

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Castleman-Bull House is a two-story, load-bearing masonry historic house located at 201 Red River Street across from the service yard of the Austin Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, the house was originally constructed in 1873 at 308 East 7th Street; and

WHEREAS, the two-story brick home dates back to 1873, when it was completed by Austin merchant R.M. Castleman, and four generations of Castlemans lived in the house before St. David's Episcopal Church acquired the building in 1963; and

WHEREAS, St. David's Episcopal Church leased the house to the Caritas Foundation until it moved to its new location; and

WHEREAS, in December 2000, St. David's Episcopal Church donated the house to the City of Austin, and the Heritage Society (now Preservation Austin), with a contribution from St. David's, paid to move the Castleman-Bull House seven blocks to its current location; and

WHEREAS, the building has not been occupied since the move; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, renovations for the interior of the Castleman-Bull House were estimated at about \$2 million; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Austin Convention Center spent \$1.7 million to renovate the exterior of the Castleman-Bull House; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the Convention Center paid for the renovation from its capital
23 budget; and

24 **WHEREAS**, according to the Jamail & Smith website, the Castleman-Bull
25 House exterior renovation was intended to create “the first fixed-front porch in the
26 Promiseland Project movement, also known as America’s Front Porch,” an
27 initiative to create spaces “where all people from every walk of life, can sit
28 together, talk, and listen to each other, as neighbors,”; and

29 **WHEREAS**, this historic, city-owned structure has been under-utilized and
30 vacant for the period of time that the City has owned it; and

31 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has a vested interest in ensuring that all
32 quadrants of its Downtown remain active, vibrant places where visitors and
33 residents alike want to spend time; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has periodically had conversations about
35 methods and strategies for discouraging Downtown property owners from letting
36 their properties stand vacant; and

37 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin should model this practice with its own
38 facilities; and

39 **WHEREAS**, the Castleman-Bull’s location within the Palm District and
40 adjacent to the Convention Center makes it ideally suited for events, programs,
41 and/or a visitors center; and

42 **WHEREAS**, restoration of the Castleman-Bull House will help further the
43 goal of transforming this quadrant of Downtown into more active, vibrant
44 pedestrian uses; and

45 **WHEREAS**, without timely restoration to the interior of the building, the
46 City risks losing this valuable asset within the Austin Convention Center portfolio;
47 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

49 The City Council, by separate action, allocates \$8 million from the Austin
50 Convention Center funds for interior renovations of the Castleman-Bull House for
51 Convention Center use.

52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

53 The City Manager is directed to provide an updated estimate for interior
54 renovations of the Castleman Bull House no later than November 1, 2022.

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

56 The City Manager shall ensure that the forthcoming Palm District Plan
57 proposes to integrate the Castleman-Bull House in a meaningful way. If doing so
58 requires additional stakeholder meetings, the City Manager shall hold those
59 meetings in October and provide a memo to Council no later than November 1,
60 2022.
61

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In keeping with the City's process of reviewing facility names associated with the Confederacy, the City Manager shall initiate a community input process to consider the appropriateness of changing the name of the structure and to review alternative recommendations.

ADOPTED: _____, 2022 **ATTEST:** _____
Myrna Rios
City Clerk