

**RESOLUTION NO. 20201112-043**

**WHEREAS**, the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative began in 2012 as a three-year master planning process supported through a \$3 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant; and

**WHEREAS**, the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative considered a project area of five census tracts that surround the 208 acres of publicly owned land in east Austin, located off Loyola Lane between the Colony Park and Lakeside neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, the project area is defined by five census tracts—22.01, 22.02, 22.08, 22.11, 22.12—roughly bounded by U.S. Highway 183 to the West, U.S. Highway 290 to the North, Toll Road 130 to the East and FM 969 to the South; and

**WHEREAS**, the City engaged hundreds of community stakeholders through community meetings, workshops, and family-focused events to create a community vision for the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, the residents of the Colony Park/Lakeside neighborhoods and Colony Park Neighborhood Association have been integral stakeholders throughout the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative planning process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin City Council adopted the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative Master Plan (Ordinance No. 20141211-197) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning (Ordinance No. 20141211-150) in December 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the adopted 2014 Master Plan emphasized the importance to create a Vision Plan for the entire project area surrounded and affected by future development on the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative 208-acre project site; and

**WHEREAS**, the residents of the Colony Park/Lakeside neighborhoods and Colony Park Neighborhood Association have identified that the current project is limited by its focus solely on the 208 acres of publicly owned land; and

**WHEREAS**, there are several other development projects in the defined project area, including those on City-owned land such as the Travis County Exposition Center and Walter E. Long Park; and

**WHEREAS**, acquired by the City of Austin in 1965, Walter E. Long Metropolitan is a regional park consisting of 3,695 acres of parkland approximately eight miles outside Downtown Austin, and is the City of Austin's largest park; and

**WHEREAS**, the council approved the Walter E. Long Park Vision Plan in October 2020, which calls for improvements in the park that could include elements such as "enhanced trails, additional water-related recreation, fitness opportunities, camping, special event venues, and educational and cultural exhibits"; and

**WHEREAS**, an economic analysis, commissioned by the City of Austin Economic Development Department in 2018 indicates that approximately 19,000 residential units, 740,000 square feet of retail, 2 million square feet of office, and 6 million square feet of industrial/flex uses are planned and could be built within five miles of the park; and

**WHEREAS**, the projected growth presents significant potential for Walter E. Long Park to support a variety of revenue generating concessions and partnerships; and

**WHEREAS**, the dedicated parkland of Walter E. Long Park includes the Travis County Exposition Center grounds; and

**WHEREAS**, voters approved the City to enter into a 50-year lease agreement with Travis County in 1983, for the 128-acre portion of land on which the Travis County Exposition Center was constructed; and

**WHEREAS**, the lease agreement with Travis County on the Exposition Center will expire in December 2033; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin commissioned the 2016 Travis County Exposition Center Market and Planning Study; however, the recommendations detailed in the report have not been implemented; and

**WHEREAS**, the Travis County Exposition Center Market and Planning Study suggests that cohesive development of Walter E. Long Park and the Exposition Center grounds would mutually benefit both sites, but future plans for the Exposition Center were not included in the Walter E Long Park Vision Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin and Travis County have worked collaboratively to jointly fund projects including the Waller Creek Tunnel in downtown Austin through a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone; and

**WHEREAS**, the Decker Creek Power Station opened in 1970 and is located on Walter E. Long Lake; and



**WHEREAS**, the current Generation Resource has Decker Creek Power Station Unit 1 shutting down at the end of October 2020 and Unit 2 the end of 2021, while other substation and transmission assets will remain in place; and

**WHEREAS**, not unlike other City of Austin decommissioned power plants, Decker Creek Power Station has redevelopment potential and potential need for mitigation in the surrounding area; and

**WHEREAS**, the former Freescale Campus at 3443 Ed Bluestein Boulevard holds potential for redevelopment and is desired to be a commercial activity center by the surrounding community; and

**WHEREAS**, as this area of Northeast Austin grows and evolves, there is a need to strategically plan and calibrate future development with citywide goals and initiatives according to the specific assets, needs and challenges of the five census tract area; and

**WHEREAS**, equitable land use practices require that the overall vision, plan, and implementation includes local communities' assets, aspirations, and potential. They aim to keep current residents in the area and develop projects that promote people's health, well-being, and prosperity; and

**WHEREAS**, the current zoning in this area does not reflect the community's vision for the development of sustainable, complete communities in the five census tract area; and

**WHEREAS**, updates to the adopted Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan will be necessary to accurately reflect current development trends and the community's vision for the District; and

**WHEREAS**, failure to consider the surrounding project area in the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative planning efforts and investments exacerbates the risk for gentrification of existing neighborhoods in the five census tract area; and

**WHEREAS**, equitable housing practices give families of all income levels access to housing that costs no more than 30% of their household income; and

**WHEREAS**, the continuance of a shortage of housing options available to persons of low and moderate income is harmful to the health, prosperity, economic stability and general welfare of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, this area of the Eastern Crescent has historically suffered from inequity and lack of financial investment; and

**WHEREAS**, east of U.S. Highway 183 is considered a food desert and residents in this area have expressed a need for a full-service grocery store for access to affordable food, medications, and home products during flexible hours, which could be further incentivized through thoughtful land use planning; and

**WHEREAS**, other initiatives have identified important priorities outside of the downtown core that merit investment, including, but not limited to, the Spirit of East Austin initiative which was created to address historic inequities and the lack of financial investment in the Eastern Crescent and a path forward to reverse the impacts of generations of neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, equitable transportation practices integrate transit into walkable, livable, and affordable land use practices to enhance healthy living within underserved communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Capital Metro's Project Connect proposed MetroRail Green Line and MetroRapid Expo and MLK lines will connect Northeast Austin to Downtown, and other beneficial city centers and assets, with high-capacity transit lines and presents the opportunity to create thoughtful, equitable Transit-Oriented Development (TOD); and

**WHEREAS**, equitable TOD (eTOD) is development that enables all people regardless of income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, immigration status or ability to experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development near transit hubs; and

**WHEREAS**, eTOD elevates and prioritizes investments and policies that close the socioeconomic gaps between neighborhoods that are predominately people of color and those that are majority white; and

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

**WHEREAS**, a District blueprint could help identify next steps on important projects such as Walter E. Long Park, Colony Park, Decker Creek Power Station, and John Trevino Jr. Metro Park while also leveraging the City's investments to create a more equitable, prosperous, multi-modal, accessible, and aesthetically appealing Northeast Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council aims to bring the separate planning efforts within the five census tract area into conversation with one another to achieve a more comprehensive and cohesive vision for this area; **NOW, THEREFORE**,



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

The City of Austin desires to develop, adopt and implement a comprehensive, long-range plan for the five census tract area to serve as a guide for creating and maintaining great neighborhoods, economic development, stable jobs, improved connectivity and providing rich, high-quality public spaces. The City Manager is directed to return to Council with a planning scope and process for how to accomplish this.

The scope should consider including the following:

1. The City Manager convening stakeholders in a comprehensive planning effort for this area of the Eastern Crescent, including the eponym of the district, comprised of census tracts 22.01, 22.02, 22.08, 22.11, 22.12, roughly bounded by U.S. Highway 183 to the West, U.S. Highway 290 to the North, Toll Road 130 to the East and FM 969 to the South. The plan should be informed by Project Connect and the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan and should establish a cohesive vision regarding future plans for Walter E. Long Park, Colony Park, Decker Creek Power Station, John Trevino Jr. Metro Park, the Exposition Center and commercial development at the former Freescale campus.
2. Stakeholders in the planning process should include, but not be limited to, representatives from the Colony Park Neighborhood Association as well as surrounding neighborhood associations, contact teams and mobile home communities, Travis County, Austin Rodeo, chambers of commerce, Manor ISD, Austin ISD, the Travis County African American Cultural Heritage Commission, local businesses and non-

profits, relevant higher-learning institutions, Central Texas Allied Health Institute, and Central Health.

3. The planning process should provide opportunities for public charrettes involving any interested participants, as well as smaller, focused conversations with invited participants.
4. The City Manager will support this effort with personnel the City Manager deems necessary to promote a robust planning process, which may include staff from the Housing and Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Office of Real Estate Services, Austin Transportation Department, Public Works Department, Developmental Services Department, Watershed Department, Austin Energy, the Economic Development Department, Public Health, Fleet Services, Austin Resource Recovery and the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative Executive Leadership Team. The City Manager shall also invite Travis County, Central Health, Capital Metro and a representative from the Colony Park Neighborhood Association to participate in this planning effort.
5. To the greatest extent possible, the City Manager is directed to coordinate this planning process with Travis County in order to ensure continuity between the plan's cohesive vision for the District and Travis County's long range planning efforts. For the areas of the District in the extra-territorial jurisdiction, the City Manager is directed to ensure that the plan's cohesive vision is compatible with relevant Travis County policies, such as the Travis County Public Improvement District policy.



6. The City Manager may consider hiring a consultant to accomplish the planning process.
7. The City Manager is encouraged to apply for grants, such as the American Institute of Architects Center for Communities by Design Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) grant, or the AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) 2020 program to guide the planning efforts in collaboration with key partners.
8. In adopting, the City Council may consider changes to the adopted Walter E. Long and Johnny Trevino Vision Plans if necessary to achieve the more comprehensive District planning effort.
9. Recommend any updates to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan necessary to support the outcomes of the District visioning process.
10. The scope should include a recommendation or options on how this plan could fit in to the City's regulatory framework and existing plans.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The District Plan should guide future development in the area to create complete communities that have high-quality design and connectivity, and should strive to:

1. Encourage the introduction of denser, missing-middle housing types, such as townhomes, to accommodate more residents with less land.
2. Have a mix of uses to support economic development and accommodate population growth.

3. Integrate housing above commercial to create transitions into surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Support the future expansion plans of the existing street network and Project Connect while providing enhanced connections to and within surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Create flexible eTOD overlay zones within 0.5 miles of a MetroRail station entrance or a MetroRapid bus line corridor roadway that provide meaningful incentives to construct mixed-income, climate resilient development near transit.
6. Encourage multi-story mixed use buildings oriented toward new multi-functional streets rather than highways and access roads.
7. Provide direct pedestrian links to rail stations and other transit uses in the district.
8. Encourage active and livable places that serve daily needs and provide people with a sense of belonging and ownership within their community.
9. Promote job growth and sustainable economic activity that supports the immediate area and the city as a whole.
10. Explore the use of optional architectural design templates that can streamline and simplify City approvals for eTOD projects.
11. Incentivize the development of mixed-income and workforce housing.

12. Encourage the development of flexible, affordable commercial space to ensure local businesses can remain in their communities.
13. Consider ways to maintain long-term residential and commercial affordability, such as utilizing Community Land Trusts and Commercial Community Land Trusts on City-owned property.
14. Identify and recommend neighborhood-level transit-supportive anti-displacement strategies consistent with City Council Resolution 20200807-003.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to analyze and recommend a financing plan for the development of the City assets within the District. The analysis should include, but not be limited to:

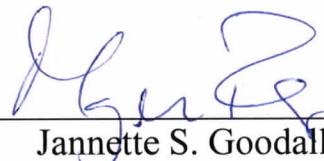
1. The consideration of public/private partnerships, such as an independent partnership to operate and attract private financial support for the implementation of the Walter E. Long Park Vision Plan;
2. The involvement of the Austin Economic Development Corporation (AEDC);
3. Exploration of public financing benefits from considering the projects on a district-scale, including, but not limited to, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone partnership opportunities with Travis County; and



4. A proposal to replace, re-imagine or relocate the Exposition Center, that considers all public and private partnership opportunities, including, but not limited to, Travis County and Rodeo Austin.

**ADOPTED:** November 12, 2020

**ATTEST:**

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk