

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Austin Fire Department has an emergency response goal of responding within 8 minutes of call receipt, 90% of the time, and this goal is consistent with national standards set by the Commission of Fire Accreditation International and the National Fire Protection Association; and

WHEREAS, in some areas of the city the majority of emergency incident response times exceed the 8 minute goal; and

WHEREAS, according to the City of Austin Demographer, Austin's population grew by 40% from 2003 to 2018, and will likely further expand by roughly 25% between now and 2033; and

WHEREAS, as Austin's population continues to grow, the need for services will also increase; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Fire Department and The Austin Firefighters Association collaborated to update the 1994 Fire Station Justification Model, now called the Fire Station Risk and Service Delivery Analysis Model (Service Delivery Analysis), which provides data driven information to allow policymakers to proactively make informed decisions about the need for future fire station location and timing; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Service Delivery Analysis determined there was an immediate need for fire stations in five areas with “significant development, increased population, and response times which are substantially below AFD's goal of 8 minutes” within call receipt; and

WHEREAS, when facing a similar situation in 1986, Council passed

Resolution 19860522-019 to develop a plan to build six new fire stations to address high areas of need, and to respond to this need the City of Austin built all six stations in two years –Stations 28, 29 and 30 in 1987 and Stations 31, 32, 33 in 1988; and

WHEREAS, other communities throughout Texas, including San Antonio, Houston, and Denton, have responded to critical fire station needs through innovative means such as the use of temporary fire stations until permanent stations can be built; and

WHEREAS, in 1997 the City of Austin used a temporary fire station, Temporary Station 38, while Permanent Station 38 was built at 10111 Anderson Mill Road; and

WHEREAS, recently the detrimental lack of emergency response service has been compounded for Austin families who have also seen an increase in their homeowner’s insurance rates due to a downgrade in their Public Protection Classification because they are more than five miles from a fire station; and

WHEREAS, the Insurance Service Office (“ISO”) is a for-profit organization that provides statistical information on risk and, in particular, assesses a Public Protection Classification that many insurance companies use to calculate insurance rates; and

WHEREAS, according to the Texas Department of Insurance, the ISO classifies communities from a Class 1 (the best) to a Class 10 (the worst) based on how well they score on the ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, which gives consideration to many things, including Fire Department resources and firefighter training—regardless, any building more than five road miles from a fire station is

automatically rated Class 10; and

WHEREAS, these 1-10 scores are used by the ISO to reflect a community's local fire protection for property insurance rating purposes and these Public Protection Classifications are shared with insurance companies; and

WHEREAS, insurance companies use Public Protection Classification (PPC) ratings to set insurance rates and, if a community's classification is downgraded, then premiums will increase; and

WHEREAS, according to the Austin Fire Department, after a 2017 review by the ISO, 183 issued addresses have been downgraded from a Class 1 rating to a Class 10 rating; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the downgrades in PPC ratings, homeowners have reported homeowner's insurance rate increases of as much as \$1,000 per year; and

WHEREAS, the only way to improve PPC ratings and reduce the impact on an affected homeowner's insurance rates is to provide a fire station within five miles of their issued address, but the City has only broken ground on one fire station since 2010; and

WHEREAS, the ISO recognizes a temporary fire station in meeting the five-mile requirement for PPC ratings, and the City of Austin has previously used a temporary fire station for up to two years to provide high-quality service in high needs areas; and

WHEREAS, on March 7, 2016, the Public Safety Commission voted 9-0 to recommend that Council direct the City Manager to develop a comprehensive plan to address immediate needs for fire stations, including recommendations for

funding options and timelines, and that an annual report be presented to Council during each budget year that includes an updated version of Austin Fire Department/Austin Fire Association Fire Station Risk and Service Delivery Analysis Report; and

WHEREAS, Council is committed to providing reliable and equitable public safety services for Austin residents, and Council sees value in immediately improving response times through building fire stations in areas of greatest need; and

WHEREAS, Austin’s Strategic Direction for 2023 states that the city strives to create a complete community where every Austinite can experience, “[b]eing safe in our home, at work, and in our community.” And “[b]elieving that city government works effectively and collaboratively for all of us—that it is equitable, ethical and innovative.”; and

WHEREAS, the metrics for measuring success in achieving the goal for being safe in our home, at work and in our community, include the success of emergency response outcome, community compliance with laws and regulations, community prevention and preparedness, administration of justice, and quality of reliability of safety-related infrastructure and utility services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is not meeting its goals for those residents who are living in the areas of greatest need; and

WHEREAS, in order to construct a fire station within the next six months, a request for proposals (RFP) must be put out immediately; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant lag between when an RFP is placed for bid, when the contract is awarded, and when contract construction is complete and,

as such, there would not be a need to fund staff for fire stations until City of Austin fiscal year (FY) 2018-2019; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2018-2019 Financial Forecast indicated that for FY 2016-2017 General Fund departments closed the year with \$6.1 million more than had been estimated and the Forecast projected that for FY 2017-2018 General Fund departments would end the year with a \$750,000 surplus, **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The Council directs the City Manager to, within six months, construct, build or establish, either through temporary structure or other alternative arrangement, interim fire stations in at least the top two areas of greatest need as identified in the 2017 Austin Fire Department/Austin Fire Association Fire Station Risk and Service Delivery Analysis Report.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Council directs the City Manager to include funds to staff the interim fire stations in the City Manager's recommended fiscal year 2018-2019 budget for Council consideration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Council directs the City Manager to develop a six-year timeline to fund, construct, and staff five permanent fire stations in the areas of greatest need as identified in the 2017 Austin Fire Department/Austin Fire Association Fire Station Risk and Service Delivery Analysis Report.

ADOPTED: _____, 2018

ATTEST: _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk