



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Brion Oaks, Chief Equity Officer

**DATE:** January 17, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Update on Resolution No. 20171005-031 – Confederate Monuments

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the progress of, and to respectfully request an extension on Council Resolution No. 20171005-031, which condemns the display of monuments and memorials of the Confederacy and the naming of public places for prominent members of the Confederacy, directs the City Manager to submit a report to Council identifying City-owned monuments and memorials of the Confederacy located on City-owned property, and to develop recommendations for accomplishing removal or renaming of such monuments or memorials.

Since adoption of the resolution, the Equity Office has reached out and initiated consultation with the peer cities of Dallas and New Orleans, to understand their process for Confederate monument removal and identification. Other cities were researched and their reports were evaluated in this process. In addition, a resolution workgroup of key departments has been formed and convened, and includes the expertise of community archivists from the Austin History Center (AHC), staff engaged in historic preservation from the Planning and Zoning Department, and key staff from the Parks and Recreation Department, Building Services Office, and Communications and Technology Management. The workgroup met on December 1, 2017, to discuss the scope of the resolution and develop a plan to identify Confederate monuments and memorials. The group also consulted with community archivists from the AHC, who will be conducting a thorough analysis of the Confederate assets, as well as recommending best practices in addressing the removal or contextualization of these assets. In this initial phase of research, the workgroup identified the importance of working with subject matter experts, and agreed upon the need for integrating best practices and lessons learned that are grounded in equity. Research of this kind is time-intensive but imperative in order to ensure that Council receives the most comprehensive information.

In addition, Equity Office and AHC staff, presented the resolution to the Equity Action Team (a group of community stakeholders that work in collaboration with the Equity Office) for their

review and comments, and have also met with members of the Travis County Historical Commission to discuss how to move forward in coordination with input from various stakeholders. To conduct a space of co-creation and true community engagement, these sources will also be critical to submitting a report which is grounded in community experience and knowledge. Having said that, engagement has only been initiated and not fully explored and integrated into the process, which will require more time.

To ensure that a complete and coordinated approach is undertaken in response to this resolution, there is a need to do additional research, as described above, to ensure that we clearly define and identify all City-owned monuments and memorials that have ties to the Confederacy. Engaging with resources and conducting a thorough analysis will ensure that Council is well-informed in their decision-making, and that this is a complete and thoughtful process. Therefore, we are anticipating that this report will be completed by June 30, 2018.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact me at (512) 974-7979 or at [Brion.Oaks@austintexas.gov](mailto:Brion.Oaks@austintexas.gov).

cc: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager  
Ray Baray, Chief of Staff  
Assistant City Managers