

RESOLUTION NO. 20130321-040

WHEREAS, alleys traditionally served a variety of purposes, from providing opportunities for servicing commercial businesses to pedestrian-friendly uses; and

WHEREAS, the City's alleys have long been neglected, with several even being vacated and sold to private developers; and

WHEREAS, a pending ordinance change would allow alley loading and unloading as a matter of right; and

WHEREAS, a working group of the Downtown Commission, along with Art Alliance, the Public Works Department, the Department of Economic Growth and Redevelopment, The University of Texas, and the Downtown Commission among others have initiated the Alley Activation Project, an experiment in transforming a Downtown alley into an interactive public space from April 17 to April 21, and an art installation that may remain for several months; and

WHEREAS, a 2009 Master's Report for The University of Texas Department of Architecture recommended that the City create a downtown alley master plan; and

WHEREAS, such a master plan could provide planners and City Council with guidance in making decisions that take into account the contextual and historical significance of alleys and their potential for more public, pedestrian uses; and

WHEREAS, cities such as Fort Collins, Colorado, Seattle, Washington, Chicago, Illinois, and Los Angeles, California have undertaken

alley reactivation initiatives and in doing so have enlivened their downtown public spaces and created additional reasons for residents and visitors to spend time and money there; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

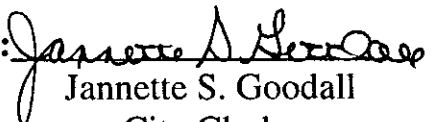
The City Manager is directed to report back to Council by June 20, 2013, about options and a proposed timeframe for conducting a Downtown Alley Master Plan, which may be undertaken either by existing staff or in partnership with professional or university resources; and provide the Downtown Commission, Urban Transportation Commission, and Planning Commission with opportunities for feedback on the proposed plan.

The Downtown Alley Master Plan should build upon the framework developed in the 2009 report and verify findings and existing conditions; further analyze downtown alleys and their uses and cultural/historical significance; identify which alleys offer most potential for ongoing or permanent "activation"; address the merits of allowing loading and unloading by right; and describe other opportunities and challenges that may exist.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

When reviewing proposed amendments to the City Code that pertain to downtown alleys, the Council shall strive to preserve possibilities for Austin's urban alleys and shall carefully consider any future alley vacations.

ADOPTED: March 21, 2013

ATTEST: 
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk