

RESOLUTION NO. 20190425-044

WHEREAS, Priority Program 3 of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan is to continue to grow the City of Austin's economy by investing in our workforce, education systems, entrepreneurs, and local businesses; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board (WFS), under the direction of the City of Austin and Travis County, officially launched the Master Community Workforce Plan (Master Plan) effort, aiming to keep Austin affordable by moving people out of poverty and into family-supporting, career middle-skill jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council adopted the Master Community Workforce Plan as an element of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan in 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council adopted Strategic Direction 2023, which included Economic Opportunity and Affordability as one of six strategic outcomes with indicators related to the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, WFS is the City's only designated intergovernmental partner providing required and critical job seeker supports through subsidized child care, youth services, job matching, and career training services; and

WHEREAS, in July 2019, WFS is expanding capacity for its flagship North Career Center. The new facility will serve as the largest, most comprehensive job center in operation in Austin/Travis County; and

WHEREAS, benefits of the new flagship facility include:

- Located in the Austin Eastern Crescent to align with customer need (just south of East Rundberg Lane and Interstate Highway 35);
- Increased career center space to serve job seekers and employers; and
- Expanded customer access to workforce-related services and staff: job counseling and matching, job training, job seeker workshops, subsidized child care, employer job fairs, veterans' services, disability employment services, and community-based programs; and

WHEREAS, current federal and state contracting rules require WFS to fund facility expansion from current client services contracts or from external sources. To date, WFS has cut fiscal year 2019 contracts by 20%, resulting in reduced client services, in order to meet facility expansion budget needs; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin annually invests millions of dollars in workforce development and job training services with various local providers; and

WHEREAS, WFS is uniquely positioned to leverage local funding with matching federal child care funds, and has been doing so with the City of Austin and Travis County for more than 10 years to bring more total funding to our community to help working poor families with child care; and

WHEREAS, WFS has identified and built a proof-of-concept for matching federal funds for every non-federal dollar spent on qualifying workforce activities for

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-eligible individuals. WFS is the only workforce board in Texas approved to receive this match (called Third Party Reimbursement) from the Texas Workforce Commission; and

WHEREAS, WFS believes that there are unmatched funds that could be brought to our community with no additional investment from local government. The potential is \$.50 for every \$1.00 spent, and the proof-of-concept has already matched over \$100,000 with minimal effort or promotion. Funds return to our community as unrestricted; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

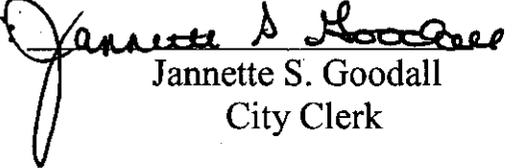
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council directs the City Manager to recommend options for partnering with WFS to meet shared goals regarding facilities, funding, and level and location of services. Options considered should include, without limitation, options that:

- Assist WFS facilities expansion needs in the short-term, without necessitating further possible cuts to client services in the current fiscal year. Options should include those that are revenue-neutral to the City, including, but not limited to the City providing a no-interest loan to WFS.
- Explore long-term partnerships with WFS on facilities and service delivery opportunities throughout the City in areas of high need.

- Explore opportunities to leverage City investments in workforce development and job training services with additional funding from state, federal, and private sources to achieve improved Strategic Outcomes and the goals of the Master Plan.

ADOPTED: April 25, 2019

ATTEST: 
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk