

26 **WHEREAS**, in 1954 the City Council created the Greater East Austin
27 Development Committee to study the needs of the East Austin community and the
28 housing conditions of the area; and

29 **WHEREAS**, on December 5, 1959, the creation of an Urban Renewal Agency to
30 carry out urban renewal project powers in accordance with Chapter 374 of the Texas
31 Local Government Code (Urban Renewal in Municipalities) was approved through a
32 voter referendum; however, few minorities were able to vote in the 1959 referendum;
33 and

34 **WHEREAS**, by way of urban renewal projects, minority-owned properties were
35 seized through eminent domain and residents were subjected to forced relocation; and

36 **WHEREAS**, congregated segregation followed by concentrated gentrification
37 resulted in mass displacement of Black Austinites from their historic communities in
38 Austin; and

39 **WHEREAS**, Black residents have experienced state-sanctioned racism in the
40 form of Jim Crow laws, racially restrictive covenants, and bank redlining in Austin; and

41 **WHEREAS**, a 2017 study, funded by the Urban Institute, ranks Austin in the top
42 quarter of the nation’s economically segregated areas; and

43 **WHEREAS**, the City’s collective prosperity depends upon the equitable access
44 to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin; and

45 **WHEREAS**, the City commissioned a disparity study from National Economic
46 Research Associates, Inc. ("NERA") to develop evidence relevant to the City's
47 continuing compelling interest in remedying discrimination and the results of these
48 efforts were presented in the December 2015 report entitled "Race, Sex, and Business
49 Enterprise: Evidence from the City of Austin" ("NERA Report"); and

50 **WHEREAS**, based on the evidence from the NERA Report, the City determined
51 that:

- 52 (1) Minorities and women are substantially and significantly less likely to own
53 their own businesses as the result of discrimination than would be expected
54 based upon their observable characteristics, including age, education,
55 geographic location and industry.
- 56 (2) Minorities and women earn substantially and significantly less than their
57 nonminority male counterparts.
- 58 (3) There are large, adverse, and statistically significant disparities between
59 Minority-Owned Business Enterprises/Women-Owned Business Enterprises'
60 (MBE/WBE) share of overall revenues and their share of overall firms in the
61 U.S. as a whole, and in the State of Texas.
- 62 (4) There is evidence of discrimination against MBE/WBEs in the City's market
63 area for the small business credit market.
- 64 (5) Anecdotal evidence from outreach meetings, mail surveys and in-depth
65 personal interviews of MBE/WBE firms and non-MBE/WBE firms revealed
66 numerous forms of discrimination affecting the City's marketplace, including
67 unequal access to bonding, stereotypical attitudes, passive participation in
68 private sector discrimination, predatory business practices, and closed
69 business systems, causing minorities and women to continue to suffer
70 discriminatory barriers to full and fair access to City contracts, as well as other
71 public sector and private sector contracts.
- 72 (6) Despite the City's efforts to create equal opportunities in its marketplace, the
73 evidence continues to indicate that the ongoing effects of marketplace
74 discrimination continue to undermine the utilization of MBE/WBE firms; and

75 **WHEREAS**, based on the results of the NERA Report and based on the factual
76 predicate which has been established after careful study and review, the City continues
77 to have a compelling governmental interest in remedying the racial and gender
78 discrimination that exists in the market segments in which the City does business, and

79 in ensuring that the City is not an active or passive participant in such discrimination,
80 thereby allowing all segments of the Austin community to share in the economic benefits
81 of the City; and

82 **WHEREAS**, the City’s 2023 Strategic Direction Anchors itself to Equity,
83 Affordability, Innovation, Sustainability and Resiliency, Proactive Prevention,
84 Community Trust and Relationships and Across ALL Outcomes- Values supporting
85 Quality of Life in Austin; and

86 **WHEREAS**, one of the City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
87 EQUITY, which means to advance equitable outcomes, the City is leading with a lens
88 of racial equity and healing, and understanding that race is the primary predictor of
89 outcomes, therefore it is time to recognize, understand, and address racism at its various
90 levels: personal, institutional, structural, and systemic; and

91 **WHEREAS**, equity is the condition when every member of the community has a
92 fair opportunity to live a long, healthy, and meaningful life; equity embedded into
93 Austin’s values system means changing hearts and minds, transforming local
94 government from the inside out, eradicating disparities, and ensuring all Austin
95 community members share in the benefits of community progress; and

96 **WHEREAS**, one of the City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
97 AFFORDABILITY, which means that Austinites deserve to experience the necessities
98 of life as affordable and accessible; this strategic direction lays out strategies to increase
99 economic opportunities and affordable choices across Austin, so that Austinites,
100 families, businesses, City employees, and all generations can thrive; and

101 **WHEREAS**, one of the City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
102 INNOVATION, which means that, in Austin, we define innovation as any project that
103 is new to you with an uncertain outcome; aimed at addressing pressing challenges that
104 affect our community, human-centered innovation means a new approach to exercising
105 authority and decision-making that starts with the needs, behaviors, and experiences of

106 our community, and continues through a process of questioning assumptions, engaging
107 with empathy, stewarding divergent thought, reflecting, and learning; and

108 **WHEREAS**, innovation is future-oriented around what outcomes could be
109 created together, rather than an analysis of already formed alternatives; and

110 **WHEREAS**, one of The City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
111 SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY, which means being a sustainable and resilient
112 community requires proactive steps to protect Austin’s quality of life now, and for future
113 generations; a sustainable city finds a balance among three goal areas: (1) prosperity and
114 jobs, (2) conservation and the environment, and (3) community health, equity, and
115 cultural vitality; resiliency is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions,
116 businesses, and systems to survive, adapt, and grow from difficult times, and in Austin,
117 we bounce back stronger; and

118 **WHEREAS**, one of the City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
119 PROACTIVE PREVENTION, which means that the City embraces the dual
120 responsibility of being responsive to emerging challenges while also dialing up efforts
121 to prevent problems on the front end; and

122 **WHEREAS**, one of the City’s Strategic Direction 2023 Strategic Anchors is
123 COMMUNITY TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS, which means that Austin is a place
124 where leadership comes from the people; and

125 **WHEREAS**, it is the City’s responsibility to rectify discriminatory City policies
126 and address its institutional racism, including actively engaging all citizens in racial
127 justice work, as evident in the City’s Strategic Direction 2023; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

129 The City Council of the City of Austin formally apologizes for its participation in
130 the enslavement of Black people, for its active involvement in segregation and systemic
131 discrimination, for exacerbating racial divides through both active and intentional

132 means, and passive, inadvertent means, and for carrying out multiple “urban renewal”
133 programs that hindered, and often decimated, the progress made by Black communities.

134 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

135 The City rejects prejudice and bigotry based on race, religion, gender, sexual
136 orientation, and nation of origin, including the idea that anyone is better than or more
137 deserving of privileges than another based on the above characteristics.

138 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

139 The City hereby affirms its commitment to correcting the City’s systemically
140 racist practices and eradicating the effects of the City’s systemically racist past practices.

141 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

142 The City calls on Travis County, local school districts, the State of Texas and the
143 federal government to initiate policymaking and provide funding for reconciliation and
144 racial healing at the local, state and national levels.

145 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

146 The City Manager is directed to conduct a study and provide a report outlining the
147 economic value of the direct, indirect, intentional, and unintentional harm caused
148 through economic, health, environmental, criminal injustice, and other racial disparities
149 and declination of resources by the City to be developed through the partnership between
150 The University of Texas at Austin LBJ School of Public Affairs and Huston-Tillotson
151 University.

152 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

153 The City desires to create a centralized Black resource and cultural center – a
154 Black Embassy - that is geared to the success and cultural promotion of the
155 demographics in need by providing relevant resources, and support for existing and
156 future black-led businesses and organizations, in a central location in East Austin. The
157 City Manager is directed to return to Council with a planning scope, process and funding
158 recommendation for how to accomplish this.

159 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

160 The City Manager is directed to provide recommendations of existing City held
161 assets located in Central East Austin that could be used to house a centralized Black
162 resource and cultural center.

163 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

164 The City Manager should include stakeholders in the planning process for creation
165 of the center, including the naming of the center. Stakeholders should include, but not
166 be limited to, a coalition of Black businesses, communities, and Austin residents; and
167 descendants from Austin Freedman Settlements, with support from relevant city
168 departments.

169 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** The City Manager is directed to report back to
170 Council by August 1, 2021 with the analysis and report requested by this Resolution.

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ADOPTED: _____, 2021

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk