

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**  
2

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

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

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

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

24 **WHEREAS**, the 2019 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan sets a goal to have  
25 50 percent of commuters utilize modes other than single-occupant vehicles by

26 2039, including 25 percent of commuters taking transit, biking, or walking to  
27 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**, it is important to distinguish among the types of rail and bus  
73 service being considered as part of the current and potential future ETOD  
74 studies; and

75 **WHEREAS**, rail includes: (1) light rail, with routes providing frequent  
76 rail service on a fixed guideway with a limited number of stations for faster

77 travel times and route features with fixed guideway rail potentially operating  
78 within a separate lane in the right-of-way street or in a separated rail corridor,  
79 with transit signal priority, enhanced transit stations, and high frequency  
80 operations; and (2) Metro Rail, with routes providing commuter rail service on  
81 separated heavy rail tracks with a limited number of stations and route  
82 features with fixed guideway rail that runs in a separated rail corridor; and

83 **WHEREAS**, bus includes MetroRapid Buses that provide frequent bus  
84 service with a limited number of stops for faster travel times and route  
85 features including priority lanes, transit signal priority, queue jumps, enhanced  
86 and improved stations and higher frequency operations, and while being a  
87 bus-based service, these routes and stations are implemented with substantial  
88 infrastructure investment beyond typical bus stations serving non-Metro Rapid  
89 Bus routes and include the types of enhanced infrastructure present along a  
90 rail line; and

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

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

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

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

101 **WHEREAS**, ETOD is development that enables all people regardless of  
102 income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, immigration status or ability to

103 experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development  
104 near transit hubs; and

105 **WHEREAS**, ETOD elevates and prioritizes investments and policies that  
106 close socioeconomic gaps; and

107 **WHEREAS**, in consideration of the timing of the initial investment in  
108 rail under the Project Connect Transit System, rail is first in priority of all  
109 implementation activities; and

110 **WHEREAS**, while rail is the priority, the current and potential future  
111 ETOD studies will yield data- and community-informed, context-sensitive  
112 policy and land-use recommendations, and will be used by Capital Metro to  
113 update the agency's TOD Tool Kit used for both rail and rapid bus services;  
114 and

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

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

127           **WHEREAS**, the ETOD Policy Plan supports implementation of equitable  
128 transit oriented development along the future Project Connect transit system  
129 including rail and MetroRapid Bus lines; and

130           **WHEREAS**, rail will be the most intensive transit service provided under  
131 the Project Connect transit vision and the success of these future transit  
132 investments is highly dependent on creating equitable transit-oriented  
133 development along the routes; and

134           **WHEREAS**, the ETOD Policy Plan does not directly address local or  
135 express bus routes but, instead, focuses station areas served by rail or  
136 MetroRapid Bus; and

137           **WHEREAS**, the City, Capital Metro, and Austin Transit Partnership staff  
138 and consultants have engaged community members, especially people of  
139 color, low-income earners, people with disabilities, non-English speakers,  
140 transit users, small business owners, and older adults, to understand current  
141 challenges and their reactions to various tools to address those challenges and  
142 their reactions to various tools to address those challenges and reach more  
143 equitable outcomes; and

144           **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20221208-036 directed the City Manager to  
145 place a resolution for Council consideration on the Council's February 23,  
146 2023 meeting agenda to accomplish the following: (1) accepts the ETOD  
147 Policy Plan; (2) directs the City Manager to coordinate with Capital Metro to  
148 incorporate the ETOD Policy Plan tools for the Green Line and Metro Rapid  
149 Stations within the boundaries of the ongoing Northeast Austin District  
150 Planning Process; and (3) initiates necessary amendments to the Land  
151 Development Code to implement an ETOD Policy; and (4) initiates

152 amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the  
153 ETOD Typologies; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

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

158 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

163 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

164 The City Council initiates necessary amendments to City Code Title 25  
165 (*Land Development Code*) to implement the ETOD Policy Plan.

166 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

169  
170 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2023 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

171 Myrna Rios  
172 City Clerk