



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20240605-003

**Date:** June 5, 2024

**Subject:** Bird-friendly design and building solutions

**Motion by:** Jennifer Bristol

**Seconded by:** Perry Bedford

### **RATIONALE:**

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission was given a presentation about Bird Safe Design by Heidi Trudell, Bird Safe Design Specialist with support from Travis Audubon; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes the City of Austin was named a Bird City in February 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that over 400 species of birds reside or migrate through Travis County every spring and fall. Both endangered species and species of concern both utilize the Central Flyway and geological way finders of the Balcones Escarpment and Colorado River during their migration; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes the hills of Austin and Travis County are home to the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler and threatened Black-capped Vireo; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes the City of Austin benefits from the annual \$1.8 billion generated from bird tourism in Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes birds colliding with poorly designed buildings results in up to 2 million birds dying in the US every year; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that more than 30 cities have adopted bird-safe design practices into their code and/ or practices. However, no city in Texas has yet to adopt these design practices, which means Austin could lead the way; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that habitat loss for nesting and wintering birds also has a negative impact; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that the loss of insects due to the use of pesticides, diminishes food supply for birds.

**THEREFORE**, the Environmental Commission recommends the City of Austin take the following actions:

1. The Environmental Commission will form a working group to study best practices and make recommendations about what code changes could be made to support bird-safe design.
2. The Environmental Commission requests that Council pass a resolution directing staff to support the working group.
3. The City will strive to be the FIRST city in Texas to be a bird-safe design city.
4. City of Austin will continue to require all new construction or remodels of both low-rise and high-rise buildings utilize, at a minimum, bird-friendly glass and downcast, Dark Skies lighting.
5. The City of Austin will limit the use of pesticides on all city managed properties, especially during peak migration and nesting seasons.
6. The City of Austin will continue to actively add parkland or preserves along creeks and wetlands, and in the rapidly disappearing Black Land Prairie ecoregion. The City will consider wintering bird habitats and migration corridors and nesting habitat when selecting these sites.
7. The City of Austin will encourage developments to leave wild spaces with native tree and plant communities that support birds, healthy insect populations, and other wildlife.

**VOTE: 7-0**

For: Perry Bedford, Richard Brimer, Jennifer Bristol, Peter Einhorn, Mariana Krueger, Haris Qureshi, David Sullivan

Against: None

Abstain: Colin Nickells

Recuse: None

Absent: Hanna Cofer and Melinda Schiera

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Perry Bedford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Perry Bedford, Environmental Commission Chair