

**RESOLUTION NO. 20160225-048**

**WHEREAS**, the history of the community of Americans of African descent in the City of Austin is one of neglect and exclusion; and

**WHEREAS**, City policies enacted via the 1928 Comprehensive Plan required by law that all non-whites be relocated east of what was then known as East Avenue and today as IH-35; and

**WHEREAS**, 5 acres were purchased in 1905 by the Emancipation Organization of Travis County subsequently named Emancipation Park to use for celebrations such as Juneteenth and was publicly acquired by eminent domain to build Rosewood Courts; and

**WHEREAS**, Rosewood Courts has been a tremendous asset of community value throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century having been built exclusively for working-class Americans of African descent and opened in the year 1939; and

**WHEREAS**, the historical associations have long-standing significant associations with Americans of African descent in Austin and due to the legal enforcement of segregation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century represent a way of life of working class low-income individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals of significance to the community include Eleanor Sims R.N. (1909 -1979) one of the first Americans of African descent to work for the Health Department of the City of Austin, Dr. Jeffrey James (a practicing physician), Gus Swain (1927 - 2006) who was the first black male to receive a Masters of Social Work from the University of Texas' School of Social Work; and

**WHEREAS**, the architectural value has not been significantly compromised insofar as design for lasting utility is the aim of public housing since its inception

being the city's and the nation's second public housing community according to the Austin American-Statesman, June 19<sup>th</sup> 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, 78702 is the fastest gentrifying zip code in the United States according to Jason Cohen in the Texas Monthly, January 21, 2013; and

**WHEREAS**, Rosewood Courts is in an area that was once considered blighted and is now in what is fast becoming a high-opportunity area; and

**WHEREAS**, Santa Rita Courts were built in the same year as the Rosewood Courts and received a National Historic Register designation in 2008; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to work with the Housing Authority of the City of Austin, Mid Tex Mod and Preservation Austin, without limitation, to provide options and to inform the appropriate boards and commissions and City Council regarding the historical significance of preserving Rosewood Courts, located at 2001 Rosewood Avenue, which shall include the initiation of historic zoning. The City Council initiates historic zoning on the Rosewood Courts property located at 2001 Rosewood Avenue, Austin, Texas 78702 and directs the City Manager to process historic zoning for the property.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to present these options and staff's recommendation to the City Council for Council action by no later than June 9, 2016.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

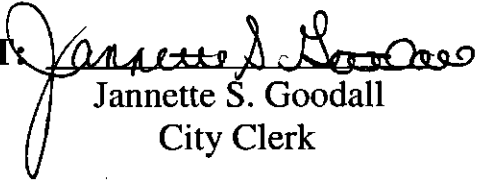
The City Council supports the nomination and inclusion of Rosewood Courts in the National Register of Historic Places based on the local and national significance of Rosewood Courts.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council instructs the city clerk to forward copies of this resolution to the State Historic Preservation Officer and appropriate officials at the National Park Service and the Austin Housing Authority so it may be a part of the record of nomination.

**ADOPTED:** February 25, 2016

**ATTEST:**

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk