

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, in Travis County the food insecurity rate for all residents is 16%, and approximately 22% of children in Travis County, or 57,780 young people, experienced food insecurity in 2015; and

WHEREAS, 13% of Travis County residents live in poverty and the poverty rate for both Hispanics (26%) and African Americans (23%) in Travis County is more than twice the poverty rate for Whites (9%); and

WHEREAS, the Austin Travis County Food Policy Board was created to improve the availability of safe, nutritious, locally, and sustainably-grown food at reasonable prices for all residents, particularly those in need, by coordinating the relevant activities of city government, as well as non-profit organizations, and food and farming businesses; and

WHEREAS, the region faces significant challenges to sustaining a vibrant community-based food system, including the loss of 82 farms which represent 4% of county farmland (10,000 acres) from 2007 to 2012; and

WHEREAS, in order to reverse the trend of losing farmland, policies are needed that support the return of land not currently in agricultural production back to agricultural use; and

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin's Comprehensive Plan includes as one of the Conservation and Environment Policies Building Blocks to permanently preserve

areas of agricultural value; and

WHEREAS, part of the City of Austin Council’s Strategic Direction 2023 has committed to ensuring that all Austinites can enjoy a sustainable environment and a healthy life, physically and mentally, by implementing community-informed initiatives that make healthy and affordable foods easily accessible to all, especially for our vulnerable populations and historically marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Direction 2023 states that building the skills and capabilities of the community workforce as well as improved food security and nutrition are critical parts of the development of Austin’s future; and

WHEREAS, according to Ready by 21, a community plan/group that advocates for youth, engaging in community, school and/or extracurricular activities is a key component to securing healthy outcomes for youth; and

WHEREAS, after school programming offers a structured environment for students to participate in healthy enrichment activities, and decreases the likelihood that students will participate in risky behaviors. Students who regularly participate in afterschool programming perform better academically, attend school more regularly, and graduate from high school at higher rates than their peers who do not attend; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin’s Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) owns a nine acre tract of land located at 4711 Winnebago Lane (Winnebago) located between light industry and single family residences that is well suited for agricultural

use and youth programming; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 the Parks and Recreation Department brought a proposal to City Council to create a dog park on this site but a Council Member raised concerns about access to transit, and the issue was postponed; and

WHEREAS, when ARR brought to Council a potential contract for sale of the tract in 2016, Council voted against the measure and later passed Resolution No.20160204-038 directing the City Manager to explore the feasibility of developing an affordable live/work project on the site for artists whose studios must be located in industrially-zoned locations; and

WHEREAS, a March 2016 staff report determined that for a redevelopment to occur on the property, the General Fund or another entity must purchase the land from Austin Resource Recovery or, alternatively, zero waste must be made part of the project's mission on the property and urban farming is considered to be a superior use on this parcel due to the dearth of food access in the surrounding area and its ability to contribute to ARR's zero waste goals; and

WHEREAS, Austin Youth & Community farm, Inc. d/b/a Urban Roots (Urban Roots) has been using food and farming to transform the lives of young people and inspire, engage, and nourish the community for 10 years including paid internships for youth leaders through a Food and Leadership Fellowship and Farm Internship Program, sharing a significant portion of their harvest with the community through their Hunger Relief Partners, and providing community education through

educational farm tours and community volunteer days; and

WHEREAS, Urban Roots could expand existing programming at the Winnebago site, and is committed to building an urban farm, commercial kitchen, indoor and outdoor teaching space for youth, office space, and adequate parking to further serve the community at no cost to the City; and

WHEREAS, Council has approved long term agreements for use of City property when significant community benefits will be provided at the site, including Austin Pets Alive, Austin Y. M. B. L. Sunshine Camp d/b/a The Young Men's Business League of Austin, West Austin Youth Association, and others; and

WHEREAS, support for Urban Roots expanding their program by leasing the Winnebago site has been provided to Council and the City through letters, emails and resolutions from community advocates such as Go Austin/Vamos Austin (GAVA), District 2 residents, the Southeast Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (SCNPCT), the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board as well as the Kensington Park Homeowners Association which is located adjacent to the Winnebago property; and

WHEREAS, entering into a long term use agreement for the Winnebago tract with Urban Roots would enable provision of quality youth programming and improve access to healthy affordable foods, while also expanding available local agricultural space, providing extensive community benefits with minimal costs to the City; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The Council directs the City Manager to explore the feasibility of developing a long-term use agreement with Austin Youth & Community Farm, Inc. dba Urban Roots for the tract at 4711 Winnebago Lane to be utilized for workforce development and enrichment programs for youth through urban agriculture. This exploration should include an assessment of environmental remediation that may be required to support the use of urban farming on the site.

If this long-term use agreement is deemed feasible for 4711 Winnebago Lane, an executed lease must contain the provision that the general public will be able to access the site and the use will contain features that are accessible to residents', adjacent neighbors, and the surrounding community. An executed lease for this programmed open space will include, to the extent feasible, a provision that any youth programs include internships and leadership opportunities that provide a community benefit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Council directs the City Manager to report back to the City Council no later than August 30, 2018.

ADOPTED: _____, 2018

ATTEST: _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk