RESOLUTION NO._____

WHEREAS, due in part to a robust and growing economy, Austin's population grew by thousands over the past 12 months, making it among the fastest growing metropolitan statistical areas in the nation;

WHEREAS, the resulting growth has significantly increased occupancy rates citywide, which has directly impacted the majority of Austin citizens who rent their homes by driving up the cost of rents; and

WHEREAS, in addition to reducing the availability of housing, increased growth over the past year has resulted in significant backlogs in construction permitting and increased turn around time for permit review; and

WHEREAS, small local businesses suffer disproportionate losses due to the complexity and difficulty in navigating the backlogs in the permitting process; and

WHEREAS, the creation of pilot programs focused on local businesses to immediately "test run" temporary strategies aimed at relieving the bottlenecks may be useful; and

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:
The city manager is directed to:

1. locate significant bottlenecks in the City's permit review process, including but not limited to the Austin Fire Department's Emergency Prevention Services, Transportation Department, Watershed Protection Department and the Planning & Development Review Department's commercial plan review process;

2. develop proposed strategies to eliminate these bottlenecks without compromising enforcement of public safety codes or the consistency of development with City zoning regulations;

   a. these strategies should include, but not be limited to, options for hiring new full time employees, recommendations on hiring a third-party reviewer to help the department get on schedule, and ways to synchronize what are now separate review procedures to make the overall process more efficient and timely; and

3. present a recommendation at the City Council's June 14, 2012 meeting.

ADOPTED: _____, 2012   **ATTEST:**_____

                                         Shirley A. Gentry
                                         City Clerk