

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin owns a 7.36 acre tract of land in the upper Waller Creek watershed at 401 West St. Johns Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Waller Creek is a high priority watershed due to pollution and flooding concerns; and

WHEREAS, the site was purchased for stormwater management use and the Watershed Protection Department (WPD) has identified it as an appropriate location for a stormwater management pond to address pollution; and

WHEREAS, in 1970 the Austin City Council approved the use of the West St. Johns Avenue site as a sports field and has leased the site to the University Hills Optimists (UHO) for its exclusive use since 1971; and

WHEREAS, UHO currently offers kickball, baseball, and soccer to youth in Austin and surrounding communities at “Reznicek Field” at the site; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin relies on organizations like University Hills Optimists to provide youth sports programming on public land throughout Austin; and

WHEREAS, most recent numbers from the Parks and Recreation Department suggest that a substantial number of youth sports participants who use this facility reside outside the City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, the site remains locked when youth sports activities are not taking place and thus largely inaccessible for more general park use; and

WHEREAS, the 2003 Brentwood/Highland Neighborhood Plan calls for construction of a park on this property but the City has taken no action in the past decade to consider or facilitate such a use; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has adopted a goal of providing parks within a distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of every household, and the Parks and Recreation Department's (PARC) Gap Analysis in the Long Range Plan identifies this area of Austin as deficient in adequate parkland; and

WHEREAS, among the top five votes during the Central Public Input Meeting conducted as part of PARC's Long Range Plan was to "move [the University Hills Optimists]... to create more park opportunity"; and

WHEREAS, WPD presented 60%-complete plans for the stormwater facility to the Highland Neighborhood at meetings on December 13, 2012, and February 18, 2013, and neighbors expressed concern over lack of input regarding the design of the pond and their interest in using the WPD site as a park; and

WHEREAS, WPD has placed plans for construction of the stormwater facility on hold pending direction from the City Council regarding future use of the site; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Manager is directed to hold a community meeting to solicit suggestions and ideas and to report to Council by October 24, 2013, with options for the future use of the Watershed Protection Department tract located at 401 West St. Johns Avenue, including 1) using the entire tract for stormwater management; 2) using the entire tract as a park and relocating University Hills

Optimist sports; 3) reconfiguring the site to allow both public park uses and continued youth sports activities; and 4) maintaining the site in its current use and configuration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to include in consideration of options 1-3 possible relocation options for the University Hills Optimist sports and, with regard to option 3, to prioritize which sports activities fill the greatest need in the community and also allow flexibility in the use of the site.

ADOPTED: _____, 2013 **ATTEST:** _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk