

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, in 2015, in an effort to enhance the Austin Public Library's ability to empower the community through technology, the Austin Public Library Friends Foundation (AAPLFF) requested support to provide Google Chat technology in both the City's new central library facility and in select branch libraries; and

WHEREAS, Google Chat identified seven geographically dispersed Austin public libraries with videoconferencing capabilities, and awarded funds to provide hardware and software for those nine library locations. Such funding will enable a range of videoconferencing services in the community such as videoconferencing for military families, community organizations, and small start-up businesses; will promote civic engagement such as through connecting homebound individuals to community meetings held at library locations; and will allow City staff to remotely participate in City meetings ; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Task Force on Community Engagement recommended that the City "make it easier for people to give input in ways that are convenient, accessible and appropriate for them," specifically through enabling online or virtual participation in City meetings; and

WHEREAS, the remote-location videoconferencing pilot program initiated by Resolution 20160804-054 was deemed to be a viable option for off-site citizen participation during the General Citizen Communication portion of Council meetings; and

WHEREAS, Austin public libraries serve as community centers with existing infrastructure, technology, staff and expertise that could be utilized to efficiently expand transparency and public participation in Council meetings; and

WHEREAS, the City strives to achieve Smart City goals of investing in modern communications infrastructure and technologies to meet residents' needs, improve efficiency of services, increase opportunities for citizen communication at Council meetings, and enhance overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Council supports innovative uses of technology to enhance citizen participation which may also reduce vehicle miles traveled and reduce traffic congestion in the downtown area and other parts of the city; **NOW THEREFORE**,

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

By the March 2, 2017 Council meeting, the City Manager is directed to begin initial testing and implementation for expansion of library services to provide for General Citizen Communication via videoconferencing, to be in conformance with requirements of City Code, Section 2-5-28. Funding has been obtained, and the following three library locations have been identified for initial testing and implementation, based upon their designations as regional branches and based upon the goal of achieving geographic dispersion throughout the city and council districts so that all residents are afforded equal opportunities to participate in city government:

- Ruiz Branch (Southeast Austin Regional Branch)
- Manchaca Road Branch (South Central Austin Regional Branch)
- Spicewood Springs Branch (Far Northwest Branch)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

By the May 4, 2017 Council meeting, the City Manager is directed to expand implementation of the same videoconferencing capabilities at the following locations, which have also been similarly identified and funded:

- Carver Branch (East Central Branch)
- Little Walnut Creek Branch (Far North Central Regional Branch)
- Yarborough Branch (North Central Regional Branch)
- Old Quarry Branch (West Central Branch)
- Southeast Community Branch (Far Southeast Branch)
- Hampton Branch at Oak Hill (Southwest Branch)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to develop a methodology to analyze the expansion of library services afforded to residents through the use of these library locations for all new services provided hereby, including but not limited to access to General Citizen Communication, and teleconferencing by military families, community organizations and small business start-ups. The methodology should consider, among other factors, the number of residents with increased access to these expanded services due to their location near the facility, travel patterns and available travel options, parking availability, hours of operation, flexibility of meeting spaces, and other related factors. Using this methodology, the City Manager is directed to identify gaps in access to services throughout the city (Geographic Gap Areas Map).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

By the May 4, 2017 Council meeting, the City Manager is directed to develop a plan for extending the expanded services beyond the initial nine libraries associated with the current funding, and such extension of expanded services shall be to the Geographic Gap Areas, in order to determine appropriate libraries or other locations in which to offer these services, and to identify additional resources, if any, which are needed to train staff and provide equipment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

By the May 4, 2018 Council meeting, the City Manager is directed to analyze the effectiveness of the expansion of library services with regard to offering new opportunities for more residents throughout the City to participate in General Citizen Communications and other civic engagement forums afforded by these expanded services, and to provide a report on same to the Council.

ADOPTED: _____, 2017 **ATTEST:** _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk