

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, park access is a public good, and walkable park access is a public great; and

WHEREAS, a tiny gap of approximately 250 feet separates the City's Circle C Metropolitan Park from the Hielscher Tract Greenbelt and thousands of Circle C homes; and

WHEREAS, a heavily used, informal trail through private property has historically bridged this gap but was recently closed off by the property owner, thereby restricting a key non-vehicular access route to a City of Austin metropolitan park; and

WHEREAS, without this short, shaded trail connection, neighbors must travel much farther, along sunny, high-traffic Escarpment Boulevard, to access Circle C Metropolitan Park; and

WHEREAS, people are more likely to choose to drive, rather than walk or bike, when required to travel longer distances with less shade and more traffic exposure; and

WHEREAS, Circle C Metropolitan Park and the surrounding area are in the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone; and

WHEREAS, reducing vehicle miles traveled to, from, and around Circle C Metropolitan Park helps protect the water quality of Edwards Aquifer and Barton Springs; and

WHEREAS, fortunately, the City owns 646 acres of water quality protection land between the Circle C Metropolitan Park and the Hielscher Tract Greenbelt, known as the Dr. Mary Gay Maxwell Tract (the "Maxwell Tract"); and

25 **WHEREAS**, the Maxwell Tract is managed by Austin Water and features
26 the 5-mile Maxwell Trail for hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use; and

27 **WHEREAS**, Austin Water staff estimates that creating a short connector
28 trail between Circle C Metropolitan Park and the Hielscher Tract Greenbelt would
29 require less than one acre of the Maxwell Tract's 646 acres; and

30 **WHEREAS**, strategic, short, public micro-trails for pedestrians and cyclists
31 restore the connective mobility tissue within suburban land use patterns, reduce car
32 dependence, strengthen public health, and improve climate, air, and water quality;
33 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

34 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

35 The City Manager is directed to create a nature trail to connect the Circle C
36 Metropolitan Park to the Hielscher Tract Greenbelt trail through the adjacent City-
37 owned land.

38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

39 The City Manager shall ensure that the connector trail project includes
40 fencing, gates, signage, waste receptacles, and any other associated improvements
41 needed to protect water quality, the City-owned land, and nearby private property.

42 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

43 The City Manager shall ensure that the connector trail alignment avoids trees
44 and karst features and, to the extent practicable, minimizes the acreage of City-
45 owned land required to complete the connection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall explore implementing a land swap between Austin Parks and Recreation and Austin Water to prevent loss of water quality protection land acreage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall engage with community partners, such as the Austin Ridge Riders and the Hill Country Conservancy, to explore opportunities to collaborate on the development, operation, and maintenance of the connector trail.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall identify appropriate funding for the connector trail within the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget, with a priority on non-General Fund sources, such as parkland dedication fees, Austin Water funds, or Transportation and Public Works funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall provide an update on the implementation of this direction by memorandum to Mayor and Council within 90 days.

ADOPTED: _____, 2026

ATTEST: _____
Erika Brady
City Clerk