

RESOLUTION NO. 20140612-060

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department currently has funding available for a master plan of Lamar Beach Metro Park through mitigation funding from the Transportation Department for the construction of the Pressler Street extension; and

WHEREAS, a master planning process would provide an avenue for existing partners and Austinites to provide additional feedback about their vision for the future of the park which serves as a gateway to downtown Austin; and

WHEREAS, Lamar Beach Metro Park has been the home of multiple community and City of Austin organizations that provide public benefits, including the Austin Animal Center, West Austin Youth Association (WAYA), the YMCA of Austin, and Austin Pets Alive! (APA); and

WHEREAS, the YMCA has been at the Lamar Beach Metro Park site since 1963 and currently serves approximately 24,000 members; and

WHEREAS, the YMCA provides many community benefits, including reduced rates for those unable to pay, health and wellness programs that are accessible to Austinites regardless of income level, and programs available to the disabled, homeless, obese, and patients with dementia and Alzheimer's; and

WHEREAS, WAYA, founded in 1981, has provided recreational programming open to all children in Austin at Lamar Beach Metro Park for over three decades, provides ball field access to Austin High sports and club teams, currently holds a long-term agreement with the City of Austin to

provide services at Lamar Beach Metro Park, and intends to invest in the property to provide new athletic fields and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, WAYA serves participants from over 60 zip codes around Austin, provides financial assistance for low-income families, maintains a league for children with disabilities, and provides job opportunities and community service hours for college-aged students; and

WHEREAS, Austin Independent School District (AISD) uses the ball fields and infrastructure at Lamar Beach for athletics programs; and

WHEREAS, APA has been an animal welfare partner with the City of Austin since 2008, has been operating out of the Town Lake Animal Center location since 2011, and serves the City of Austin as a critical partner in helping to achieve and maintain no-kill status; and

WHEREAS, APA's RuffTail Runners program at the Town Lake Animal Center serves the public and allows trail users to take shelter dogs for a walk or run on the trail; and

WHEREAS, community partners have expressed a strong desire to move forward with a master plan to approach the future of the park in a comprehensive way and address issues like parking, environmental protection, public benefits, and the potential benefits and impacts of traffic changes that could accompany the Pressler Street extension; and

WHEREAS, the Pressler Street extension was approved by a majority of Austin voters in the City's 2012 Bond Election, reflecting the desire of the surrounding neighborhoods for a safe and efficient connection between the areas north of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to the waterfront park

amenities, as reflected by the fact that a connection has long been part of the adopted Old West Austin Neighborhood Plan; and

WHEREAS, students attending AISD's Austin High School (AHS) are prevented from legally, safely, and directly accessing the high school on foot from north of the UPRR tracks, and may even be currently encouraged to risk their safety by the presence of a remnant trail directly linking AHS to an ad-hoc pedestrian crossing location, requiring students to trespass onto private property, and improved safety could be provided by a modern, safe and legal crossing location of the UPRR tracks directly aligned with AHS as part of the Pressler Street extension; and

WHEREAS, partners have expressed concerns about increased traffic and a significant decrease in the availability of parking, both of which are affected by the proposed Reserve Road east of the Pressler Street extension; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Reserve Road east of the Pressler Street extension may not be a vital part of the overall Pressler Street extension, and eliminating it could reduce traffic in the park and provide additional open space and parking opportunities; and

WHEREAS, additional ingress, egress, and circulation options to Lamar Beach Metro Park should be considered as part of a park master planning effort if the proposed Reserve Road east of the Pressler Street extension is eliminated; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Department has a preliminary design completed for the Pressler Street extension and continues to hold public

meetings to gather additional public input before the design is finalized, with a targeted construction letting date of Fall 2015 or later; and

WHEREAS, the master planning design process would begin with joint meetings held with the Transportation Department and a Lamar Beach master planning group to enable opportunities to coordinate the park design with alignment of the Pressler Street extension to ensure the optimal design for Lamar Beach, functionality of circulation within the park, and the safety of Austin High School students moving between the park and school; and

WHEREAS, the Pressler Street extension provides connectivity to AHS and may be heavily used by AISD students and families to walk, bike and drive to and from AHS; and

WHEREAS, the AISD Interim Superintendent, AHS Administrators, parents, teachers, and Campus Advisory Council members have expressed concerns about the impacts on traffic and student safety for AHS that may result from the Pressler Street extension and have suggested that a traffic impact analysis could be beneficial; and

WHEREAS, a traffic impact analysis could help stakeholders and the City Council make a more-informed decision while proceeding with the design process for the Pressler Street extension; and

WHEREAS, bringing the final design of the Pressler Street extension to City Council for final approval after completing the traffic impact analysis will provide another avenue for public input; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20071011-062 requires the City to retain a permanent animal adoption center at the Lamar Beach property; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20081023-049 required the City of Austin to incorporate the animal adoption center at the Lamar Beach Metro Park into the master plan for the park; and

WHEREAS, the condition of the existing structure is not sufficient to adequately serve this animal adoption need and could conflict with the future layout of the property; and

WHEREAS, no City funding has been identified to upgrade or replace this structure; and

WHEREAS, APA is willing to fund the construction and operation of an adoption center onsite and will provide an opportunity for the Austin Animal Center to partner and use kennel space onsite without obligating the City of Austin to invest in the building of the facility, providing a valuable asset to City of Austin residents without requiring the use of taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, APA is willing to invest in additional park amenities like outdoor showers and a stretching area as part of the new facility; and

WHEREAS, the scope of the Lamar Beach Metro Park master plan should consider environmental protection and sustainability, public amenities, parking options that could include a managed parking plan to ensure that existing partners are able to continue their current services, and overall design that both serves the needs of the current partners and provides public benefits for all Austinites; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to initiate and expedite the master planning process for Lamar Beach Metro Park so that the process is completed by August 215 with status updates in November 2014 and May 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create a Lamar Beach master planning group, which works to maintain partners operating on the site, including WAYA, the YMCA of Austin, and APA and involves surrounding neighborhoods, including Old West Austin Neighborhood Association, representatives of the Austin Independent School District and Austin High School, and the Parks and Recreation Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to employ a third party contract consultant to conduct a traffic impact analysis of the Pressler Street extension to inform further Pressler Street extension design efforts and the master planning effort that will include consideration of traffic during peak times of morning and afternoon rush hour, drop off and pickup times for AHS during its normal operation, and peak traffic times around WAYA programming and AHS student usage of the fields, and could include recent historical data as a component of this analysis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to make the results of the traffic impact study available to all interested stakeholders at a public meeting, gather public

input, and present all findings to City Council prior to 50% of the final design being completed on the Pressler Street extension.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to hold public meetings to coordinate the Lamar Beach master plan with the design and alignment of the Pressler Street extension and bring the final design of the Pressler Street extension for Council approval prior to beginning construction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore options for circulation within the park, including an option that does not include the currently-proposed Reserve Road east of the Pressler Street extension.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

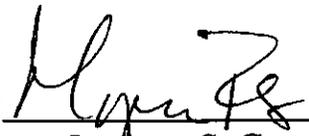
The City Manager is directed to retain a permanent adoption center at the Lamar Beach property per the requirement of Resolution No. 20071011-062 and Resolution No. 20081023-049 and work with APA to meet that requirement through an agreement where APA could fund the construction and operation of an animal adoption center at no cost to the City that would provide some adoption and kennel space to the Austin Animal Center and include additional park amenities like outdoor showers and a stretching space for trail users.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to address specific issues in the scope of the Lamar Beach Metro Park master plan, including environmental protection and sustainability, student safety, public amenities, alternative modal access

to the park, parking options to ensure that existing partners after construction are able to continue their current services, and overall design that both serves the needs of the current partners, park users and provides public benefits while ensuring the safety of all who use the park facilities or travel through the area.

ADOPTED: June 12, 2014

ATTEST:  For
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk