RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City's emergency communication operations are challenging, due in part to the extensive intergovernmental and interagency cooperation required to execute such functions in a City which spans multiple counties and criminal jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Dispatch Equity and Optimization Study identified substantial inefficiencies, including challenges with collaboration across departments and outdated and needlessly segregated computer systems; and

WHEREAS, the joint operation and management of emergency communications functions is successfully precedented in Texas, most notably in the North Texas Emergency Communications Center, an independent emergency telecommunications center serving the cities of Addison, Carrollton, Coppell, and Farmers Branch; and

WHEREAS, slow emergency response times have caused residents in outlying areas like District 6, which crosses multiple jurisdictions and agencies, to experience real-world impacts where response times do not meet stated goals; and

WHEREAS, embedding mental health experts or crisis line clinicians directly into emergency communications centers has been shown in other cities to resolve thousands of low-risk crises on scene, free up thousands of dispatch and police hours, and save significant taxpayer money; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin should explore all avenues to provide excellent service and response times for Austin residents while minimizing strain on public safety employees, allowing sworn first responders to focus on emergencies rather than administrative tasks; and

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WHEREAS, establishing a dedicated civilian infrastructure supporting administrative tasks and hiring a civilian to manage civilian call-takers addresses the core operational, legal, and structural needs of the center; and

WHEREAS, emergency communication centers should be an equal, independent branch of the public safety system to ensure unbiased, proactive leadership and technological agility; and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2025, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 20250813-018, directing the City Manager to "consult with all relevant external stakeholders, including employee unions, intergovernmental partners, licensing agencies, and community groups, in developing the strategic plan for the [Joint Emergency Communications Department];" and

WHEREAS, in response to that Resolution, the City Manager circulated a memorandum on July 29, 2026, which found that the City could establish a new Joint Emergency Communications Department which could implement crucial governance, operational, and technology enhancements that would improve emergency response; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The Council affirms its dedication to timely, responsive, and technologically agile operations at our emergency communications center, including and especially our 911 call-takers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create an Office of Joint Emergency Communications within the Management Services Department which reports to the Assistant City Manager for Public Safety on the first day of Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to hire a Director of Joint Emergency Communications as soon as feasible to manage the Office of Joint Emergency Communications.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In Fiscal Year 2026-2027, the City Manager, through the Office of Joint Emergency Communications or other means, shall take the necessary administrative and other steps to execute the transition to an independent Joint Emergency Communications Department housing all civilian 911 call-takers and all non-sworn positions which are required to support and/or manage the work of the civilian call-takers and complete the transition on a timeline such that the Joint Emergency Communications Department can be created and made fully operational at the earliest possible date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager, through the Office of Joint Emergency Communications or other means, shall develop recommendations on how best to implement potential improvements to our emergency communications system, including telephone crime reporting, alternative first response models, coordination with 311, and targeted reverse 911 communication for events requiring phased evacuation measures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In Fiscal Year 2026-2027, the City Manager, through the Office of Joint Emergency Communications or other means, shall work to secure TCOLE authorization for an independent Joint Emergency Communications Department to function as a public safety communications agency, and shall navigate all other

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legal, operational, and administrative requirements for the City to create a functioning independent 911 civilian call center at the earliest possible date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

After the City Manager takes the necessary administrative and other steps to create an independent Joint Emergency Communications Department, the City Manager is directed to bring a recommendation to Council at the earliest possible date, including any necessary budget amendments, regarding the creation of an independent Joint Emergency Communications Department to include all civilian 911 call-takers and all non-sworn positions which are required to support and/or manage the work of the civilian call-takers, incorporating training, human resources operations, and quality assurance, among other functions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to Council, the relevant Council committee, or both, on the progress towards completing the directions in this Resolution at least once every three months until the Joint Emergency Communications Department is fully operational.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

During Fiscal Year 2026-2027, if the City Manager identifies any obstacles that may prevent or significantly delay the timely implementation of the Joint Emergency Communications Department, the City Manager is directed to notify Council as soon as possible via briefing or memo and provide potential solutions to the obstacle which maintain the ultimate goal of timely implementation.

ADOPTED: _____, 2026 **ATTEST:** _____
Erika Brady
City Clerk

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