

26 **WHEREAS**, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
27 (CDC), the Delta variant of COVID-19 accounts for 98.8 percent of new infections
28 in the United States; and

29 **WHEREAS**, the booster shot plan currently being developed by the Biden
30 administration applies to the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, but it is anticipated that
31 the booster shot will also eventually be needed for those who received the Johnson
32 & Johnson vaccine; and

33 **WHEREAS**, Americans who were first to get vaccinated against
34 COVID-19, including health care providers, nursing home residents, and the
35 elderly, will likely be eligible for a booster shot starting September 2021; and

36 **WHEREAS**, the Biden administration’s plan is subject to approval from the
37 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (also known as FDA); and

38 **WHEREAS**, according to federal data as reported by Reuters, more than
39 one million Americans have independently sought an extra vaccine dose before the
40 official decision on booster shots was announced; and

41 **WHEREAS**, there are approximately 350 vaccine providers in the
42 Austin/Travis County region and the vaccine is widely available; and

43 **WHEREAS**, Austin Public Health traditionally serves as a safety-net
44 vaccine provider that covers low income and uninsured and underinsured
45 individuals, but was designated until approximately July 2021 by the State as a
46 regional hub provider and therefore required to distribute the majority of the
47 vaccine supply to anyone who requested it; and

48 **WHEREAS**, on July 9, 2020, City Council approved Ordinance No.
49 20200709-003 authorizing the health authority to adopt rules reasonably necessary
50 to protect the public’s health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

51 **WHEREAS**, on December 3, 2020, City Council approved Ordinance No.
52 20201203-003 amending the expiration date of Ordinance No. 20200709-003 to
53 December 15, 2020; and

54 **WHEREAS**, on August 28, 2020, Austin Public Health released a staff
55 memorandum to City Council titled, “Addressing COVID-19 disparities in the
56 Hispanic/Latinx populations,” explaining the goal of improved outreach,
57 prevention, and communication includes the need to evaluate outreach efforts and
58 continuously improve them; and

59 **WHEREAS**, on October 23, 2020, Austin Public Health announced the
60 launch of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Coalition, a group of health care
61 and community partners tasked to help Austin Public Health develop strategies for
62 distributing the vaccine; and

63 **WHEREAS**, in January 2021, Austin Public Health, in partnership with the
64 Capital Area Vaccine Distribution Coalition, published the Capital Area
65 COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan, which was the product of valuable
66 contributions from community partners who provided a voice for those who they
67 represent and serve; and

68 **WHEREAS**, as part of “Phase 3: Sufficient Supply of Vaccine Doses for
69 Entire Population,” the Capital Area COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan stated
70 Austin Public Health committed to considering “Communicating the need for

71 boosters or annual vaccines, if applicable,” which was the sole reference to booster
72 shots in this Plan; and

73 **WHEREAS**, on March 25, 2021, City Council directed the City Manager to
74 address the continued impact of COVID-19 by encouraging employers to create
75 programs that will increase access to COVID-19 vaccines by their employees and
76 identifying funding to prioritize mobile testing and vaccination programs; and

77 **WHEREAS**, on June 10, 2021, City Council approved an American Rescue
78 Plan Spending Framework that included \$44.3 million to be allocated toward
79 COVID-19 response efforts; and

80 **WHEREAS**, on June 10, 2021, City Council approved an ordinance
81 amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Austin Public Health Department Operating
82 Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to accept and
83 appropriate \$4,087,502 in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and
84 Human Services and CDC, for the delivery of COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach; and

85 **WHEREAS**, there is, and has been, a continual need to improve and build
86 upon current outreach and vaccination strategies by the City; and

87 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin is currently in Stage 5 of the Risk-Based
88 Guidelines and is witnessing a surge in COVID-19 positive cases as a result of the
89 Delta variant, vaccine hesitancy, and lack-of-access concerns that differ for every
90 community; and

91 **WHEREAS**, zip codes in the Eastern Crescent, such as 78744, 78741,
92 78742, and 78617, continue to fall near or below a 50% vaccination rate as it
93 relates to full vaccinations; and

94 **WHEREAS**, a booster shot strategy is needed in order to avoid similar
95 disparities in the future; and

96 **WHEREAS**, it is crucial to continue to increase access to initial doses of the
97 COVID-19 vaccine, especially for communities hardest hit by the pandemic, while
98 also recognizing that everyone who is or will be vaccinated will likely be
99 encouraged to take the booster shot; and

100 **WHEREAS**, through adopting the Fiscal Year 2021- 2022 budget as
101 amended, the City took a step forward in building on lessons learned during the
102 current vaccination process by making an investment in increasing Community
103 Health Worker capacity to address, among other health access needs, both current
104 and future COVID-19 vaccination processes; and

105 **WHEREAS**, the development of a booster shot strategy that builds on
106 lessons learned during the initial COVID-19 vaccination process is a similar step
107 forward that is anchored in equity; and

108 **WHEREAS**, community booster shots will begin in the midst of both the
109 initial COVID-19 vaccination process and continued testing, all of which will
110 continue to strain the resources of our public health institutions; and

111 **WHEREAS**, for this reason, a booster shot strategy for Austin Public
112 Health is needed to ensure efficiency and cohesion moving forward; and

113 **WHEREAS**, a robust community engagement and communication strategy
114 on the underlying science and recommendations for booster shots will be essential,
115 as the City will continue to face vaccine hesitancy and access issues, as well as
116 new concerns, such as vaccine fatigue; and

117 **WHEREAS**, because there is still much work to be done with vaccine
118 outreach and individuals will become eligible for booster shots eight months after
119 their initial COVID-19 vaccination, the booster shot process could extend late into
120 2022, thereby necessitating a long-term strategy that addresses the eventual need to
121 reach communities that have not yet been reached for the initial COVID-19
122 vaccination process; and

123 **WHEREAS**, the City must do all it can to stay ahead of the virus; **NOW**,
124 **THEREFORE**,

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

126 The City Council reiterates its commitment to an equitable vaccine
127 distribution strategy that is built on the recommendations of public health officials
128 and community input.

129 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

130 The City Manager is directed to build on the Capital Area COVID-19
131 Vaccine Distribution Plan by developing a comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine
132 booster shot strategy, which will be included in an updated version of the Capital
133 Area COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan; and notwithstanding any possible shift
134 in vaccine distribution responsibility assigned by the State or Federal government,
135 this strategy will include, but not be limited to:

136 (1) A section dedicated to analyzing lessons learned from the ongoing
137 initial COVID-19 vaccination rollout and process, with a focus on combatting
138 vaccine hesitancy or access issues affecting communities most impacted by
139 COVID-19;

141 (2) The City’s plan to build on its communication and partnership with
142 community, government partners, and other vaccine providers during the booster
143 shot process;

144 (3) The City’s plan to execute a booster shot strategy while continuing to
145 address ongoing vaccine-access issues and prioritizing populations experiencing
146 disparate outcomes related to COVID-19;

147 (4) The City’s communication strategy and plan to educate the public
148 with accurate information on the booster shot process and where residents can get
149 the vaccine from among nearly 350 vaccine providers in the region; and

150 (5) The City’s plan to utilize Community Health Workers from Austin
151 Public Health and community partners to address booster shot outreach efforts.

152 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

153 The City Manager is directed to report to City Council in the form of a
154 memorandum, any outstanding needs of Austin Public Health, Homeland Security
155 and Emergency Management, and other City departments required to implement a
156 booster shot strategy for Austin Public Health, including but not limited to:

- 157 (1) Funding;
- 158 (2) Personnel;
- 159 (3) Training;
- 160 (4) Intergovernmental assistance; and
- 161 (5) New contracts or amendments to existing contracts.

162 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

163 The City Manager is directed to provide an update in the form of a
164 memorandum to City Council detailing the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution
165 Coalition’s work performed as of the date of the memorandum and future plans, as
166 well as their recommendations on booster shot strategies and subsequent actionable
167 items.

168 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

169 The City Manager is directed to submit an updated version of the Capital
170 Area COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan, the memorandum detailing related
171 City department needs, and the update regarding the COVID-19 Distribution
172 Coalition’s work, to City Council by September 21, 2021.

173 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

174 The City Manager is directed to present the updated version of the Capital
175 Area COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan, the memorandum detailing related
176 City department needs, and the update regarding the COVID-19 Distribution
177 Coalition’s work, to City Council during the September 28, 2021, work session.

178
179 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2021 **ATTEST:** _____

180 Jannette S. Goodall
181 City Clerk