

City Council Regular Meeting Transcript – 8/22/2018

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>> Mayor Adler: All right, council, I think we have a quorum so I'm going to call this meeting to order. Today's date is Wednesday, August 22nd, 2018. This is a called meeting for three public hearings. The time is 1:13 P.M. And we are in the city council chambers here at city hall, 301 west second street in Austin. Three items, colleagues. The first one is to conduct a public hearing, receive public comment on the proposed rate and fee changes for Austin energy as part of the fiscal 2018-2019 budget. Item number 2 concerns the proposed budget for 2018-2019. And third item is the public hearing on ad valorem tax rate for the 2018-2019 year. Without objection, it's my intent to open all three of these public hearings at the same time so they can run concurrently. So if someone comes an hour from now and wants to testify on number one, we need to make sure that number one is still open. And then we will close all three hearings at the same time. At this point it looks like we have about 60 people that have signed up to speak between the three items. So there is no specific script with respect to the first one, conducting a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed rate and fee changes for Austin energy as proposed as part of the fiscal year 2018-2019 proposed budget. But we're also going to take up agenda item number two and that's to conduct a public hearing and receive public comment on the city of Austin's 2018-2019 proposed budget. Council will hear more public comment on the proposed budget on August 30th of 2018.

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And we're going to also have the public hearing running concurrently on our agenda item number three, so we'll take that up now as well. And that's to conduct the first of two public hearings to receive comments on the proposed maximum property tax rate of 44.2 cents per 100-dollar valuation for fiscal year 2018-2019. The second public hearing will be at 4:00 P.M. On August 30th, 2018, at city hall, 301 west second street in Austin. Council will adopt the actual property tax rate on September 11th, 2018, at city hall, 301 west second street in Austin. The hearing may continue through September 12th and 13th if they're needed. So with that, council, we have three public hearings that are open, agenda items 1, 2 and 3. And I will begin now to call folks that have signed up and wish to speak. And before we do that,

let me recognize the manager. >> Thank you, mayor, councilmembers, members of the community. As you know on August 6th I presented the proposed budget for the council's consideration. And to set the stage today I thought it would be help Dolph have our budget director to just say a few words high level about what is included in that proposed budget, mainly so that everyone here and that's listening at home can have the same information. >> Thank you, city manager and good afternoon, mayor and members of the council and welcome to all the community members here today to speak in regards to the city's proposed budget and tax rate. I think it's truly a budget before you that everybody can be proud of. I think it's a budget that really reflects the priorities of of this dais and the priorities of a lot of folks that are sitting behind me that I have seen and talked to at our 11 town hall meetings that we had as part of our public

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engagement process. So I just wanted to touch on a few highlights. And I'm going to kind of be focusing on this fiscal year 2019 proposed budget snapshot that you all have at your dais and it's available for the people in the audience. We have copies out front. But it's a \$4.1 billion budget. We are a large organization running an electric and water utility and airport. That's roughly a four percent increase from the prior fiscal year and our general fund is just over one billion dollars that is supported by a tax rate of 43.85 cents, which is a small reduction from the current tax rate. A sixth 10th of a penny reduction from the current tax rate. And I think even more importantly if you look at the personal increase relative to the state calculations of the effective tax rate we're looking at a tax increase that's only 4.9% above the effective m&o rate, which is the lowest tax increase we've seen in this city since 2010-2011. I also want to talk about the fact that, you know, not only is that tax rate the second -- increase the second lowest we've seen since 2010-2011, but also for the third time in four years this council has elected to increase the general homestead exemption from eight percent to 10%, which softens the tax burden for residential property owners and maintains a senior exemption at \$85,500. So these are exemptions from property values that would otherwise be taxed. So these are exempt from taxes. I'll just mention that that senior exemption is at the same level as Travis county and our central health unit. When you look at our enterprises there's only one enterprise that is proposing an increase in base rates. That's the Austin transportation user fee that supports the Austin transportation department and public works department. That would be \$1.27 per month increase. And if you jump to the bottom of that page and look at that table, overall we're projecting a combined tax

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and utility rate increase for a typical austinite of only 2%. Again, I think this is truly a budget that reflects and was built upon your priorities. When you look back at your council resolutions and the priorities that you established at the beginning of this budget process, I think you will see that throughout the highlights detailed in the next couple of pages. I'll just touch on a few. Affordable housing has been a huge issue of this council and for the first time since council has revised the calculations for the transfer

of the housing trust fund we are fully funding that transfer at \$5.3 million. Homelessness, another huge priority of this dais. You've said that repeatedly. Many council resolutions about the homelessness situation, and that was one of your top priorities at your priority-setting work session. So this is on top of the \$26 million that the city is currently investing in the current fiscal year on homelessness programs. Another \$3.1 million to expand and improve are the capabilities of our host program, additional funding to look at alternatives of panhandling, and some funding in our watershed department related to the cleanup of vacated homeless camps. Looking at the safety outcome, safety continues to be a tremendous priority for the city council. I know I've provided you some information about really the significant investments that you all have made in public safety over the last four fiscal years with more than \$100 million of new funding going to our three public safety departments, police, fire and emergency medical services and the number of staff is pretty impressive as well. I think it was 83 additional police officers and 80-some additional paramedics as well as 67 additional firefighters. In fact, in this year we're adding 16 fire positions to open the new onion creek fire department. We have funding in the budget for the expedited construction of two additional fire stations at Morris crossing and Travis

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country. And then \$5.7 million for an additional 33 police officers. That's funding for 12 unfunded positions that you previously had put into budget, but were unable to fund 15 additional patrol officers and six more airport police for a total of 33. So I think the public safety investment continues to be very, very strong. In regards to our mobility outcome you will see almost \$70 million of planned spending related to our 2012 and 2016 mobility bonds in culture and lifelong learning. The artist space issues has been a huge priority and we have funding in this budget to help address some of those issues and also if you look at the 2018 bond program that is going to be coming forward in November that would have additional money to help our artists. In health and the environment you see a long list related to Austin public health. I'm surely not going to read all those to you, but just to say over and above base cost drivers related to wages and health insurance and things of that nature, we are seeing a budget with four and a half million dollars for new health services and that's in alignment with councilmember Garza's resolution that she was the sponsor for years ago that talked about continually increasing funding. Not continually forever, but for the next several years increasing funding in Austin public health, and this is a budget that continues that trajectory. I would just mention on the bottom three bullets there are some great stories for the parks department. This budget has almost just sort of a 10% increase in our parks department. You know, roughly four, four and a half% of that is for what we call built in cost drivers, wages and whatnot, but the remainder of that increase is for better aquatics programs and better pool maintenance and better park maintenance and additional funding for our urban forestry program. And lots of new investments in parks and finally in our government that works outcome I think that one of

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the things that a lot of us are the most proud of is being able to fully fund your financial policy in regards to facility maintenance at six and a half million dollars. I know you all know that we're blessed to work here in city hall, but a lot of city facilities both public facing and not public facing are in very poor state of condition. So this is going to be a great move in the direction of improving those facilities, not only one time, but ongoing. So again, I just think it's a budget that we all should be really proud of, funds a lot of your priorities comes in at the second lowest tax increase in I think roughly eight years. So those are my opening comments. I'd be happy to answer any questions before we get to the public testimony. Councilmember pool. >> Pool: I'm interested in if we have necessary funding in hosts specifically for our youth, the focus on youth. What do we have or do you have some information there that you can share right now that I can then take with me for our continued deliberations on the additional monies that we may be able to allocate. >> I did get that question from your office. I don't have the answer right now, but the question about funding to address specifically youth homelessness, so we're working on that. >> Pool: And this would be such that we could draw down federal dollars as a match. >> That's right. That's my understanding too. We're looking into that and we'll get you a response about how that would work. >> Pool: That would be great. So the rest of the dais knows that this is a focus that we were hoping to put on the homeless issues. We focused on veterans before and families. And the youth is also Teed up at the federal level. I'll be looking for the information from Mr. Van eenoo on that topic and hopefully we'll be able to have enough to match what we may be able to get from our other government partners and then forward that activity to support the work that the mayor pro tem has so ably let on for a number

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of years on with our homeless outreach street team. >> Mayor Adler: Mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: I know we were selected as a demonstration city for the demonstration grants and already are well on our way to ending youth homelessness so that connects really well to what you just requested. >> Mayor Adler: All right. Let's turn to public comment. Thank you, Ed. Let's start with Stewart Hirsch. You will have five minutes, Mr. Salinas. >> Mayor and members of the council, Stewart Harry Hirsch from district 2. Thank you for the city manager and his staff for a budget that is generally fair to the poorest among us. Attached please find of chart of who they are and the maximum rent and mortgage they can afford. Hopefully you've received my handout. I ask that you make a few changes and adjust property tax rate accordingly if necessary to align with the strategic housing blueprint adopted by the council in 2017. Four bullets to think about in change to the budget. One, restore free expedited review and inspection for smart housing to facilitate achieving the goal of 65,000 income restricted housing units over the next 10 years. Two, provide funding needed to repair 600 low income owner-occupied homes annually and reduce home repair waiting list and the Austin community data coalition is going to furnish you a chart on who those people are. Number three, restore development services as an enterprise fund department. It was one when I walked

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into city government in 1977, so we're going back to the future. Reduce fees for service to a level when no you're -- with no new construction or when an owner is paying fees that should have been paid by the contractor performing the work and no new construction is happening. And finally, four, align the Austin energy and water utility budget to encourage energy conservation and water conservation repairs as part of the general obligation repair program. These changes align with what I like to call code mama, which is make Austin more affordable, named after my mother. [Laughter] The code I recommended over the past few years as a way to align our regulations and investments with imagine Austin. And I -- to avoid copyright issues I want to highlight for you what came out on August 6 in Bloomberg business week. An article called the U.S. Housing market mentions Austin. The U.S. Housing market particularly in competitive areas appears headed for the broadest slide down in years. Buyers are getting squeezed by the combination of rising mortgage rates and prices that have been climbing about twice as fast as income. So I think the manager has done an outstanding job. I think with a few tweaks the budget will be fairer than it is now and during deliberation easy hope you will take my comments into account. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Is Tim Arndt here? You will be up next speaking. You will have three minutes. Mr. Salinas, you have five minutes. I won't need it. I will be brief. Good afternoon, mayor and council, Mr. City manager. My name is Trey Salinas and I represent the coalition for clean, affordable and reliable energy, also known as Secare. My board has asked me to speak to you briefly this afternoon about the proposed

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rate and fee changes with Austin energy's fiscal year '19 budget. Our organization represents small commercial and industrial businesses as well as non-profits, school districts and state facilities, which in total employ more than 50,000 citizens. Our companies, which include applied materials, brandy wine sellty, cypress semiconductor, Seton, Samsung and many others are nationally and internationally recognized for leadership and environmental stewardship and also leaders in the business community on energy and regulatory issues. In 2011 the city of Austin adopted what is referred to as the affordability goal for Austin energy. The affordability goal is intended to make costs as predictable as possible. And what it calls for, it calls for Austin energy to operate so that to control all-in base rates, fuels, riders, power supply demand agreements, et cetera, rate increases to residential, commercial and industrial customers to two percent or less per year. In addition, the goal is to maintain Austin energy's current all-in customer bills for all three of the customer classes in the lower 50% of benchmark cities. Our organization and customers continue to enjoy a strong working relationship with Austin energy and the staff. The level of customer service offered by Austin energy to large customers is some of the best in the state of Texas. We like municipal power. As many of you are aware, our organization, along with many others, entered into a rate settlement with the utility in 2017. It is our goal for 2016. It is our understanding that staff is finalizing the power supply adjustment charges, calculations and are working on benchmarking data for commercial and industrial customer classes. Secare would like to request for clarification the reasoning for what looks like a significant increase in transfers to the fund summary for

fy19 along with an increase of cash reserves. While increasing cash reserves may very well be a sound business practice for the utility, we also want the utility to keep in mind

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where the commercial and industrial rates are against the benchmark cities in the state of Texas. Residential rates are some of the lowest in the state and is in keeping with the affordability goal. However, has not always been the case with commercial and industrial rates. Secare would also like to see the psa calculations and as much of the benchmarking data that we can before the council votes on the budget the week of September the 10th. While it might not be possible to see a completely accurate look at where commercial and industrial rates are until November when the electricity information agency, eia data, is actually assessed. We would like to see if we can find a snapshot of where they're at right now. Lastly, we want to reiterate one more time we think the staff at Austin energy is doing a good job overall running the utility and we appreciate their hard work. Thank you for your time. >> Mr. Arndt, you will have three minutes. And then on deck is Rebecca Lightsey. Go ahead, sir. >> Good afternoon, mayor, mayor pro tem and councilmembers. I'm in support of the Austin energy's request to increase the community benefits charge by 22% with a caveat on the budget. My name is Tim Arndt. I served as vice-chair on the low income consumer advisory task force. We've made recommendations on how to make the cbc more equitable. Austin energy is making recommendations to cut the weatherization budget by \$150,000 -- \$150,000 and reducing the budget by 55%. The cbc tariff increase before you would result in a 26 cents per month increase on the average -- for the average residential customer. If you extend that out to the 173,000 multi-family customers, that's a half a million dollars.

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I estimate that multi-family residential customers are paying about three million dollars into that fund already. At last month's rmc meeting sector was saturated. Last year they had millions of dollars in efficiency and just in the affordable housing sector. This year they've made it so restrictive and difficult to participate they might invest a third of that. Looking at the ecad data available I can identify 31 million square feet of living space with duct leakage over 30% in their central air conditioning. Just to repair those duct systems and change out lighting to leds, the investment would be over \$10 million in those apartments. And most of them need water saving, insulation and solar screens. I realize the goal of Austin energy is to reduce peak kw demand, not kw use, but with a more than three to one pay back on every dollar invested in energy efficiency in the multi-family sector, it saves three dollars on their utility bill. That 10-million-dollar investment in the 38,000 apartments that need the work that I mentioned would save ratepayers \$30 million. Please increase the multi-family energy efficiency budget to 3.5 million and make it less restrictive so owners can participate and restore the \$150,000 for weatherization. I'm available for questions if you have them. >> Mayor Adler: Any questions? Thank you very much. Is John levy here? Come on up. You have three minutes. Ms. Lightsey. >> Thank you, mayor

and council -- >> Mayor Adler: Could you pull that up a little closer to you? >> Sure. >> Mayor Adler: That's perfect. >> Thank you. And as a long time austinite, let me first say

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thank you as a taxpayer and as a homeowner for the great stewardship that this council has shown over our tax dollars. We really appreciate it and recognize what hard work that is. I also wanted to thank you for your leadership on immigration issues. I am the executive director of American gateways. We are an organization that provides legal services to our low income immigrant neighbors, both those who have -- those who are long time residents and those who have newly arrived here in the Austin area. I know that this council has been a national leader in the immigration issues and I know many of you were just recently in del Rio with the family separation issues, the lawsuit the council was part of as sb 4, your participation in the safe cities network are all issues that we greatly appreciate. I have with me today one of our staff attorneys, John levy, who you will hear from in a minute, who has been doing his work under funding from the city. We also had hoped to have one of our clients that benefited directly from the city here, but unfortunately his family obligations were such that he wasn't able to make it. In the current city budget, in the highlights I know that there is money designated for immigrant legal services for Asian immigrant and other community members, I would like to ask you to consider increasing that line item from 150,000 to 300,000 in the budget. Let me tell you a little bit about what this money can do for organizations like ours and the others in the community. American gateways was the recipient of the funding through the safe cities to do deportation defense work

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inside the detention centers. That \$100,000 allows us to help 40 individuals a year. We're also -- last year under the city's funding there was a competitive bid process for universal representation in immigration issues and we were fortunate enough to be awarded that contract. Under that contract of \$135,000 that allows us to help about three people a week. To put that in perspective, we have about 30 people a week walk in to our offices who need our help. We actually just cut our office hours because we didn't want to give people false hope that if they came in they would get a lawyer. [Buzzer sounds] Thank you. So that just gives you a little snapshot of the need for this. So again, thank you for your work on the issues and we -- work on the issues and we appreciate it. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Mr. Levy, you may come up. Is Mr. Bannon here? >> He's not. >> Mayor Adler: What about Laura petty? Doesn't want to speak? What about Colin Wallace? Why don't you come down. You have time donated from John Rooney. You will have five minutes, Mr. Wallace. Mr. Levy you have three minutes. >> Thank you, good afternoon. My name is Jonathan levy, I work as a staff attorney for again gateways and I have the honor of working as an attorney under the city of Austin funding. I've also represented Austin residents through the Vera safe cities contract and I wanted to let you know what a powerful impact this funding has had on so many lives. Just as an example, Mr. Bonnen, whom you just mentioned, was

hoping to be able to speak today, but was inaudible unable to make it today, but he has permitted me to share his story. Michelle was a vocal opponent of the current

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regimes in both Cameroon and Burkina Faso and had death threats and kidnappings. He came here and won asylum in 2016. We had represented him through our proceed bone know program. And after that we recommended him in a very complicated petition process to bring over his wife and two children which he was able to successfully do and they came here in May 2017. Michelle is now a permanent resident and thanks to the city of Austin funding we're now also representing his wife and two children in their application process for permanent residency. I did want to mention too that under this funding we serve on average maybe about 15% of the need and that's among the self-selecting crowd of people who are able to come in and request our services. And of course it's even more challenging for people with very low to no income or people who are currently detained far away from the city of Austin. I wanted to thank you all for providing us funding for Austin residents. I wanted to thank you for being national leaders in this area. And in closing, I ask that you please fund immigration legal services for the city of Austin in the amount of \$300,000. This will allow legal organizations such as American gateways to continue to provide direct representation to our most vulnerable immigrant neighbors. Thank you and good afternoon. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. You have five minutes, Mr. Wallace. Is Jill Nokes here? Why don't you come down. You will have three minutes. Mr. Wallace. >> Good afternoon, mayor, council. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak. I'm Colin Wallace, the CEO of the Austin parks foundation. We are here today because our parks matter not just to me, not just to some of my posse who has followed me out here today, but to people in all of your districts and most of your

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constituents. You know, our parks are in rough shape and we really want to applaud the city manager and the staff for presenting a budget that is very reasonable and very fair in addressing some of these issues around park maintenance, around aquatics maintenance, the A.D.A. Issues that we see in our parks, but we'd really like to urge the council to consider some other additions that we see as critically important. Again, around maintenance, I can't hammer enough that maintenance in our parks is the single biggest issue, and it's not going to get solved overnight and we need to continue to fund so that we can get rid of the backlog that exists, the giant backlog that exists, and allow them to do some things other than just picking up the trash in our parks. Recycling, I think living our values that we don't recycle in parks, I think that's a huge issue that we've got to figure out a way to solve. Youth programming, the parks department has some incredible youth programs in our parks and community centers, but there's just not enough of it. It gets sold out after school in the summer and that particularly hurts folks in the most underserved areas. We've got to continue to fund those on a better level. And then safety, park rangers and lighting in our parks are a huge issue. So the parks foundation is really proud to work alongside the city as well as a host of other non-profit partners who work really hard everyday to raise

private dollars to help supplement our taxpayer dollars. And we're just asking for the city council to do your part and consider the same. We urge you to support this budget and consider the items that I mentioned. So thank you again. Thank you to everybody for the hard work on this budget. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. >> Hello, my name is Jill

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Nokes and I'm a long-term -- long time park advocate, former president of the board of parks foundation and I have worked hard on park improvement projects, shy park, Pease park, and this summer I got to know what the folks have done springs have been doing. In my experience, when there seems to be some activity in park, the park is being cared for, more people want to become a part of it and want to help keep those improvements and actually add to this. And so I wanted to thank city manager cronk's suggestion that the budget is increased 10% because that puts these public-private partnerships more within reach of citizens that want to either maintain their parks or improve them like so many of you know about on the dais. I think when -- we're really missing an opportunity to leverage public dollars here by giving the city more of a presence in our parks through more support financially then that makes some of the projects that the citizens can bring and have some skin in the game with either in kind donations to help raise the level of the funding in parks when funding is scarce. I think so often the question of whether to address the challenges of how to increase park funding when there's so many other demands on the budget stem from an attitude that parks are nice to have, but not necessarily something you need to have. And I hope you'll all come to the place where we realize that parks are essential for a vital city to have our -- to have social connection and cohesion in neighborhoods and across the city and to bring those benefits that are part of the values that you've been promoting, health and environmental awareness and all the things that green spaces can bring. So I wanted to thank you for that increase. We've been kicking this can down the road a long time in

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bond elections and in budgets. And losing these assets of our public spaces are going to be very hard to replace if we don't have more successful support in the meantime. So thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. So the next speakers that I have and maybe you guys are up there now, would be [indiscernible] Rhoades. Are you part of this group? >> Yes. >> Mayor Adler: That's what I thought. And Adrian Longnecker will be up next. Go ahead. >> Hello. My name is heath riddles. I'm the CEO at the Pease park conservancy. And I've lived here in Austin for about 25 years now. And over that time span I've had the pleasure of working with a lot of you folks up there in various capacities in my roles in the non-profit community here both professionally and personally. But I just kind of wanted to mention some of my experience. I worked in the fund-raising department of aides services Austin in the early '90s in a pivotal time in the community's bones, at a time when we in the lbgtq community felt like we were mounting a public health care response to that epidemic. I worked at equality Texas at the executive director when it was called the lesbians gay rates lobby of Texas. I worked at Texas advocacy

project where we provided legal services to domestic violence victims. I worked in the long center. I worked at the hispanic alliance and currently at Pease park. So I have seen firsthand the impact that public and private resources when appropriately focused can have in a community. At all of those places I have experienced that sort of moment where the light goes on in terms of the mission really taking hold in the community. And never have I experienced that more impactfully than through public parks.

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Not only in parks are communities truly built, but when young people come into a park and they have that experience with nature, you really do see that light go on. Imagination is ignited. We teach students how to learn in parks. Young people learn how to learn. And again, never in my experience have I seen such a critical and effective use of public and private resources focused. So I would just like to say that I thank city manager cronk addressing the critical need, including facial funding for parks in his proposed budget. I have already shared a personal story and personal experience. I would like to urge the city council to keep city manager cronk's addition in the budget and ask that you allocate additional funds to maintenance, cycling, youth programming, park rangers and lighting. Clearly parks are a priority for me. It's important that all austinites have access to safe, quality parks. That's why I support Austin parks' foundation ask for better parks funding. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. >> Hi. Good to see you all, mayor, council people, city manager. I'm Adrian Longnecker and like heath I'm a long time austinite. I grew up playing in Austin's parks. For me it was in west Austin. Like heath I'm a long time professional for non-profits here in town working to leverage the private funds that we fundraise with the public funds. And now I'm raising my son in Austin garrison park is our neighborhood park. The first swing set he played on was garrison. I understand you have a tough job balancing very critical important priorities for our city and I hope that when you consider the additional funds that city manager cronk has allocated towards maintenance that you will

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think of my story, you will think about the fact that I continue to serve our community because I was connected to our community via our parks as a child. And that I believe the more that we can connect children with our community via our parks the more Austin lights like me and like you all will have serving our community. Thank you again. I wish you the best as you go through this process. Thank you, city manager, for the budget that you have proposed. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. The next speaker that we have is Cata garm on oin. And then Larry icener. >> Thank you for having us. Cata carbon. Imagine Austin without zilker park or dove springs pool or our immense tree canopy. I can't and neither can austinites, because time and again we keep saying how important parks are to us. For example, regardless of race, ethnicity or income levels, austinites rated the category quality of parks and recreation above libraries and animal services in the 2017 budgets priority survey. Quality of Lakes and streams was the top environmental service of importance to austinites yet these waterways are unfit for swimming, we're constantly dragging trash out of shoal creek and lady bird lake. Yet when our aging

public pools fail we need to prepare for an onslaught of sit citizen outrage during the next 100-degree summer. Austinites have told us that accessibility to parks, trails and recreational opportunities are important to them in this year's budget talks. Our focus on parks is long overdue. Thanks to Austin parks foundation and other non-profits like keep Austin beautiful and tree folks, our residents are not just users of these public

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spaces, but stewards. And every step of the way we rely heavily on parks and recreation personnel, but that's not just enough. While I deeply appreciate the funding to address our critical needs, I'm asking for more, please. Because parks represent such an enormous component to our quality of life. I'll borrow aisd's battle cry, it's for our children, and ask that you please consider additional funding for parks and pools. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. After Mr. Icener, the next speaker is Jennifer potter Miller. She's not here. What about Lisa sledge? No? >> I'm here. >> Mayor Adler: You will be next. That's okay. >> Hello. I'm Larry elsener, chair of the early childhood council and executive director of open door preschools, which is an inclusive non-profit, early childhood education program that serves families of all income levels. I think we can all agree that investing in our youngest learners makes good sense for Austin. It strengthens economic development for today's employees while also supporting tomorrow's workforce. Even Nobel prize winning economists hail early childhood education as the most effective and cost effective anti-poverty program around. High quality early learning, especially for low income families, has been shown to significantly improve early literacy, language and math skills and to reduce special education placements by nearly 50% through second grade. The draft budget includes funding to convert eight elementary school classrooms for pre-k-3. This translates into serving over 250 new young learners

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per year. In Austin and Travis county there are a total of at this point 481 three and four-year-olds on the waiting list for workforce subsidies in head start. Many of these children would be eligible for pre-k services school district, but we need to build capacity by adapting available elementary school classrooms into ones appropriate for younger children. School districts can draw down T.E.A. Dollars to fund these programs so this upfront investment will bring more funding to our community, especially for those most in need. Otherwise we're just leaving money on the table. I also want to underscore the need for the one-year consultant that is in the draft budget and also for the program coordinator position at Austin public health which is not in the draft budget, but which the early childhood council strongly recommends. In a little bit a couple of my colleagues will speak in more detail about these needs. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for all that you are doing for Austin's children and families. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Libby Doggett here? U I'm Lisa sledge and I'm president of the friends of Macbeth recreation center at zilker park. I would like to thank the city manager for including funding for an A.D.A. Coordinator and making A.D.A. Accessibility upgrades to our parks a

priority. The Macbeth recreation center provides programs specifically designed for people with special needs. We have a year-round adult program that serves 45 adults ages 22 and up. We offer three summer camps and after school programs for the youth. We offer 10 special olympic sports and serve over 200 athletes. The Macbeth center like many other buildings in Austin, was built in the 50s.

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The Austin parks and rec department is amazing at managing our facilities and grounds. The Austin parks foundation have provided countless hours and \$20,000 to make a ramp tad da accessible, but other improvements are still needed. At Macbeth our primary focus is on people with disabilities. So it is important to us that you continue to work to get our parks and rec centers up to code. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ms. Doggett and then next will be John hart asher. >> I'm for parks too. Y'all have made a great case. Thank you very much. I'm Libby Doggett. You all know that I've moved back from Washington and am working full-time as a voluntarily for early childhood education here in the city. I want to make the city the best place to raise children in the country. And I think we can do that. I'm also here on behalf of early matters Austin. When I came back I realized that we needed to hear more voices than mine and other advocates. That we really needed to hear from the business community about the importance of their workforce. And that workforce starts at birth. So we have organized the business community along with civic leaders like me, it's called early matters Austin. I hope you will be hearing more about them in the months to come. We're here really to thank you as lower Larry icener did for what you put in the budget. Based on the fact that we have in 2017 46% of Travis county's young children were not deemed ready for kindergarten when they entered, with the assessment that was done that was shown that they really hadn't gotten the early childhood education that they really needed. So we need to focus a lot more on that. We know that children that do well in kindergarten also do well in third grade, which is a huge predictor of high school graduation. And subsequently our workforce. So there are two items in the budget that we're very

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pleased that are there and I would just like to reiterate what Larry said, that the pre-k classrooms that are in the budget, you're funding eight of them. That will help us draw down state money. Right now we're leaving state money for three-year-olds on the table table. And by opening up these classrooms in collaboration with aid, we'll be able to serve 250 more children. So thank you for that. We also have in the budget a 75,000-dollar consultant. This is a one-time ask, but this person would work on economic development because truthfully early childhood is an economic development issue. It allows if we have really good quality childcare, it allows parents to work, but if we also have good early learning programs, we have a better workforce. So we are hoping that you will fund this consultant that will work with the public and private sector to find where can we find more dollars for early childhood? The last thing is not in the budget and Kathie Mchorse is going to speak about that. When I left here 24 years ago I was on the council, the childcare council. We had one staff person at the city working on early learning. I'm

back 25 years later, 24 years later, and we still only have one person at the city level working on early childhood. So we need more manpower on your level to help us make Austin the best place to raise children. Thank you all very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank >> Mayor Adler: Hold on a second, please. Ms. Doggett, Alison. >> I am really excited about this investment in the classrooms and ability to draw down. I was just wondering beyond the eight classrooms, were there other classrooms in the queue we could make further investment in or is that sort of where year at for this season of investment? >> I think that will probably really help this

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year. We obviously need to come back because we need to keep working until we have every eligible 3-year-old served. We've to work slowly because these classrooms are difficult to create. That includes increasing the quality there, so I think eight is a really good goal, but don't take it out of the budget for the future. >> Alter: I wasn't talking about taking it out. Add more if we're at capacity for what we could handle -- >> I think eight is perfect for this budget and in future budgets we might be able to add more. >> Alter: Thank you. >> Any more questions? Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Sir, before you start, however I had gotten to John Asher, Kathy Mchorse. Go ahead, sir. >> Yes, sir. Thank you very much for listening to us today about support of parks and thank you for including the additional funding on city council -- excuse me, city manager Cronk mentioned in the budget. John Hart Asher, part of councilmember Houston's district 1. I've been there a little over a decade. Springdale park and Gibbons park are new two go-tos for my children. I thank you for the funding you have included for additional planning for that park as well. I work at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, I'm a senior environmental designer and part of the department of ecological research and design component, and I'm just here to reinforce really what you've heard from a lot of people today. We work on many restoration projects all over the state and the nation. Waller Creek project is one that we're involved with as well, the design of that. I commend the city for those efforts. We've included research and work for the water quality

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protection lands that Austin has done such a good job assuring we have clean water and we are recharging our aquifer, so I'm very thankful for that as well. But we also do projects like the Bush Presidential Center prairie that is along the SMU campus. We worked on eight miles of river restoration on the San Antonio river, and I say all these projects just because there is a great interest of including nature throughout our cities. And it's not just, again, something that's sort of nice but something that's a vital component to ensure we have health for our citizens and that we have those ecosystem services. I'm also part of the state leadership team for the outdoor learning environment initiative or OLEI, and that's about early childhood development making sure every playground has nature play. It's very important in terms of their development in terms of having empathy for others having able to other than them and obesity rates in under served areas of cities, so that's extremely important as well. I would say all of that is based on research. I assure you that's a scientific term. But we are able to

document all of the value of people's exposure to nature and don't just think about parks as, again, as something nice or these nodes throughout the city. Collectively they offer a great deal of benefits and that's carbon sequestration or heat island mitigation, water quality. We've seen the studies that have professed the value of Austin's urban forest to the tune of \$34 million in terms of service they provide. I thank you again and ask that you all continue to support and -- [buzzer sounding] -- And support our parks.

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Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. After Ms. Mchorse, Laura slow couple. Three minutes. >> Thank you for the opportunity to highlight the need of Austin's youngest citizens in the budget. I'm the early childhood budget director for united Way which means our community's strategic plan around early childhood issues. I'm here on behalf of the school readiness action team. Austin topped the list of best places to live based on job market and quality of life. But as Libby Doggett noted only 46% of children are prepared to learn which is a staggering number which kindergarten readiness is a key opt mater of there's a significant greater disparity for our low-income children of color so this is an issue of equity in our community. As Libby and Larry both noted, we're very grateful to the city councilmembers, city manager cronk and mayor Adler for investing in our youngest citizens in the budget with the two initiatives already included in proposed budget, the funding for the pre-k classrooms and hiring a consultant to work in coordination with economic development and Austin public health. Thank you very much for that. But it's important to note both are one-time nonrecurring expenses that will enable us to leverage additional dollars. There's additional recommendation that came from the high quality child care and pre-k resolution work group, thank you councilmember Garza for sponsoring that resolution, and it was also part of Austin public health's requested budget proposal, but is not included in the currently proposed budget. We're requesting funding to hire a full-time program coordinator for Austin public health to focus on young children ages birth to

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5. Currently Austin public health has only one staff member dead indicated fully to efforts around early childhood. As currently staffed, Austin public health does not have the resources to coordinate services integrating early childhood with other commissions and city departments. This position will aid in building capacity and permanent infrastructure around early childhood policy and partnerships. This position alliance with critical city strategic outcomes including economic opportunity and affordability, health and equity of access. I wanted to remind you that Austin was one of six cities awarded a prestigious national league of cities grant to support planning for a strong pre-natal to age 3 agenda. Let's ensure the work started through this planning granted is successfully implemented with infrastructure we need. With the investment of a full-time program coordinator, we have an opportunity to leverage this kind of private funding to enhance public dollars with the end result being better outcomes for our children. Let's not let this opportunity get away. As we all know, you can tell a

community's priorities by looking at its budget. Thank you for your consideration -- [buzzer sounding] -- And for being a champion for young children. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Marissa Aguilar here? Three minutes. >> Good afternoon. Laura Wilson Slocum, integral care. I want to start by thanking the mayor, mayor pro tem, council, city manager for giving us the opportunity to be here today to talk about our expanded mobile crisis outreach team. Integral care has always enjoyed a strong partnership with the city and happy to be here to talk about this program. Integral care works to improve the lives of people living with substance abuse disorders and the goal of the expanding mobile crisis

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outreach team is prevent overuse and misuse of emergency departments, psychiatric hospitals, emergency detention or psychiatric commitments, and arrests during a mental health crisis. This city council identified ten key priorities for the -in year 19 budget. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team alliance with two. The first being addressing homelessness in our community. In fiscal year 18 to date 37% of people served through the expanded mobile crisis outreach team program were identified as experiencing homelessness or unstable housing. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team works hard to link those folks to appropriate treatment teams and supports like housing teams within integral care or benefits specialist that can help them apply for benefits. The second priority that the expanded mobile crisis outreach team assigns with is access to quality and timely physical and mental health services. Because of stigma and lack of recognition what constitutes a mental health crisis, the majority of people who receive mental health services get their first treatment through a crisis they experience. And that means a lot of times 911 is utilized when a person experiences a mental health crisis. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team is the partner that responds on scene in realtime at the request of Austin police department, austin-travis county ems to provide on-site crisis assessment, crisis intervention and alternate dispositions to those highly restrictive and costly interventions that I mentioned earlier that we try to avoid. To date the expanded mobile crisis outreach team has been able to divert 98.7% of people served from being arrested during a mental health crisis, 93.3% of people served from any involuntary placement, which includes emergency detentions and arrests, and

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over 75% have been diverted from emergency departments during a mental health crisis. Another really cool aspect of the expanded mobile crisis team is that its staff provide point and crisis inletter very long training to Austin police department and austin-travis county ems and that training focus in three areas. The first is training to recognize the signs and symptoms and presentations of mental health crises. [Buzzer sounding] The second is knowledge of resources and provided -- certified police officer. Thank you for your time. I'll pass the microphone to my colleague. >> Mayor Adler: Is Ellen Richards here? >> She is. >> Mayor Adler: She will be up next. You have three minutes. >> Good afternoon, Marissa Aguilar, practice manager over the outreach teams with integral care. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today on the benefits that the expanded mobile crisis outreach team has on our

community. Last year first responders received a 911 call wherein a female was refusing to leave her apartment after she had been evicted. The subtle signs that they picked up aren't easy to recognize. However, they have been through the expanded mobile crisis outreach training and knew how to respond. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team arrived on scene and were able to release first responders out into the community so they could be available to -- be available for issues related to true public safety. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team was able to help the individual and get her connected to services she needed in that moment. We facilitated inpatient admission where she was stabilized. Officers could have made a different decision that day, arresting this woman from refusing to leave the property and where she would have resulted in incurring unnecessary expenses for taxpayers, increased trauma

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for someone who was already in a tragedy it state and not address the -- fragile state, someone experiencing a mental health issue and housing crisis at the same time. Today this woman was connected through psychiatric services where she is receiving medication, counseling services, case management and nutritional services. Another example is a thank you letter my team received from a person in the community that was provided with assessment and admitted to the judge guy Herman center for stabilization. I would like to read what he wrote. The expanded mobile crisis out reach team met with me at a point when I was in complete distress. I swear the clinician must have been an angel sent from above to rescue me. He immediately began helping me and got me to the Herman center. He gave me hope when I was completely hopeless. This individual is still connected with integral services today. The expanded mobile crisis outreach team is so proud of our collaborations with our responders including Austin police department, Travis county sheriff's office, Travis county ems, capital police, pflugerville police department, Austin community college district police, university of Texas police department, and west lake hills police department. I'm also pleased to report that we have several memorandums of understanding with various law enforcement departments that will further increase our impact. All integral care's collaboration serves our community in such a powerful way. Together we work in the best interest of the community. We prevent situations from escalating. We safeguard community members with behavioral health challenges -- [buzzer sounding] -- Getting them the care they need when they immediate it. This is a public service I'm proud to be part of. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Annie Hoffmeister here?

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>> We wanted to share additional information about our expanded mobile outreach crisis team. This is long standing partnership with first responders here. We were not successful in making it into the preliminary budget and appreciate discussions with council in email or other settings to talk about this important program. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have about it, but we're really here to ask you consider finding a spot in this year's budget and this was a project funded by the 1115 medicaid

waiver, one of two projects out of 11 projects we could not continue with that funding, and we will not be asking for any other projects to be funded. This is our one program we couldn't continue. So ... >> Mayor Adler: You just answered my question. >> Okay. >> Mayor Adler: Any other questions? Thank you. >> Thank you very much and we appreciate all the hard work you have put into the budget. It really clearly a terrific challenge for all of you but we appreciate your public service and you will doing to try to help Austin. >> Mayor Adler: Ms. Houston. >> Houston: Ms. Richards, so will this be -- over here. >> Hi. >> Houston: Good to see you. Is this going to be an ongoing request or a one time to get you through the phaseout of the 1115 waiver? >> Thank you for the question. At this time it is an ongoing request. We continue to always monitor any available funding sources including federal and state funds. We have -- we did pursue state funding for this project prior to coming to city council and Travis county commissioners. Those dollars, crisis dollars at the state level went to other communities that needed them. But we would continue to monitor other opportunities so we could bring dollars to Austin if at all possible.

