

RESOLUTION NO. 20240418-049

WHEREAS, Article X, Section 1, of the City Charter stresses the importance of the provision of parks and recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, provision of adequate parks and recreation facilities plays a major role in achieving the six key City goals established in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan: 1) preserving our livability; 2) expanding transportation choices; 3) tackling the ethnic divide; 4) protecting our natural resources; 5) promoting prosperity for all; and 6) collaborating regionally; and

WHEREAS, parks provide recreational opportunities, create community, preserve the City's character and natural resources, increase transportation opportunities, and keep Austin beautiful; and

WHEREAS, parkland provides relief from urban life, green space to those who do not have access to a yard, opportunities to gather and recreate, and numerous physical and mental health benefits; and

WHEREAS, investing in parkland in historically underserved areas is investing in the physical and mental wellbeing of those residents; and

WHEREAS, accessibility to parks, trails, and recreational opportunities is identified as a key Council priority within Strategic Direction 2023 and the City continues to underperform on our goals; and

WHEREAS, high-quality parks, trails, natural spaces, and recreational opportunities are critical for physical and mental wellbeing as well as maintaining a healthy work-life balance; and

WHEREAS, feedback from surveys collected during the development of the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) Long Range Plan detailed a high interest in access to outdoor pools as well as a separate interest in reducing fees that may prevent low-income residents from participating in PARC programs and spaces; and

WHEREAS, PARC's Long Range Plan documents that outdoor pools also provide important public health benefits during heatwaves and help ensure that all children have an opportunity to learn how to swim; and

WHEREAS, the PARC Aquatic Vision Plan recommends that our aquatic system provides a variety of aquatic opportunities with neighborhood pools remaining free and fees for community and regional pools based upon the socio-economic conditions of the surrounding market area; and

WHEREAS, in response to record-breaking heat, the City waived fees at certain pools and extended pool operations in 2023; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Manager is directed to implement a pilot project this swim season that would explore opportunities to responsibly improve aquatic facilities access by waiving, reducing, or restructuring user fees at one or more City aquatic facilities during the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 swim season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to consider geographic and socio-economic factors when determining which site(s) shall be included in this pilot project this swim season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to hold PARD harmless for any financial impact this one-time fee reduction may have on the department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to use information gleaned from this pilot to make recommendations to Council for any pilot extensions or permanent changes that might be made to aquatic fees in the future.

ADOPTED: April 18, 2024 **ATTEST:**

Stephanie Hall for
Myrna Rios
City Clerk