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RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, house relocation benefits housing stock and naturally occurring affordability by preserving older homes; and

WHEREAS, house relocation contributes to preservation of residential structures in Austin and neighboring communities where the structures are moved; and

WHEREAS, the current City Code makes it easier to move houses outside the city than within; and

WHEREAS, 85% of relocated houses in the past ten years have been moved outside city limits; and

WHEREAS, house relocation can be a cost-efficient alternative to demolition; and

WHEREAS, house relocation presents an opportunity for efficient infill development with smaller, more affordable legacy structures; and

WHEREAS, demolition results in 25% of solid waste in Travis County landfills and contributes significant carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the City has a goal of 90% landfill waste diversion by 2040 and is significantly delayed in meeting said goal; and

WHEREAS, it can be difficult for potential buyers to find available houses eligible for relocation until they are posted for demolition; and

WHEREAS, the City received only 16 relocation permits between January-September of 2023, while issuing 483 demolition permits, indicating an opportunity for further awareness-building around home relocation; and

WHEREAS, the ratio between relocation and demolition permits issued has been increasing significantly over time; and

WHEREAS, house relocation can be a time-consuming process compared to demolition, taking upwards of three months to secure the required permitting, necessitating advance notice, planning, and preparation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council passed Resolution No. 20171214-067 in 2017 that directed the City Manager to explore the feasibility of establishing a fee to demolish single-family and multi-family residential structures; and

WHEREAS, the City does not currently provide incentives for residents to choose to move a home rather than demolish it; and

WHEREAS, cities including San Antonio, Portland, Phoenix, and Pittsburgh have already adopted policies incentivizing deconstruction; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Antonio's *Treasure in the Walls* report found that circular economy and reuse professions create 300 jobs for every six jobs in the landfilling and incineration industries; and

WHEREAS, Preservation Austin recently released their *House Relocation Guide*, explaining that the process overall is opaque and confusing to owners with eligible buildings, and that clarifying the process would incentivize more people to choose relocation instead of demolition; **NOW**, **THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to explore opportunities and develop a strategy to build awareness and minimize barriers to increase house relocation, in partnership with community stakeholders and groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In developing a strategy, the City Manager is directed to consider at least the following options, among others:

- 1. Creating an informational guide to be available to applicants and stakeholders promoting relocation and deconstruction by:
 - a. Providing an average time and cost breakdown for relocation of a structure compared to demolition and new construction, and deconstruction as compared to demolition;
 - b. Detailing the processes for moving or deconstructing a house, including commonly asked questions and helpful resources; and
 - c. Explaining what building materials are salvageable for reuse, and the resale market.
- 2. Expanding the threshold for diversion to commercial buildings to less than 5,000 square feet and residential homes.
- 3. Requiring that the age of the structure proposed to be demolished is included on any required demolition notices.
- 4. Adding information to the City's website detailing the steps to relocation, similar to the City's Demolition Permit webpage.
- 5. Exploring creating a forum that provides opportunities for members of the public to promote or view properties proposed for demolition that may be eligible for relocation, beyond demolition permits being publicly available.
- 6. Including information on demolition and building permits promoting relocation as a viable alternative to demolition and new construction.
- 7. Identifying potential ways the City can incentivize house relocation, such as a streamlined permitting process and reduced fees.

8. Facilitating trainings for contractors and city staff on relocation and deconstruction, including, but not limited to: current land development code, policies, and permit processes, and the environmental, cultural, and financial benefits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to the City Council with recommendations for action and implementation by March 2024.

| ADOPTED: | , 2023 ATTEST : | |
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| | | Myrna Rios |
| | | City Clerk |