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21 22 Agenda: April 18, 2024

Sponsor: CM Pool, District 7

Co-Sponsors:

Subject: Adoption of a Passive House Challenge Program for Affordable Housing

Projects

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin recognizes the critical need for sustainable and affordable housing solutions to address the diverse housing challenges faced by our community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin, in alignment with its commitment to climate action, has established a comprehensive Climate Equity Plan aimed at addressing environmental and social inequities in the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has also developed a robust Climate Resilience Action Plan, outlining strategies to enhance the resilience of the community in the face of climate change impacts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin seeks to encourage and support the development of affordable housing projects that adhere to the highest standards of energy efficiency, sustainability, and equity;

WHEREAS, sustainable building practices-contribute significantly to energy efficiency, reduced environmental impact, and long-term affordability; and 23 24

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WHEREAS, innovative programs such as the Passive House Design Challenge, as demonstrated by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, have successfully incentivized and promoted the construction of energy-efficient and affordable housing units within Massachusetts; and

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF AUSTIN:

The City Council directs the City Manager to explore the cost and benefits of a passive house pilot program that includes the following potential goals:

- 1. Study the potential for a pilot program: Convene a group of subject matter experts and community advocates working with utility professionals in the Green Building space to study the potential for a pilot program which includes comparing the established program in Massachusetts to the Austin climate, as well as modifications that may need to be made to have a potentially successful pilot in Austin.
- 2. Program Details: a. Affordable housing projects that certify with PHIUS may be eligible for financial incentives based on budgetary approval and availability. Projects may be required to share construction cost data, both hard and soft, and post-occupancy energy data.
- 3. Reporting and Evaluation: If implemented as a pilot, the appropriate city department shall provide regular reports to the City Council on the progress and impact of the program, including the number of projects certified, energy savings achieved, and any adjustments or improvements recommended.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to explore the feasibility of an Austin Passive House Challenge Pilot Program and report back to Council by second quarter FY 2025.

Myrna Rios City Clerk