

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, Austin's goal to be the "most livable city in the nation" is related to the overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council established "sustainability" as the central direction of the *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*, and integrating nature into the city is one of the six Guiding Principles for action; and

WHEREAS, Austin has a rich and unique natural heritage, including a diversity of ecosystems that provide benefits to residents and businesses, and the diverse species we share it with; and

WHEREAS, research shows that exposure to nature can reduce stress, aid recovery from illness, enhance cognitive skills, improve academic performance, and aid in moderating the effects of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, autism, and other childhood illnesses; and

WHEREAS, greening neighborhoods through increased tree planting has been shown to reduce crime, strengthen community connections, and increase walkability; and

WHEREAS, the concept of "biophilia" can be defined as "humans having co-evolved with the natural world, and...have an innate need for contact with nature and other forms of life.", and therefore "biophilic cities" are those that intentionally protect, grow, and celebrate local nature, and work to ensure human health and quality of life through co-existence with nature; and

WHEREAS, the "Biophilic Cities Network" is a community of biophilic cities that place nature at the core of design and planning, and work to create abundant opportunities to learn about and connect with this nature; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the Biophilic Cities Network, the City would be asked to designate a coordinator to manage the membership requirements, pay nominal membership fees, and monitor and report a minimum of five indicators that align with the Biophilic Cities Network metrics; and

WHEREAS, by joining the Biophilic Cities Network, the City recognizes an alignment with Imagine Austin goals, and demonstrates international leadership on the environment and local commitment to the well-being and health of its residents; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

Pursuant to the goals and aspirations of Imagine Austin and the priority principle to integrate nature in the City, the City Council declares its support for the principles of the Biophilic Cities Network and commits to promoting, learning about, and collaborating with other participating municipalities, institutions, and organizations to support urban biodiversity, and to create opportunities for all city residents to connect with nature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is authorized to secure Austin's membership in the Biophilic Cities Network.

ADOPTED: _____, 2016

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk