

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, City of Austin has an interest in improving the quality of life for all of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has a diverse and international population that is approximately 19.3% foreign-born, constituting over 150,000 individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Commission on Immigrant Affairs passed a recommendation, subsequently adopted by City Council on March 20, 2014, to take efforts to become a “Welcoming Community” by engaging all relevant sectors, such as government, business, and non-profit, to work together to create a welcoming community climate that supports long-term integration of immigrant communities and a commitment to institutionalizing strategies that ensure the ongoing inclusion and long-term economic and social integration of newcomers; and

WHEREAS, the threat of deportation without criminal offense undermines the willingness of the immigrant community to share information with law enforcement that is crucial to public safety and their own personal safety; and

WHEREAS, the lack of a government-issued identification can be a deterrence to reporting crimes of public or personal safety, and a logistical barrier to housing, healthcare, education and banking; and

WHEREAS, a 2012 report by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation listed approximately 62,000 households or 10.2% of the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area as un-banked, a status that may make them vulnerable to potentially predatory lending at alternative financial service firms; and

WHEREAS, the failure of the U.S. Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform but passage of the 2005 Real ID Act, which requires all state issued drivers licenses to meet certain standards, including proof of immigration status, before they can be accepted for federal purposes, prompted the City of New Haven, Connecticut to implement the nation's first municipally issued identification card in 2007; and

WHEREAS, the City of New Haven noted that many immigrants were unable to open bank accounts, which made them frequently profiled by thieves with the expectation that they would be carrying cash and not report crimes due to their undocumented status; and

WHEREAS, New Haven's "Elm City Resident's Card" has been followed by similar programs in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Richmond, California, and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, many cities have recognized the opportunity of having a broadly adopted and multifunctional card that consolidates other issuances such as library cards and bus passes or have included benefits such as resident-rates at city facilities or local-affinity discounts at participating businesses; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland, California launched a municipal identification card in June 2009 that incorporates an optional limited debit card functionality that has proven popular, has helped defray costs of administration, and has made records better protected under the banking privacy act of 1978; and

WHEREAS, municipally issued identification has also been used to address issues with other vulnerable communities, including housing and employment access for the homeless who may have difficulty obtaining or retaining other government-issued forms of identification; and

WHEREAS, the National Transgender Law Center and other LGBT advocacy organizations have supported municipal-issued identification as a means of providing government-issued identification without gender classifications; and

WHEREAS, a broadly adopted and accepted identification card fosters greater connectivity to important urban institutions, provides access to vital locations where photo identification is required, and creates a sense of unity within a city; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to convene a community stakeholder group to assist in reviewing community needs and current opportunities regarding municipally issued identification. With assistance from the community stakeholder group, the City Manager will review the following topics:

- Case studies from peer cities;
- Applicable state and federal law as well as current identification practices;
- Community needs with the Commission on Immigrant Affairs, Human Rights Commission, Community Development Commission and other relevant organizations;
- The identification needs of public safety departments and solicit feedback from the Public Safety Commission on ways to improve the interaction with local authorities for those without state-issued identification;
- The practices of the local banking, housing, and insurance community regarding identification needs for the un-banked;
- The issuance of user cards, requests for identification or request for residency by city departments or partnered organizations (such as Cap Metro, Austin B-Cycle, ChargePoint, etc...) for potential system integration and cost-savings;
- Available options for third party vendors regarding optional integrated debit card services; and
- Options regarding an application process and document retention that ensure the privacy of applicants and maximum adoption and renewal of City issued identification cards.

The City Manager shall report back to the City Council by December 1, 2014 with a proposal for a City of Austin issued identification card in calendar year 2015.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk