

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, according to the Human Rights Campaign, 2015 marked the highest number of murders against transgender people on record; and

WHEREAS, Austin resident Monica Loera was the first known transgender murder victim in the United States in 2016; and

WHEREAS, almost a week after the homicide occurred, several media outlets began reporting that Monica Loera had been misidentified; and

WHEREAS, this misidentification created a delay for neighbors and community members to be made aware of Monica's death; and

WHEREAS, there is no standardized process within the State of Texas for legal name and gender marker change, making it considerably more difficult and costly for transgender people to be appropriately identified by governmental authorities; and

WHEREAS, the National Transgender Discrimination Survey reported that one-third of survey respondents were not able to update any of their government-issued identifications or records to reflect their gender identity; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Center for Transgender Equality, lack of identification exposes people to a range of negative outcomes—from denial of employment, housing, and public benefits, to harassment and physical violence; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Center for Transgender Equality, more than one in four transgender people has faced a bias-motivated assault, with rates higher for transgender women of color; and

WHEREAS, a national survey of transgender individuals published by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force revealed that 46 percent of respondents were uncomfortable seeking help from the police; and

WHEREAS, the Human Rights Campaign found that under-reporting and misidentification obscured the severity of disparities and bias-motivated violence against transgender people; and

WHEREAS, many police departments, including these in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Worcester (MA), Chicago, and Washington D.C., have implemented specific policies to better serve transgender persons; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin on Law Enforcement and Transgender Communities states that training resources exist pertaining to police interactions with transgender communities, consistent with recent efforts by the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin wishes to seek clarity and consistency in the identification of individuals for public safety purposes and recognizes that legal documents may not always align with this goal; and

WHEREAS, additional recommendations from community stakeholders could further strengthen the recently announced efforts by the Austin Police Department to implement new policies and training intended to improve the quality of services that Austin's LGBTQ residents and visitors receive; and

WHEREAS, ensuring people are identified by their chosen name and pronouns upholds respect for transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals;
NOW, THEREFORE

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to evaluate new policies and training to potentially improve how transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals are identified by the Austin Police Department in its internal and external communications, and to present the results of that evaluation, along with proposed changes in policy and training, if any, to the Council by no later than August 4, 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The City Council directs the City Manager to initiate a community stakeholder process for the purpose of receiving input on potential improvements to Austin Police Department policy and training regarding identification of transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals; to invite participation in that process by appropriate organizations and individuals, including without limitation, the Transgender Education Network of Texas, Equality Texas, allgo, the Office of Community Liaison, the Office of the Police Monitor, Lesbian and Gay Peace

Officers Association-Austin, University of Texas School of Law Trans Name and Gender Marker Project and representatives from the Human Rights Commission and the Public Safety Commission; and to report the results of that process to the Council by no later than August 4, 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The City Council directs the City Manager to evaluate how accurate identification of transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals can improve current Austin Police Department interactions with LGBTQ and gender-nonconforming individuals, and facilitate reporting of bias-motivated crimes, and to report the results of that evaluation to the Council no later than August 4, 2016.

ADOPTED: _____, 2016

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk