

RESOLUTION NO. 20130117-057

WHEREAS, for several years Austin experienced a downward trend in the number of traffic fatalities, decreasing from 73 to 54 between 2004 and 2011; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 Austin experienced 78 traffic fatalities, an increase of 44% from the previous year; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department plans to host a regional summit to discuss approaches to address this challenge and to step up safety initiatives and traffic enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the trend in traffic fatalities in Austin is consistent with a nationwide trend: traffic fatality rates in the U.S. in 2011 were 26% lower than in 2005, but there was an increase of 7.1% in the number of fatalities in the first nine months of 2012; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has serious concern about the safety of Austinites and the increase in traffic fatalities which included motorists and passengers, cyclists, pedestrians, and motorcyclists; and

WHEREAS, speculation and theories to explain the causes of the spike in traffic fatalities in Austin and nationwide have suggested, among others, drunk driving, distracted driving, warmer weather resulting in more pedestrian activity, an improvement in the economy leading to more discretionary driving; and

WHEREAS, an analysis of the causes behind the increase in traffic fatalities would allow for targeted countermeasures to address the issue and reduce traffic fatality rates; and

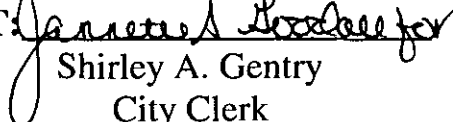
WHEREAS, effective countermeasures have been developed in other cities to address these issues as referenced in the PEDSAFE and BIKESAFE programs at the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and the Countermeasures that Work program at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and

WHEREAS, the City is in a position to build upon efforts to improve traffic safety regionally including participation in the October 5, 2012 Transportation Safety Summit, as directed by Council resolution 20120524-093; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

City Council directs the City Manager to work with the Austin Police Department, the Transportation Department, the Public Works Department and other city departments or state agencies as needed to perform an analysis of the causes of the increase in traffic fatalities in 2012 and develop countermeasures to prevent future traffic-related fatalities. This should be reported to the City Council in an interim status report by February 28, 2013, and in a final report by April 15, 2013.

ADOPTED: January 17, 2013

ATTEST: 
Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk