



**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

**TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION**

**RECOMMENDATION NUMBER: 20250305-007:**

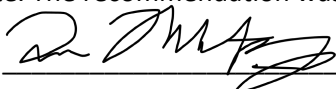
**REGARDING: Recommendation for Funding an Affordable Device Distribution & Repair Program in the  
FY26 Budget**

**WHEREAS**, access to affordable, functioning digital devices is essential for participation in education, employment, healthcare, and government services; and  
**WHEREAS**, the Travis County - City of Austin Broadband and Digital Equity Needs Assessment found that lower-income households, older adults, and individuals with disabilities face significant barriers to obtaining and maintaining digital devices; and  
**WHEREAS**, planned obsolescence, high repair costs, and lack of affordable device options disproportionately affect underserved communities; and  
**WHEREAS**, expanding access to low-cost or refurbished devices and repair services would enable more Austin residents to participate fully in the digital economy; and  
**WHEREAS**, creating a dedicated Hardware Fund would allow for targeted grants supporting device distribution and repair programs through partnerships with local nonprofits, libraries, and community organizations; and  
**WHEREAS**, this would result in a reduction of e-waste; and  
**WHEREAS**, a public-private partnership could be used to drive total funding; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Technology Commission recommends that the Austin City Council allocate a minimum funding amount of \$25,000 to the FY26 Budget to establish a Hardware Fund, ensuring that all residents have access to affordable devices and repair services, thereby closing the digital divide in Austin.

Date of Approval: March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Record of the vote: Motion to approve made by Commissioner Heritage and seconded by Commissioner Alderete. The recommendation was approved on a vote of 6-0.

Attest:  \_\_\_\_\_

Dan Martinez

Community Technology Division

Economic Development Department / City of Austin