



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

From: T. C. Broadnax, City Manager 

Date: October 14, 2026

Subject: **Lions Municipal Golf Course and Brackenridge Development Agreement**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on discussions with the University of Texas at Austin to convey full ownership of Lions Municipal Golf Course to the City of Austin as part of proposed amendments to a 1989 interlocal agreement between the City and the University, also known as the Brackenridge Development Agreement (BDA). Staff will brief the Environmental Commission and the Planning Commission prior to bringing the proposed amendments to the City Council on November 19, 2026.

Background

The University of Texas was gifted nearly 500 acres of land along both sides of Lake Austin Boulevard and has ground lease agreements with many of the commercial businesses in the area. Lions Municipal Golf Course, also known as Muny, first opened in 1924 and occupies about 141 acres of the University-owned property. The City took over the lease for the golf course 13 years later and has operated Muny ever since. In 1950, Muny became the first public golf course in the South to integrate, allowing people of color to play, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a civil rights landmark. Today, it is the most used course in the city, with more than 75,000 rounds of golf played each year.

For more than 50 years, the course's community of golfers, neighbors, students, and other Austinites have been working to save Muny and preserve its role as a public course open to all who want to play. Throughout that time, the City, the University, and community members have discussed various solutions to the issue of ownership, operations, and preservation of Muny. However, without a clear path forward, the City has been operating Muny under a month-to-month lease agreement with UT since 2019.

As part of the conversations to preserve Muny, the City and the University also discussed the terms for how the University may use the land it owns on either side of Lake Austin Boulevard for private development. In 1989, the City and University entered into an interlocal agreement known as the Brackenridge Development Agreement. The City and the University have amended the BDA several times throughout the years, but none of those changes have resulted in a long-term plan for Muny, despite a great deal of work by the community of golfers and neighbors who love Muny.

Date: October 14, 2026
Subject: Brackenridge Development Agreement Amendments

After decades of conversations, however, the City and the University are prepared to enter into an agreement that will preserve Muny as open public green space for the people of Austin and prepare the remaining 190 acres of University-owned land for the benefit of the University community.

Proposed Amended Agreement

In advance of City Council consideration on November 19, City staff will brief the Environmental Commission and the Planning Commission before the end of October regarding plans to convey Muny to the City alongside amendments to the original BDA. Should the City Council agree to amend the BDA, City staff will return to the commissions in early 2027 to consider and make recommendations on the corresponding regulating plan.

The amended BDA will describe the general process for:

- The conveyance of Muny,
- A proposed update to the University's lease of property at Mueller,
- The exchange of City rights-of-way,
- The proposed creation of a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, and
- The development of a mutually agreed regulating plan.

The updated BDA will define the parameters of any future private development of the 190 acres of land in the University-owned Brackenridge tract. Those include:

- Building heights cap at 65 feet when viewed from Lake Austin Boulevard,
- Impervious cover limits set at 75% sitewide, and
- Maintaining a 200-foot setback from Lady Bird Lake.

Next Steps

The amended BDA will be presented for City Council consideration at its November 19, 2026 meeting. Pending City Council approval, staff will prepare the regulating plan to reflect the BDA. The regulating plan will then be forwarded through the Boards & Commissions process and City Council consideration in Spring 2027.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jon Fortune, Deputy City Manager, at jon.fortune@austintexas.gov or Dr. Eric Johnson, Assistant City Manager, at eric.a.johnson@austintexas.gov.

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
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