

RESOLUTION NO. _____

WHEREAS, the City of Austin’s historical commitment to preserve our natural heritage is demonstrated by its acquisition of land to sustain soil, water, air, plants and animals for the continued public benefit of our communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin, using Austin Water Utility revenue bonds and City of Austin general obligation bonds, has purchased approximately 23,500 acres of land and development rights in order to protect water quality and quantity in the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer; and

WHEREAS, a regional trail, currently known as “Walk for a Day,” can be incorporated into the management of these lands in a manner that assures achievement of the land’s fundamental purpose of protecting water quality and quantity and educating trail users about the importance of the preservation of these lands while at the same time providing for reasonable public access for the purposes of recreational enjoyment, and enhanced fitness opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Walk for a Day regional trail system would benefit both citizens of Austin and surrounding communities by providing a first-hand experience of these lands and an appreciation of the importance they play in protecting our natural resources and advancing an understanding of Barton Springs and the watersheds that affect it; and

WHEREAS, the Walk for a Day trail system will benefit from the collaborative efforts of multiple political subdivisions and jurisdictions,

including the City of Austin, the City of Sunset Valley, Travis County, Hays County, and Texas Department of Transportation, as well as other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, groundbreaking for the first phase of the Walk for a Day trail system is planned for May 2009; and

WHEREAS, there is already a successful model for development and implementation of a trail system on the City's water quality protection land along Slaughter Creek; and

WHEREAS, Hill Country Conservancy shares the City's values of water quality and quantity protection, conservation, and providing public benefits through a regional trail system; and

WHEREAS, Hill Country Conservancy has committed itself both to acquire land or access rights to ensure a continuous trail for Walk for a Day and to raise donations to create an endowment to fund construction, operations, maintenance, and security for the trail; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Council endorses the development of the Walk for a Day regional trail system across its water quality protection lands, park land, and other land in a manner that preserves the integrity of the land's natural resources, provides for continued protection of water quality and quantity, and offers educational, recreational, and fitness opportunities to trail users.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In order to develop a mutually beneficial partnership with Hill Country Conservancy, the City Council directs the City Manager to negotiate a memorandum of agreement with Hill Country Conservancy that:

- (1) ensures the participation of City departments, including but not limited to Austin Water Utility, Parks and Recreation, Watershed Protection and Development Review, Contract and Land Management, Public Works, Transportation and Law; and
- (2) outlines the City's and Hill Country Conservancy's responsibilities for planning, construction oversight, management, water quality and other environmental protection, public education, scheduling of phases, commensurate with available endowment funding, and other responsibilities necessary to carry out the Walk for a Day project; and
- (3) incorporates the Hill County Conservancy's commitments both to acquire land or access rights to educate the public about the importance of water quality and quantity and ensure a continuous trail, and to raise donations to create an endowment to fund construction, operations, maintenance and security for the trail consistent with this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council further directs the City Manager to place the memorandum of agreement on the agenda of its February 26, 2009, meeting for Council action.

ADOPTED: _____, 2009

ATTEST: _____

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk