



Item 1.60 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Investing in Much-Needed Improvements at Northwest Pool

Council Member Pool proposes making much-needed repairs to one of Austin’s most-used pools.

- Council Member Pool proposes investing roughly \$210,000 to repair Northwest Pool’s cracked and dangerous deck – ensuring residents can safely enjoy the pool.
- This investment will make much-needed repairs to Northwest Pool, though Council Member Pool is dedicated to continuing to push for further investments to fully repair Northwest in the future.

Northwest Pool is one of Austin’s most-used pools – and badly needs repairs.

- Northwest Pool is one of the most-used pools in Austin. Over 15,000 Austin residents live within a mile of Northwest Pool.¹
- Nearly 3 in 10 individuals responding to online and at-pool surveys say someone in their household has used Northwest Pool in the past year – one of the highest rates in Austin.¹
- However, Northwest Pool also badly needs repairs. It is nearly six decades old and has cracked decks and a numerous other infrastructure issues.¹
- The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has identified Northwest Pool as a “critical pool” that needs “major renovation” and is unlikely to survive five years without major repairs or replacement.¹

Item 1.53 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Restoring Our Libraries to Full Service

Council Member Pool’s proposal would restore Austin libraries to pre-recession service levels.

- During the 2008 recession, Austin Public Library was forced to cut its branch hours to deal with reduced funding.
- Last year, City Council partially restored the cuts to the days and hours made during the recession.
- Council Member Pool’s proposal would fully restore the roughly \$356,000 needed to bring Austin libraries back up to their pre-recession levels, ensuring residents can access their community libraries.

¹ “Aquatic Facilities Needs Assessment,” Austin Parks and Recreation Department.



Items 1.67, 1.68, and 1.69 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Keeping Our Parks, Playgrounds, and Facilities Safe

Council Member Pool's proposals would invest in the staff and equipment necessary to keep Austin's parks, playgrounds, and facilities safe and well-maintained.

- Council Member Pool has proposed three strategic investments that would keep Austin's parks, playgrounds, and facilities safe and well-maintained, including investing in:
 - Staff and equipment needed to maintain Austin's parks and playgrounds (\$1.5 million);
 - Staff to keep Austin's recreational and cultural facilities safe and clean (\$108,000); and
 - Park Rangers to patrol and monitor the city's parkland and enforce park rules (\$375,000).

Austin residents are able to enjoy a large number of parks, playgrounds, and cultural and recreational facilities.

- The Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) is responsible for maintaining many of the city's important community assets, including:²
 - Almost 100 parks;
 - Over 300 playgrounds;
 - Over 1,000 playground pieces and components;
 - About 20,000 acres of parkland;
 - Over 190 miles of hike and bike trails; and
 - Many of the city's recreation centers, museums, cultural facilities, and other buildings around the city – including cleaning the facilities' public bathrooms.

However, the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) does not currently have enough resources to fully maintain these precious community assets – despite being high priorities.

- Many playscapes in Austin's parks and playgrounds are in need of upkeep and repair, while others are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some playscapes are roughly 35 years old.
- Many of the city's recreational and cultural facilities often require weekly care to ensure that dangerous debris is removed, bathrooms are cleaned and sanitized, and other safety issues are recognized and addressed.
- Despite serving a critical public safety role, there are not enough Park Rangers to patrol the city's parkland during all the hours that that parkland is open, which means that public parks go unpatrolled in the early morning and in the evenings.
- PARC has recognized these issues as high-priority unmet needs.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would make the investments necessary to ensure all Austin residents can continue to enjoy the city's treasured parks, playgrounds, and facilities.

Council Member Pool and her colleagues have also recognized a number of other parks-related needs across the city that she would like Council to consider funding, including:

- Improvements to parks and recreation centers in underserved sections of the city; and
- Investments in summer camp and other parks programs.

² "FY 2015-16 Five-Year Financial Forecast and Economic Outlook," City of Austin.



Item 1.29 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Helping Underserved Communities Access Healthy Foods

Council Member Pool's pilot Healthy Foods Initiative would help underserved Austin communities access healthy, affordable food.

- Through this Healthy Foods Initiative, Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) would administer a \$350,000 grant program that would:
 - Help local corner stores in low- to moderate-income areas offer healthy food (\$150,000);
 - Support farm markets at schools and community centers (\$100,000); and
 - Expand an existing non-profit incentive program that matches the money low-income families spend on healthy foods up to \$20 per week (\$100,000).
- Council Member Pool's proposal would also provide for one full-time employee to administer these grants.
- This proposal would take the first steps toward a broader, ongoing commitment to providing access to healthy food by focusing this year on targeted areas where local stakeholders have already built support for these initiatives – and looking to continue expanding into other high-need areas across the city in the future as the program succeeds.

Residents in underserved Austin communities do not have reliable access to healthy food.

- Many communities in the Austin area do not have access to healthy foods. Roughly 17 percent of Travis County residents lack access to nutritious foods.³
- Less affluent areas tend to have significantly fewer grocery stores and significantly more corner stores than other, more affluent areas.⁴

The Healthy Foods Initiative uses proven programs and is ready to go in Austin.

- The programs included in the Healthy Foods Initiative have been successfully implemented in a number of cities – including some programs that have been done in Austin.
- HHSD already has experience working on similar initiatives in the past.
- A number of stakeholders in Austin support this type of initiative, including Austin Interfaith, Go! Austin/VAMOS! Austin, and the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board.
- Because these programs are scalable, City Council can continue to expand them across the city as the programs succeed and grow.

³ "Community Health Assessment," Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (December 2012).

⁴ "The Grocery Gap," The Food Trust (2010).



City of Austin

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Item 1.61 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Transparency for CodeNEXT Policymaking

Council Member Pool proposes ensuring that important meetings on rewriting the city's land use regulations are videotaped and made available for public viewing.

- Austin is currently working on CodeNEXT, an important initiative to rewrite the regulations on how land can be used and developed in the city.
- To help engage the public and provide feedback on CodeNEXT, the City Council created an advisory group (the Land Development Code Advisory Group, or CAG), with members appointed by the City Council and City Manager.
- However, unlike City Council, Council Committees, or Boards and Commissions meetings, the city does not videotape and televise these important CAG meetings. Only audio recordings of CAG meetings are available.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would invest about \$3,800 to ensure that Austin residents are able to watch these important meetings and participate in the CodeNEXT process.

Item 1.70 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Ensuring CodeNEXT Protects Our Natural Resources

Council Member Pool proposes hiring a green infrastructure consultant to advise on how to rewrite the city's land use regulations in a way that protects Austin's natural resources.

- Austin is currently working on CodeNEXT, an important initiative to rewrite the regulations on how land can be used and developed in the city.
- Investing \$250,000 in hiring a consultant with expertise in green infrastructure would help protect our natural resources and ecosystems by allowing him or her to advise on ways the city can integrate parks, working landscapes, and other open spaces responsibly into land use regulations.
- This would also help the CodeNEXT process further align with "Imagine Austin," the city's comprehensive plan, which includes green infrastructure and sustainable water management as one of its main principles.