



## PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD RECOMMENDATION YYYYMMDD-XXX

Date:

Subject: Crime and Law Enforcement in Parks

Motioned By:

Seconded By:

### Recommendation

Resolved that the Parks Board recommend that that City Council form a Parks Crime Task Force that would put much needed resources into this effort and would be tasked with addressing the following:

- Funding and reinstatement of a parks police unit
- Increased funding to greatly expand our Park Ranger program
- Addressing the impact of unhoused community in our parks
- Improvements of lighting, signage, security equipment within our park system
- Ensure that resources are distributed equitably across park systems in all parts of the city

### Rationale:

Whereas, the Parks Board recognizes that all of the City's parks and amenities should be safe, secure and welcoming for all community members; and

Whereas, data and community reporting show that incidents of crimes against society, people and property continue to grow across our park system including theft, vandalism, threatening, violent and unsafe behaviors, unleashed dog issues, etc.; and

Whereas, the Parks Board created a Working Group to evaluate and make recommendations on improving safety in our parks and which would include representation from the Public Safety Commission and the Austin Police Department; and the group studied the recent history of park safety and found that

Whereas, in 2020, the Austin Police Department's park police division was dissolved and the Park Rangers serve as a uniformed presence in the parks; currently there are 26 Park Rangers and over 300 parks; and furthermore, the Park Rangers lack official authority to enforce compliance of most laws; and

Whereas, the Working Group studied alternative factors with the potential to mitigate crime such as lighting, signage, security equipment, etc. and their impact; and be it

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Working Group Members:

Dawn Lewis, Former Parks and Recreation Board Member, District 10

Nancy Barnard, Parks and Recreation Board, District 7

Patrick Moore, Former Parks and Recreation Board Board Member, District 3

Kathleen Hausenback, Public Safety Commission, Mayor's Appointee

Donald Baker, APD  
Justin Berry, APD  
Lt. Chief Todd Smith, APD  
LeAnn Ishcomer, Park Ranger Program Manager

**Vote**

For:

Against:

Abstain:

Absent:

Attest:

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DRAFT