

Open Space, Environment, and Sustainability Committee Meeting Transcript – 4/27/2016

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(Council member Pool)

Afternoon everybody. I will call us to order. It is 2:06 in the afternoon and this is the Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Committee.

It's Wednesday April 27, 2016 and I am calling us to order at 2:06 p.m. We are at City Hall 301 West 2nd Street. It looks like I have a full house here. I don't see Jane Rivera from PARD or Marisa Perales from Environmental Commission but maybe they will join us later. So we have a short agenda and we have to be able to finish up before the three hours are over. There is no reason we are not able to do that.

Before I do anything more. There are two things I would like to do, kind of administrative. When we first started Committee's a year ago or so. Staff from Watershed Protection were assigned to help administer this Committee and Jessica Coronado was the staffer who worked with Mike Personett and make sure the agendas were pulled together properly, posted properly, that we follow all the posting requirements and it really helps smooth the pathway for a need for sure and learning how to do a good job as chair. The Council committee and I super appreciate the work Jessica did. She's just moving out of this seat as our administrative liaison. So I wanted to both thank Jessica for her able services to those of us on the Committee's. (applause) and to welcome our new administrator liaison Kelly Strickler. She is a research analyst with watershed protection department.

Welcome Kelly my staff and I are looking forward to work with you. I am sure Jessica has given you a pretty good update and briefing on the processes that we use. So thanks to the all of you. Especially to Watershed Protection for all of the really good support you guys have given to us.

So far, I don't think we are an infant anymore as a Committee. We are learning fast. So thanks for your past support and your future support. So let's see. We also have this fancy new speaker sign up. We are all electronic here. We won't be taking any paper sign up for citizens communications and I see we do not have any citizen signed up for general citizens communications. So we'll move on to. (We do have someone) Oh, Mary Engel.

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refresh it. Okay. Okay. There we go. Come on up, Mary, if you would like to speak. I think any of these are on. >> I move that we change the order to have citizen communication first and then the minutes? >> I was about to bring up the minutes. I don't think it -- is there a motion to approve the minutes? >> No, there's a mistake in the minutes. I move we remove the minutes on point number 7. With a 3-1 vote with Zimmerman off of the dais. I'm not able to vote no when I'm off of the dais. That needs to be fixed.

301, I guess it should say. Could we make that amendment? >> Vice chair Garza has made the motion with the amendment. Is that okay? >> Sure, let me move as amended. >> Mayor pro tem has seconded. All in favor? That's unanimous. So item two, Mary Engel, welcome. You have three minutes. >> I'm Mary Engel. I'm a resident of north university neighborhood and I was involved in the park project called pocket park, one of the first public-private partnerships -- private partnership pocket parks in the city of Austin. We located the cell phone tower there. We were able to fund the park and be responsible about everything that went in it. One thing here about this experience is I wanted to bring up a couple of things to call to your attention particularly since we're in the code in the next process. It seems that the development standards are written only for large facilities. Which added two years of cost at least to the renovation of the building on the screen.

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We had to go back that we were required to put in six bathrooms and 828 square foot building which was ridiculous. And also we had to worm out of parking requirements, large parking requirements that are required for other large facilities. So in order to keep our costs down for the new type of pocket park, not a new type but for the city's types of pocket park, we need to look at the code about these development standards so it doesn't take two years and we won't be gobbling up precious money that will be going to parks. I would have looked up or tried to look up the place on the code but I don't have power today. So I wasn't able to do that. Thank you. >> Thank you very much. That looks like all of the speakers. Let me refresh it one more time. Yes, mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: I wanted to thank Ms. Engel for her work and other committee members seeing that park to fruition. It's a neat example of what can with done through community effort and partnership. So thank you very much. So thank you for those important points about the code. >> We have two items, briefing and discussion regarding children and nature. Cities connecting children to nature planning grant. And I see I have some -- some familiar faces in front of us here today. So welcome to you all, who's going to start. >> Hi, I'm Margaret Russell. I'll start. I'll kick this off. Thank you all for making time this afternoon for us to appear before you all, councilmembers.

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Margaret Russell with the parks and recreation department. I'm a project manager at nature-based sites. And I'm part of the city of Austin's working group for the cities connecting children to nature project. I'm here to give you all an update. Let's see. >> That's right. >> All right. The city received an invitation to submit an xensive, exhaustive comprehensive survey from the national league of cities and they're in partnership with the children in nature network. And this survey measured the current state of our city's capacity and reach in providing connections to nature for children in our underserved communities. Why focus on connecting children to nature? After being alerted to the nature deficit being experienced by our children in Richard Lu Seminole's work, last child in the woods published in 2005, research has turned more extensively in looking and seeing the impact of having our kids being out in nature on a much more limited degree. Children, it turns out are spending little time in nay xhur and the outdoors compared to the time spent in front of screens. One survey said that the children spent seven minutes a day on average outdoors. And seven hours a day in front of screens. So we're seeing that there is a huge impact. Research increasingly supports the understanding that more time spent outdoors in nature increases the good health,

