

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Castleman-Bull House was originally constructed in 1873 at 308 East 7th Street by Austin merchant R. M. Castleman; and

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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 entrance of the Austin Convention Center; and

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~~WHEREAS, the house was originally constructed in 1873 at 308 East 7th Street; and~~ **WHEREAS**, the Castleman-Bull is one of the oldest and most substantial 19th century houses in Austin, a fine example of the High Victorian Italianate style; and

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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 where it would then serve as home; and~~

~~WHEREAS, St. David's Episcopal Church leased the house to the Caritas Foundation until it moved to its new location for more than 30 years; and~~

WHEREAS, in December 2000, in lieu of demolition, 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 unoccupied since the move; and

WHEREAS, a two-year effort was undertaken between 2010 and 2012 to create a public-private partnership between the Waller Creek Conservancy, the MFI Foundation, and the City of Austin that would have resulted in a restored building at no cost to the public, coupled with a significant public benefit; and

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WHEREAS, in 2017, 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-restore~~ and stabilize the exterior of the Castleman-Bull House; and

WHEREAS, the Convention Center paid for the renovation from its capital budget, which has a proposed ending balance for Fiscal Year 2023 of more than \$181 million; and

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

WHEREAS, this historic, city-owned structure has been under-utilized and vacant for the ~~period of time~~20 years that the City has owned it; and

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

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WHEREAS, the City of Austin periodically has ~~periodically~~ had conversations about methods and strategies for discouraging Downtown property owners from ~~letting-allowing~~ their properties to stand vacant; and

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

WHEREAS, the Castleman-Bull's location within the Palm District and adjacent to the Convention Center makes it ideally suited for events, programs, ~~and/or~~ a visitors center, or other public uses; and

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

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

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

That the City Manager shall work in conjunction with the Austin Convention Center and the City of Austin Historic Preservation Office to define a scope of work for the restoration and renovation of the Castleman-Bull House consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties that would return it to service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

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The City Council, by separate action, allocates \$8 million from the Austin Convention Center funds for interior ~~renovations~~ restoration and such renovations as are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties ~~of the Castleman-Bull House.~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

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

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