

**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, 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 Castleman-Bull is one of the oldest and most substantial 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Austin, a fine example of the High Victorian Italianate style; and

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**WHEREAS**, four generations of Castlemans lived in the house before St. David's Episcopal Church in 1963 where it would then serve as home to the Caritas Foundation 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) paid to move the Castleman-Bull House seven blocks to its current location; and

**WHEREAS**, the building has 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

23       **WHEREAS**, in 2017, renovations for the interior of the Castleman-Bull  
24 House were estimated at about \$2 million; and

25       **WHEREAS**, in 2019 the Austin Convention Center spent \$1.7 million to  
26 restore and stabilize the exterior of the Castleman-Bull House; and

27       **WHEREAS**, the Convention Center paid for the renovation from its capital  
28 budget, which has a proposed ending balance for Fiscal Year 2023 of more than  
29 \$181 million; and

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

35       **WHEREAS**, this historic, city-owned structure has been under-utilized and  
36 vacant for the 20 years that the City has owned it; and

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

40       **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin periodically has had conversations about  
41 methods and strategies for discouraging Downtown property owners from allowing  
42 their properties to stand vacant; and

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

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

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

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

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

55       That the City Manager shall work with the City of Austin Historic  
56 Preservation Office to define a scope of work and to provide a cost estimate for the  
57 restoration and renovation of the Castleman-Bull House consistent with the  
58 Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties that  
59 would return it to service. The City Manager shall provide this estimate no later  
60 than November 1, 2022.

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61 **BE IT RESOLVED**

62       The City Council, by separate action, reserves \$10 million from the Austin  
63 Convention Center funds for interior restoration and such renovations as are  
64 consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic  
65 Properties.

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66 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

The City Manager shall conduct community engagement meetings in October and November to discuss possible public uses of this building, including for the Black Embassy, Convention Center purposes, or other city- or third-party uses. The City Manager shall engage with culturally significant and representative organizations; stakeholders shall include and not be limited to Preservation Austin, Six Square, Waterloo Greenway, the Downtown Austin Alliance, and participants in the Palm District Planning initiative.

The City Manager shall notify the following boards and commissions (and any other relevant ones) in advance of these conversations: Visit Austin, the Downtown Commission, the Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board, the African American Quality of Life Commission, the Parks and Recreation Board, and the Historic Landmark Commission.

The City Manager shall consult with and involve in these conversations city staff from multiple departments, including the Palm District Planning effort, the Historic Preservation Office, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Equity Office, the George Washington Carver Museum and Genealogy Center, and the Convention Center.

The City Manager shall provide a Council memo or briefing about these meetings along with staff recommendations no later than December 1, 2022.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

In the event that staff and/or the community recommend non-Convention Center options for use, staff shall recommend sources of funding.

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Deleted: 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

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Item ~~54~~  
Version ~~3~~  
Meeting: 09-~~15~~-2022

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109 In keeping with the ~~process~~ that the Equity Office is spearheading to review,  
110 facility names associated with the Confederacy, the City Manager shall also initiate  
111 a community input process to consider the appropriateness of changing the name  
112 of the structure and to review alternative recommendations.

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113 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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Myrna Rios  
City Clerk

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