



RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Technology Commission

Recommendation Number 20260909-004: Recommendation to Support the Recommendations Outlined in Measure's Community in the Loop Report

WHEREAS, artificial intelligence and related automated systems are increasingly used or considered by municipal governments for service delivery, public safety, infrastructure planning, and administrative decision-making, with significant implications for equity, privacy, civil liberties, environmental sustainability, and public trust; and

WHEREAS, the Technology Commission is charged with advising the Austin City Council on issues of technology access, equity, and the ethical use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, and has a responsibility to ensure that residents—not only vendors and agencies—have a meaningful role in technology governance; and

WHEREAS, Measure, in partnership with the City of Austin, the Austin AI Alliance, and a network of community organizations, authored Community in the Loop: A Community-Led Framework for Municipal AI Governance in Austin, Texas (the "Report"), a lived-experience black paper led by Jameila "Meme" Styles, and

WHEREAS, the Report draws on community engagement conducted between November 2025 and April 2026 using Measure's CARE Model (Community, Advocacy, Resilience, and Evidence), including City-supported Community in the Loop sessions and Measure's independent outreach, engaging approximately 409 residents in total; and

WHEREAS, residents consistently prioritized transparency, accountability, human oversight, community participation, and equity as conditions of public trust in municipal AI systems; and

WHEREAS, the Report aligns with Austin's Open Government Partnership (OGP) commitment to co-create an AI Accountability Framework grounded in transparency, fairness, and public trust, and is informed by nationally recognized guidance including the NIST AI Risk Management Framework and the Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, based on resident feedback, the Report recommends that the City of Austin: (1) establish a permanent community AI advisory structure inclusive of impacted communities; (2) publish an AI transparency registry disclosing AI systems in use, data sources, vendors, intended uses, risks, and oversight mechanisms; (3) maintain human oversight requirements for high-impact municipal AI systems; (4) expand community AI literacy through public workshops, library partnerships, youth education, multilingual resources, and neighborhood-based initiatives; (5) develop public accountability mechanisms including public audits, resident complaint systems, community review opportunities, and iterative public reporting; and (6) include environmental

justice in AI governance by evaluating the environmental impacts of data centers, water consumption, energy use, and technological infrastructure expansion; and

WHEREAS, the Technology Commission has previously recommended formal community input, commission review, and independent accountability for sensitive technology contracts (Recommendation 20250910-004), and has advanced digital inclusion, AI literacy, and community-centered technology priorities consistent with the Report's findings; and

WHEREAS, members of the Technology Commission participated in related community engagement, including the March 7, 2026 Digital Equity Community Listening Session facilitated with Measure, received presentation of this work, and the Commission Chair joined Councilwoman Fuentes and Councilmember Velásquez, and community partners at the August 3, 2026 press conference releasing the Report at Austin City Hall; and

WHEREAS, the Report is a community-informed foundation for future AI governance—not a final policy document—and begins a conversation that City Council, City staff, and residents should continue together;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Technology Commission recommends that the Austin City Council formally support the six community recommendations outlined in Measure's Community in the Loop Report as guiding principles for municipal AI governance in Austin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Technology Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the City Manager to:

1. Community AI Advisory Structure – Explore and propose options for a permanent or recurring resident governance body on municipal AI, inclusive of impacted communities, and clarify how such a body would coordinate with the Technology Commission and other relevant boards and commissions;

2. AI Transparency Registry – Develop and publish a public inventory of City AI and automated decision systems that discloses, at minimum, systems in use, data sources, vendors, intended uses, known risks, and oversight mechanisms;

3. Human Oversight – Affirm and implement requirements that high-impact municipal AI systems retain human review and intervention protocols;

4. Community AI Literacy – Expand investments in public AI literacy in coordination with Austin Public Library, community-based organizations, schools, and neighborhood partners, including multilingual and youth- and elder-focused resources;

5. Public Accountability – Establish or strengthen public audit pathways, resident complaint and redress processes, community review opportunities, and regular public reporting on municipal AI use and impacts; and

6. Environmental Justice – Integrate evaluation of environmental impacts—including data centers, water consumption, energy use, and related infrastructure—into AI and digital-infrastructure governance, consistent with prior Technology Commission guidance on data center development; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that implementation of these recommendations should proceed in coordination with Austin's Open Government Partnership AI Accountability Framework work, relevant City departments, and community partners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager's office report back to the Technology Commission and City Council within a defined timeframe on implementation pathways, resource needs, interdepartmental coordination, and measurable milestones for advancing the recommendations above

Date of Approval: September 9th, 2026

Motioned By: Chair Apodaca

Seconded By: Vice Chair Combee

Vote: 6-0

For: Chair Apodaca, Vice Chair Combee, Commissioner Eastwood, Commissioner Frock, Commissioner Williams, Commissioner Welch

Against: None

Abstain: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: None

Attest: _____

