RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to undoing its racist past and combatting and denouncing racism in present-day Austin; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin acknowledges that the history of bigotry and discrimination has contributed to racially disparate outcomes in policing and policy; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Policing Equity found in 2016 that the Austin Police Department (APD) was more likely to use force in communities where more African-Americans and Latinos live, and when force was used, APD was more likely to use more severe force in communities where African-Americans and Latinos live, even after controlling for factors such as community crime and poverty rates; and

WHEREAS, the APD’s state-mandated racial profiling reports consistently show that Black and Latino drivers are more than twice as likely to be searched than their white counterparts during traffic stops despite similar “hit rates”, including in 2018 where 6 percent of traffic stops of white drivers resulted in a police searches compared to 14 percent for Latino drivers and 17 percent for Black drivers; and

WHEREAS, APD data provided per Resolution No. 20180614-073 (one of the Freedom City Resolutions) showed that in 2017 APD police officers made discretionary arrests of Black people at more than twice the rate of either white or Latino residents; and
WHEREAS, that same 2017 data also showed Black and Latino residents accounted for just under 75 percent of those discretionary arrests for driving with an invalid license, although the two groups combine to make up less than 45 percent of Austin’s population; and

WHEREAS, that same 2017 data also showed that one out of three discretionary arrests for misdemeanor marijuana possession involved a Black resident even though less than one in ten Austinites is Black, though usage rates of marijuana are similar across racial groups.; and

WHEREAS, subsequent quarterly reports made pursuant to Council Resolution No. 20180614-073 show a persistent pattern in which Black people continue to comprise a disproportionately high percentage of APD’s discretionary arrests; and

WHEREAS, per the quarterly report for Resolution No. 20180614-073, issued by APD on May 3, 2019, Black people still composed 27 percent of persons arrested by APD for offenses eligible for citation, which, proportionally, amounts to more than three times Austin’s Black population; and

WHEREAS, as of March 2019, nearly 40 percent of the 140th Austin Police Department cadet class had dropped out; and

WHEREAS, an anonymous whistle-blower has recently accused an Assistant Chief of the Austin Police Department of using racist epithets and derogatory terms,
including “negro” and “nigger,” to refer to specific Black elected officials and sworn officers of the Austin Police Department; and

WHEREAS, following the public release of the anonymous complaint and subsequent resignation of the Assistant Chief named in the complaint, City Manager announced on November 7, 2019 that a third-party investigation into the allegations that the use of racial slurs and epithets lasted over a period of many years with the knowledge of other leadership at APD.; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor’s Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequity recommends that the City of Austin create protocols to ensure the cultural competency of all personnel, and that the City of Austin’s law enforcement agencies engage in continuous diversity and inclusion training, with special attention to implicit bias training; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Office of Police Oversight was created to augment accountability and transparency at APD, and that the department could benefit from expanded insight and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department presented a training plan during the City of Austin FY19-20 budget deliberations indicating its intention to graduate almost 200 new cadets in Academy classes scheduled to start in February 2020; and

WHEREAS, patterns and specific incidents of discrimination and bigotry in the Austin Police Department erode the public trust, which is necessary to effectively
enforcing the law and maintaining public safety, and so the Council finds it imperative to understand the full extent of bigotry and systemic racism and discrimination within APD, and consider reforms to APD’s policies, protocols, and training curriculum; **NOW,**

**THEREFORE,**

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

The Council supports the investigation initiated by the City Manager into the allegations against a former APD Assistant Chief. The City Manager is directed to provide an update and resulting findings to Council by January 23, 2020.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Effective on January 23, 2020, the City Manager is directed to undertake a comprehensive, multi-pronged investigation and evaluation of the extent to which forms of bigotry and discrimination are present in the protocols, practices, and behaviors of the officers of the Austin Police Department. To the extent to which they are present, this investigation and evaluation shall document the impacts these individual and systemic biases have had on hiring, professional ranking, and treatment of personnel within APD, as well as police interactions with people of color and other marginalized groups in Austin.

The investigation should begin with an immediate focus on patterns of prejudiced behavior and institutionalized bigotry in the following high-priority areas:
1. Officer and supervisor communications, including all public posts on social media platforms that are available to the investigator, City email, and text messages and instant message communications on City devices within the last 5 years;

2. Training materials, course/section descriptions and duration, and description of any other procedures (e.g. detailed descriptions of scenarios) administered to cadet classes and to active officers related to training on communication strategies, cultural competency, acknowledging and addressing bias, use of force, de-escalation, search, pro-active policing, mental health response, protocols for non-English speaking subjects, protocols for disabled subjects, recognizing resistance, and their evaluation protocols;

3. Course/section descriptions and duration of all other coursework required at the cadet academy and their evaluation protocols;

Investigation of these high-priority areas of focus should result in an interim report that includes analysis of expressed behavior and patterns, and any immediate recommendations for reform presented to the Council no later than December 7, 2020.

Recommendations in these high-priority areas should include recommendations for new training materials administered to cadet classes, if necessary.

Investigation into the following areas of focus should begin concurrently:

4. The degree to which the APD is adhering to state and federal law with regard to racial discrimination in employment;
5. All use-of-force incident reports from June 2019 to November 2019, analyzing them by location, charges, if any, the outcome of each incident, and demographic information including race, ethnicity, and language spoken;

6. Aggregate data on every recorded interaction from June 2019 to November 2019 with a member of the public, including type of interaction and its outcome (search, arrest with charges, citation with charges) and an evaluation on whether there are racial and/or ethnic or other disparities in searches, arrests, charges and citations;

7. Complaints and disciplinary action taken against officers accused of bias and/or discrimination;

8. The number of sustained complaints of bias against officers and leadership, including those that did not result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, lack of disciplinary action due to the 180-day rule.

The evaluating entity will issue a final report no later than December 6, 2021, that details any patterns of systemic racism, racist behavior, and other forms of discrimination found in all of the above areas of focus, to include recommendations to remedy and prevent continued patterns of bias.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The independent investigation and examination shall be conducted by an independent third party with substantial experience in the evaluation and investigation of police misconduct, bias, and claims in employment law and Title VII violations, as well
as in assessing systemic conditions that engender civil rights violations, including both organizational decision-making and greater policy-making rules and patterns. The City Manager shall develop the scope of work and qualifications for the solicitation of the evaluating entity with input from the Joint Inclusion Committee, the Public Safety Commission, and community organizations that advocate for racial justice, equity, and criminal justice reform as allowable by the City’s purchasing rules. The City Manager shall determine the appropriate funding sources when recommending the contract for Council approval.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is also directed to collaborate with the Equity Office and the Office of Police Oversight in a joint oversight capacity in regard to the selection and supervision of the independent investigating entity, to the extent allowed by the City’s procurement policies.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to ensure that the scope of work for the selected third-party investigator will require written reports, including at least one interim report issued no later than December 7, 2020, and a final report issued upon conclusion of the investigation. The final report, as well as interim reports that may be required or otherwise warranted, shall detail any patterns of systemic racism and racist behavior within the Austin Police Department and within the City’s oversight of and policy-
making with respect to APD. The final report and any interim reports should include recommendations for steps to any remedy problematic behaviors and policies, including recommendations that address any systemic patterns and conditions that foster a culture in which racism and other discrimination is acceptable. The final report will be issued no later than December 6, 2021.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Separately from other investigations, the City Manager shall initiate an audit of the Austin Police Department’s hiring protocols to assess opportunities to better screen qualified candidates. Additionally, the City Manager shall audit training protocols and procedures for the cadet academy and sworn officers to understand the extent to which the training materials currently used foster bias in policing. The City Manager is directed to update or revise training materials for APD to the extent necessary to remedy any findings from the audit. This process should be as public as possible, ensuring that the public has access to view training materials on the topics of bias, racism, and cultural competency in policing. The audit is to be completed and reported on no later than June 1, 2020.

The City Manager shall ensure that no new cadet classes may be initiated until this audit is completed and new training materials, if any, are implemented, in order to resume cadet classes no later than September 2020.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall issue biannual updates on the progress of the independent third-party investigation, to include relevant updates on the solicitation process and anticipated timelines for the investigation to proceed.

ADOPTED: ____________, 2019

ATTEST: ___________________________

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk