

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**

2 **WHEREAS**, the 351-acre Zilker Metropolitan Park is considered  
3 Austin's most beloved park, attracting visitors from across the City and  
4 beyond; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Zilker Park is home to a variety of recreation opportunities,  
6 facilities and special events, including a beloved miniature train traditionally  
7 enjoyed by thousands of individuals and families per year; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the twelve-passenger Zilker Park Eagle miniature train  
9 made its first trip in Zilker Park on April 22, 1961, and was subsequently named  
10 the Zilker Zephyr after the City facilitated a City-wide naming contest; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in February 1997, the 72-passenger family amusement  
12 ride known as the Zilker Zephyr, operated by Texas Special Company, began  
13 its route around a defined path within Zilker Park; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in June 2018, Resolution No. 20180628-072 created the  
15 Zilker Park Working Group, which recommended to City Council in June 2019  
16 that the City begin a Vision Plan process for Zilker Park, which may consider the  
17 family amusement train ride path; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in May 2019, a rainstorm caused severe erosion to an  
19 embankment supporting part of the train's track, causing it to close temporarily;  
20 and

21 **WHEREAS**, in January 2020, the Parks and Recreation Department was  
22 not able to come to an agreement with Texas Special Company for a new contract  
23 for the continued operation of the train; and

24           **WHEREAS**, in February 2020, Resolution No. 20200220-046 directed the  
25 City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement between the City and the  
26 Austin Parks Foundation (APF) to allow APF to procure a new train vendor and  
27 to oversee the operations of the train; and

28           **WHEREAS**, the Resolution also directed all net proceeds were to be  
29 distributed to non-profit organizations operating within and around Zilker Park  
30 via a transparent financial reporting process developed by APF and PARD until  
31 such time as the Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan recommendations for  
32 future train operations could be implemented; and

33           **WHEREAS**, in September 2020, APF launched a contest to name the  
34 train, resulting in the selection of the historic Zilker Eagle name; and

35           **WHEREAS**, the Austin Parks Foundation will operate as the temporary  
36 concessionaire of the Zilker Eagle for the term specified in the agreement or  
37 until such time as the Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan recommendations for  
38 future train operations are implemented, whichever occurs sooner; and

39           **WHEREAS**, the planning process for the Vision Plan is underway and is  
40 anticipated to continue through 2021, with possible plan adoption in 2022; and

41           **WHEREAS**, erosion repair and the resulting train track realignment are  
42 underway, with Zilker Eagle operations expected to begin in the final quarter of  
43 2021; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

45           The City Manager is directed to include language in the PARD/APF Zilker  
46 Eagle agreement that APF will distribute all net proceeds from the Zilker Eagle to  
47 nonprofits supporting parks across the City in a transparent and equitable manner,

48 such proceeds to be used for park system improvements, upgrades, amenities, and  
49 maintenance. Funding distribution should ensure sufficient funding is available to  
50 support what is needed for Zilker Park to ensure the Zilker Eagle is sustainably  
51 maintained and is able to generate funds to serve the overall City parks system.

52  
53 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2021 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

54 Jannette S. Goodall  
55 City Clerk  
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