



To: Mayor Watson & City Council Members

March 15, 2024

Dear Mayor Watson and City Council Members,

As AIA Austin President, a practicing Architect, and native Austinite, I've seen firsthand the benefits of trees in our City, and more specifically, in the right of way, where they have the opportunity to connect communities, provide shelter, and filter the air adjacent to our roadways. Where we have new city sidewalks and no street trees, it seems prudent and timely to point out the missed opportunity. With so many transformative projects on the horizon, it is imperative to put the right policy in place to ensure a better outcome for all inhabitants of our fair city—one that is in line with the values already established by the City. AIA Austin is prepared to provide education to our membership to help clients of all types understand the new policy and how to implement it successfully into projects.

We wholeheartedly endorse the "Green Infrastructure" Council resolution, which advocates prioritizing the planting of street trees within Austin's public rights-of-way. This initiative aims to create cooler and safer pathways, fostering a supportive environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility device users, and transit users and we view this resolution as a crucial initial step towards these goals. By passing this resolution, City Council can significantly advance the Green Infrastructure Resolution's objectives, fostering a more sustainable and equitable city for all Austinites, now, and for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sophia Razzaque", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Sophia Razzaque, AIA
AIA Austin President



Re: APF's support of the Green Infrastructure Resolution, Item #39.

Mayor Watson and City Council Members,

We support the upcoming Green Infrastructure Resolution, Item #39.

We need more trees in our city, planted where they really count: along streets to shade paved pathways for walking and cycling, so we can reach transit and most of our day-to-day destinations. This has become both an affordability issue and a critical public health issue, as our climate is trending hotter and hotter, stressing our lower-income communities disproportionately. This initiative aims to create cooler and safer pathways, fostering a supportive environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility device users, and transit users and we view this resolution as a crucial initial step towards these goals.

This initiative will create a much better Austin for everyone – now, and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kayla Reese

Advocacy Manager, Austin Parks Foundation

From: City of Austin
To: [District 7](#)
Subject: Central Texas ASLA's Support of the GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RESOLUTION, ITEM #39
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 1:24:16 PM

To: Mayor Watson & City Councilmembers

Re: CENTRAL TEXAS ASLA'S SUPPORT OF THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RESOLUTION, ITEM #39

Dear Mayor Watson and City Council Members,

Founded in 1899, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is the professional association for landscape architects in the United States, representing nearly 15,000 members nationally. Our Central Texas Chapter represents hundreds of local landscape architects, planners, and those aspiring to be, who are passionate about bettering the built environment and furthering the tenets set forth by ASLA on a national level. Part of our core mission is to promote healthy, beautiful, and resilient places for everyone through empowering our members to design a sustainable and equitable world through landscape architecture. The principles behind green infrastructure are supported by our values and mission as an organization, as we aspire to promote a more sustainable way of living for all.

We wholeheartedly endorse the "Green Infrastructure" Council resolution, which advocates prioritizing the planting of street trees within Austin's public rights-of-way. This initiative aims to create cooler and safer pathways, fostering a supportive environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility device users, and transit users and we view this resolution as a crucial initial step towards these goals. By passing this resolution, City Council can significantly advance the Green Infrastructure Resolution's objectives, fostering a more sustainable and equitable city for all Austinites, now, and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Nick Wester, PLA
Chair of Central Texas ASLA

CC: Kevin Howard: [REDACTED]; and Jana McCann:
[REDACTED]

NOTE: While the tenets of the Green Infrastructure Resolution are in line with many of the principles of ASLA, the positions expressed in this letter may not necessarily reflect the opinions of all our organization's members.

Street address: 812 San Antonio St, Austin, TX 78701

Council District: 9



To: Mayor Watson, Mayor Pro Tem Ellis, & City Councilmembers

Re: Austin Outside's Support for the Green Infrastructure Resolution, Item # 39

Dear Mayor Watson, Mayor Pro Tem Ellis, and City Council Members,

Austin Outside is a coalition of over 65 nonprofits and businesses who champion vibrant and thriving outdoor places for all throughout Greater Austin. **We fully endorse Item # 39, the Green Infrastructure Council resolution**, which advocates for the prioritization of street tree planting and maintenance within Austin's public rights-of-way. This initiative aims to create cooler and safer pathways, growing a supportive environment for people who walk, bike, roll, and use transit.

While we view this resolution as a crucial initial step towards implementing street trees citywide, we recognize that further actions are necessary for its successful realization. Therefore, we urge City Council to approve the Green Infrastructure Resolution in alignment with the following objectives:

1. **Require street trees in public and private projects.** This mandate should apply to all land uses and most development activities, however, appropriate alternatives should be allowed where planting street trees would be infeasible and unreasonably burdensome due to existing utility locations. Alternatives should include payment-in-lieu fees.
2. **Remove barriers to street trees in rules, regulations, and development review processes.** This should include the following:
 - a. **Criteria Manuals:** Remove or reform rules that hinder street tree planting including separation standards. Restrict and protect utilities within planting zones.
 - b. **Standard Details and Specifications:** Adopt citywide standard details, specifications, and product lists for street trees and associated equipment that prioritize tree health and utility protection in constrained conditions. Build from the City's 2022 Corridor Program "Tree Manual".
 - c. **License Agreement:** Eliminate the license agreement requirement for street trees. Address current needs by defining street trees as "standard" objects within the right-of-way and assigning the responsibility of street tree maintenance to abutting property owners in the municipal code.
 - d. **Working group:** Establish a working group comprised of representatives from key stakeholder agencies including utilities and leaders in public realm design and advocacy to advise City Staff.
3. **Subsidize street trees.** Make public funds available for planting and maintaining of trees and necessary utility repair and relocations. This funding should prioritize SMART Housing projects, projects surrounding transit, and utility projects affecting street trees. Major funding sources could include DSD's Tree Mitigation funds and a future climate bond.
4. **Appoint a Public Realm Officer at the assistant city manager level.** This officer should oversee public realm projects, with a specific emphasis on enhancing street functionality, safety, and comfort for all users. Empowered with authority, the Public Realm Officer would resolve conflicts among various right-of-way stakeholders throughout the capital planning, design, review, and implementation processes of both public and private projects.

By supporting these goals, the City Council can significantly advance the Green Infrastructure Resolution's objectives as well as the City's climate and sustainability goals, all of which foster a more livable and equitable city for Austinites.

Sincerely,

The Austin Outside Board

Ted Siff, President; Kari Spiegelhalter, Vice President; Marianne DeLeon, Treasurer Beth Larkin, Secretary, Joanna Wolaver, Immediate Past President; and members: Drew Carman, Melinda Chow, Priya Patel, and Tom Wald

CC: Kevin Howard: [REDACTED]; and Jana McCann: [REDACTED]