

RESOLUTION NO. 20231214-070

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the increasing prevalence of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), commonly referred to as drones, in the Austin area airspace; and

WHEREAS, drones have seen a significant increase in usage across various sectors, posing new challenges to public safety, privacy, and security; and

WHEREAS, drone technology has evolved significantly, presenting both opportunities and challenges for public safety, privacy, and security; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to ensuring the responsible and safe operation of drones within our city limits; and

WHEREAS, the proliferation of drones has led to concerns regarding their potential misuse, including unauthorized surveillance, interference with emergency response operations, and threats to critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for regulating drone operations within the national airspace, but there is a growing need for comprehensive and updated regulations to address evolving technology and emerging threats; and

WHEREAS, the FAA currently issues Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs), which apply to drones and other aircraft, for a select list of major sports events but not for other mass gatherings; and

WHEREAS, Austin hosts major sports events such Formula One, Moto GP and Major League Soccer, which are not currently listed as sports events eligible for TFRs; and

WHEREAS, local governments play a crucial role in ensuring that drone operations align with the needs and safety of their communities, making it essential to collaborate with state and federal authorities to enhance regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City has witnessed an increase in drone-related incidents, emphasizing the necessity for stronger regulations to protect the safety and well-being of its residents; and

WHEREAS, public concerns about drone noise disturbances impacting the quality of life of Austin residents have risen necessitating regulations to mitigate these disturbances; and

WHEREAS, the protection of sensitive areas, such as schools, public facilities, and critical infrastructure from potential drone threats is paramount to maintaining public safety and security; and

WHEREAS, the rapid evolution of drone technology requires updated regulations to ensure that emerging risks and challenges are adequately addressed; and

WHEREAS, effective drone regulations should strike a balance between promoting innovation and safeguarding the public interest; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City to work collaboratively with state and federal authorities to develop, advocate for, and implement stronger drone regulations that address local concerns while respecting technological advancements and innovation; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to collaborate with state and federal authorities to enhance drone regulations that address local concerns; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

Council amends its state and federal legislative agendas to include supporting legislation related to drone use that enhances public safety, security, and quality of life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

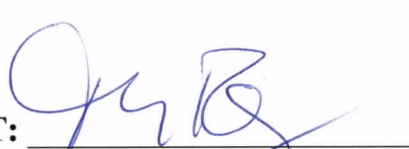
The City Manager is directed to work with elected representatives at the state and federal levels to advocate for the following priorities:

- A. Enhanced regulation of permanent flight restrictions near critical infrastructure, public facilities, a broader set of sports facilities, and emergency response operations to ensure public safety and security, with a particular emphasis on preventing weaponization of UAS and other low-flying aircraft.
- B. The implementation of geofencing technology and other measures, including public awareness of these restricted areas, to prevent drones from flying in restricted or prohibited areas, thereby reducing the risk of unauthorized surveillance or malicious activities.
- C. Stricter enforcement of existing regulations related to drone registration, operator certification, and compliance with FAA guidelines, including measures to detect and prevent weaponization.
- D. Developing and implementing a comprehensive noise mitigation plan to address noise concerns from drone operations within our city, ensuring that public safety and quality of life are not compromised.

- E. Establishing a federal process to allow applicants to request temporary prohibitions of unmanned aircraft operations in close proximity to a large outdoor public gathering for a specified period of time. Applicants eligible to submit petitions for consideration shall be a credentialed law enforcement organization or public safety organization otherwise recognized by a federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial governmental entity.
- F. Lowering attendance thresholds of mass gatherings for the issuance of TFRs to include wider range of sporting and non-sporting events, and strictly prohibiting UAS or other aircraft operations unrelated to the event or public safety during those events to ensure the safety and security of event attendees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to send copies of this Resolution to the FAA and Austin's state and federal legislative delegations to notify them of the City's priorities and concerns related to drone regulation.

ADOPTED: December 14, 2023 **ATTEST:** 
Myrna Rios
City Clerk