



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 25-1428, **Agenda Item #:** 137.

7/24/2025

Posting Language

Conduct a public hearing and consider a resolution authorizing and directing the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department to act on the City's behalf and work with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) in connection with the Local Park Grant Program and to apply for a Local Park Grant of up to \$1,500,000, to be partially matched by the City, to fund the construction of amenities in Palm Park. Funding: Funding of up to \$1,500,000 is available from the TPWD's Local Park Grant Program. A City funding match of \$1,500,000 is required and is available through the Waller Creek Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone.

Lead Department

Parks and Recreation Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding is available through the Waller Creek Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) to meet the City's matching requirement of \$1,500,000.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

Palm Park, located at 200 N. IH-35 in downtown Austin, is the site of the historically significant Palm School and other historic buildings. The park and school are deeply significant to the East Austin community and a substantial public engagement campaign helped to develop a community-informed vision plan, including restoration of the historic shelter house, a new all-ages play structure, shaded seating and gathering places for the community, new shade trees and native landscaping, and a rain garden to manage storm water coming from off site (collectively, the Park Improvements). However, the Waller Creek TIRZ lacks sufficient funds to fully implement the plan and without additional funds, the community's vision for the park will remain unfulfilled.

TPWD's Local Park Grant Program consists of five individual programs that assist local units of government with the acquisition and/or development of public recreation areas and facilities throughout the State of Texas. All grant-assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The grant program provides 50 percent matching grants on a reimbursement basis to eligible applicants.

If awarded, the \$1,500,000 Local Park Grant will fund 50 percent of the anticipated cost to construct the Park Improvements, with PARD's required match of \$1,500,000 to be funded through the Waller Creek TIRZ.

According to guidelines set forth by TPWD in its grant application process, PARD must seek City Council authorization to apply for a Local Park Grant. The grant application requires the City to hold a public hearing that complies with the Texas Open Meeting Act, including the opportunity for public comment, before the application can be submitted to TPWD. At this hearing, the governing body must pass the resolution authorizing application submission and authorizing the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department to act

on the City's behalf and work with TPWD for purposes of the Local Parks grant program. This Resolution is posted on the City Council's non-consent agenda to ensure that the requirements for a hearing and an opportunity for public comment are satisfied. As required by TPWD, PARD will submit an application by August 1, 2025.