

RESOLUTION NO. 20211104-064

WHEREAS, in the month of October 2021, several incidents involving antisemitic, racist, and homophobic vandalism and hate occurred in Austin, Texas; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Austin is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Austin has previously approved Resolution No. 20161013-009, condemning violence and hate speech, and expressing solidarity with Muslims and all those targeted for their ethnicity, race or religion, Resolution No. 20200409-076, condemning violence, hate speech, racism, and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic and expressing solidarity with Chinese and Asian Americans, and Resolution No. 20210204-064, denouncing the January 6, 2021, domestic terrorism incident at our nation's Capitol and affirming an ongoing commitment to cultivating an inclusive, safe, and just society and culture; and

WHEREAS, antisemitism is the centuries-old bigotry and form of racism faced by Jewish people simply because they are Jews; and

WHEREAS, antisemitism includes blaming Jews when things go wrong; calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or extremist view of religion; or making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotyped allegations about Jews; and

WHEREAS, Jewish people are subject in the media and political campaigns to numerous other dangerous antisemitic myths as well, including that Jews control

the United States Government or seek global, political, and financial domination and that Jews are obsessed with money; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported a 14 percent increase in hate crimes against Jews or Jewish institutions and found that attacks against Jews or Jewish institutions made up 60.3 percent of all religious-based hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, according to records in the Austin History Center, Jewish settlers began to arrive in Austin as early as the 1840s; and

WHEREAS, in 1876 Austin was reported to have a Jewish population of 188 individuals and the Jewish population is estimated to be nearly 30,000 individuals today; and

WHEREAS, hate groups like the ones that have targeted Austin recently seek to attract attention, seed fear, and provoke confrontation; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that the City Council of Austin take leadership and stand in solidarity with its Jewish communities to send a message that discriminatory and hate-motivated behavior or violence will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, each individual has the ability to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, and reject hate and bias in all forms; and

WHEREAS, all persons are encouraged to report any such antisemitic incidents to the proper authorities for investigation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Austin affirms its commitment to the well-being and safety of its Jewish community members and to ensuring Jewish

residents and organizations know they are not alone and that the City Council of Austin is committed to ending the spread of all forms of hate and bigotry; **NOW THEREFORE,**

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

The City Council of Austin condemns antisemitic acts and statements as hateful expressions of intolerance that are contradictory to the values that define the people of Austin.

The City Council of Austin denounces antisemitism and all hateful speech and violent action that casts blame, promotes racism or discrimination or harms the Jewish community.

The City Council of Austin joins cities, counties and states across the country in affirming its commitment to the safety and well-being of all community members, including the Jewish communities, and in combating hate crimes targeting Jews.

The City Council of Austin pledges to support the inalienable rights of all people in our community, who should be treated with respect. We call upon all our residents to treat each other with respect.

The City Council of Austin urges residents to join us in calling attention to these harms and denouncing antisemitism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council of Austin will strengthen its efforts to protect residents and targets and victims of hate, and to prosecute and curb hate acts in partnership with nonprofit organizations, the Travis County District Attorney's Office, the Austin

Police Department, Williamson County District Attorney, Williamson County Sheriff's Office, Travis County Sheriff's Office, Hays County District Attorney and Hays County Sheriff's Office, and other law enforcement partners; Austin ISD, Round Rock ISD, Hays CISD, and other Austin Metro area education partners.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council of Austin directs the City Manager to research best practices from peer cities and to collaborate with local community groups, including Shalom Austin and the Anti-Defamation League, to review, and then identify and implement improvements to the City's response to hate.

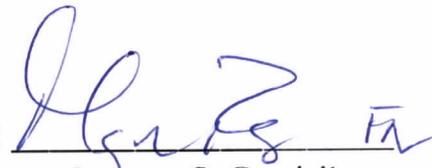
The improvements should include training for relevant city staff that educates participants in how hate manifests, how to effectively respond to incidents of hate, and how social media is used to propagate hate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council of Austin directs the City Manager to report his findings and recommendations to Council within 120 days.

ADOPTED: November 4, 2021

ATTEST:



Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk