

## **RESOLUTION NO.**

**WHEREAS**, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan envisions a nexus of housing, transportation and jobs through several of its six core principles for action, “to grow as a compact and connected city”, “develop as an affordable and healthy community”, and “sustainably manage water, energy and other environmental resources”; and

**WHEREAS**, Imagine Austin identifies ways to “expand the growth-shaping toolkit” which include utilization of both zoning and incentives in the form of “grants, loans, infrastructure investments, or innovative regulatory approaches” and to identify, cultivate and create partners from government, institutions, businesses, and community groups to achieve its comprehensive vision; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin continues to experience expansive population growth and development that can be designed and directed to better provide solutions that connect housing, transportation and jobs while also providing opportunities to address issues of affordability; and

**WHEREAS**, Council has adopted programs and policies to address housing challenges such as Resolution 20130509-031 that directed the City Manager to establish baseline information, goals, opportunities, and sustainable strategies for preserving affordable housing stock; and

**WHEREAS**, in Resolution 20140213-044, Council directed the City Manager to develop a program plan, financing, and funding strategy for viable districts in the context of an overall affordable housing financing strategy and includes recommendations on using other funding tools to accomplish the Council’s priorities; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council, Capital Metro and Lone Star Rail District's Board of Directors endorsed the Project Connect High-Capacity Transit System Plan in resolutions on June 21, 2013, August 29, 2013 and October 4, 2013; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council in Resolution 20131212-067 endorsed the City Manager's Phase 1 recommendation for Project Connect and further evaluation and analysis of multiple corridor opportunities along with recommendations for future phases of the Project effort for Council to consider; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council further indicated tentative plans to include a transit bond on the November 2014 election ballot for consideration; and

**WHEREAS**, a Transit Project will be dependent on federal funding under the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the statutory project justification criteria set forth by the FTA New Starts Program include mobility improvements, environmental benefits, congestion relief, economic development effects, land-use and cost effectiveness; and

**WHEREAS**, the measure of economic development effects considered in the criteria is the extent to which a proposed project is likely to induce additional, transit-supportive development in the future based on a qualitative examination of the demonstrated performance and existing local plans or policies that support economic development proximate to the project; and

**WHEREAS**, the evaluation criteria also involves a quantitative examination of estimated changes in vehicle miles traveled attributable to the estimated changes in development patterns; and

**WHEREAS**, Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, dated February 11, 1994, and U.S. DOT Order 5610.2(a), Actions to address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations, dated May 10, 2012, require that the U.S. Department of Transportation and the FTA make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs, policies and activities on minority or low-income populations; and

**WHEREAS**, FTA New Starts incorporates goals that include affordable housing “...to ensure that service is improved over time there is a mix of housing options for existing and future residents” and further seeks to “avoid significant gentrification”; and

**WHEREAS**, FTA New Starts goals align with Imagine Austin and City Council goals; and

**WHEREAS**, FTA New Starts funding is competitive with evaluation of proposals addressing affordability under three of the individual criteria ratings including mobility improvements, economic development effects and land use, accounting for a significant portion of an application’s Project Justification;

- The mobility improvements criteria rating includes a calculation of estimated number of transit trips and multiplies by a factor of two transit trips taken by transit dependent persons.

- The economic development effects criteria rating includes evaluation of the “policies and tools in place to preserve or increase the amount of affordable housing in the project corridor”.
- The land use criteria rating utilizes as a measure “the proportion of existing “legally binding affordability restricted” housing within ½ mile of station areas to the proportion of “legally binding affordability restricted” housing in the counties through which the project travels.”; and

**WHEREAS**, FTA New Starts Final Policy Guidance of August 2013, sets forth specific breakpoints and details for achieving highest rankings in their evaluations; and

**WHEREAS**, the FTA New Starts proposal submission after NEPA is anticipated within the next few years, the City Council is afforded some time to establish policies, strategy and timeline that will be beneficial in maximizing the City’s success by the submission date; and

**WHEREAS**, this is best achieved by ensuring related policies and programs are designed and implemented to enhance application success and will require some analysis of existing conditions applicable to the FTA New Starts requirements and criteria; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council reaffirms its commitment to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan by recognizing the opportunity presented through the nexus of housing affordability, economic development and transit; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to create a “Housing/Transit/Jobs Action Team” with perspectives from Directors of NHCD, PDR, ATD, and EDD and include Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The team should initially consider FTA New Starts Policy Guidance Criteria that address affordable housing, and shall incorporate stakeholders and partnerships with organizations that bring expertise in relevant research, program development and financial considerations as needed and to:

- Capture additional analysis called for;
- Identify current programs and policies that address FTA New Starts criteria related to affordable housing;
- Identify gaps and deficiencies to achieve highest rankings for criteria that involve affordable housing;
- Identify current programs and policies that address FTA New Starts criteria related to job preservation or economic development;
- Identify all options and recommend strategies, programs and policies to fill the gaps along with a timeline; and
- Present to the Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Council committee by June 15, 2014 before reporting to Council by with status, including information on the Homestead Preservation District study and Preservation programs in anticipation of informing budget discussions and recommendations for a work plan outline anticipating continuing efforts by the Housing/Transit/Jobs Action Team.

**ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2014

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk