth programs
- Vehicle load-in areas for theater programs
- Activation of parkland and enhancement of existing trail access
- The civic presence and identity of the DAC, a vital arts institution for Austin's creative culture
- The need for back-of-house space, including a covered kiln yard for ceramics functions
- Opportunities for incorporation of public art with the AIPP Program
- Allowance for possible expansion, should additional funding become available

### OPTION 1A –

#### NEW DAC BUILDING TO THE SOUTH; PARD MAIN OFFICE REMAINS AT ITS CURRENT LOCATION

##### **Brief Description:**

Option 1A locates the DAC building to the south of PARD Main Office. This arrangement will provide accessible drop-offs along both Riverside Dr. and the eastern portion of Toomey Rd. The PARD Main Office remains at its current location providing the opportunity for future renovation and expansion, including reorienting the main entrance to the south. The surface parking lots along Toomey Rd. remain. The lots will be enhanced with landscaping and modified to incorporate a drop-off for the DAC youth programs. Additional parking for the new DAC will be in an underground garage beneath the existing ZACH parking lot. PARD, DAC, and ZACH will all utilize this consolidated parking and drop-off. The surface of the existing ZACH lot would be improved to serve as a civic plaza. A portion of the existing Riverside right-of-way is proposed to be vacated and restored to green park space.

##### **Design Drivers:**

This option proposes a very compact DAC, tucked into the SE corner of the site to preserve parkland and keep traffic contained to the east. All the DAC programs are connected by one shared lobby. This creates easy access

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and security while providing a coherent sense of identity to the organization. The lobby is the “living room” where the various DAC programs and the public come together.

The main approach to the building is along a landscaped Arts Promenade that connects DAC, ZACH, PARD, and the park. The Gallery is a taller vertical structure that acts as a spatial complement to the ZACH fly tower and a beacon for DAC at the terminus of the Arts Promenade. It also acts as a transition between the urban east side of the site and the park to the west.

### Risks:

The compact nature of this layout introduces spatial challenges. The DAC is located very close to the existing ZACH buildings along Toomey Rd., and ZACH’s portable building will be removed to allow access for the primary drop-off lane. The program space for the ZACH portable would need to be accommodated, perhaps in a shared space within the new DAC. Additionally, the underground garage sits within the ZACH lease boundary. Underground utility infrastructure traverses this area which would need to be relocated. The garage may require the partial vacation of the Riverside Dr. right-of-way. Expansion is possible; however, the building is most constrained for significant future growth in this scenario. One heritage oak to the S. of PARD Main would be impacted under this scenario.

### Parking:

The preferred parking scheme for option 1A is a centralized, underground garage serving DAC, ZACH, PARD, and the public at the location of the existing ZACH parking lot. The underground structure would need to be three (3) levels in this location to meet demand. The current ZACH lot is the most centralized location for DAC, ZACH, PARD, and trail programs. This would maximize the amount of land returned to open space while dividing DAC traffic along both Toomey Rd. and Riverside Dr. Existing surface parking along Toomey road would remain available for the Little League and public while also supporting the DAC school drop off and studio load-in/out function.

## **OPTION 1B –**

### **NEW DAC BUILDING TO THE WEST; PARD MAIN OFFICE REMAINS AT ITS CURRENT LOCATION**

#### **Brief Description:**

Option 1B locates the DAC building in the northwestern portion of the site, accessible from an extension of Riverside Dr. and from a service lane that extends from the existing ball field service road off of Toomey Rd. PARD Main Office remains at its current location with the opportunity for renovation and expansion. The parking lots along Toomey Rd. remain, though enhanced with landscaping and an access ramp to the centralized parking located underground to the south of PARD. The existing surface parking lot west of PARD Main Office is demolished and PARD parking is consolidated in the new underground garage. The existing ZACH lot is landscaped as a public plaza and ZACH parking is incorporated into the underground garage.

#### **Design Drivers:**

This option proposes a pavilion-like DAC in a park setting with close access to the hike and bike trail. All the DAC programs are connected by one shared lobby. This creates easy access and a natural opportunity to strengthen connectivity to the trail. The location also provides a coherent sense of identity and a visible presence. The lobby is the “living room” where the various DAC programs and the public come together.

The building acts as a visible terminus to Riverside Dr., giving DAC a clear and civic identity. By keeping the building relatively compact, much open park space is retained on the southern portion of the site. Many of the cottonwood trees around the ball fields are retained in this option. The underground parking and associated access stairs provide opportunities for interactive public art within the park and/or the potential for a new public restroom to support the park use.

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### Risks:

This option situates the building most closely to the trail and would need to respond with appropriate an architectural scale and materiality to integrate with the site's natural edge. Additionally, stormwater management strategies will be necessary to avoid impacting the quality of the trail. The building placement in this option poses the least risk to ZACH's ongoing operations, locating nearly all site improvements outside of their lease boundary. However, ZACH's portable building will need to be relocated to allow access for the primary drop-off lane. There are no risks to the heritage trees in this scheme.

### Parking:

The preferred parking scheme for option 1B is a centralized, underground garage serving DAC, ZACH, PARD, and the park/general public to the south of the PARD Main Office. This location is central to all three programs, though further from both DAC and ZACH than the parking option proposed in 1A. Locating the parking underground will allow for a large area of landscaped park on top to form continuous green space. Traffic will be divided between Riverside Dr. and Toomey Rd., with in/out access ramps to each.

## **OPTION 2 –**

### **NEW DAC BUILDING AT SITE OF DEMOLISHED PARD BUILDING; NEW PARD MAIN OFFICE BUILDING ALONG TOOMEY ROAD**

#### **Brief Description:**

Option 2 locates the DAC building in the northeastern quadrant of the site, at the location of the current PARD Main Office. The original 1959 PARD building is proposed to be demolished under this scenario, which allows for a less-constrained DAC gallery to sit within the heritage oak trees. New construction for DAC program would occur primarily to the south and west of the PARD building footprint, avoiding most other heritage oaks. As in option 1A, the existing PARD lot is consolidated with the ZACH parking and additional parking for the new DAC in an underground garage beneath the existing ZACH parking lot. PARD, DAC, and ZACH can all utilize this central, shared parking and drop-off. The surface of the existing ZACH lot will be landscaped as additional public green space. The parking lots along Toomey Rd. remain, but are modified to incorporate a drop-off for the DAC youth programs and PARD. A new PARD Main Office, two to three stories in height, is constructed along Toomey Rd providing a campus-like feel.

#### **Design Drivers:**

This option creates a centralized arts plaza at the existing ZACH parking lot, where ZACH, DAC, and trail all come together. This DAC/ZACH plaza becomes the western bookend of a civic arts district that stretches east along the river to Auditorium Shores. As in Option 1A, a portion of the existing Riverside Dr. ROW will be vacated in order to maximize open green space along the north side of the site.

In this option, DAC is constructed around a series of interconnected courtyards sitting with the heritage oaks. The indoor/outdoor hall runs along the southern end of the largest courtyard, while smaller courtyards and green spaces branch off from the gallery, lobby, school, and studios.

### Risks:

The primary risk to this scheme is that it entertains multiple unfunded requests: the demolition of the existing PARD Main Office and construction of a new office building on site. Proceeding with this scenario would require a funding commitment for PARD's new office and consideration of temporary relocation of staff during construction. Additionally, while there are two proposed options for the structured parking, the preferred scenario replicates the solution in Option 1A within the ZACH lease boundary and underneath the Riverside Dr. ROW. As in Option 1A,

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one heritage oak to the S. of PARD Main would be impacted under this scenario. Additionally, ZACH's portable building is proposed to be removed to allow access into the primary drop-off. Finally, it also proposes that the historically eligible PARD Main Office is demolished to better situate the new DAC between heritage trees. However, it would be possible to also preserve the 1959 portion of the PARD Main Office as shown in Option 3.

### Parking:

The preferred parking scheme for option 2 is a centralized, underground garage serving DAC, ZACH, PARD, and the public at the location of the existing ZACH parking lot. This area is the most centralized location for DAC, ZACH, PARD, and other district uses, and would maximize the amount of land returned to landscaping. This location divides DAC traffic along both Toomey and Riverside while avoiding an extension of Riverside that connects to Toomey. Existing surface parking along Toomey road would remain available for the Little League and public while also supporting the DAC school drop off and studio load-in/out function.

If it is not feasible to create a centralized garage for all three programs at the ZACH lot, Option 2 could also utilize an underground garage underneath the new DAC building, accessed from Toomey road. This location would separate ZACH parking from DAC/PARD parking, and would also push the majority of DAC traffic on to Toomey Rd.

## OPTION 3 –

### **NEW DAC BUILDING AT SITE OF PARTIALLY DEMOLISHED, PARTIALLY RENOVATED PARD BUILDING; PARD MAIN OFFICE MOVED OFF SITE**

#### **Brief Description:**

Option 3 assumes that the PARD Main Office is relocated off site. The original 1959 PARD building is retained but incorporated into the DAC building program. Apart from this, Option 3 is nearly identical to Option 2.

#### **Design Drivers:**

The intention of this scheme was to show what might be possible with the removal of a key programmatic element shown in the other options: the PARD Main Office. Due to its absence, the DAC school drop off is given a slightly more generous spatial arrangement along the Toomey Rd. right of way. The adaptive reuse of the 1959 PARD Building provides the opportunity for additional program space. Apart from this, Option 3 is nearly identical to Option 2.

#### **Risks:**

The primary risk to Option 3 is that PARD vacates the site at Butler Shores with no site identified for a suitable replacement. The central office location and visible site is an important aspect of the Parks Department's identity and cultural significance in Austin. The building is the first headquarters constructed for the department in the City, and it is located next to the trail, Zilker Park and Auditorium Shores. It is also in close proximity to City Hall and other critical administrative functions that support its operation. As such, this is PARD's least preferred scenario. In addition, the partial demolition and adaptive reuse of the 1959 PARD Main Office is an unfunded component of the project. As in Option 1A & 2, one heritage oak to the S. of PARD Main would be impacted under this scenario and ZACH's portable building is proposed to be removed to allow access into the primary drop-off.

#### **Parking:**

Due to PARD Main Office relocation off site, there would be slightly less onsite parking required under this scheme than in the other options. Additionally, with the removal of this office building any associated traffic accessing the site from Toomey Rd. would also be removed. Apart from this, Option 3 is nearly identical to Option 2.