

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, Since 2005, the City of Austin encouraged transit-oriented development (TOD) to create attractive, walkable, and sustainable development patterns around high-capacity transit that maximizes Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Capital Metro) system ridership and offers Austin residents abundant housing choices and convenient access to jobs, services, and diverse amenities; and

WHEREAS, City policies, processes, and City Code sections related to TODs may need to be updated to accommodate Project Connect investments, the recommendations from the studies, and reflect population growth to meet housing demands and maintain an accessible housing market; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan envisions a compact and connected city that promotes household affordability, environmental protection, and complete communities, with easier, greener, healthier transportation options linking residents to jobs, arts and culture, parks, schools, health care, shopping, and other destinations; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint established a goal of building 135,000 new housing units and preserving 10,000 affordable units over a 10-year period, and recommends allowing affordable options in all parts of town, as well as helping Austinites reduce household costs by encouraging housing developments and the preservation of affordable housing that connect with diverse transportation options; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan sets a goal to have 50 percent of commuters utilize modes other than single-occupant vehicles by 2039, including 25 percent of commuters taking transit, biking, or walking to work; and

28 **WHEREAS**, encouraging development around Austin's transit network
29 promotes safer, more environmentally sustainable transportation options that
30 reduce household costs associated with car ownership and as the Austin
31 Strategic Housing Blueprint states, “when developing in transit corridors
32 and nodes, every attempt should be made to ensure that development does
33 not reduce transit ridership”; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint states further that “a
35 common pattern is that as transit is added, housing becomes more expensive.
36 Wealthier residents move into the neighborhood, often pricing out existing
37 core transit riders, while vehicle ownership becomes more common and
38 transit ridership is actually reduced despite increases in density. Policies
39 should encourage the preservation of affordable housing near transit
40 corridors”; and

41 **WHEREAS**, in 2020, Austin voters approved the initial investment in
42 Project Connect, a citywide high-capacity transit plan that includes two new
43 light rail lines (Orange and Blue Lines), a new commuter rail line (Green
44 Line), expanded regional rail (Red Line), four new MetroRapid routes (Gold
45 Line, Expo Center, Pleasant Valley, Burnet/Oak Hill/Menchaca), three new
46 MetroExpress regional routes (Four Points, Oak Hill, South MoPac) depicted
47 on Exhibit A attached to Resolution No. 20200807-003 (*Project Connect*
48 *Contract with the Voters*), the full electrification of Capital Metro's fleet, and
49 a historic \$300,000,000 investment in financing tools and other anti-
50 displacement strategies related to the implementation of Project Connect; and
51 the acquisition of real property related to the Project Connect
52 anti-displacement strategies; and

53 **WHEREAS**, through Project Connect, certain corridors will have bus
54 service frequencies and ridership comparable to rail lines in many cities; and

55 **WHEREAS**, Capital Metro was awarded a \$600,000 grant from the
56 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to complete a TOD study along the
57 Green Line between Austin and Manor in 2018, and the City has provided
58 coordination and support to that effort which resulted in a Green Line TOD
59 Study in 2020; and

60 **WHEREAS**, Capital Metro was awarded a \$900,000 grant from the FTA
61 to complete an Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) study along
62 the entire Blue Line and the northern segment of the Orange Line (“ETOD
63 Study”) in order to support transit-oriented development and anti-
64 displacement efforts for Project Connect; and

65 **WHEREAS**, Capital Metro was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the FTA
66 to expand the ETOD Study to eight additional stations along the southern
67 Orange Line in order to support transit-oriented development and anti-
68 displacement efforts for Project Connect; and

69 **WHEREAS**, Capital Metro intends to apply for additional grant
70 opportunities from the FTA to complete ETOD studies for other sections of
71 Project Connect rail, commuter, and MetroRapid corridors; and

72 **WHEREAS**, the current and potential future ETOD studies will yield
73 data- and community-informed, context-sensitive policy and land-use
74 recommendations, and will be used by Capital Metro to update the agency's
75 TOD Tool Kit used for both rail and bus services; and

76 **WHEREAS**, the City is a key participating agency and partner,
77 supporting the Green Line TOD Study and the ETOD Study; and

78 **WHEREAS**, the City policies, processes, and Code sections related to
79 TOD may be further improved to promote affordability in communities for
80 both residents and small businesses; and

81 **WHEREAS**, equitable transportation practices integrate transit into
82 walkable, accessible, livable, and affordable land use practices to enhance
83 healthy living within low-income communities and communities of color; and

84 **WHEREAS**, Capital Metro's Project Connect presents the opportunity to
85 create thoughtful, equitable transit-oriented development; and

86 **WHEREAS**, ETOD is development that enables all people regardless of
87 income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, immigration status or ability to
88 experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development
89 near transit hubs; and

90 **WHEREAS**, ETOD elevates and prioritizes investments and policies that
91 close socioeconomic gaps; and

92 **WHEREAS**, when centered on racial inclusion and community wealth
93 building, ETOD can be a driver of positive transformation for more vibrant,
94 prosperous, and resilient neighborhoods connected to opportunities throughout
95 the city; and

96 **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20210610-093 directed the City Manager to
97 undertake ETOD planning in Austin by 1) partnering with Capital Metro on
98 ETOD by actively participating in its study, 2) creating a citywide ETOD
99 Policy Plan to update the City's existing ordinances and processes and present
100 it to Council for consideration and adoption, 3) proposing tiers for ETOD
101 designation and an implementation timeline, and 4) providing
102 recommendations via the Policy Plan to achieve 30 goals related to ETOD;
103 and

104 **WHEREAS**, the City, Capital Metro, and Austin Transit Partnership staff
105 and consultants have engaged community members, especially people of
106 color, low-income earners, people with disabilities, non-English speakers,
107 transit users, small business owners, and older adults, to understand current
108 challenges and their reactions to various tools to address those challenges and

109 their reactions to various tools to address those challenges and reach more
110 equitable outcomes;

111 **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20221208-036 directed the City Manager to
112 place a resolution for Council consideration on the Council's February 23,
113 2023 meeting agenda to accomplish the following: (1) accepts the ETOD
114 Policy Plan; (2) directs the City Manager to coordinate with Capital Metro to
115 incorporate the ETOD Policy Plan tools for the Green Line and Metro Rapid
116 Stations within the boundaries of the ongoing Northeast Austin District
117 Planning Process; and (3) initiates necessary amendments to the Land
118 Development Code to implement an ETOD Policy; and (4) initiates
119 amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the
120 ETOD Typologies; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

122 The City Council accepts the ETOD Policy Plan described in **Attachments**
123 **A and B** and initiates amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan to
124 reflect the ETOD Typologies included in the ETOD Policy Plan.

125 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

126 The City Manager is authorized in coordination with Capital Metro, to
127 incorporate the ETOD Policy Plan policy tools for the Green Line and
128 MetroRapid stations within the boundaries of the ongoing Northeast Austin
129 District planning process.

130 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

131 The City Council initiates necessary amendments to City Code Title 25
132 (*Land Development Code*) to implement the ETOD Policy Plan.
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136 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

137 The City Council authorizes the City Manager to process these amendments
138 to accomplish the purposes set forth in this resolution.

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140 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2023 **ATTEST:** _____

141 Myrna Rios
142 City Clerk

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