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TO: Mayor Steve Adler and members of the Austin City Council
Chair Stephen Oliver and members of the Planning Commission
(via electronic mail)

RE: Case No. C14-2014-0198 — One Two East

Dear Mayor, Council and Commissioners:

I'm writing to express my support for the zoning changes requested by the applicant for the One Two East project in Central East Austin, on I-35 between 11th and 12th Streets.

I've lived four blocks away from this site for more than 20 years, and at no point during that time have I ever felt that the property as it exists today is an asset to our neighborhood. Rather, it's always seemed to me a surprisingly overlooked opportunity to provide housing and services Central East Austin needs, and it's been disappointing to see one proposal after another for this property fall by the wayside. I believe One Two East as proposed finally seizes that opportunity.

While I'm writing you on my own behalf as a citizen and neighbor, I do want to share some particular perspectives:

1. As president of the **Central Texas Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism**, and as a CNU-accredited professional (CNU-A), I advocate for better placemaking and urban design that can improve our lives. Chapter policy is to not make recommendations on individual projects, but we do refer decision-makers to the principles articulated in the Charter for the New Urbanism. Some of these include:

Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, allowing independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young ...

Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.

Appropriate building densities and land uses should be within walking distance of transit stops...

[D]evelopment must adequately accommodate automobiles. It should do so in ways that respect the pedestrian and the form of public space.

The design of One Two East as proposed, with your approval of the zoning changes sought, would create a project that would better respect these principles than the site does now or could do with its existing zoning.

2. As chair of the **Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Austin**, I promote revitalization of 11th and 12th Streets in the heart of Central East Austin. Our urban renewal plan adjoins on both sides (but does not include) the One Two East site, which has itself not really changed since the plan was adopted in 1999.

The URA commissioned a market study in 2011, among whose conclusions was that the One Two East site was the best place to create neighborhood-serving businesses envisioned by the urban renewal plan and desired for the community, such as a grocery store. While the URA does not officially have a dog in this hunt, I personally believe that the urban renewal plan's vision of 11th and 12th Streets could be better achieved with the approval of the applicant's proposal for One Two East.

3. As the chair of the **Central East Austin Neighborhood Plan** team back in 2000-1, and as president of the contact team (OCEAN) thereafter, I advocated for a vision for our neighborhood that was consistent with a project such as One Two East. By creating higher-density options at appropriate points on nodes and corridors, and especially on the interstate, we could create a broader mix of housing and services that would reduce pressure on the established, historic single-family interior neighborhoods.

At the time, this was a novel approach for a neighborhood plan, but one that the city later wrote large with its Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. Today's OCEAN and its member neighborhoods (including my own) have decided to reject this approach, but I'm not sure what in either the neighborhood plan or Imagine Austin justifies the limitations my neighbors are demanding. The existing conditions on this property are arbitrary and were not negotiated as part of our planning process, so the best outcome would create the best project that benefits the most people, which in this case would suggest the zoning changes requested.

Thanks for your consideration and for all you do for Austin.