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>> Houston: Okay. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. I'm sorry, yes. Councilmember alter. >> Alter: Thank you. Thank you for being here. >> Sure. >> Alter: It's my understanding that the waiver lapsed for the prior year's funding and this year you were able to fund it. Can you speak to a little bit that transition and provide a little more information, please? >> Absolutely. So to try to speak in the simplest terms, the medicaid waiver originally funded very specific projects, and we had agreed upon metrics that we reported on on those specific projects. When the waiver changed to what I'll call new waiver, we now instead of reporting on specific projects have to report on our entire population and services. So we're looking at population health rather than specific programs or projects. In the first year of the enough waiver, the current year, fy-18, we only had to make a 2% increase in improvement in our new metrics looking in the population health. It really wasn't much of a lift for us as an agency because we had been working on this and are in pretty good shape to meet these new metrics, but going forward we will have to make in increases and make greater investments in our infrastructure and in our service delivery systems to continue to bring those federal dollars in focused on population health. So we continued the waiver funding at a reduced rate this year, but going forward we'll have to use all of those dollars to meet the federal metrics and bring in the \$18 million in federal funding that we currently have in our budget for the coming year. >> Alter: Thanks for the clarification. >> Casar: Mayor? >> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Casar. >> Casar: Thank you for coming. At our work session, I don't know if you all saw or noticed, but I want to continue to engage in this conversation that I think a

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lot of folks in the community are interested in. I know there's really important work being done. Many of these cases being done, our council and whole community, police officers have experienced difficult cases where there is allegedly a weapon, whether there is one or not, involved and how we can better

address those situations. As we continue to consider this, I think we're going to be looking at how it is that we work with cities like Dallas that are trying out different models for addressing those kinds of situations. And so thank you for being here and I just want you to know that's a conversation that I think you should be engaged in as we deliberate on this budget. >> We are always interested in being at the table to talk about how we can continue to partner with the city and strengthen the programs that we have. There was a question that was raised at the work session last week around whether -- whether and when emcot responds on scene and currently 911 may dispatch APD in the event there is some kind of imminent threat ordaininger on site. That needs to be cleared before a mental health professional can come on site. That's how it currently operates. APD clears, you know, clears the scene, makes sure it's safe, then we bring in the licensed mental health professionals. Anyone else? Any other questions. >> Garza: -- >> Kitchen: I have a quick question. I appreciate the work that is done by all of integral health, but particularly the emcot. That is such an effective program and really hits the spot, so to speak, in terms of our needs. I wanted to ask you -- I wanted to ask you one question related to population health metrics. What do they use for that for integral health? Are they specific to mental health services or are they physical health types of services for people that have mental health issues? >> Yes. Thank you for that question. That came up at work session

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as well. So I'm going to look at my cheat sheet here if you don't mind because I did look at that issue specifically. So the kinds -- so there are a few measures that fall outside of mental health, so one of those would be looking at body mass index, high rates of obesity in our population due to a lot of factors including medications, untreated chronic disease, things like that. But the vast majority of the metrics that we're reporting are focused on mental health or substance use disorder and they include screening for clinical depression and follow-up planning, child and adolescent, suicide risk assessment, assessment for substance use props you're problems of psychiatric patients, assessment of risk to others and individuals with schizophrenia. >> Kitchen: Did I hear you right in saying the metrics -- the measures changed such that you are not measured on across your entire -- the entire population you serve as opposed to metrics specific to this program. >> Right. So in the past what we would have reported on would have been something like number of people responded to in a crisis, number of people diverted from an emergency room, number of people diverted from an arrest, those kinds of things specifically for the mobile crisis outreach team project. And this is for everyone we're serving. >> Mayor Adler: Just to close the loop, the question that I was asking that I need more information on was the question of if the police clear the scene first, seems as if we missed some of the opportunities when we wish there was a mental health professional there. I don't know how to reconcile those things, but I think that's the question that I have is is there a way to get an earlier intervention of that team. Somehow. Or that expertise somehow. >> We're happy to come to

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the table and work with the city in any way we can. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. >> Thank you for your time. >> Mayor Adler: Is Karen here? You will be up next. >> Good afternoon. Andy Hoffmeister. I'm just here to answer questions as relates to emcot and how it works on the ground between our services. That's all I'm here. I would be happy to take any questions. >> Mayor Adler: Anybody have questions? That intervention question is a question that I have. Is there a way for us to get that expertise, mental health expertise on the site earlier than before it's cleared to participate in the decision making associated with clearing the case is my question. >> Completely understand. >> Mayor Adler: Any other questions? Thank you. Is Marquita reigns here? Not here. What about Nell Peterson? What about Donna Hoffman? Or franny Sanchez? Come on down. You have three minutes. >> Thank you. Thank you, mayor Adler, city council, city manager cronk, for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon on behalf of nami Austin. If you are not familiar with name, it's the largest grass roots organization death indicated to building better lives for families who live with an amino acid. I am executive director for the local affiliate. Our work is focused on providing free classes, support groups for families and individuals living with a mental illness. We've been working closely in partnership with integral care and the Austin police department on equipping families with the kind of

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stills they need to address mental health crisis when and if it does happen. On August 27th we are collaborating both with some cit officers and Marisa Aguilar in providing a session on mental health crisis and preparing for that in our community. I'm personally very passionate about the work that we do in this collaboration because seven and a half years ago I almost lost my own daughter to suicide. Like most people living with mental illness, with the right supports in place and treatment and access to the care that she needed, my daughter did recover and is doing well and last year graduated from college after a long journey to wellness. But here's the reality is that even in the best of situations when you've got families and individuals who are well equipped with the kinds of support systems and access to care that they need, the reality is relapse of symptoms will happen. Our own family just navigated a crisis this last fall. After more than five years of wellness. We were completely blindsided by this relapse and I can assure you families that live with serious and persistent mental illness face these challenges of relapse with more frequency and severity than our own family has. We didn't have to call nine and we were fortunate we didn't have to do that because no family wants to do that. But it does happen. And what I know from the work that we do in working closely with families that we serve is that we know the presence of emcot and someone is having to call 911, it transforms that experience. You are creating the opportunity to address the situation as the crisis health situation that it is instead of a criminal situation, which it is not. So I certainly agree with mayor Adler and would be happy to sit at that table to discuss how do we begin to utilize this even better than we're already doing. So that we don't get to

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those crisis points. When emcot steps into the picture, they are able to address the situation, assess what the individual needs and make sure in the midst of a mental health crisis the individual is getting the level of care they need and ultimate I ensuring the citizens of Austin don't end up in jail or machine rooms needlessly. -- Emergency rooms. Thank you for considering this request. It greatly impacts the families we serve. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Hang on just a second. Is Joyce stats here? You will be up next. Go ahead. >> Franny sandhis, I want to start by thanking city manager cronk and thank councilmember pool for her dedication to the parks in Austin including in district 7. When I was growing up in Austin I lived within walking distance of the maybe he will Davis park. It's where I learned to swim, spent summer days exploring. I was there when the park began to have I don't remember issues. Many of the neighborhood kids found sewage in the creek and the whole area shut down. During the time our beloved park was being remediated we felt the vacuum it reeigh. The park was where we got out excess energy, connected with the community and when we lost access to that park within walking distance it was devastating as a kid. Now as an adult, I realize that because of the Mabel Davis park I grew up with a deep sense of nature and the advocates in our city that stood up and made it a safe place for kids today. I now get the honor of watching my own children grow a passion for parks and a passion for especially our Gracey woods park. We've been working together as a community to rebuild the playscape and make it Ada accessible with the help of Austin parks foundation.

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I get the honor of working for a local nonprofit. I work for the Pease program, directly work with children in parks and schools and provide direct access to outdoors. We do education in these parks and in these spaces, and what I get to see is kids light up outdoors. Kids begin to develop a love for nature and a love for school that's not always possible in the classroom. What I'm asking is that you please consider making education outdoors a priority and that including funding for programming in parks. It's something that I think we sometimes leave out when we're thinking about the things that we can add to campuses, when a lot of times what we need in our parks and at our school campuses is programming and people doing that work with children. I want to extend my support for Austin parks foundation's ask for better funding for our parks and even additional funding to what you've already promised. Thank you and I hope you consider. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Pete Winsted here? Three minutes. >> I think you are getting a copy of materials that are what I'm saying and things supporting what I'm saying. Joyce Stotts, resident of district 10. I'm here to talk about two things, one is the parks and the other is the funding to handle our homeless neighbors in our city. With respect to parks, I'm grateful that the city manager's budget provides additional money for the critical need of maintenance and for planning staff to complete park improvement projects. As someone who leads a monthly cleanup effort at bull creek park, I can tell you how important it is to keep the parks viable for

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our citizens. We the citizens are happy to pull the weeds and pick up the trash, but we can't fix the broken playground equipment, we can't fix the broken playground surfaces and certainly can't take care of the pools that are closed. There's a need for maintenance funds and I urge you to keep that fully funded within the budget. With respect to the homeless in our neighborhoods, there are two pre mayor needs that require for funding. Low cost homes and caseworkers who will go out in the streets and work with our homeless neighbors to help get them housed. Today we have only five caseworkers that I know of who go out into the streets, and these are from the path program that works through integral care, but we need many more than five people. And not just in downtown Austin. We have many homeless in north and south Austin too. The data from our January point in time count is dead wrong. You have a chart that shows, for example, for district 10 that in 2018 the point in time count found four people. That's ridiculous. In the previous year it found six and before that seven. A group of church volunteers that I work with paid for hotel rooms to house 23 homeless people on January 1st. On new year's eve. That's much more than four. And these are people who are found within a four-mile radius of Burnet and 183. We also have done other activities with our homeless neighbors and have generally drawn 20, 25, 30 people to those events. So it's a problem within the city's periphery that's way underestimated. So just as those neighbors can't be found by point in time count, neither can all of our homeless neighbors be served from a central downtown location. Not only is the distance an access issue, but the chaos of drug dealers and alcoholics downtown scares

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the people away. Our neighbors need services in north and south and caseworkers. Reconsider where the residence funds are going. New staffing is heavy on administration and light on caseworkers. Seven oversight positions in one place, two in another. I found three new caseworkers mentioned with the downtown Austin community court. [Buzzer sounding] And the branch libraries getting two social workers. But I find a million dollars be allocated for cleaning up homeless camps. That could fund at least ten more field based caseworkers and I urge you to think about that. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. You have donated time, Mr. Winsted. Is Carey Roberts here? You have five minutes. Is Andrew Dobbs here? Mr. Winsted. >> Thank you. Mayor pro tem, thank you, city manager, thank you. I know you are tired of seeing me. Asay should the city manager I'm not stacking him. After watching today's proceedings I'm going to move over to 2 parks department and help them out. As present of the greater Austin crime commission, we're here to really ask you to implement the 56 new officers that were in the staffing proposal that you got back from your city manager. The proposed budget includes 33 police officers, however, six of those are assigned to and paid out of the airport budget. They do not help us do community policing in the neighborhoods. This leaves only 12 of the positions are positions already in staffing but never funded. The net effect is we really have only 15 brand-new positions. And in spite of the increase in violent crime, slower emergency response time, population growth, and the taxpayer-funded study that you all adopted, we have -- the percentage of the public safety budget has decreased in the past three years. In March you'll recall city council approved a unanimous

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resolution directing the manager to come up with a five-year staffing plan calling for 333 new officers over the next five years to reduce crime and strengthen the community policing. The council resolution also directed city manager to review the recommendations in the matrix study for which we paid \$200,000 with a California group to come in and tell us what we needed to do to do community policing. The community policing time in Austin has fallen from 33% in 2009 to 24% last year and well below the recommended standard of 35 to 50%. Also there's been a recent crime initiative we looked at where we took two officers in the Rundberg area and told them not to respond to 911 calls but just do their own induced community policing. And it created a 30% drop in crime in that neighborhood. So anyway, the return on investment we need to make this happen. Police department, we're trying to do our part now, I want to ask city council to do the funding that we need done. So thank you very much. As I said, I think obviously public safety is the most important job that government has. I'm all for affordable housing, I'm all for art in public places, but we have to have public safety as the number one. Thank you very much. Appreciate it. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Jenny Brycemice story here? >> Mayor and council, city manager, Andrew Dobbs. Our big priority is parks recycling. We've talked about this before. City of Austin has a zero waste goal, a big part of our vision of the city, one of the values the city has adopted. Unfortunately while every resident has recycling available at home either through city services or the universal recycling ordinance and every business

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has recycling somewhere through the universal recycling ordinance, city facilities have fallen behind. That's a problem. In 2009 when zero waste was adopted in the broadest visionary sense, the city said they would lead by example and right now we're not. Our parks are a big example of that. Up to 293 of our 300 parks have no recycling available in them. That's a problem. It's something we need to solve. That's why we had the task force put together and I want to thank councilmember pool and everybody else that voted for it so that we could come together with experts and concerned people to figure out how we can get the money to do this. Because I don't know if you know this, but there's needs in our parks nowadays. We wanted to make sure that we were not competing with the pools and everything else. We looked at a lot of different things, weighed a lot of options and found a kind of middle path that we believe is the most cost effective and responsible way to do this. We could have said we demand it be this year we get it all done, would have cost a lot of money. We didn't want to wait years and years. The two-year implementation plan that uses a combination of some money from the general fund and a little bit of money from the clean community theme is the best solution for making sure that we get all of our recycling and all of our parks facilities before the end of 2020. That will be -- that amounts to \$140,000 of the general fund and 14 cents a month to the clean community fee. Fees are something we're all concerned about, but if you'll notice, thanks to the great leadership at Austin resource recovery, they've done a wonderful job, the fee increases for the organics collections, those aren't happening. They managed to find cost savings within the department. It's like we're getting a much smaller increase than what we're imagining and we're getting more services than we thought two years ago when we were -- yeah,

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two years ago. Had to think for a second. When we approved the organics. We're being fiscally responsible, conservative with resources, but making sure we meet goals and obligation we've set for one another. I hope that's something we'll consider. The last point as I understand there is questions about the applicability about the clean community fee. It exists for litter abatement. When this is done and you are walking through Austin's parks and find a can on the ground, you will pick it up and take it to a recycling bin. [Buzzer sounding] I'm happy to answer questions. >> Mayor Adler: Ms. Houston. >> Houston: Mr. Dobbs, I thought we were charging people a dollar for the composting. So we have increased the fees, not just in recycling, but we have -- in the clean community fees, are we charging everybody a dollar for composting? >> Right, if you'll remember, we were anticipating there was going to be several years of increases. We increased it the first year and haven't had to increase it since then because of the cost efficiency and the work arr has done. Anticipated increases are not represented. >> Houston: I'll need to ask staff to give me feedback because I have not heard that. >> Yeah, and you might have to go back to the presentations two years ago, but there were several -- three or four years of fee increases anticipated and there's none from arr this year thanks to leadership. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Is Steven frishmuth here? What about Johnny Overton? Er limit a Garcia? What about Mike kanoty? Come on down. You will have three minutes.

[2:40:32 PM]

>> Thank you. Good afternoon, mayor, council and city manager. My name is Janie breezemicestory. I'm the chair on commission on seniors. I'm pleased to say the budget includes the top budget priorities. I'm here requesting you support these items. According to the city demographer, the fastest agreeing growing age group in Austin 55 and older. In 20 years seniors will make up 20% of the area population. This council has amended imagine Austin and passed the age friendly action plan to help prepare the city to meet the needs of this fast growing population. A senior program coordinator who focuses on senior issues is necessary for the city's successful implementation of the age friendly action plan. In fact other large cities have entire departments devoted to senior issues. One coordinator is a modest and overdue step tore Austin. The senior coordinator would have overall responsibility for implementation of the age friendly action plan across departments, identify gaps in city services to seniors, and where necessary work with other units of government such as Travis county and Williamson county. As well as with outside agencies. Our other priority requests that are in the city manager budget include \$125,000 for Austin public health to address a lack of access to physical and especially mental health care and dental care for low-income seniors. We found a great need for mental health and dementia screening for low-income seniors and dental care is something that's not covered by medicare. In addition there's \$47,000 to support better coordination and expand access to transportation for seniors. The commission is asking you for your support to keep these items in the budget. Finally on behalf of the

commission I'd like to thank the council for encouraging early input from boards and commissions. Thank you, city manager cronk, for meeting with me

