

RESOLUTION NO.

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4       **WHEREAS**, temporary and permanent public plazas provide unique  
5 opportunities for enhanced conviviality and community in urban areas; and

6       **WHEREAS**, like pocket parks and sidewalk cafés, temporary and  
7 permanent public plazas can activate underutilized space with the purpose of  
8 creating safe, accessible, family friendly, and social public spaces; and

9       **WHEREAS**, Imagine Austin endeavors to “protect and enhance the unique  
10 qualities of Austin’s treasured public spaces and places such as parks, plazas, and  
11 streetscapes; and, where needed, enrich those areas lacking distinctive visual  
12 character or where the character has faded”; and

13       **WHEREAS**, Imagine Austin also prioritizes the development of “accessible  
14 community gathering places such as plazas, parks, farmers’ markets, sidewalks,  
15 and streets in all parts of Austin, especially within activity centers and along  
16 activity corridors including Downtown, future Transit Oriented Developments, in  
17 denser, mixed use communities, and other redevelopment areas, that encourage  
18 interaction and provide places for people of all ages to visit and relax”; and

19       **WHEREAS**, the 2008 Families and Children Task Force report  
20 recommends that the City Council should “create additional public gathering  
21 spaces in downtown and throughout the city and incorporate child-friendly and  
22 family-friendly features into existing public spaces”; and

23       **WHEREAS**, the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan calls for  
24 a temporary public plaza, currently known as the Nightwing Plaza, as an interim  
25 strategy in lieu of capital funds for a permanent plaza; and

26           **WHEREAS**, efforts are underway to complete installation and begin  
27 activation of the Nightwing Plaza, but progress has been slow due to the lack of a  
28 streamlined process; and

29           **WHEREAS**, while the “Adopt a Median” program’s application process  
30 enables private stewardship over public space with continued public access,  
31 medians and public plazas are quite different and the City could benefit from  
32 creating a separate and more streamlined process for creating, managing,  
33 overseeing, and programming temporary and permanent public plazas; and

34           **WHEREAS**, additionally, the City does not have a clear process for  
35 establishing public-private partnerships to create a temporary or permanent public  
36 plaza, nor does it have clear expectations and requirements for programming,  
37 accessibility, vendor guidelines, and signage requirements to denote public access;

38 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

40           The City Manager is directed to research national best practices for  
41 temporary and permanent public plaza programs, with special attention to other  
42 programs’ organizational structures, application requirements, contractual  
43 agreements, cost-sharing models, accessibility standards, vendor requirements,  
44 signage requirements, features that appeal to all ages, and successful methods in  
45 which public entities engage private organizations and community groups that  
46 participate in the operation, maintenance, and programming of public plazas.

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49           Upon completion of this research, the City Manager is directed to compose a  
50 memo that synthesizes these best practices with recommendations for City of  
51 Austin implementation, including which City department should oversee the  
52 creation and administration of a public plaza program by April 15, 2019.

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54 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2018

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk

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