

Resolution Requesting Wave Attenuation Recommendations

WHEREAS the City of Austin is the owner of land in Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake, including the bed and banks thereof and islands therein, for benefit of the public, and

WHEREAS the City of Austin has adjudication rights to impound waters in the Colorado River for several purposes, including recreation purposes, and

WHEREAS Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake provide recreation and boating opportunities for citizens of Austin and visitors to the area, and

WHEREAS the population of the Austin area continues to grow, creating increased demands on Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake that stress the physical resources, and

WHEREAS owners of property adjacent to Lady Bird Lake and Lake Austin, including parkland owned by City of Austin, are experiencing significant erosion of their shoreline and have presented their interests and concerns to the Parks and Recreation Board, and

WHEREAS the size and number of watercraft on Lake Austin has increased substantially, and new activities such as wakeboarding and lake surfing have become popular, increasing the intensity of wakes on Lake Austin, and

WHEREAS the *2009 Study of Recreational Boating on Lake Austin*, commissioned by the City of Austin, identifies the intensity of wakes as an issue for property owners and recreational boaters on Lake Austin, and

WHEREAS the priorities and management of Lady Bird Lake are codified with the Waterfront Overlay District, and with a Waterfront Planning Advisory Board established to help protect the waterfront and provide harmonious use and interactions with the shoreline, and

WHEREAS many entities have specific responsibilities for Lake Austin but there is no entity or forum for comprehensive management of Lake Austin.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin Parks and Recreation Board requests the Austin City Council to direct the City Manager to assemble an appropriate, multi-disciplined team to recommend methods and policies that would provide for reasonable use of Lake Austin while also protecting the resource.

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DRAFT:

v1.0 Aug 30, 2010

v1.1 Oct 18, 2010

v1.2 Nov 24, 2010

The multi-disciplined team should include, but is not limited to, members who have expertise in the following:

- Shoreline management,
- Wetlands management,
- Water quality, erosion, and sedimentation,
- Development planning and management,
- Public Health and Safety,
- Lake Austin Police Patrol,
- Parks and Wildlife Code (Ch 31. Water Safety Act),
- Texas Water Code,
- U.S. Corp of Engineer regulations.

Methods and policies for wave abatement that might be considered by the team include, but are not limited to:

- using Navigation Control Zones, as defined in Section 8-5-2 of the Austin Land Development Code, and Navigational buoys to optimize the uses of Lake Austin and increase public safety,
- prohibiting devices that are designed to increase the wake of a watercraft,
- limiting the quantity or type of watercraft allowed on Lake Austin, or limiting the type of activity allowed in particular areas or during particular days and times,
- the use of wave attenuation structures, such as stationery or floating wave breaks,
- providing incentives for converting smooth, vertical bulkheads into “living” shorelines that provide better wave absorption

Due to the urgency of this issue, with ongoing property loss and increasing risk to public safety, the Parks and Recreation Board requests that the team provide its recommendations within three months so that wave attenuation measures may be considered prior to summer boating season. The team is requested to specify what measures it recommends, and why, to protect the shoreline of Lake Austin while also providing for safe, diverse recreational uses by the public.

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