

RESOLUTION NO. 20060928-067

WHEREAS, there are thousands of urban parks in the nation's communities that help to enrich the lives of Americans everyday and there are 206 Austin urban parks, 12 preserves, and 26 greenbelts that help to enrich the lives of the thousands of citizens of Austin and the surrounding metropolitan area everyday; and

WHEREAS, urban parks provide countless social, health and environmental benefits for the residents of the nation's communities, such as helping to reduce air pollution, protecting communities from flooding, providing a safe place for children to play and learn, and providing a place for healthy recreation, physical activity, and family gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Parks and Recreation Board on behalf of the citizens of Austin has long recognized the important benefits of urban parks and has used its best efforts to advocate for ongoing investments of local parks; and

WHEREAS, the increased demand for park space and recreational facilities in Austin, together with our aging park infrastructure, has resulted in a situation where our local park system has been unable to keep pace with the tremendous costs of making the needed repairs, improvements and upgrades; and

WHEREAS, the National Recreation and Park Association has recently estimated that funding for local parks and recreation is predicted to fall \$38 billion short of meeting basic needs over the next four years; and

WHEREAS, despite the clear and important benefits of urban parks to the health and welfare of the nation's communities, and a demonstrated need for more funding, in recent years the federal government has failed to provide adequate funding for the nation's urban parks; and

WHEREAS, in May 2006, representatives of the largest urban park and recreation systems in the United States gathered together in Chicago for an "Urban Parks Summit" to create a new national agenda for urban parks and recreation, and a new compact among federal, state, and local governments, along with citizens groups, private foundations and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the new national agenda for urban parks and recreation is premised upon four guiding principles and beliefs, as follows:

- 1) Urban parks must continue to *promote health and wellness*;
- 2) Urban parks must continue to *stimulate community and economic development*;
- 3) Urban parks must continue to *protect the environment*; and
- 4) Urban parks must continue to *educate, protect and enrich America's young people*; and

WHEREAS, the new national urban parks and recreation agenda calls upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to provide increased federal funding for urban parks in the nation's communities, in exchange for a commitment from state and local governments to match the federal funds dollar-for-dollar; and

WHEREAS, this new urban parks agenda, which is premised upon these four guiding principles and a renewed commitment by all levels of government to invest in the nation's communities by investing in parks, will help to protect and ensure the countless value of urban parks for generations to come; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

That the City of Austin recognizes the invaluable role of urban parks and recreation services to the Austin community; and

That City Council endorses the new "National Agenda for Urban Parks and Recreation" adopted at the Urban Parks Summit in Chicago in May 2006, and recognizes the critical importance to the nation's communities of abiding by the four guiding principles for urban parks adopted at that Summit; and

That the City will support the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Recreation and Park Association in helping to carry out a national

advocacy effort to implement the new "National Agenda for Urban Parks and Recreation".

ADOPTED: September 28, 2006

ATTEST:


Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk