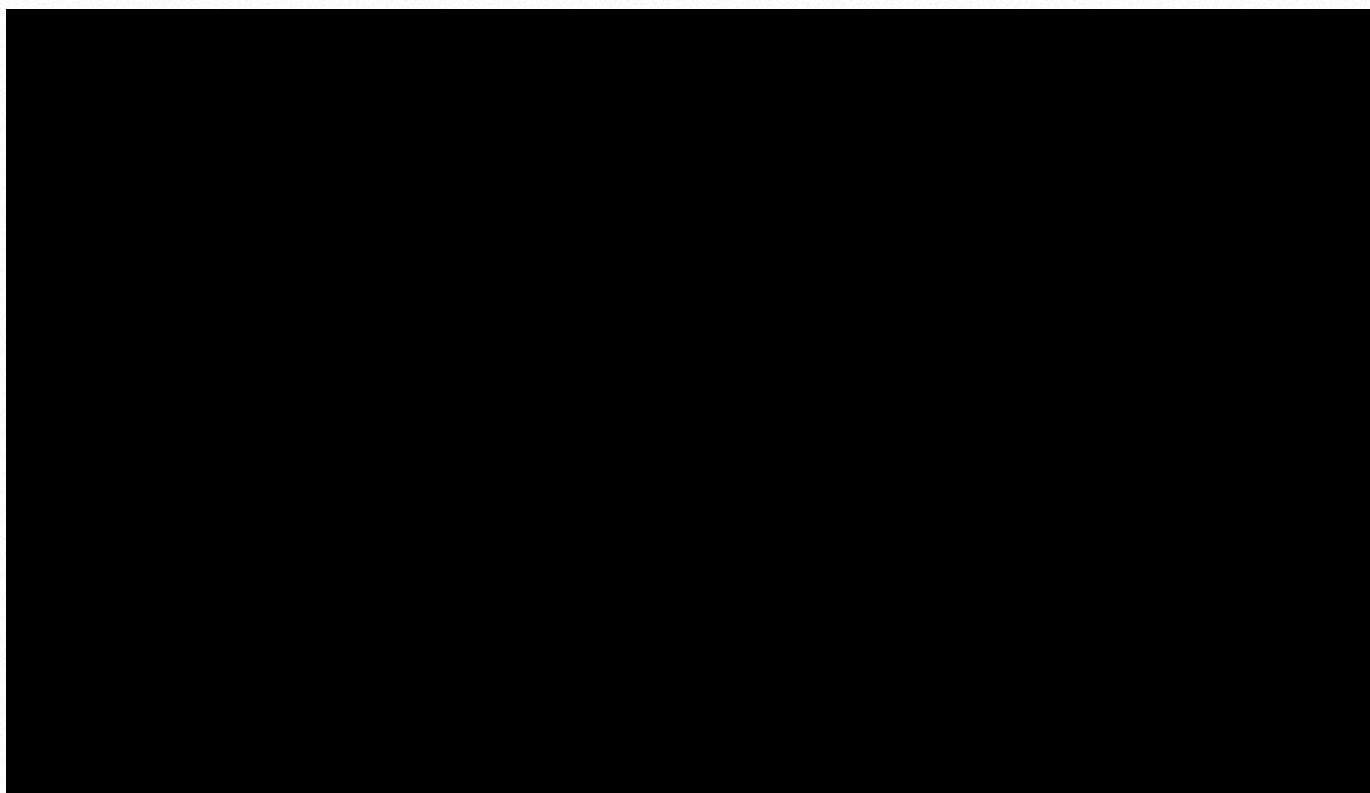




City Council approves \$7.5M for Waller Creek Tunnel project



Additional money approved for Waller Creek Tunnel Project

Ashley Goudeau, KVUE 7:03 PM. CDT May 12, 2016

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The Austin City Council voted Thursday to add an additional \$7.5 million in funding to the Waller Creek Tunnel project.

Just last summer, council approved spending another \$6.2



(Photo: KVUE)

million on the project, but during the meeting, city staff told council without the additional funding, work on the tunnel would stop.

The purpose of the Waller Creek Tunnel is to carry water from the creek away from downtown, preventing flooding.

The outlet facility that releases the water into Lady Bird Lake is complete. City staff said they need \$1.5 million to finish the inlet facility, where water goes in, on 8th Street, another \$500,000 for the inlet facility on 4th Street, \$500,000 for contingency and \$5 million for the main inlet facility at Waterloo Park.

The main inlet facility has been a point of contention and caused many delays because when it was first built a section of the roof and observation deck violated the Capitol View Corridor. It had to be torn down and redesigned.

City staff said the bulk of the \$5 million is going to a settlement with the construction company that lost money when the city had to halt the project, but staff expects to get most of this money back.

"Our belief and position has been that the Capitol View Corridor issue is a design error that the design engineer's at least partially responsible for," said City of Austin Public Works Director Howard Lazarus. "We will embark upon a negotiation process with them and their insurers to settle those matters but it is our expectation that we will significantly recover the money we asked for today."

Lazarus said now that the city can reach a settlement and pay the construction crews, the negotiations can begin.

The tunnel is already in service, but will have to get some repairs to the concrete and steel this year. The cost to do that is covered in the tunnel's warranty. The 4th Street inlet and Waterloo Inlet are expected to be done by the end of the year and the 8th Street inlet will be finished next May.

While that will be the end of the tunnel construction, it won't be the end of construction for Waterloo Park. The Waller Creek Conservancy is improving the park itself and city staff said that will happen after construction is complete.

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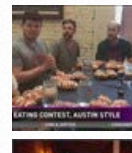
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