

RESOLUTION NO. 20220915-055

WHEREAS, the City of Austin invests in multiple programs to encourage more transit and fewer car trips, particularly in areas such as Downtown with limited parking; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has set a goal of achieving a 50-50 mode share split by 2039, whereby fifty percent of commuters would be using modes other than single-occupancy vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the City has engaged in much discussion about the ways that free and/or low-cost parking may in some circumstances encourage car trips in lieu of other forms of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin owns and operates multiple parking garages in the Downtown area; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2011, the City of Austin began installing more paid parking meters throughout the Downtown area, prompting concerns from service industry workers about the removal of free parking options; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin responded by creating the “Affordable Parking Program,” allowing service industry employees and musicians to purchase monthly passes in City-owned garages at the substantially reduced cost of \$35 per month; and

WHEREAS, City garages provide free parking to employees and visitors engaging in city business; and

WHEREAS, most Downtown City-owned garages have excess parking that they can make available to individuals for an hourly or block-period rate; and

WHEREAS, parking fees in City-owned garages get applied toward the costs of operating that facility and, when relevant, toward debt payments; and

WHEREAS, the City has not done cost of service studies to update the pricing in its parking garages, and while assets such as the Seaholm Garage tend to charge higher rates indistinguishable from other garages in the area, the City Hall and Convention Center garages have instituted rates that may not return the cost to provide the service; and

WHEREAS, City Council raised parking garage rates at the City Hall garage to better reflect its costs of maintaining and operating the parking garage and the building; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 and 2017, the Downtown Austin Alliance worked with City of Austin transportation staff and other stakeholders on the development of the “Downtown Austin Parking Strategy,” which recommended that the City design and implement a performance-based parking management program in which staff would have authority to adjust rates and regulations at least annually to meet adopted availability targets; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, updated earlier this year, calls for properly pricing public parking at market rates and using performance-based parking to correct the imbalance in demand between on-street parking and off-street parking; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Austin Transportation Department implemented a performance-based management program in regard to on-street metered parking

spaces, under which the Department monitors parking usage quarterly and makes incremental pricing adjustments to ensure that one to two spaces are available at any time; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Austin Parking Strategy recommends that the City clearly define roles and responsibilities in parking management; empower staff through policy, tools, and data to effectively implement, operate, and manage the parking system; utilize new technology platforms to operate and manage the system through streamlined data collection and processing; and use parking revenue to support the citywide parking system and overall mobility improvements; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has not yet undertaken organization changes that would bring Convention Center parking and other city-owned off-street parking facilities under the management of centralized staff with expertise in the management of parking; and

WHEREAS, the Convention Center Garages, located near the Red Line train station and bus routes 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 17, and 803 attract many visitors to the Downtown and Rainey Street area, especially during evening hours; and

WHEREAS, the Convention Center has the following rates approved by Council as part of the fees and fines to be set or charged by the City for Fiscal Year 2022-2023:

0 – 30 minutes	Grace Period
30 minutes – 2 hours	\$5.00
2 hours – 9 hours	\$10.00
9 hours – 12 hours	\$15.00
12+ hours	\$3/hour
Max Rate	\$48.00

WHEREAS, the Convention Center can and does validate parking tickets for free or discounted rates for conventions and events taking place; and

WHEREAS, the published fee schedule in the approved Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes a variable rate for special events, indicating that the Convention Center adjusts parking rates base on agreements with different event organizers; and

WHEREAS, parking fee revenue is used to pay off debt related to the Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has a responsibility to manage and operate its building and facilities in a fiscally responsible manner; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The Convention Center shall participate in the City of Austin's Affordable Parking Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Convention Center shall retain the ability to enter into agreements with event organizers for particular rates and to waive or provide discounted rates on other occasions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall engage the City's parking enterprise and Convention Center staff to evaluate existing parking rates throughout Downtown and in garages adjacent to these and return to City Council with an alternative parking garage rate increase proposal and accompanying budget amendment on the October 13, 2022, Council agenda.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The proposal shall reflect relevant considerations, including but not limited to, the City's responsibility to set reasonable rates that reflect solid financial stewardship of public assets; assist in paying toward debt at an appropriate pace; and support existing policies related to parking and mobility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to study parking rates and provide recommendations for the Austin Convention Center and other City-owned garages, and to provide a report with any rate increase suggestion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

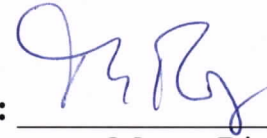
The City Manager is directed to produce quarterly reports showing the impact of the increased hourly rates and to bring forward action to Council to change those fees, if appropriate. The City Manager shall also include in these reports information detailing the number and total value of validated parking tickets and contracts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall present information to City Council prior to or during Fiscal Year 2024 budget deliberations about parking rates and revenues at the Austin Convention Center and other City-owned garages.

ADOPTED: September 15, 2022

ATTEST:



Myrna Rios
City Clerk