




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Kimberly McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP, Director
Parks and Recreation Department 

DATE: March 31, 2022

SUBJECT: Update on Council Resolution 20211202-051 Onion Creek Metro Park District

This memorandum is response to [Council Resolution 20211202-051](#) that directed the City Manager to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the parties to the Onion Creek Metro Park District Consent Agreement related to construction, operations, maintenance and funding for the Park District, to provide regular updates on City websites regarding Onion Creek Metro Park, to provide an update on contributions of bond funds and construction of improvements, and to coordinate with the Onion Creek Metro Park District to develop recommendations related to bond funding to address the needs for activities and improvements as outlined in the Park Vision Plan.

Roles and responsibilities of each party to the Onion Creek Metro Park District Consent Agreement

During the 2013-2014 session, the Texas Legislature created the Onion Creek Metro Park District (the District). The District is governed by a 7-member Board of Directors, whose primary purpose is to fund, maintain and operate park improvements within the District boundaries and agreed upon out-of-District recreational improvements that lie within the 555 acres of the southern portion of Onion Creek Metro Park and the Onion Creek Greenbelt Corridor as defined by the 2015 Onion Creek Metro Park Vision Plan. As a result of the District creation in 2014, a consent agreement was developed between the City of Austin, Onion Creek Metro Park District and Austin Goodnight Ranch, LP, who is the developer of the property within the District to the south of Onion Creek Metro Park. The consent agreement was amended in 2020 to provide clarification to the original agreement language. Authorization for negotiation and execution of this amendment was approved by City Council on March 12, 2020. The consent agreement amendment was executed by all parties on August 9, 2020 and may be downloaded and viewed on the Onion Creek Metro Park webpage at: <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/onion-creek-metropolitan-park>.

The basic responsibilities of each party set forth in the Consent Agreement are as follows:

Onion Creek Metro Park District:

- Collect a resident district tax in part for the “planning, design, maintenance and operation, and phased construction, if, as, and when possible, of park and recreation facilities within the District and within [the portion of Onion Creek Metro Park south of Onion Creek].” (ongoing)
- Operation and maintenance of recreation improvements within the portion of Onion Creek Metro Park south of Onion Creek, also known as Out of District Improvements, may be provided through a

reimbursement to the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) or a private service agreement. Improvements within the south area of Onion Creek Metro Park are currently maintained through a private service agreement paid by the District. (ongoing)

- Nominate District Board of Directors for Places 4, 5, 6 and 7. (as needed)

City of Austin, Parks and Recreation Department:

- Nominate District Board of Directors for Places 1, 2 and 3. (as needed)
- Complete Onion Creek Metro Park capital improvements including a 50-space parking lot, 30 acres of irrigated improvements and 20 acres of un-irrigated improvements. (completed in 2019)
- Fund agreed upon future improvements with parkland dedication fees collected within the District, other available parkland dedication fees outside the District and near Onion Creek Metro Park, authorized bond funding or other authorized funds. Future improvements will be agreed upon by the City and District based upon the District's capacity to fund maintenance and operation of the improvements. (ongoing)

Austin Goodnight Ranch, LP:

- Advance funding on behalf of the District to the Austin Parks Foundation for the completion of the Onion Creek Metro Park Vision Plan. (completed in 2015)
- Advance funding on behalf of the District for in-district park and open space improvements including a 3-mile loop that will provide access from the District to Onion Creek Metro Park. (partially complete/in progress)

Provide regular updates on City websites regarding Onion Creek Metro Park

The City of Austin Onion Creek Metro Park webpage is found at:

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/onion-creek-metropolitan-park>.

The City webpage provides the following park information:

- A general park description and aerial map of Onion Creek Metro Park.
- A summary and link to the 2015 Onion Creek Metro Park Vision Plan.
- A description of the Onion Creek Metro Park Phase 1 Vision Plan Implementation.
- A description of the development of the north section, also known as the buyout area, of Onion Creek Metro Park.
- A summary of the Onion Creek Metro Park District and related Consent Agreement.

A summary of future development opportunities at Onion Creek Metro Park. The City of Austin Onion Creek Metro Park webpage is updated periodically to provide current information on development at Onion Creek Metro Park.

Information regarding recreation improvements, including the 3-mile loop trail, within the Onion Creek Metro Park District, south of Onion Creek Metro Park, may be found on the Goodnight Development webpage at:

<https://www.liveatgoodnight.com/community/park-district>.

Provide an update on contributions of bond funds and construction of park improvements

As required by the Consent Agreement, the Parks and Recreation Department completed the development of the phase 1 "base park improvements" in 2019. This 50-acre section in the southern part of the metro park

consists of approximately 30 acres of irrigated area including open playfields, a 50-space parking lot, groomed trails, drinking fountain and a perimeter sidewalk. An adjacent 20-acre natural area to the north was improved to provide nature trails for accessibility into the park and ecological restoration through selective clearing. This \$4 million project was funded through General Obligation Bonds and Parkland Dedication Fees.

Coordinate with the Onion Creek Metro Park District to develop recommendations related to bond funding to address the needs for activities and improvements as outlined in the Park Vision Plan

Future improvements on the southern portion of Onion Creek Metro Park will be coordinated with the Onion Creek Metro Park District as set forth in the consent agreement. Generally, recreational improvements will be considered for the southern portion of Onion Creek Metro Park when the District has sufficient tax revenue to support the maintenance and operation of these improvements. In special circumstances, and in consultation with the District, the Parks and Recreation Department may add recreational amenities to the park beyond the District's maintenance capacity with the understanding that maintenance of these amenities will be the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Parks and Recreation Department, Onion Creek Metro Park District and Austin Goodnight Ranch, LP hold an annual coordination meeting in February to review items including the previous year's park maintenance and operations, current District tax revenue, potential parkland dedication fee availability for improvements, parkland concession opportunities for the District and future development plans. The coordination meeting to discuss the 2021 park maintenance and operations occurred on February 23, 2022.

In addition to this response, the Parks and Recreation Department in coordination with the Onion Creek Metro District provided a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Board on February 22, 2022 inclusive of the of Council Resolution 20211202-051. The completed work sufficiently addresses the directives Council Resolution 20211202-051. Should you have any additional questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6717.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager