



CITY OF AUSTIN TOURISM COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation Number: 20240313-005: These recommendations from the Tourism Commission's Parks and Environment Working Group identify park amenities to leverage tourism funding for park-specific projects that can benefit parks and environment in our community.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is regarded as one of the *most* environmentally conscious cities in the country, with our parks, preserves, open spaces, waterways, spring-fed pools and greenbelt trails attracting tourists and citizens alike to Austin's parks and environment;

WHEREAS, Austin's tourism industry actively uses our parks and environmental attractions to promote tourism to Austin, as readily seen from Visit Austin's website listing Austin parks and environmental attractions (<https://www.austintexas.org/things-to-do/history/austin-parks-recreation/>), featuring Barton Springs Pool, Zilker Metropolitan Park, Mt. Bonnell, Lady Bird Lake Butler Trail, and many more;

WHEREAS, traditional funding sources for parks and environment spaces have struggled to keep up with our growing city, and have even dwindled over the years, especially with recent state law changes which prevent the City of Austin from collecting parkland development funds, decreasing the amount of parkland the city can require, and limiting the ability of municipalities to raise property tax revenue that could otherwise be used to pay for park and environment projects; and

WHEREAS, the Tourism Commission was established to provide expertise and recommendations to the City Council concerning issues related to and that promote tourism, and in this role, seeks to find ways for both the tourism industry and the citizens of Austin to benefit; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Environment Working Group was appointed to prepare recommendations to identify park amenities to leverage tourism funding for park-specific projects that can benefit parks and environment in our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Austin Tourism Commission encourages the Austin City Council to consider and direct staff to consider the funding opportunities in the Parks and Environment Working Group Recommendations (attached) for park-specific projects that can benefit parks and environment in our community.

Date of Approval: 3/13/2024

Record of the vote: 9-0 approved vote

Attest: _____

(Staff or board member can sign)