

RESOLUTION NO. 20170817-055

WHEREAS, ongoing gentrification in Austin is resulting in the displacement of low- and moderate-income residents from their communities; and

WHEREAS, the complex issue of gentrification and the problems of displacement are evident in many large U.S. cities, as well as in Austin, and are being studied by academic and research institutions such as the University of California, Harvard University, Princeton University, and the Brookings Institute, among others; and

WHEREAS, current market forces in Austin are destabilizing existing communities through rising rents, rapidly rising property values that increase property taxes, and rapid redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, rapid redevelopment in gentrifying neighborhoods is focused on attracting a narrow segment of higher-income earners for units that are not affordable to the existing communities, including to families; and

WHEREAS the displacement of less affluent residents is leading to a loss of diversity and sense of place for Austin communities; and

WHEREAS, the City's demographer and planners with Austin Independent School District (AISD) have documented a decline of students in central Austin and this is of particular concern for AISD schools imperiled by low enrollment; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council recognizes the value of studying gentrification and displacement in Austin to discover the underlying causes and deleterious effects upon communities of low- and moderate-income residents; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council values the expertise of our academic experts at the University of Texas, and relies upon partnerships with those experts to provide necessary research and study of local issues; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council acknowledges the need to study and analyze the city's patterns of gentrification and displacement of individual residents and families, along with a mapping of where these trends are occurring; and

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin calls for “Complete Communities” where “all Austinites must benefit from its outcomes”, for “opportunities for existing residents who are struggling with rising housing costs to continue living in their existing neighborhoods”; and

WHEREAS, several city boards and commissions have issued resolutions and recommendations calling for the Austin City Council to review and respond to gentrification and displacement issues in Austin’s vulnerable communities, including the Zoning and Platting Commission, the Community Development Commission, the Human Rights Commission, and the Mayor’s Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities; and

WHEREAS, studying gentrification and displacement and developing a mapping of neighborhoods on a spectrum of vulnerability to gentrification and displacement will provide the City Council with the necessary foundation for policy decisions and assist efforts to manage growth as well as achieve the goals of Imagine Austin; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to negotiate an Interlocal Agreement with the University of Texas at Austin related to a study of gentrification,

displacement and mapping of vulnerable neighborhoods (the "Study") issues within the City; and to provide Council an opportunity to authorize the execution of an agreement on or before September 28, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council requests that the Study include sections related to study and data analysis, mapping of vulnerable neighborhoods, and policy tool recommendations; that the Study focus on the unique factors, including, but not limited to, race, class, and age, when evaluating the risk of displacement and to the degree of harm from displacement; that the Study include data in the mapping on public infrastructure investment using existing data; and that the Study be completed on or before August 31, 2018. The City Council also requests a mid-Study report in January, 2018. The City Council requests that the maximum amount of funds dedicated to the Study be \$69,000.

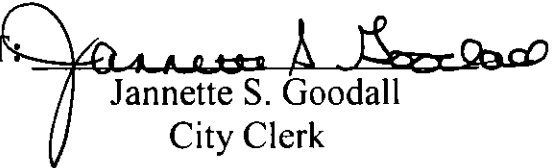
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to provide an estimate of the cost to keep the Study up-to-date; and to provide the estimate on or before March 1, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

After the Study is complete, the City Council directs the City Manager to prepare a coordinated plan to use the Study and implement the policy tool recommendations.

ADOPTED: August 17, 2017

ATTEST: 
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk