

RESOLUTION NO. 20160804-XXX

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council is committed to supporting and enhancing opportunities for citizen participation at all of its open meetings; and

WHEREAS, even though the Texas Open Meetings Act does not require governmental entities to provide a public forum for citizens to speak on matters of interest, this and previous Councils have recognized the value of citizen participation as a key component to effective governance and therefore have established rules in Section 2-5-28 of the City Code allowing General Citizen Communication at open meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Open Meetings Act was amended in 2013 to allow a governmental body to permit members of the public to testify at an open meeting from a remote location by videoconference call; and

WHEREAS, the Council is committed to supporting innovative uses of technology to enhance citizen participation while simultaneously working in tandem with environmentally-friendly mobility options to relieve traffic congestion in the downtown area; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Manager and the City Clerk are directed to develop a plan for implementation of a pilot program, to be no longer than three months in duration, whereby citizen participation during General Citizen Communication as defined in Section 2-5-28 of the City Code, would be allowed via videoconference call from a local Council District office during regularly-scheduled open Council meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager and City Clerk are directed to report back to Council no later than September 1, 2016 with a plan for the pilot program. The plan should specify timelines and projected cost of the pilot program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

Pending approval of the plan, the City Manager and City Clerk are directed to report back to Council no later than December 15, 2016 on the results of the pilot program, and make recommendations to Council based on the conduct of the pilot program for any Code amendments, Code provision waivers, Council rules, and technology requirements that may be necessary in order to implement the program more widely and on a regular basis.

ADOPTED: _____, 2016

ATTEST: _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk