

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin serves as a major economic and cultural hub, with a rapidly growing downtown that is home to the State Capitol, world-renowned music venues, thriving businesses, diverse communities, and significant public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the population of downtown Austin surged from 7,635 in 2010 to 13,648 in 2020, marking a 79% increase over the decade; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Austin Plan, adopted in 2011 and currently undergoing updates per Resolution No. 20240814-028 serves as a 10-year guiding framework for ensuring sustainable growth, walkability, density, and equitable development in the downtown area; and

WHEREAS, there are transformative infrastructure projects, both private and public, that are happening concurrently in downtown Austin, and there is a need to prioritize near-term projects; and

WHEREAS, future arts and music investments, public safety improvements, and additional programmatic efforts to improve our downtown are vital keys for Austin to be a top destination for residents and tourists; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing need for a Downtown Austin Strategic Initiative that identifies key goals, metrics for tracking outcomes, and focused attention on downtown Austin for the future viability of the heart of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

The City Manager is directed to present the Council with a comprehensive Downtown Austin Strategic Initiative that accomplishes the following:

- 25 1. Creates a management structure empowered to track, oversee, coordinate,
26 implement, and identify any additional funding needed for all projects and
27 programs within the Downtown Austin Strategic Initiative and align those
28 with the Downtown Austin Plan, South Central Waterfront Vision
29 Framework Plan, Downtown Density Bonus Program, and other ongoing
30 programs or plans that impact downtown.
- 31 2. Identifies near-term projects and strategies that create opportunities to ensure
32 that downtown is a vibrant, safe, and accessible place for residents and
33 visitors. That includes but is not limited to:
- 34 a. Mobility and Infrastructure
- 35 i. Identify a priority list of downtown mobility and infrastructure
36 projects that include but are not limited to:
- 37 1. Our Future I-35 Cap & Stitch,
38 2. Project Connect,
39 3. Austin Convention Center Expansion,
40 4. Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative,
41 5. Austin Core Transportation Plan, which includes the East
42 Sixth Street streetscape improvements, and
43 6. Waterloo Greenway.
- 44 ii. Identify and provide feedback regarding a construction
45 mitigation plan, for upcoming private and public infrastructure
46 projects, with the necessary partners.
- 47 iii. Identify opportunities to advance City objectives for green
48 infrastructure, including infrastructure that improves energy
49 conservation, renewable energy generation, water conservation,
50 water quality, and stormwater detention.

51 b. Music and Arts

- 52 i. Identify strategic investments in the Red River Cultural District
53 to ensure its sustainable growth, preserve its cultural legacy and
54 strengthen its role as a premier live music destination.
- 55 ii. Identify new opportunities to enhance and preserve music
56 venues.
- 57 iii. Assess and restructure event fees within the downtown area to
58 attract smaller to mid-size events.

59 c. Cultural and Historical Assets

- 60 i. Review additional investment opportunities in the Mexican-
61 American Heritage Corridor and Emma S. Barrientos Mexican-
62 American Cultural Center.
- 63 ii. Advance incentives and other tools to help preserve historic
64 buildings and legacy businesses.
- 65 iii. Provide opportunities to celebrate historical assets throughout
66 the City.

67 d. Economic and Workforce Development

- 68 i. In coordination with the Downtown Austin Plan, provide a plan
69 and timeline for the redevelopment and repurposing of City-
70 owned buildings, including HealthSouth, Old Municipal
71 Building, and Austin Police Department (APD) Headquarters.
- 72 ii. Identify a list of programs to incentivize unused and under-
73 utilized commercial storefronts.
- 74 iii. Identify actions to decrease office vacancies within downtown.

75 iv. Identify opportunities that will prioritize and promote
76 workforce safety standards and project labor agreements for
77 public and private construction and infrastructure projects.

78 e. Public Safety

79 i. Provide a timeline on an action plan for the implementation of
80 tools to address safety across downtown through various safety
81 measures, including but not limited to, planning for fire stations
82 to accommodate increased density and the EMS Downtown
83 Area Command.

84 f. Homelessness

85 i. Review and identify a framework to address downtown's long-
86 term homelessness response strategy, including, but not limited
87 to, street outreach for individuals experiencing homelessness;
88 increased access to housing and emergency shelter;
89 homelessness prevention programs; and supportive services
90 including but not limited to family support services, health
91 services, transportation assistance, legal assistance, educational
92 and job training assistance, and rental assistance.

93 g. Parks and Greenspace

94 i. Assess needs and provide recommendations with partners for
95 sustainable maintenance and operations for vibrant public
96 spaces, particularly the four historic squares: Brush, Republic,
97 Wooldridge, and Hamilton.
98 ii. Identify a strategy to increase the tree canopy within downtown
99 with necessary partners.

100 iii. Explore 2019 Shoal Creek Feasibility Study recommendations
101 based on updated costs and benefits.

102 iv. Provide recommendations for standards and incentives best to
103 support the completion of the Waterloo Greenway project, as
104 initiated in Resolution No. 20241010-070.

105 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

106 The City Manager is directed to work with appropriate partners and
107 stakeholders to incorporate their feedback and identify responsibilities for
108 implementing the strategic goals within the initiative. Key partners include but are
109 not limited to: Downtown Austin Alliance, Visit Austin, Opportunity Austin,
110 Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, Shoal Creek Conservancy, Austin Chamber of
111 Commerce, Rally Austin, Old Austin Neighborhood Association, Downtown
112 Austin Neighborhood Association, the Downtown Commission, the Red River
113 Cultural District, the Central Labor Council, the Central Texas Building Trades,
114 and organizations that specialize in serving people experiencing homelessness in
115 downtown Austin.

116 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

117 The City Manager is directed to provide an initial update, which includes a
118 reporting structure and lead implementing department, to the Economic
119 Opportunity Committee no later than March 31, 2025, along with quarterly status
120 updates to the Economic Opportunity Committee.

121 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

122 The City Manger is directed to present the Council with any additional
123 funding that is identified as needed for the initiative to accomplish its objectives as
124 part of the budget planning process.

125 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

126 The City Manager is directed to provide a progress report on the
127 implementation of the Downtown Austin Strategic Initiative six, twelve, and
128 eighteen months after the final report is presented to the Council. After eighteen
129 months, the City Manager is directed to provide the Council with a yearly progress
130 report concerning the Downtown Austin Strategic Initiative.

131
132 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2025

ATTEST: _____

133 Myrna Rios
134 City Clerk
135