

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20071213-058 created the African American Cultural Arts District with the following boundaries:

- (1) West Boundary: 1-35 East frontage road
- (2) East Boundary: Airport Blvd.
- (3) North Boundary: Manor Rd.
- (4) South Boundary: Beginning on East 11th St., then South on Chalmers Ave., then East on East 7th St., then North on Chicon St., then East on Rosewood Ave., then merge into Oak Springs Dr. until connection with the East Boundary (Airport Blvd); and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20080214-056 renamed the African American Cultural Arts District to the African American Cultural Heritage District; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being located adjacent to downtown, the State Capitol, numerous City and State cultural and heritage sites, and the Red River Cultural District, the African American Cultural Heritage District has within its boundaries significant economic, historical, cultural and heritage tourism assets, such as:

- (1) the oldest institution of higher learning in the City, Huston-Tillotson University, and the National Register historically-designated buildings on campus,
- (2) the State Cemetery,
- (3) the Oakwood Cemetery,
- (4) the French Legation,
- (5) the Victory Grill,

- (6) the historic East 11th and 12th Street African American Music and Commercial Corridors (The East End),
- (7) the original Austin Public Library Building and George Washington Carver Museum,
- (8) three of the City's oldest religious congregations, African American or otherwise: the Ebenezer Baptist Church, the Metropolitan AME, and the Wesley United Methodist Church;
- (9) historic site locations of the City's first and only African American-owned pharmacy;
- (10) the home of famed jazz musician Kenny Dorham;
- (11) the temporary home of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall;
- (12) the first federal Public Housing Projects in the nation;
- (13) scores of designated historically significant homes and buildings;
- (14) prime examples of period architecture; and
- (15) the core of the Historic African American Community of Austin; and,

WHEREAS, on October 27, 2005, City staff briefed the City Council on the African American Quality of Life Initiative; and

WHEREAS, under the Arts, Culture, and Entertainment Recommendation from the African American Quality of Life Initiative, a need for an African American Cultural Heritage District was recognized to enhance the quality of life for African Americans living in Austin; and

WHEREAS, the non-profit organization "Six Square" was created in 2013 as an outgrowth of the City Council's African American Quality of Life Initiative, and has been dedicated to improving the quality of life for Black African American residents through preservation of historic Black spaces, artistic cultivation, and by serving as a catalyst for social and economic development as the African American

Cultural Heritage District, as designated by the Texas Commission on the Arts, also known as “Six Square” and the “Black Cultural District”; and

WHEREAS, City staff has worked closely with numerous Cultural Arts organizations within the City to determine if this area meets the District's criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan illustrates:

- (1) how creativity is a cornerstone of Austin's identity and economic prosperity,
- (2) that arts, culture, and creativity are essential keys to the City's unique and distinctive identity and are further valued as vital contributors to our community's character, quality of life and economy, and
- (3) collectively, the Austin music and creative ecosystem generates rich, social, cultural and economic benefits; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2016, Council approved Resolution No. 20160303-019, the Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution, which affirmed support for the music and creative ecosystem through short- and long-term goals specific to cultural tourism, revenue development, and venue retention; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Department committed more than \$1.3 million of Great Streets funding for streetscape improvements for Fiscal Year 2020, with the Economic Development Department managing that project; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 2019, Council approved Resolution No. 20190523-029 directing the City Manager to bring forward a Palm District Master

76 Plan, which is adjacent to the African American Cultural Heritage District as a
77 prominent component, and presents opportunities for East-West connectivity; and

78 **WHEREAS**, on February 15, 2018, Council approved Resolution No.
79 20180215-082 directing the City Manager to, among other things, analyze and
80 provide next steps for collaboration and support of an “Austin Cultural Trust” that
81 could create spaces that support artists and arts organizations, preserve historic and
82 iconic cultural buildings and spaces for creative and cultural uses, and function in a
83 way that provides for cultural assets to exist in all parts of the City; and

84 **WHEREAS**, working creatives residencies can create a synergistic cultural
85 hub community, foster professional development, and provides opportunities for
86 Austin creatives to be able to afford to live adjacent to professional opportunities in
87 the arts; and

88 **WHEREAS**, on August 8, 2019, Council approved Resolution No.
89 20190808-072 reiterating prior Council direction to create an economic
90 development entity that could manage a portfolio of projects, including affordable
91 housing developments, public-private partnerships with private-led development,
92 and a Cultural Trust to support acquisition and preservation of creative space; and

93 **WHEREAS**, on October 1, 2020, Council approved Resolution No.
94 20201001-055 authorizing the creation of the Austin Economic Development
95 Corporation; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

97 The City Council reaffirms the designated African American Cultural
98 Heritage District that formally recognizes areas that have a concentration of
99 existing Black African American landmarks, historical and cultural assets, and the

100 legacy of what once was the diverse and thriving Black African American
101 residential, commercial, and cultural core of Black Life in Austin;

102 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

103 The City Manager is directed to determine necessary strategies to
104 implement, as soon as feasible, the following actions:

- 105 (1) Update all official City Maps that show designated Cultural and
106 Historic Districts and Landmarks to include the African American
107 Cultural Heritage District (AACHD);
- 108 (2) Develop an official detailed map of the AACHD;
- 109 (3) Develop way-finding signage for public rights-of-way that provide
110 directional guidance for locating the AACHD in general, and specific
111 landmarks and significant places of interests within the AACHD;
- 112 (4) Fund and implement a highly-visible Place-making program within
113 the District (signage, public art, streetscape features, AACHD-
114 branded street signs/markers, historic neighborhood identifiers, etc.);
- 115 (5) Use the cultural/historic/heritage assets inventory list found in the
116 East Austin Historical Survey to assist with designation of historic
117 sub-districts throughout the AACHD to get placement on local, state,
118 and national registers;
- 119 (6) Work with the African American Resource Advisory Commission, ,
120 Six Square, East Austin Creative Coalition, and other relevant
121 organizations to craft an incentives program specifically to attract and
122 nurture growth of professional entertainment and creative industry
123 businesses, and culture-based organizations to locate into and do
124 business within the AACHD;

- 125 (7) Work with the Music Commission, Arts Commission, African
126 American Resource Advisory Commission, Six Square, East Austin
127 Creative Coalition, and other relevant organizations to establish a
128 funding mechanism specifically to support public arts and culture
129 programming within the AACHD;
- 130 (8) Engage stakeholders, including but not limited to, Six Square, East
131 Austin Creative Coalition, Austin Revitalization Authority, and other
132 relevant organizations, to create a strategic plan to steer sustainable
133 development and growth of the AACHD;

134 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

135 The City Manager is directed to recommend potential short- and long-term
136 design solutions for the physical landscape of the AACHD to increase pedestrian
137 mobility and safety, and to support place-making efforts;

138 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

139 The City Manager is directed to complete the streetscape and place-making
140 work in the AACHD;

141 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

142 The City Manager is directed to consult with the Music Commission, the
143 Live Music Fund Working Group, and the Austin Economic Development
144 Corporation to explore ways of using the Live Music Fund to support the long-
145 term sustainability of Black African American culture-based music industry
146 projects located or producing within the District, and other investments that would
147 help enhance the live music and cultural tourism economy. The City Manager is
148 also directed to work with relevant departments and organizations to continue to

149 address historic underrepresentation in City funding programs and plot a course to
150 direct City focus on issues of affordability, professional development, business
151 mentorship, educational programs, venue establishment and support, and related
152 programs to assure development, growth, and sustainability of the East Austin
153 Music Community within the AACHD;

154 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

155 The City Manager is directed to review the City of Austin's capital project
156 delivery planning and make recommendations that may accelerate investment in
157 cultural venues and deployment of approved funding for creative spaces. This
158 review should reflect the Joint Working Group recommendations unanimously
159 passed by both the Music Commission and Arts Commission on January 6 and 9,
160 2020, respectively;

161 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

162 With the joint Arts Commission and Music Commission recommendations
163 set forth and submitted to Council in January 2020 as guidance, the City Manager
164 is directed to work with the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Austin to
165 determine how to announce and initiate a solicitation for detailed plans and cost
166 estimates, with possible participation by the Austin Economic Development
167 Corporation, community-based nonprofits, and private-sector creative industry
168 professionals, regarding the development of the 1100 Block of E.11th Street for a
169 multi-story mixed-use development that can accommodate:

- 170 (1) Outdoor performance space/amphitheater and publicly accessible
171 green space;
- 172 (2) Indoor performance space, with a café and/or pub;

- (3) Audio/video Recording studio (that has learning laboratory and professional capabilities);
- (4) Rehearsal space;
- (5) Space that can be used as a classroom, meeting room, and conference room;
- (6) Small studio rooms for practice, lessons, and art-making;
- (7) Shared work/office space for nonprofit arts organizations that reflect the intent of the AACHD, and AACHD professional creatives and students;
- (8) An art gallery;
- (9) The Kenny Dorham Museum (a mini-archival collection dedicated to the life and music of Kenny Dorham, but also home to an active research project/educational site for the study and collection of materials documenting Black Music History of Austin and the cultural history of Central East Austin and the AACHD);
- (10) Street-level retail; and
- (11) Residential units, with significant emphasis on housing at or below 60% MFI, and a portion of units reserved for working creatives residencies of 2-3 years maximum;

Once the City Manager and the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Austin have a plan to issue such a solicitation, the City Manager will present that solution to the City Council before proceeding. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council adopts this recommendation to correct deficiencies found in the original Resolution establishing the AACHD and plots a path forward to fully recognize, support, and invest in the District's growth and sustainability into the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

This initiative shall not work in a way that is in conflict with other initiatives serving similar populations and shall not be prioritized in a way that hinders other similar initiatives, fiscal or otherwise, serving similar populations including but not limited to Six Square and the Black Austin Coalition with the understanding that all initiatives are encouraged to explore collaboration wherever possible, to the benefit of the greater community.

ADOPTED: _____, 20__ **ATTEST:** _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk