

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	60307	Agenda Number	6.
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Meeting Date:	8/4/2016	Department:	Parks and Recreation
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Subject

Approve an ordinance authorizing negotiation and execution of an agreement with the Austin Area Garden Center, Inc. for use of the Zilker Garden Center and waiving certain building-use fees as part of the agreement in an amount not to exceed \$175,551.

Amount and Source of Funding

This item waives a maximum of \$175,551 in General Fund, Parks and Recreation Department fees.

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is attached detailing the maximum amount of building use fees to be waived.

Purchasing Language:	
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Prior Council Action:	
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For More Information:	Cora Wright, 512-974-6743; Vera Labriola, 512-974-6716
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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	July 26, 2016 - Approved by the Parks and Recreation Board 7-0-0-4 with Board Members Alter, Casias, Cofer, and Vane absent.
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MBE / WBE:	
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Related Items:	
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Additional Backup Information

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Austin Area Garden Center, Inc., doing business as the Austin Area Garden Council ("Garden Council") currently have an agreement that is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2016.

The City and the Garden Council have a longstanding relationship of over 50 years. In 1964, the Zilker Garden Center building was built from funds raised by the Garden Council. Since 1986, the City and the Garden Council have had a building use agreement, which includes collaboration on development projects, ongoing operations, educational outreach, volunteer opportunities and the promotion of best management practices and garden club activities.

Today there are nine theme gardens in Zilker Garden, and the Garden Council provides volunteers to help maintain them. Some theme gardens, such as the Taniguchi Japanese Garden, were built by volunteers and members. Over 110,000 individuals who visit Zilker Garden annually, can request tours by Garden Center volunteers.

The City and the Garden Council are both working with the recently formed Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy (“Conservancy”) to help develop Zilker Botanical Gardens into a world-class botanical garden that will benefit all City of Austin residents.

In order to advance a shared mission that promotes conservation, and provides educational and recreational opportunities to citizens and visitors alike, the parties desire to enter into another building use agreement. The basic terms and conditions of the agreement will continue to:

- Promote the City’s partnership with the Garden Center with a two-year contract term and a possible one-year extension option for a total of three years
- Allow the Garden Council to staff and operate a gift shop for visitors to the Garden Center
- Allow Garden Center staff to utilize designated office space in the Garden Center for the Garden Council to share with the Conservancy at no cost
- Allow the Garden Council access to provide education and gardening-related programs and to arrange and facilitate tours that create opportunities for the general public to observe and participate in the beautification of Zilker Gardens
- Allow the Garden Council and its member clubs to use the Garden Center within a PARD approved established schedule at no cost
- Establish mechanisms that will allow the Garden Council to generate revenue, which minus expenses incurred, will be applied to the operation, maintenance, and further improvement of Zilker Gardens

The public benefit of the proposed agreement between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Garden Council provides programs and opportunities that promote the education of citizens in the art of gardening that could not otherwise be provided by the Parks and Recreation Department staff. Additionally, the proposed agreement ensures community access while providing the City with a valuable partner in the ongoing development of Zilker Gardens.