

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City Council believes that City of Austin residents and taxpayers are well-served by a budget-making process that is transparent and responsive to the needs and objectives of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City Council commends the City Manager for his multi-year effort to increase the transparency of the city's budget development process; and

WHEREAS, among these laudable efforts, the City Manager has created a budget-making calendar which includes the publication of essential planning documents, such as the Annual Performance Report, Horizon Issues Report, Unmet Needs Report, and the Citizen Survey, and currently provides these critical documents to the Council prior to presentation of the City's five-year financial forecast; and

WHEREAS, the City Council's policy making responsibilities include setting policy priorities and helping to define core city objectives that guide the business planning and budget development processes, and the City Manager has the responsibility to keep Council advised of the financial condition and future needs of the city; and

WHEREAS, understanding that the City Manager retains the authority to prepare a city-wide budget recommendation for Council's consideration, the City Council should provide meaningful and appropriate policy-based input during key planning phases for the City Manager's consideration in developing the budget recommendation; **NOW THEREFORE**,

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

1. The City Council will conduct an annual policy retreat in order to discuss broad policy objectives with the City Manager. The timing of the retreat will be scheduled by the City Council, after consultation with the City Manager to ensure coordination with annual budget and business planning calendar development. Discussions will include highlights of key successes and challenges from the previous fiscal year and broad policy objectives for the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

2. After the City Manager presents the five-year financial forecast, the City Council and City Manager will discuss departmental conditions as they relate to the future needs of the city, no later than April or May each year. Relying on information provided by the City Manager prior to these conversations, the City Council and the City Manager will discuss:
 - a. Previous fiscal year-ending financial and key performance report data;
 - b. An overview of progress and challenges on departmental horizon issues and unmet needs for the current fiscal year;
 - c. Projected current year-ending financial and key performance measures data; and
 - d. An outline of core departmental objectives and horizon issues for the next fiscal year.

3. Also as part of the annual budget and business planning calendar development, the City Manager will recommend to the City Council which specific city departments these discussions will cover and whether they should be conducted in full Council work sessions or in Council committees. The City Council will apprise the City Manager if they would like additional departments added to the discussions and if there are any changes Council requires to the proposed discussion format and schedule.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

4. For the fiscal year 2010-2011 only, Council requests that department discussions be conducted of the following departments as soon as feasible after completion of the five-year financial forecast presentations that are currently scheduled in April. The discussions can be scheduled at the appropriate Council committee meetings or at a regularly scheduled work session(s).
 - a. Austin Energy
 - b. Austin Water Utility
 - c. Solid Waste Services
 - d. Planning and Development Review
 - e. Capital Planning Office
 - f. Austin/Travis County Health & Human Services Department
 - g. Parks & Recreation Department

h. Austin Fire Department

i. Austin Police Department

APPROVED: _____, 2011

ATTEST: _____

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk

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