



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and Council Members  
**From:** Greg Meszaros, Director, Austin Water  
**Date:** September 12, 2019

**Subject: Response to Resolution 20190808-071 Downtown Drinking Fountains**

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On August 8, 2019 Council passed Resolution 20190808-071, which directed the City Manager to present the Council with proposed locations and a budget estimate to install at least ten (10) free, ADA compliant, 24-hour drinking fountains within the downtown Austin area. In response to this resolution, Austin Water conducted coordination meetings with multiple stakeholders and has identified ten potentially suitable fountain locations.

### **Stakeholder Input and Proposed Locations**

Austin Water staff conducted stakeholder input meetings with the following organizations and City Departments: Downtown Austin Alliance, Front Steps, The Trail Foundation, Austin Homelessness Advisory Council, Waller Creek Conservancy, Capital Metro, Downtown Austin Community Court, Pedestrian Advisory Council, Bicycle Advisory Council, Great Streets, Austin Transportation Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Department, Watershed Protection Department, and Economic Development Department.

Based on stakeholder input and a preliminary review of existing infrastructure needed to support drinking fountains, staff identified proposed locations for new drinking water fountains. The attached map shows the proposed locations, as well as locations of 29 existing drinking fountains within the area identified in the Resolution. Additional planning, engineering and permitting work, as well as coordination with stakeholders and adjacent property owners will be required before exact locations of the fountains can be finalized. The final locations would provide that these ADA compliant fountains be accessible 24-hours a day and be located in existing well-lit areas for nighttime use.

### **Estimated Budget**

The total estimated capital cost to install ten drinking fountains ranges between \$700,000 to \$750,000, or approximately \$70,000 to \$75,000 per location. The estimate is



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based on installing non-refrigerated, three-station units that include a drinking fountain, bottle filling station, and pet fountain. Costs at each location include the fountain unit, water service, wastewater service, installation, permitting, engineering and project management costs. The estimate was vetted by the Engineering Services Division of Public Works Department.

Estimated annual operations and maintenance cost is \$63,000. This estimate is based on providing one dedicated, full-time position (Maintenance Worker III). A consistent comment received during stakeholder engagement was the need to keep these fountains clean and sanitized. Accordingly, it is anticipated that each fountain would be cleaned and maintained on a daily basis thus requiring a full-time position.

Opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with other ongoing projects and agencies in the downtown area may yield lower installation and/or maintenance costs. For example, three (3) of the proposed fountain locations would coincide with the new public restroom facilities potentially lowering installation costs at these locations.

### **Austin Water Funding**

In addition to cost estimates, the resolution requested an evaluation of Austin Water funding the installation, maintenance and operation of these new drinking water fountains. In consultation with Law, Austin Water confirmed that there are no legal limitations to the Utility paying for public drinking water fountains or the water consumed at the fountains. While Austin Water's FY 2020 proposed budget did not specifically include funding to install, maintain and operate drinking water fountains, a review of the proposed FY 2020 levels of capital budget appropriations and operating budget indicates these costs can be absorbed in the FY 2020 budget submittal. Any future budget expenses beyond FY 2020 would be included in budget proposals.

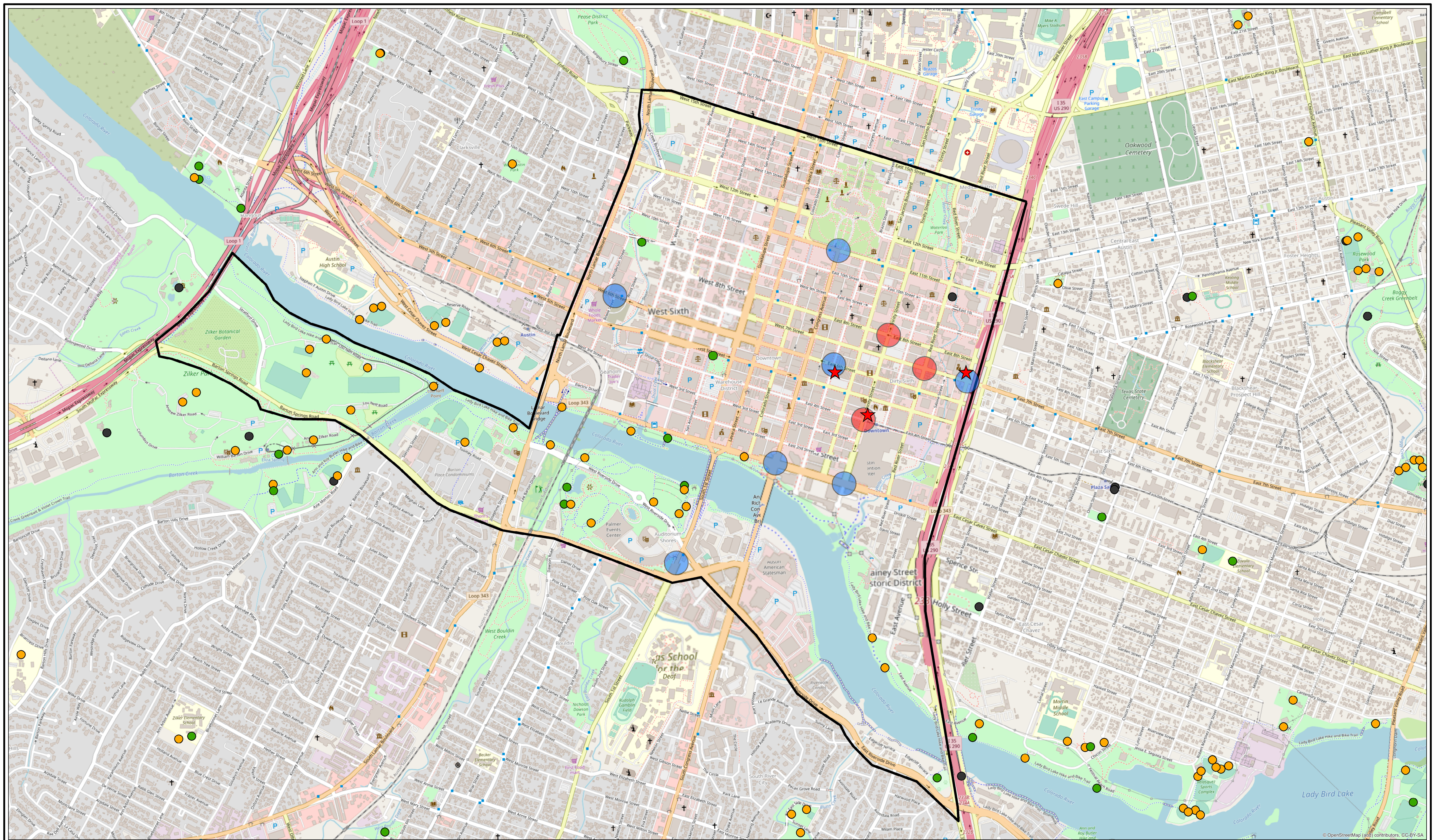
Should you have any questions or need additional information please contact me at 512-972-0108 or [greg.meszaros@austintexas.gov](mailto:greg.meszaros@austintexas.gov).

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Kimberly McNeely, Director, Parks and Recreation Department  
Rob Spillar, Director, Austin Transportation Department  
Richard Mendoza, Director, Public Works Department  
William Stauber, Interim Assistant Director of Engineering Services, Austin Water


Attachment: Downtown Austin Drinking Fountains Ten Potentially Suitable Locations Map




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# Public Drinking Water Fountains




Proposed Fountains From Council Resolution



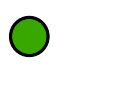
Proposed Fountains From Stakeholder Input




Proposed Public Restrooms




Council Resolution Boundary



Accessible Drinking Fountains



Not Accessible Drinking Fountains



Not Evaluated Drinking Fountains


0


0.25

0.5

1

Miles





Distribution System Engineering

Date: 08/26/2019

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