



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4998, **Agenda Item #:** 61.

7/18/2024

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of all documents and instruments necessary or desirable to acquire a conservation easement over and across approximately 19.779 acres situated in the Martin James Survey, Abstract No. 259, of Hays County, Texas, being a portion of that tract of land as conveyed to Charles Richard Stark by warranty deed recorded in Volume 229, Page 623 of the Deed Records of Hays County, Texas and located on both sides of Barton Creek at 3400 Bell Springs Road, Dripping Springs, Hays County, Texas 78620, from Charles Richard Stark and Susan Stark, for a total amount not to exceed \$1,050,000 including closing costs.

Lead Department

Financial Services Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding is available in the Capital Budget of the Watershed Protection Department.

For More Information:

Brandon Williamson, Financial Services Department, 512-974-5666; Michael Gates, Financial Services Department, 512-974-5639; Ana Gonzalez, Watershed Protection Department, 512-974-2929.

Additional Backup Information:

The proposed acquisition represents a significant conservation easement acquisition over and across approximately 19.779 acres of the Stark tract on Barton Creek in the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone for the City of Austin Water Quality Protection Lands Program. The 1.789-acre tract being retained by the Starks is not subject to the proposed conservation easement.

The property is located along approximately 1,000 feet of Barton Creek and borders both sides of the creek, which is rare. Water quality sampling was conducted at this site for over 20 years to characterize Barton Creek's headwaters as part of the 1997 Barton Creek Report and the Environmental Integrity Index. This acquisition will prevent non-point source pollution from potential development from entering the headwaters of Barton Creek, thus limiting impacts to downstream aquatic resources.

The proposed acquisition of the conservation easement will be funded through the 2018 Proposition D Bond funding and the Barton Springs Zone Mitigation Fund. The bond funding was designated for the purchase of land and conservation easements on properties in the City's southern watersheds that feed the Edwards Aquifer, Barton Springs, and the Colorado River.

An independent, third-party appraisal was procured to establish the fair market value of the proposed acquisition. The appraisal report supports the purchase price of \$1,000,000. The amount of the purchase price plus closing costs is not to exceed \$1,050,000.

This acquisition is located within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.