

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City supports a fair and equitable property tax system;
and

WHEREAS, most Austin homeowners have experienced large increases in their property valuations and thus their property taxes; and

WHEREAS, rapidly escalating property taxes are driving an increasing number of homeowners out of Austin's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the Austin Independent School District, one of the seven districts within the City boundaries, experienced a decrease in student enrollment for the first time since 2001 and attributes this decrease in large part to increased housing costs; and

WHEREAS, the Travis Central Appraisal District sets the appraised value for residential and commercial properties; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the *Austin American-Statesman*, Real Values for Texas, and others demonstrates that commercial property is often valued lower than actual sales prices and its real market value; and

WHEREAS, the undervaluation of commercial property imposes an unfair tax burden on residential property owners; and

WHEREAS, valuations of commercial property should be based on the

fair market value; and

WHEREAS, Harris County has filed a petition with its Appraisal Review Board challenging valuations on unimproved commercial property; and

WHEREAS, the Travis County Commissioners Court is contemplating filing a challenge petition for commercial properties; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to present a comprehensive and well-researched body of data to document its concerns about the setting of commercial property values; and

WHEREAS, if Travis County Commissioners elect to proceed with a challenge petition, the City may be able to share the costs of hiring experts and other legal preparations; **NOW THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to file a challenge petition with the Appraisal Review Board regarding the setting of commercial property values in the portion of the City within Travis County by the Travis Central Appraisal District pursuant to Chapter 41 of the Texas Tax Code. The City Manager is further directed to work with and share costs for legal preparation with Travis County as appropriate.

The City Manager is further directed to work with other area taxing entities over the next year to research and compile information that can be used to prepare

a comprehensive challenge petition by the appropriate deadline in 2015. The City Manager should provide an interim report by October 1, 2014.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk

DRAFT