

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, Austin is experiencing high rates of development and growth as well as diminishing housing stock and affordable housing options; and

WHEREAS, the loss of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families and residents is one of the biggest challenges facing Austin today; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan identifies the development and maintenance of affordability through Austin as a top priority and states that a key challenge is “encouraging the preservation of affordable housing in neighborhoods across the city and in activity centers and corridors”; and

WHEREAS, the University of Texas School of Law’s Community Development Clinic’s Preserving Austin Multifamily Rental Housing Toolkit 2007 stated that in appreciating neighborhoods like Austin’s, market pressures lead to the disappearance of affordable housing from the city through demolition, conversion to other uses, and increases in rents, resulting in the displacement of low-income tenants; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 City of Austin’s Office of the City Auditor’s Demolition Permits Audit Report shows an average 13% increase per year since 2010 of approved demolition permits; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal years 2015 and 2016, most of these demolitions permits (77%) were approved for residential single-family homes, with more than half of all approved permits occurring in City Council Districts 3, 9, and 10; and

WHEREAS, data indicates that the almost 1,800 residential demolitions in the urban core between 2000 and 2010 nearly equal the amount of residential demolitions from 1980 to 2009; and

WHEREAS, an untold number of other residential structures are virtually demolished under the City's overly generous allowances for "remodels"; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 report by HousingWorks, "Taking Action: Preservation of Affordable Housing in the City of Austin," shows that the vast majority of Austin's existing affordable housing – 62,000 units, defined as renting at or below 60% median family income (MFI) – is in the form of privately-owned, unsubsidized, older housing, compared to 18,500 publicly subsidized affordable units; and

WHEREAS, through Resolution No. 20141016-034, City Council recommended the implementation of a strike fund as a strategy to preserve 20,000 affordable housing units over 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Strategic Housing Blueprint states a goal of preserving 10,000 affordable housing units over 10 years; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20170817-053 creates an Anti-Displacement Task Force to review and recommend strategies in preserving and expanding the supply of affordable housing, including assessing housing losses due to demolition; and

WHEREAS, retaining this housing stock supports the city goal of minimizing waste flowing to our landfill; and **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to recommend an analytic process to determine an appropriate compensation that property owners would provide to the City to demolish single-family and multi-family residential structures. The process to potentially create an appropriate compensation should explore the loss of affordable housing that occurs when older residential structures are demolished and replaced with new market-rate residential structures. If such a study establishes a relationship between demolitions and the loss of affordable housing, the City Manager would then recommend levels of appropriate compensation and a method to direct that compensation to the City's Housing Trust Fund to create affordable housing opportunities in the same geographic area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back with recommendations for initiating a nexus study no later than April 1, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create definitions for the demolition of both single-family and multi-family structures that would encompass virtual demolitions that currently fall under the “remodel” definition.

ADOPTED: _____, 2017

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk