

24 **WHEREAS**, PARD has reported that the cost of developing or replacing a
25 neighborhood park as of fiscal year 2023 exceeds \$1.4 million per park; and

26 **WHEREAS**, the *Our Parks, Our Future Long-Range Plan* states that “In
27 considering new park development projects, it is essential to include operational
28 costs, including staff, equipment, and materials, as part of the overall ‘total cost of
29 ownership’” and that “Together, capital investment, operations and maintenance,
30 and lifecycle replacement represent the total cost of ownership of a parks system”;
31 and

32 **WHEREAS**, cities like Minneapolis, Minnesota, have had great success in
33 holistically managing their parklands from a regional perspective, creating a taxing
34 authority and governing body responsible for the management, acquisition, and
35 upkeep of its regional park system; and

36 **WHEREAS**, PARD relies on the General Fund to support its vast system of
37 parks, recreation centers, museums, gardens, programming, facilities, and general
38 operating needs; and

39 **WHEREAS**, the General Fund is a limited resource that also supports other
40 critical City services such as police, fire, emergency medical services, public
41 health, libraries, planning, municipal court, and animal services; and

42 **WHEREAS**, Council is committed to overcoming these financial
43 limitations and developing a quality parks system that is equitable, financially
44 sustainable, well-maintained, and accessible to residents of all means and
45 resources; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

48 Recognizing the competing priorities limiting the General Fund, the City
49 Manager is directed to convene a team of City staff that may include members
50 from PARD, FSD, the Law Department and other departments in the City
51 Manager's discretion, to explore additional funding sources for parks management,
52 land acquisition, amenities, facilities, and maintenance.

53 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

54 In addition to the General Fund, the staff team should consider the following
55 funding structures including but not limited to:

- 56 • Park Districts;
- 57 • Tax Increment Financing (TIF);
- 58 • Public Improvement Districts (PIDs);
- 59 • PARD fee setting and cost recovery policies;
- 60 • Public/Private Partnerships (PPPs);
- 61 • Expanding the Community PARKnership Program; and
- 62 • Park User Fees.

63 The Council recommends enlisting the assistance of external consultants
64 with expertise in park system funding to advise the staff team on funding methods
65 to sustain Austin's parks, as well as establishing a means of comparing funding
66 methods used by other park systems in Texas and providing financial scenarios to
67 compare funding options along with any opportunity costs.

69 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

70 The City Manager is directed to hold at least two public input sessions at
71 Parks and Recreation Board meetings to review and gather feedback on the staff
72 team's draft public recommendations prior to returning to Council.

73 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

74 The City Manager should provide a progress report to Council by March 31,
75 2025, regarding the status of the staff team's efforts to identify additional sources
76 and methods of funding to sustain Austin parks, and a final report back to Council
77 with recommendations on the funding strategies no later than May 31, 2025.

78 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

79 The City Manager is directed to provide an annual report from FSD and
80 PARD regarding total parkland, preserve, and open space assets and maintenance
81 costs that includes the following:

82 Citywide land assets and amenities report:

- 83
- 84 • List the overall land assets managed by PARD citywide as well as by
85 Council district; and
 - 86 • Total maintenance costs for these land assets and any amenities installed
87 on site.

87 Parkland Dedication Fund report:

- 88
- 89 • Total amount of fees collected that have yet to be appropriated to Capital
90 Improvement Projects (CIP) in the Parkland Dedication Fund;
 - 91 • Total appropriation, encumbrances, and expenses to date in the Parkland
Dedication CIP;

- 92 • Current project appropriations, encumbrances, and expenses in the
- 93 Parkland Dedication CIP;
- 94 • Projected annual amount of Parkland Dedication fees for the upcoming
- 95 year;
- 96 • Total amounts since the adoption of the Parkland Dedication ordinance in
- 97 2016:
 - 98 ○ Fees-in-lieu of land dedicated;
 - 99 ○ Park Development Fees collected; and
 - 100 ○ Land and amenities dedicated; and
- 101 • Amount estimated to maintain the land, amenities, and facilities built
- 102 with the Parkland Dedication fee funds.

103 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

104 The City Manager is directed to work with Travis County, surrounding
105 counties, and other regional partners to explore the feasibility of creating a regional
106 park management, acquisition, and maintenance strategy and provide an annual
107 progress report and any recommendations to Council.

109 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2024 **ATTEST:** _____

110 Myrna Rios
111 City Clerk
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