

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, more than half of Austin renters are cost-burdened by rent and a disproportionate share of these households are Black and Hispanic; and

WHEREAS, the private market has failed to consistently provide housing that is both desirable and affordable for key sectors of the community, including working families; and

WHEREAS, Austin Housing has been a leader in innovative real estate development for the production of affordable housing, especially through the use of creative developer incentives, flexible gap financing, and strategic investment housing programs; and

WHEREAS, the City has already facilitated a model mixed-income housing project through the Mueller Redevelopment, a public-private partnership that converted the retired municipal airport into a vibrant, mixed-use, mixed-income community that is compact, pedestrian-scaled, supportive of transit, and compatible with the surrounding fabric of single-family neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City has the opportunity to build additional mixed-income housing developments, by leveraging available tools and resources such as public financing, public land, public experts, intergovernmental cooperation, and public private partnerships; and

WHEREAS, “social housing” is one the of the strategies used around the world by government agencies to intervene in the housing market and build housing that is community-driven and permanently affordable; and

WHEREAS, municipalities across the United States, including Montgomery County, Maryland, are adopting “social housing” policies that are

25 financed through a “housing production fund” to build mixed-income multifamily
26 housing developments; and

27 **WHEREAS**, the “social housing” model put forth by Montgomery County,
28 Maryland projects that each rotation of \$100 million of investment through the
29 housing production fund will produce about 1,500 units, with a mixture of market
30 rate and permanently affordable housing; and further, after each project is
31 completed and leased, the invested public dollars are replaced by conventional
32 financing and returned to the housing production fund for utilization in additional
33 projects; and

34 **WHEREAS**, through social housing, the City can address a variety of
35 community needs including: increased economic opportunity and social mobility;
36 reduced racial and economic segregation; reduced year-by-year fluctuations in the
37 cost of rental housing; development of future sources of income for the City; and
38 construction of mixed-income, high-quality housing projects that have stalled due
39 to market conditions; and

40 **WHEREAS**, the City has the additional opportunity to integrate its
41 environmental expertise into a social housing policy, by leveraging existing
42 programs to build not only social housing, but “Green Social Housing” that is
43 sustainable, healthy, energy efficient, and protective of our surrounding
44 environment, while reducing utility costs to residents; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

46 The City Manager is directed to present the Council with a comprehensive
47 Green Social Housing policy that accomplishes the following:

- 48 (1) Create a management structure to research, coordinate, develop, and
49 identify any additional funding needed for all projects and programs

within the Green Social Housing policy, evaluate the cost and feasibility of the items listed in the Green Social Housing Policy framework, and align Green Social Housing with other Housing Department initiatives and the goals outlined in the Strategic Housing Blueprint and Imagine Austin; and

- (2) Research and explore innovative options to support the creation of Green Social Housing including but not limited to: economic development; workforce development; public banking; and land banking, with the goal of building off the success of existing programs supported by Austin Housing, the Austin Housing Finance Corporation, and Housing Authority City of Austin, and connecting the program to other efforts related to Project Connect, the Climate Equity Plan, and other City programs and plans; and
- (3) Create a Green Social Housing policy framework that:
 - (a) Emphasizes “housing” that is compact, pedestrian-scaled, transit-oriented and compatible with the surrounding community, and that includes a substantial percentage of units that are accessible and attractive for working families;
 - (b) Incorporates “social” goals including: (1) an emphasis on mixed-income, economically-integrated projects that include both market rate and permanently affordable units; (2) tenant inclusion in housing development governance; (3) tenant protections including just cause eviction, rent escalation caps, and additional protections contained in policies such as the City’s Rental Housing Development Assistance program guidelines and lease addendum; (4) workforce development

76 opportunities for local residents; and (5) a process of
77 community engagement that involves impacted communities in
78 green social housing planning;

79 (c) Incorporates “green” goals including existing green building
80 standards, a preference towards more compact and efficient
81 housing typologies, and potential additional elements that
82 support carbon reduction, water conservation, healthy living
83 standards and biological diversity, as well as utility savings;

84 (d) Requires that the City is a majority owner of Green Social
85 Housing developments to ensure that (1) Green Social Housing
86 standards are achieved and (2) the City accrues the long-term
87 financial benefits of housing production; and

88 (e) Requires that Green Social Housing developments live up to the
89 City’s standards for workers by incorporating established job
90 safety protections, Department of Labor apprenticeship ratios,
91 prevailing wage standards, and the Better Builder Program; and
92 shall build on existing workforce development initiatives, such
93 as the Austin Infrastructure Academy; and

94 (f) Creates a development process, prior to commencing Green
95 Social Housing projects, to gather and synthesize priorities for
96 how the City should focus its investments, including
97 consultation on how they City should balance project elements
98 as well as geographical distribution; and
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- (4) Create a finance plan to build Green Social Housing that:
- (a) Considers use of voter-approved funds; certificates of obligation; general fund dollars; conventional financing; utilization and leveraging of public land; utilization of City-employed experts; intergovernmental agreements; and public-private partnerships;
 - (b) Includes creation of a Housing Production Fund to provide low-cost construction financing for self-sustaining mixed-income Green Social Housing developments that are stable through various market conditions, and that encourages rapid loan repayment so that public dollars may be reinvested through a revolving fund;
 - (c) Considers existing and future market trends to determine affordability metrics and opportunities for cross-subsidization of affordable units with market rate units; and
 - (d) Operates independently from existing funds for gap financing and home repair loans; and
- (5) Develop an interdepartmental review and approval process and establish criteria for proposed Green Social Housing developments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to work with appropriate partners and stakeholders to incorporate their feedback and identify responsibilities for implementation of a Green Social Housing policy. At a minimum, the Council considers the following to be key partners: affordable housing advocates; local governmental agencies that support affordable housing; tenant advocacy

organizations; real estate developers; climate advocates; building trades and labor unions; and workforce development organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to identify overlap between the goals of this resolution and other Housing Department initiatives, and to merge efforts where possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to complete the policy and stakeholder objectives described above by August 30, 2026.

ADOPTED: _____, 2026 **ATTEST:** _____
Erika Brady
City Clerk