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happiness, and educational strides of our children. The you are VA Austin submitted happened in year one of the national league of cities of the children & nature network project, three-year project. 16 cities selected from about 70 cities that supply the survey and those were invited to attend the leadership academy. Elected -- the core members, the three-member team included an official representative which was Randy Burton, a city staff representative which was Marty Stump and community organization representative, which was Haden Brooks. Following the leadership academy, the 16 cities applied for one of the six planning grants and in addition to the funds, they -- the national league of cities and children and nature network were providing expert support with trainings and cross sites, meetings, conference calls, webinars. The parks department, the parks and recreation department has matched this \$25,000 grant that was awarded to the city with funds for planning since so much of this gap analysis -- gap analysis work that we're doing is critical to our long-range planning. We have hired a project coordinator to assist us in managing the many meetings and data accumulation. I would like to introduce her to you. This is Julia Campbell. You want to stand? Welcome, Julia. She's doing a great job. So why do we believe involving all city departments is integral

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to the planning phase. This department has an ambitious timeline with our core team including the 10 city departments that have committed to supporting this work, meeting twice a month simultaneously with five different task-oriented groups from the departments. The first in this effort is a nonprofit community organization. This is the Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin, CCN. They have over 30 members in that organization and we're moving forward hand-in-hand to ensure our children experience connections to nature to become happier, healthier, and smarter. I'd like to introduce the executive director of West Kab Outdoor Discovery Center home to CCN, the Children in Nature Clap Rattle in Austin. >> Let's see. Is my mic on? I think it is. Okay. I'm Molly Stevens with West Cave Outdoor Discovery Center. Happy to be here today. Thank you for your time. You know, when Rich Lu published the book, "Last Child in the Woods," I think for many of us who are in the nature delivery business, like West Cave, it provided a very important contact to the work that we do to say this issue of connecting kids to nature is not one to have. It's essential to a healthy and happy childhood. After the book came out, we began with a lunch bunch brown bag talking about the importance of connecting kids to nature. That went on for three or four years. And in 2010, we formed a formal organization the Children in Nature Collaborative in Austin.

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I wanted to take less than two minutes to talk to you a little bit about the CCN and the role it's playing with this Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative. One of the things we heard early on in the connection to Austin is that CCN and the work we've done over the years an important factor in the choice of working with Austin. We see this initiative, the Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative being the most impactful piece of work to connect kids to nature because there's a huge opportunity to look community-wide in open space and programming and identify where there are gaps in services, gaps in open space to be able to get more kids outside to nature more often. CCN today has more than 30 formal partner organizations ranging from Austin Econetwork to Campfire to Wally Creek Conservancy and WMCA and others. We are actively partnering with the city pals to help develop the kind of data that we need to better understand what the plan could be, should be going forward. Again, the plan has a big emphasis on this issue of equity that is something that's very important to the -- to the whole core team. Just lastly some of the priorities for the CCN program, the City Connecting Children to Nature is one. We're involved in youth leadership and have recently held our first legacy camp for kids between the

ages of 18 and 29. Of course, when I was 29, I wouldn't want to be called a kid when I was 18 either. So for youth, we recently acquired a bus that broke the road runner out for the

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adventure bus as a way to be able to transport more children to cool outdoor nature-based adventure. We're very involve in working with area teachers and administrators as well as working with health care professionals and finally the important work of developing a baseline through the city's connecting children to nature project. So I wanted to take a minute to sort of share with you a little bit about cccn since we are partnering with our -- with our colleagues here. The slide that's up right now talks about vision, goals, and outcomes. And as I -- as I eluded to and as Margaret Hase alluded to, an essential piece of this is identifying nature gaps in needs across the Austin commune the I. The other is looking at key policy program partnerships and leadership opportunities. I can attest to the fact that this is happening every day. The meetings that I'm attending. I see that unfolding and emerging in a wonderful way. The institutionalization to connect children to nature figuring out how to make this a Normal everyday part of how we function as families, as schools, focusing on underserved areas in Austin and ensuring future sustainability and environmental stewardship. We don't know if we don't raise a generation of adults that have learned to love and be passionate about nature, they aren't going to carry on the conservation and preservation goals of taking care of nature long term. That's an essential part of this project and all of the work that we're doing. Now I'm going to turn it over to Haden brooks. If you don't know Haden, I don't know who doesn't know Haden, but if you don't know Haden, he is the recent chair of west cave

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outdoor discovery center. He was the co-founder of the children in nature collaborative of Austin. And and speaking this as well. Thank you to Haden. >> I wanted to take some time to update you on the status of the planning grant and the plan as it's being created and share a little more about the structure and the process that we're going through. The slide that is up here just shows the organizational structure. City of Austin has worked with cities on numerous projects over the years. And can help move the needle at a municipal level. We're fortunate that the league of cities has numerous projects we can learn from that they've done successfully. One thing we've done is team up with mission capital which is a nonprofit consulting group that is the collective impact planning process. One thing we have -- I think we're all learning that as societies and challenges get more complicated, we know no organization or no one program no matter how well funded or managed will help to solve problems. We have to work interdepartmentally within the city and also across sector within the -- the city as a whole. And we say cross sector, we're reaching out to the independent school districts, the education sector, reaching out to the -- to the health community and reaching out to nonprofits and reaching out to the private sector. So within this collective impact

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framework, which is what we're following the way this is structured is that the city of Austin elected officials and that is the national cities primary point of contact as was mentioned earlier, the representation from the mayor's office and other offices working on various working groups and within that, within -- below that, that's the city departments. And there's more to mention there. Ten different city departments. All the way from -- ranging from sustainability to watershed, transportation planning, zoning, public libraries, watershed, Austin recovery. Health and human services. Who are working not only on the core planning team but also on the various working groups. Parallel to that, we have local

partner ins. And the local partners as were mentioned here included the children's collaborative of Austin, ymca, the school of health. But in addition, United Way, Dell valley. Dell children's. Texas health department. Texas parks and wild life and the national wild life service. It's incredibly broad and engaged group involved in the planning so far and are helping to fast track that. So the members of the departments and the -- and the other sectors of the city are all involve in the core planning team. So what we are looking for soon is the guidance, how to reach out to your constituents. How to identify trusted leaders show we're informing the plan as it's going forward. And on the nonprofit side, there are some 20 different nonprofits involved in this. A list goes on.

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What this represents is a -- I think this is a handout that was provided to you all, a Gann chart. It shows the different phases of this in fact planning process. As mentioned earlier, the gap analysis looking at both the physical infrastructure where the physical gaps providing equitable access, abundant access to kids. And also a survey information as far as programmatic access. That's part of the gap analysis. Once that is completed, we'll move into identifying some mutually reinforcing activities, a common agenda. Last but not least is figuring out some shared metrics. It's like what can we, you know, within the nonprofit community, with the health community, within education, as well as the city departments try to measure going forward to get more kids out in nature more often. As was mentioned, we're going to be moving to a community engagement process and we'd love to get some input on that. More detail as to the different -- five elements that the process has to have. Shared metrics, a common agenda. Mutually reinforcing activities. Continual communication loop. Last but not least, the organization which thankfully the parks and rec department is filling that role for us. Here are the different -- so where we're headed with this is in August, we have a plan due to the national league of cities and the network.

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I'd love all you can offer us in the community engagement process. And what we want and need. How was your committee want to come back in the updates. Would you like something sooner for the feedback? It's bringing a resolution to council that supports the implementation plan which is something we began to look forward to. So I think that's -- I think that's -- yeah. >> Councilmembers asking questions -- >> Sorry, got to go. Just some comments on all of this. There's \$25,000 listed here? As part of a planning -- as part of a planning effort. Is that right? What would be the upper limit of the amount of money being requested from the Austin taxpayers for this. \$25,000, the plan that would suggest hundreds of thousands if you're spending that much money on planning, right, you're talking about a big budget, over where this could go or not? >> What we're looking at is the kind of code and policies and thins being developed right now to make sure that we take advantage of the efforts that are being leveraged so it includes children in nature. We'd like the process that we're undergoing for next, the long range planning. The kind of things that we are doing now that are funded that would need the additional language that would be supportive of providing nature. Example is parkland dedication funds, the language that could be included is making that an option for developers that they provide nature-rich elements in the -- what they're getting

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elements for as a parkland, for children for access. >> The short answer is we have no idea. We're not sure where this is going or what other mandates might be put on other parties or groups. >> I can jump

in there. What the children in nature planning grant is is \$25,000 coming from the national league of cities. It sounds like pard is matching that. Through the planning grant, there's another grant from the league of cities for implementation. Remind me how much the second phase is? >> Certainly. That's a \$50,000 grant and they acknowledge that that really -- they expect to see applications for projects that are already in the works and it would help kick them off. >> The national league of cities, if Austin were to win that, it's a competition, based on the efforts you and your collaborative is putting together, that would augment the work that's being done in the city. Is that right? Or is there a better way to describe it? >> So, it's work that may have already been talked about, considered. Doesn't have to be new, novel, straight out of the box? >> It provides capacity for the city to implement programs or initiatives we'd like to do but haven't been able to free up money for? >> Or it could be something that we're planning to do and it allows us to put on add-on elements to better support. >> Or do it more quickly. With additional -- >> I don't know about quickly. >> Things are quick. >> Yeah, so that grant -- although it's competitive, it's two or three grants available to

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the cities already selected down to this process. >> And we are with the smaller group to get the planning grant. What are the toe total number of cities. >> 16 selected for the learning academy. The leadership academy. Six of those receive the planning grant. And of those, either two or three implementation grants will be awarded. >> Okay, thanks. Any other questions? >> For what it's worth, before we go into any of this deeper, I can promise you the majority of my constituents would completely disagree that the city taxpayers should be forced to pay for anything to connect Austin's children to the natural world. We have boy scouts, girl scouts, environmental groups, we are religions, we have churches. We have lots of people in groups that are doing this kind of connecting children to nature and the taxpayers should not be involved. >> Thank you for your comments, council member Zimmerman. You can continue with the presentation if you like. >> Thank you. I was mentioning so much of what's involved here is simply understanding who's doing what and where. And aligning the efforts both in the -- within the city, perhaps. But absolutely within the nonprofit community, within the education community. Within the health commune bty, to simply align programs more effectively so they can efficiently get more kids out without in hopes creating additional financial burdens on any one. It's simply doing things more thoughtfully so that programs are more mutually reinforcing. As well as having a thought and

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structure going forward where there is some shared ethics. I think within the collective impact framework, once examples in Austin that have already -- that are under way is that you begin to get results without additional expense or effort. It's simply by having, you know, 20 plus nonprofits at the table, having various departments at the table. The health sector, the education sector, thinking collectively how can we fill the gaps, avoid overlaps, so that the limited resources at the city level and the local level be used more efficiently. So at the end of the day, whether they're -- whether they -- the process will tell us, you know, how we can do this most effectively. We look forward to sharing the results you all. We'd love to have some feedback as to how you'd like us to keep you updated on the plan? And also how best to connect the constituents in your individual districts? And at this point, I'd like to introduce Patrick Byer, a landscape architect with the parks and recreation department here and going to show you some results that come back in the data collection process. >> Going to jump up and be behind the screen because its's an internet-based gis model. >> Thanks, Patrick.

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>> All right, so a minute here I'm going to walk you through some of the methodology of the nature gap analysis that has begun. I want to give a big thanks to our analyst. She's done a great job of putting this information together. What we have here, these are the layers included in the mapping system that we've done. Basically city of Austin parks, other jurisdictional parks, hard to maintain unknown properties. Pflugerville parks, Travis county parks, Williamson county parks and the state of Texas parks. What we wanted to do is create a wide image of what the parks are in our system and what we've done is we've assigned a value to these parks to create a nature score of -- can you hear me now? To create a better nature score or factor for the parks to create a better picture of what's in the system today. The methodology, the first thing we have scored by is park size because the larger the park, the more biodiversity potential there is in the park. So we ranked it by acres. They receive one point and goes up to six acres. We kind of see on this map, the darker color represents the larger park. If you zoom in, there's variation on the size. Moving on, if we go to nature factor by park status, this is actually data developed from nrpa, the park association. It's based on closed, open restricted, or open. The highest score is if it's open and if there's no fee or restricted hours associated with it. And then from there, we incorporated tree canopy, which is the percentage of the parkland which is covered by tree canopy just because trees add some nature value to the

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park and also the shade they provide increased the amount of time that the park is useable. So the more densely for you later trees, the higher the score. You can see how Barton springs scored a little higher than Zucker park and downtown at the shores and the water did not score too high because it's absent of trees. So the next nature factor was from the trust of public land. Their scoring that we also had within the gis model and if it's not open to the public it received a zero. If it was covered with water, it's a one. Natural lands, two, designed lands, three. We thought about this. If it's designed lands, it's designed for people and public use, it received the highest score. So what we've done is we've added up all of these factors, it brings us to the final map for a nature score. You can see how it begins to populate and paint a picture of the parks that have higher nature access. And the next steps we like to take this model is develop an average nature score for zip code. That will paint a picture of the city of where the biggest gaps are and where we can focus some of our efforts and we can overlay that data with mhi, the medium income and children density to better focus our efforts. >> I have a question for you. >> Yeah. >> Is this tool going to be a part of what is in the grant that's submitted for implementation. Is this something that we show that we've developed? >> It will be. That's one of the questions that the national league of cities wanted for us. They gave us this big question, they wanted us to prove access

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to nature and a definition of nature to have improved access. >> Is that something available for the public or our offices to look at? >> It will be, eventually. We want it to be completely interactive so people can log in and use it for their benefits. >> That's great. Any questions? All right, thanks. Is that it? Thanks, Patrick, for your information and Molly and Haden? Vice chair, do you have any questions or mayor pro tem? Okay, keep us posted. You asked two things of us. How would we like to receive updates from you all? And then the other question was, are there folks in our district or in the city that we think would be good people for you to include in your discussions? I've got two thoughts that I can send to you. Is there an e-mail maybe to Haden or Margaret that I could -- who if we wanted to -- >> If you go on-line. >> To Julia? >> Yeah. There'll be a link if you need to look for us. There is also at the end

of the presentation contact information on that last slide. I do want to reiterate that because we're doing this planning, it doesn't mean that there will be extra costs for implementation. This is really for us to focus on where the needs are so we can use existing resources and plans for the future towards targeting those kids that are underserved right now. >> Pool: That's great. That's great. I think we understand that. Thank you. As far as getting additional updates, I think just keep us posted by e-mail. You can send to the four of us or to the entire council if you like. And then if we get to a point where there's some new

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information or something happens that you'd like us to hear about, if it's appropriate, we can do another session here at the committee will bring you to full council. For example, if we're lucky enough to win the implementation grant, I think that would be really significant. And I'd like the entire council to hear about the work that would have led up to that and then what it means to receive the nlc grant and how we -- how we see it playing out in the larger fabric of the city. So just keep that in mind if that sounds -- and if you all have any suggestions for something that you need from us, I'm absolutely open to hear. >> Thank you very much. >> You bet. Good to see you all. Thank you so much for coming. >> Pool: Our next item is four. Briefing and discussion regarding the Travis county expo center market study. Study. Gentlemen, come on down. Hi, Brian. I was lucky enough to hear the presentation from Mr. Block in the economic opportunities committee, and he was looking forward to offering an update to this committee, so I'm glad vice chair Garza and mayor pro tem tovo are here to hear. Thanks for being here, Brian. I see some folks from the expo center back there, too. Gentlemen, thanks for coming. >> Good afternoon, chair and vice chair and councilmember tovo. Please to be able to be here to provide a briefing on the Travis county expo center market study, and what I wanted to do to start off was tell you just a little bit about how and why this study came to be. The how is the city of Austin partnered with Travis county

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that has a mutual interest in the expo center, along with a funding contribution from rodeo Austin that is the prime pretty -- the primary tenant of the expo center, and the city and county jointly engaged in the market study, or jointly managing the market study. The why of how it came to be, the facility was built in 1983. It's aging. It's becoming obsolete. As we started to look at how might we renovate or remodel or redevelop the facility, one of the questions that came up was, a lot has changed since 1983. Could the facility accommodate not just what's there now, but is there a greater, broader need in the Austin area that's not being met, and could this facility accommodate it as well. That was the question that really led us to start the market study. Look at the market and see what is the gap, and could that gap be filled at this facility. And I think important to point out right here at the beginning, that the purpose was to gather data and analysis and really understand what's possible. It's not a master plan. It's not an implementation plan. So it's not meant to be implemented. It's meant to get the policy makers information and data in order to make good, long-range decisions going forward. >> Pool: And by that, you mean there are no dollar figures attached to this presentation. Right? >> There are dollar figures about what it would cost to build what's recommended, but what's not there is the financing plan for how to pay

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for it. That would be a second step. And part of the thinking there was, the policy makers at the city and county need to come together and decide, based on this information and a lot of other factors -- you know what's possible, but what is desired, then once you know what's desired, dig deeper and spend your effort pursuing that instead of pursuing it without knowing what you want to build yet, if anything. I'll try to run through it fairly quickly, and then leave some time for question and answer. But as a first step, we wanted to take a step back, especially since this is the open space environment and sustainability committee, is look at the park where the expo center is located. The expo center is at Walter E. Long metro park. The Walter E. Long is 1872 acres. It's a very large park. It's the largest park in the Austin park system. It has a citywide service area. And the current uses there, the primary development there is the Travis county expo center. That's at the southwest portion of the site. The other primary recreational development there is southern end of the park where the boat ramp is, boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, takes place at the southern end of the assignment about 70% of the park is undeveloped. Moving on, you can see where the expo center sits at the park. It's the southwest corner and you can see the aerial view of the facility itself there.

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Then zooming in further -- I'll take you through the expo center, what's there, how it got to be there, how it's operated. The background, as I mentioned earlier, the expo center facility was built in 1983. It's on 120-acre site in Walter E. Long metro park. And the way we were able to -- it is leased as part of a 50-year lease that goes to Travis county. That goes through 2033. It was initiated in 1983. And the reason we believe able to do a lease of parkland, which is unusual, as you all know, is that this went to the voter in a general election in 1982. It was authorized by the voters. And they authorized a specific term. The 50-year term, which goes through 2033. So to go beyond 2033 does require going back to the voters. It's important to point out as context as we move forward. And the facility has four primary structures. One is the arena with 6400 sheets. The second largest part of the facility is the show barn. It's 210,000 square feet. It has a dirt floor. It's primarily for livestock, rodeo, equestrian activity. There's a stand-alone banquet hall and sky line club that's attached to the arena. The biggest events there, the star of Texas fair and rodeo is the largest. That happens for two weeks in March. The republic of Texas biker rally happens there, as well as being different livestock shows, as well as auto show races and triathelons are

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there. The county as I mentioned manages and operates the facility. They do the best they can keeping it up, but they are an enterprise and only have -- they don't have taxpayer funding. The money they have to reinvest is only the net income over expenses. They've done the best they can, but with the aging facility and limited funds to invest in it, it's not in great condition. Moving on, I'll overview what we asked the consultant to do with the market study. We asked them to review the facility conditions, site location, and any plans for the area, we asked them to do stakeholder meetings, gather input, talk to city and county elected leaders, and they met with all of the council offices, talk to city and county sleeper, neighbors, local business, and of course all of the current user of the facility. Getting into the heart of the study, we asked them to look at industry trends, to look at -- and that's in the sports and entertainment and expo and multipurpose event industry, look at the trends, look at comparable cities, comparable facilities, and look at the market demand in Austin and tell us what's the gap in Austin that needs to be filled. And with that gap in mind, also we asked them to tell us -- make some recommendations that could be implemented at this facility that could meet those gaps. And once you've done that, we said tell us how much would that cost to construct the facilities you recommend.

And then assuming that what the consultant recommended was built, we asked them to tell us what would be the demand for it, how would it be used, how would it perform, how much income and expense would be realized

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from it. And we did ask them to give us a financial needs analysis, which would tell us what it would cost on an annual basis to cover the debt service for what they're recommending, but as councilmember pool mentioned at the beginning, it doesn't include a financing plan of how to pay for it. That would be a future step. Moving on to the current situation, where are we today, the consultant has completed the draft report. That's been sent to the council offices in a memo with a link to the study, so it's there for you to look at the whole thing. It's being reviewed by city departments, by Travis county, by rodeo Austin, by neighbors. We are making staff presentations on the draft. We've presented at economic opportunity committee last night at the parks & recreation board and here today, and the purpose for that is to give you the background, let you know why it was -- why the study was done, where we are today, see if you have any feedback for us to bring back to the consultant as they prepare the final report, and understand questions you might have and get the consultant prepared for when they come back, because on June 7th, the consultant, who's our subject matter expert, will present to the work session of the full council, and he can go into more detail and answer more detailed questions if you have any. That takes us to -- we'll do a configure highlight of what the draft report says. This is really an overview and doesn't drill down very deep. Essentially, what the consultant report says is based on the market and based on the current condition of the facilities, what they're recommending is replacement of all the

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existing facilities. And in looking at the current market, what they noted was, as I've mentioned, existing facilities are obsolete and too small. There's limited supply in Austin, and expanding demand as we continue to grow as a city and a region. And they took a look at the market needs and the overview of what they thought was needed is high quality exhibit and expo space, along with flex hall ballroom and meeting rooms. And I think important to point out here, that the high quality exhibit and expo also includes sports and entertainment. It accommodates rodeo, equestrian, so it's multipurpose. What they're recommending is a mid to large size arena, and they're suggesting that Austin's market can support a multipurpose arena -- multipurpose entertainment, sports, and expo facility. They did point out, and important I think to point out here, that the market needs for this facility are different than the Austin convention center and palmer. They noted that a downtown convention center focuses on multi-night convention with exhibit, and a facility like this focuses on sports and entertainment and large trade show and consumer shows that are typically one day only, or maybe one overnight. They typically have a lot of surface parking, compared to a downtown facility. And I'll go through some of what we asked them to do real quickly, which was tell us how much what you're recommending would cost, and they broke it into two phases; a phase I, which covers the arena and primary expo ballroom and meeting

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rooms. That the 470 million. So as you can see, these price tags are not insignificant. When you talk about these kinds of facilities, they are expensive. They broke it down into phase II and III. That second and third phase combined would be where additional expo and detective rodeo and equestrian facility would come in. That's an additional 150 million. As I mentioned, we asked them to tell us how much this

would cost. They estimated over 30 years that would be 25 million a year to cover the debt service. They may be modifying those Numbers a little -- a little higher. They heard back from city staff that the interest rate might need to be higher. We asked them to estimate the net operating income, and they estimated 2.9 million in the first year going up to 5 million in the 10th year. They looked at income and expense over just that first ten-year period. And just for the phase I. And we also asked them to look at what the economic impact if that facility was built, and you can see it in your backup. It includes 110 million in new taxes. That's over 30 years, as well as 1200 new ongoing and full-time jobs, also over 30 years. And as we come to the end, they provided a conceptual diagram so you could see in an image what they are recommending, which is the arena. At the top right, that's a 15,000-square-foot modern arena -- I'm sorry, 15,000 seat, not square foot. Coming down below to the bottom right is the -- also in phase I, primary expo space, it's 200,000 square

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feet with meeting room and ballroom. They suggested that in phase I, and of course the rodeo and equestrian could be taking place in that phase I area as well, so it's multipurpose. And moving to the bottom left is the phase II and III, which is the additional expo, plus the dedicated rodeo and equestrian facilities. The last slide just takes you through our timeline, where we've been and where we're going. I think I've covered most of that. We kicked off the study in may of 2015. There's been significant community engagement all throughout, including the nearby neighborhoods, all the users of the facility. Here we are, about -- a little less than a year later, and we have a draft report. We're making briefings on it. And we intend to wrap this up on June 7th with the consultant making their presentation to the full council work session, just about a year after we began on June 7th. And it's not in the backup, but important to point out for context, another next step that's taking place, not directly related to the expo center, but related to Walter E. Long metro park, is the department is funded for a master plan for Walter E. Long park, and we do intend to get that kicked off within this calendar year, to take a look at the broader park for a master plan for it. That concludes the presentation, and I'm happy to answer any questions and ricardo Soliz is here from the parks department as well in case you have questions for him, too. >> Pool: Thanks, Brian. Do you want to introduce the people from rodeo or people from the outside who came here to be here for the

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presentation? >> We've had just great support from rodeo Austin, and there's many of them here today, as there were at economic opportunity and at parks board. Probably too many for me to introduce by name. But I think there's five or six or seven in the audience. >> Pool: Why don't you all wave. There is a good contingent. Thanks for coming down. Thank you for the presentation. It was very helpful. Any -- clear, any questions for Mr. Block or any of the folks from rodeo Austin who happen to be here? Okay. Vice chair Garza. >> Garza: Does the market study -- does it look at just that one piece of, I guess, property and not any other existing venues in Austin? >> It takes into account the other venues in Austin, and it takes into account known plans for existing venues. And I'm not sure if this is relevant to the question, but it is specifically -- the recommendations are geared to this site, but they do have broader applicability to the city as a whole. Does that answer -- >> Garza: Yeah. I just was -- I guess we don't know what the fate of f1 is, and so, you know, I'd heard that there was -- you know, they were bringing in the big act soon because they wanted to bring people out there, so I'm just wondering how this all affects each other, you know. If they are able to continue thriving, does that affect the economic impact of this site because, you know, they're pulling in big names there, or, you know, different events

or whatever. I was just curious how that affects -- how they affect each other. >> Uh-huh. They did take a close look

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at that, and what they pointed out in the study is that there's really a different market for outdoor outamphitheater venues, versus an indoor concert venue, which peaks at a different time, and they usually have different tours, which is what they let us know, so they don't compete directly or much is what we've heard from the consultant. And then also, of course, this facility is multipurpose, and a large part of what the market need is, is the expo component which the circuit of Americas doesn't accommodate for large trade show and consumer shows. >> Garza: Okay. And then I know they have like triathelons out here. Is that going to be more with the master plan part of it than the expo -- is that economic impact traded into these Numbers, or is that separate, those events? >> I think they took into account the types of events they anticipated happening, and I think the triathlons could continue to happen at the expo center site. They did look at, and the master plan will look at, what types of complementary uses can take place on the adjacent parkland. So I think we'll be looking at, can the parkland accommodate races and triathlons. So looking at the best fit between the two so they're complementary, I think they could continue to happen at the park or the expo center or potentially both. >> Garza: Okay. And is the thinking, or I guess is one of the options -- or is it the primary option would be a bond measure? >> So we didn't get into how

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to pay for it. >> Garza: Okay. >> And that really is a huge question that would take a lot of in-depth, more study, more thinking about how to pay for something like this, really creative financing. And probably understanding the leadership from the policy-makers to look at -- we know what's possible, what's desired, what's the price tag of that and how do you pay for that. >> Garza: Okay. Thank you. >> Pool: Mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: So I believe you covered this, but I just didn't capture the information. Have we received your copy of the market study yet? >> You did. We sent a memo that included a link to the study. >> Tovo: When was that, approximately? >> Approximately three or four weeks ago. >> Tovo: Okay. Thank you. I'm going to go back and look for it. So does the market study also take into account, as the analysis considered who was currently using the site, how that might change with a new facility? There might be -- there might be -- I would anticipate there will be groups you can attract and then some you may lose. I know an organization I was associated with actually moved from a more centrally located facility to the Travis county expo center, in part because it was less expensive. If it's a brand new facility, likely the rents would have to go up. And so, you know, some of -- my guess is that some of the organizations that are currently utilizing that space might not be able to afford the new rates. Does the analysis take that -- those kinds of both new opportunities and transition -- transitioning way of other organizations in mind? >> It does take it into account, and it has been discussed, and I think you pointed out very accurately that right now, the facility serves the low end.

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It serves -- >> Tovo: I wasn't saying that. It's a great organization. We have a lot of great events out there, it's just more affordable than -- I don't want to finger the venue they moved away from, but it had gotten really expensive, so it's great to have those affordable opportunities, or more affordable opportunities out there at the expo center. >> I'll be careful with my terms. I'm using the consultants' terms. And what they see this new facility needing is the middle to upper middle types of events. The

upper end of the events are downtown, and will likely to -- will be likely to stay downtown, where they can afford the higher rental, they can afford the higher-priced hotels, they can afford valet parking, and more expensive parking. What they saw the gap being was these middle to upper middle events, and they have nowhere to go because our expo center -- the Travis county expo center isn't up to the quality that the middle and upper middle need, so they're being pushed either not coming to Austin, or they're going to the suburbs. And so this would be a way to capture that middle/upper middle. But it was discussed and pointed out that it might be that the rates would go up and that the very low -- the ones who can only afford very little might not be able to afford the new rates, and how do we accommodate that, can we offer discounts, scholarship, reduced rates. We do have to think about that. How can we accommodate, you know, everything that's there now, if it were to be rebuilt and the rates were to go up. So they did think carefully and talk about it and acknowledge exactly what you're getting at. So if it did move to

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implementation, we'd want to think about how do we not displace those, or can we find a new place for them. >> Tovo: Thank you. I appreciate that really thoughtful approach because those events serve a really important community function. They have people who look forward to attending them, and so finding -- making sure that they land on their feet and have some space is really important. I'm intrigued by, and I assume that the market study has more information about this, but the connection between the Travis county expo center, potential connection between the Travis county expo center and the convention center, and I'm glad that that is also -- that those -- the potential expansion, is slash,renovation -- the potential expansion of the convention center and potential renovation of this center are being considered comprehensively, because there may be an opportunity to really, as you've pointed out in your powerpoint, have those supplement each other. >> Uh-huh. And another thing they pointed out is -- well, I think as I mentioned, the needs are different for this type of facility a little further out of downtown, and it serves a different market, but it could create better coordination where there's overlap, and the consultant pointed out that the expo portion, if that was co-managed with the convention center and the palmer, that could make sure that events go to the next possible place. That type of overlap -- and it wouldn't have to be co-managed, but if it had a very strong partnership so they could be marketed, promoted, and booked with that synergy in mind in trying to move the best event to the most appropriate place, it did mention that in the study. >> Tovo: And do you know, was there an exploration of whether the venue, the definition of the venue for the convention center could be expanded to include the

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Travis county expo center, as a potential funding mechanism? >> It's outside the scope, and they didn't look at that. >> Tovo: Okay. >> And we know that there's a desire to look at it, and it's complex, especially when you talk about municipal parkland. So coming out of the economic opportunity committee, there were requests to look into that, for the law department to look into that. >> Tovo: Thanks. >> Pool: Yes. Vice chair Garza. >> Garza: The 1200 jobs, new and ongoing, are those specifically for the -- is that an estimate for the expo center, or is that also including some, like did you understand, if this was able to spur some more economic development around the expo center? >> They put it into a model, and so these would be directly attributable to constructing and operating this facility. But that's a good question to dig deeper, and we'll make sure to ask the consultant team that question as we get down to really a good level of detail, and when they come back, they'll be prepared to answer that question. But our understanding is that should be directly attributable to building and operating what

they recommend. >> Garza: Because the 5,000 says that's specific to building, but then the 1200 says it's new and ongoing. So I guess I'd be curious to know what kind of jobs. >> Right. >> Garza: Is this creating. >> I think they can tell us what kind, and we know the 5200 is temporary job years, and that is construction. The 1200 are new and ongoing and full-time. And so we should -- we can ask them what kinds of jobs are those, what do those jobs pay. >> Garza: Uh-huh. Yeah. >> Pool: Great. Thanks. I think also having this much work done in advance of any bond oversight committee

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activity, which generally is every six years, the last one was in 2012, there's some talk about having one this year, of course, for mobility and sidewalks and bikeways and so forth. But the Normal schedule would be to have one in 2018. And the county has a slightly different approach than the city does in how it handles its bond, calling through the different projects for bonds at that level. They have more a shovel-ready approach. Here in the city, we're more conceptual, and then we work over a longer timeline before we actually break ground. So I think having this much work done in advance of bringing this concept, for example, if one of the funding options were to be a bond, there's a lot of work already having -- have been done, so that the presentations would be fairly robust for that process. So I think it's really good work, but that everyone has put here. I thank the Honda and associates for their work and, Brian, for you coming to present it two or three times in the past couple of weeks. Did you have -- my last question would be, how was the reception at the park -- at the parks board last night? Did you get a good response? >> We did of a good response. They also appreciated it, and like you, thought it was good work, good data, good analysis to have as we go forward, thinking about long range planning and what the policy objectives are. So like you, I think they appreciated it and thought it was great data information to have. >> Pool: Great. Any other questions? Is there anyone in the audience that wanted to say anything? Okay. All right. Well, again, thanks to all the folks from rodeo Austin who came to be here for the presentation, to Brian, and I see our other staff out there, too. Thank you.

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That's it for our agenda items. I think we have one more, just to set any items for our next meeting. I did want to remind this committee, we were going to talk about flood mitigation task force results and the report, but it wasn't quite ready, and it was going to be a joint meeting with public utilities committee, but then we decided to delay it until may 16, and vice chair Garza, who chairs that committee, will chair that effort under the public utilities committee. I plan to attend. I think two of us -- two of of the four of us are on your committee, and so mayor pro tem, I don't know if that was a committee that you had on your schedule, but if you're able to join, I just wanted to let you know that it's happening. Is it at 2 o'clock in the afternoon? And, of course, that will be open -- an open meeting and posted and everything, and it should be a good session with the results and recommendations from the flood mitigation task force, as well as some other flood-related items that are really important to the city right now, so -- 3 o'clock on may 16. And I'm going to get it's in chambers. >> Yes. That's what it says here. >> Pool: Okay. All right. Anything else? Okay. I will then adjourn this -- >> May I say something? >> Pool: Sure. Tell me your name. >> My name is Callaghan, [inaudible] I have a business on the east side of town. But those people that were here before -- [off mic] They talked about a model for their outdoor recreation of young people -- >> Pool: Hang on one second. Are you able to hear him without a microphone on? >> Probably not. >> Pool: Probably not. And then I will ask our

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liaison to get a paper copy of the sign-up sheet so that we can get Mr. Callaghan's name and so forth. Go ahead. Have a seat if you like. >> I just wanted to make a comment. >> Pool: All right. >> The Texas wildlife association, the headquarters is in San Antonio, has a very extensive educational program that covers the outdoors, for kids, and has been going on for years, and it's a super, super, super model. So they were talking about spending money for the research. They've done it years ago, and they would be more than glad to share with the city of Austin, or anybody else, their model. >> Pool: Great. >> I'm sure. >> Pool: Thank you. >> I'm not on their board, but I am a member, and it is an exceptionally good program. Not necessarily viewed in the area of hunting or anything like that. It's viewed in the insect study and flower study and everything else in the wild. Tracks, animal tracks and everything. It's been around for a while, and it's very successful. >> Pool: That's great. Had thank you, sure. Thank you, sir. Mr. Callaghan, if you'll wait, we need your name and address so we can put you into the official record. Kelly here is our community liaison and she'll give you the form to fill out if you don't mind, sir. Thank you. All right. That's all, and we are adjourned. Thank you, everybody.