



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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A resolution renewing the support and commitment of the Metropolitan Council toward principles constituting a Community Covenant with the aim of creating opportunities for all residents of Metropolitan Nashville to thrive.

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council recognizes that every resident of Nashville and Davidson County, regardless of where they come from, what they look like, or where they live, deserves the opportunity to pursue their dreams. No matter your race, faith, gender, sexual orientation, or whether you're Native or newcomer, everyone should have the opportunity to participate in Nashville's burgeoning economic growth, and as government officials, the Council should work to ensure a more equitable city for all Nashvillians and adopt public policies and business practices that will ensure our shared resources deliver the programs, schools, and supports all of our families need to thrive; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council further recognizes that equitable growth gives all Nashvillians the opportunity to participate in and benefit from Nashville's growing economy. The Council should consider equity, rather than simple equality, when making public investments, allocating resources, choosing responsible service vendors and contractors, and enacting budgets to make our schools, hospitals, parks, and programs all that Nashville families deserve; and

WHEREAS, diversity and equity should be prioritized in all departments, boards, and agencies of the Metropolitan Government, as well as in the non-profits and businesses throughout Nashville. To ensure that opportunities for economic, social, educational, and communal growth are more equitably available for all Nashvillians to pursue and obtain a higher quality of life, steps should be taken to identify, attract, recruit, and hire candidates from diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The Metropolitan Human Relations Commission recently issued its IncluCivics Report which documents current wage disparities in Metropolitan Government departments and agencies; and

WHEREAS, living wages and family-friendly benefits support and advance upward economic mobility, financial independence, and family stability. The United Way's most recent ALICE report has calculated that the survival wage for a single person in Davidson County based on 2021 data is \$21.16 an hour which roughly equates to an annual income of \$44,000. 211,789 workers in Davidson County currently earn less than \$39,000/year. The cost of living continues to rise. The Metropolitan Council should consider this report annually. Accordingly, the Council should endeavor to promote contract procurement with living wage certified businesses and partner with those businesses that provide living wages, quality affordable healthcare, and other family-friendly benefits; and

WHEREAS, access to affordable housing is key to addressing the consequences of decades of disparate outcomes in health, income, and education. Reasonable access to affordable housing promotes community stability and development while preventing displacement. Therefore, the Metropolitan Council should continue to dedicate robust funding to the Barnes Fund for Affordable Housing and further establish a comprehensive plan, developed with community input, which prioritizes the immediate creation of more affordable housing units and prevents further displacement., including eviction protection through such programs as the right to counsel; and

WHEREAS, public transportation should connect residents to their homes, work, and surrounding neighborhoods. In light of Nashville's growing transportation crisis, the Metropolitan Council should pursue a comprehensive development plan for affordable public transportation that is conceived, developed, and

implemented with a community-driven approach; and

WHEREAS, public education is vital to prepare Nashville's children for the future. For that reason, the Metropolitan Government should fully-fund public education; and

WHEREAS, workforce development is vital to connect unemployed and under-employed residents to meaningful job opportunities. Consequently, the Metropolitan Government should seek partnerships with colleges, businesses, non-profits, federally registered apprenticeships, and apprenticeship readiness programs to connect job seekers with employers and opportunities in order to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the ever-changing workforce provide them with opportunities to develop essential workplace skills and knowledge; and

WHEREAS, public safety is the foundation of community well-being and crime is highly correlated with poverty. The Council should prioritize investments in affordable housing, living wages, transportation, education and workforce development, and social services in order to address the root causes of crime; and

WHEREAS, Nashville is 13% foreign born and faces rapid demographic change. The Metropolitan Government should invest in existing and expanding opportunities for immigrants and refugees to receive immigration legal services, English classes, and other services needed to ensure their full participation in our economy and life of our city; and

WHEREAS the Metropolitan Council believes the principles recited herein above are proper, necessary, and effective toward supporting a Metropolitan Nashville in which all residents have the opportunity to thrive; and

WHEREAS, on October 1, 2019, at the first meeting of the prior term of the Metropolitan Council, Resolution No. RS2019-31, expressing the Council's support and commitment toward principles constituting a Community Covenant with the aim of increasing prosperity and reducing poverty in Nashville and Davidson County was approved unanimously, setting the tone for the next four years; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council renew its commitment to equity and again support a Community Covenant for the benefit of all residents of Nashville and Davidson County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as expressing its commitment to the principles recited herein above as a Community Covenant for creation of opportunities for all to thrive in Metropolitan Nashville and encourages the Mayor to express a similar commitment.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council will adopt practices to implement the principles recited herein through its committee structure and encourages the Mayor to also adopt practices with the aim of implementing the principles recited herein.

Section 3. The Metropolitan Council encourages all Metropolitan Departments, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority to adopt practices to implement the principles recited herein to assist with increasing shared prosperity and creating opportunities for all to thrive throughout Nashville and Davidson County.

Section 4. The Metropolitan Council further goes on record as encouraging each successive Council of the Metropolitan Government to renew the commitments recited herein at the beginning of each new term.

Section 5. This resolution shall take effect from and after its passage, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.