

AGENDA



Thursday, December 13, 2007

**Watershed Protection and Development Review
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Item No. 52

Subject: Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Fee Schedule of Ordinance No. 20070910-008 to add fees relating to street events; and amending the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Operating Budget of Ordinance No. 20070910-003 to increase General Fund revenue appropriations by \$350,000, increase appropriated expenditures in the Watershed Protection and Development Review Department by \$350,000, and add 13.0 new full time equivalent positions to the Watershed Protection and Development Review Department. This action is a net fiscal impact to the General Fund of zero.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount of \$350,000 is available from additional General Fund Revenue and \$385,106 is available through expense refunds from other city departments collected through the newly established fees for a total of \$735,106.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is attached.

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The City continues to experience a significant number (over 100 in the past year) of Race/Walk Special Events which benefit various charitable and worthy causes in the City. With the character of a City within a Park, and the goal of being a Fit City, it is imperative that staff facilitate the continued success of these events. Many of these events showcase the City's natural beauty, as well as our vibrant downtown community. The City of Austin regularly receives national recognition for its outdoor activities, and is consistently ranked as one of the healthiest communities in the Country. Staff has developed a multi-part strategy to better serve our citizens and our partners in planning and holding these events.

This Council action will provide the necessary staff to create a more streamlined and efficient process for the race/walk special event organizers, as well as provide a significantly more affordable option for barricades and traffic control devices. Cost savings realized by the event organizers will directly result in increased funds for the charitable causes that benefit from the events. Additionally, because many of the events are held in our downtown community, it is critical that barricades and traffic control devices be set-up and removed with the least amount of disruption to our downtown residents and visitors. By utilizing City personnel and equipment for these events, we can ensure a very efficient process for street closures and re-openings.

In addition to providing a significant service for these events, the personnel and equipment will be available to meet some of the traffic plans and barricade needs of the City's capital projects within the Austin Water Utility (AWU), and projects managed by the Department of Public Works (PW). Currently all traffic planning and barricades for the City's capital projects are handled through an outside contractor. The outside contract will remain in place as the need for the capital projects will be much greater than can be accommodated with the additional staff and equipment. It is estimated that 5% of the AWU and PW projects' use will be covered with this additional staff and equipment; based on actual usage this percentage will result in savings of approximately \$470,000.

The personnel costs will be shared by the AWU and PW through a reimbursement to the Division of Right of Way Management where this function will be housed, as well as by the fees collected from the

organizations for traffic plans and the barricade rentals. The one-time costs for the equipment will be funded through existing capital project budgets.

Cost and funding is estimated as follows:

Personnel \$735,106

AWU/PW \$385,106

Rental Fees and Charges \$350,000 One-time costs to be funded by existing capital project budgets
\$379,665