[2:42:32 PM]

and two fellow commissioners to discuss these requests. And personally I'd like to thank acting assistant city manager Hensley and Mr. Van eenoo from the budget department for their help answering all the questions I posed to them. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Is later walker here? -- Larry walker? Emma rose seegull? Not here. Donna Hoffman? And then after Donna half Monday Nell Peterson. Go ahead. >> Mayor Adler, mayor pro tem, councilmembers, including councilmember alter, my personal representative, city manager cronk, thank you for your work on the budget. I'm here to support some projects in the proposed budget and some that are not. I'm with the Barton springs conservancy, a local advocacy group -- local conservancy group and we're joining Austin parks foundation and the many other parks and conservancy groups to support the request that the city manager's budget be passed. We really are delighted that there's an increase in parks budget funding. Great start. But we also would like to see more, not to be greedy. The list of the projects that were identified in the Austin parks foundation letter really have direct relevance to all our parks, but at zilker park the need for additional maintenance for lighting, for -- what were some of the other projects? The -- the parks patrol folks. I mean they all happen at zilker park and a lot of other pays places and we could use the funding. I spend a the look of time in a central Austin park and I think the needs are critical. Let's do more if we can, that would be great. I'd like to put on another

[2:44:34 PM]

hat and with the conservancy and a few other groups that are joined together in requesting something that's not in the city manager's proposed budget, but it was recommended by the parks and recreation board in one of their last meetings. And that is the idea of funding a small feasibility study to look at the upper stream dam at Barton springs pool and see if we can make it work better for flooding and water flow and creating a better spring-like environment. This was something that was in the Barton springs pool master plan and I encourage you to consider adding that if possible. I think the parks department does not have it in their budget proposal, but they would be happy to have the additional money. And also watershed protection indicated if this was funded through the parks department, they would find funds down the road. This requires a first step so we're asking you if you can to find additional funds for this feasibility study for the upstream dam. Lastly I want to thankly thank you specifically -- well, all of you for the idea of fully funding the hotel tax at 15% cap for historic preservation. There's been a lot of great work on this council. I'm delighted to see it in the proposal. If I understand correctly, maybe y'all put the cap in last year's budget too. I'm not sure how that happens, but that is awesome news. As far as I'm concerned, the more hotel tax dollars that we collect for community benefits the better. Thank you for your work. Thank you for including that in the proposed budget. City manager cronk, appreciate you all's work. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. >> Donna Hoffman. I wanted to ask if Nell Peterson could go first.

>> Mayor Adler: That will be fine. >> Good afternoon to our city manager, mayor, to my councilmember Ora Houston, district 1, we appreciate you very much. Mayor pro tem tovo and councilmembers.

[2:46:36 PM]

Nell Peterson, program coordinator for black shire bridge. It's a wonderful organization dedicated to creating and maintaining diverse, sustainable communities in central east Austin. We build bridges toward unity and equity across differences in our historic community. We bring together neighborhood partners and engage residents in participation. We support mutual visions and enhance vision, affordable housing, employment, health and well-being. Blackshire bridge is preparing to pond to city of Austin's request for proposal that will arise from this budget making process. We provide services for the strategic outcome priorities. Number one, economic opportunity and afford built. Two, health and environment, three, culture and life-long learning, and four, governments that works for all. If I said I'm Nell Peterson, I've lived in the Blackshire prospect hill neighborhood area since 1954. I am a registered nurse. I worked for the state of Texas for 32 years, and I served as vice president of the neighborhood association for over 20 years. During that time I participated in the creation of our neighborhood strategic plan in 2001. Now it's time for us to gather our neighbors together to review and update the plan. In light of all the interest of the neighborhood, Blackshire bridge is working on pollly research and a tool kit of resources to help our historic community and low-income people to live in the neighborhood if they so desire. I look forward to the goal of working with the city staff for Austin and request funding to meet our needs. Thank you very much.

[2:48:37 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ma'am? >> Thank you, Nell. Good afternoon, mayor, councilmember Ora Houston from our district 1, mayor pro tem tovo, other councilmembers and city manager cronk. Nice to meet you. Ms. Peterson just introduced you to our organization, it's a 5013c in our neighborhood. In 2013 Blackshire neighbors, administrators and faculty members of blacksheer elementary school founded blacksheer bridge to build community and bridges between the two historic schools and outward to bring resources to the community and to those schools. We built infrastructure and providing sustainability education during enrichment time Fridays on Earth day so we built large rain escapes and maintain 23 trees we planted with entrepreneurs foundation on the blacksheer campus. Now we're expanding efforts to address affordability at our new office at the Sandra joy health and wellness center on the HT campus. Our goals and objectives are in three areas. Sustainability in green infrastructure, supporting huston-tillotson, engagement, community outreach and development and engaging the neighborhood partners to work with city of Austin to develop policies and resources for historic and low-income residents right to stay in our neighborhood. We want to help bridge that gap and build awareness and understanding of each other. We were motivated by seeing

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a red line around heritage heights which is the city of Austin's first affordable single-family residential subneighborhood within our neighborhood. Heritage heights has empty homes right now that are -- we have people who need a place to stay, one ph.d. Student who traveled from Seguin back and forth every day because she couldn't find a place with her family with two kids to live. A family that was living in one of those houses had to leave, they were unable to afford the rent. It is city of Austin housing. We look forward to working with city staff and Austin health and human services and other city departments 40 you're to look at where the budget provides, about \$10,000 to support -- well, three of our programs in particular in this coming school year. We are working with the relevant coalitions -- [buzzer sounding] -- And wanted to talk to the city staff and make sure we continue and grow our mission. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Is Harold bowling here? Come on down, sir. You have time donated from Tim Arndt and time donated by Latrice Davis. Sir, you'll have seven minutes. >> Good afternoon, mayor, city manager and members of the council. I am a member of the George Washington carver ambassadors. We were organized

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approximately 15 years ago to support the George Washington carver museum and cultural center. At that time we were organized by Mr. Sauls who is in the rear, and our mission at that time was not political and it was not activists. We were merely supposed to help our museum. We've learned since that we need to do more in the other areas that we somehow expressed to ourselves that we should not become involved in. And so at this time I'd like to thank those of you with whom we've spoke concerning additional funds for the carver museum, and I thank you, first of all, for your patience and for your advice. My purpose this afternoon is to solicit your cooperation and input to establish the George Washington carver museum in the upcoming budget process. I expect our requests would exceed that requirements in that area. We are currently organized in the parks and recreation and because sometimes I read the newspaper, I've learned that the city manager is going to organize on the four areas and one of those would be culture and safety. So in those three areas I would hope somehow that we could find funds to support

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the carver museum and cultural center. But first a brief on our organization. We are a 5013c organization. We were organized, as I indicated, not as political activism but simply to support the museum. We have come to realize we must do differently. Our support in the past has included such things as wheelchairs for the museum, which we thought would be provided otherwise. We provided funds for the curator to attend conferences that we thought were necessary. We provided funds to put together a self-guided tour for the museum so that the employees could be released from that

responsibility if a visitor should so desire to do it on his own. At when I say this, we funded a perfectly tuned brass bell for the freedom wall that has been built behind the museum. That bell is, I tell everyone, is free to be rung at any time of the day or night except that under the current situation the rope for the bell has been removed and it continues to be removed and I guess because of the persons who go through the area and desire to ring the bell for freedom. We have through annual fundraisers contributed over

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\$56,000 to the museum. But back to the museum, and I -- I'll speak of it this time in the area of the bond package that just passed. We were authorized in the bond package for [inaudible] Dollars. Requested additional [inaudible] To take care of the problems that we currently see. The museum currently is beset by a leaking roof which makes maintenance of an environmentally sensitive area for artifacts almost impossible. The discovery of a long-term leak on the museum has given the possibility of the foundation having been lowered. And recently the building has been beset by vandals at the rear, at the entrance, drive-in entrance, and that's going to require almost immediate repair. That was to cover the seven and a half million that we requested in the bond program. The additional two and a half mill that we had spoken to council persons about was to first develop a master plan. We have learned that the master plan for the -- for the museum cannot be found. The museum was programmed to be completed in three phases. The current configuration is phase 1. We estimate this project to take about a half mill. The museum has received no improvement funds since its

[2:58:46 PM]

inception, and it was the first-of-its-kind to be built in the area. The museum approaches 20 years old. This review will -- the review using the two and a half mill will evaluate the suitability of the building with respect to current museum standards. And that that review would be conducted by an architect, we would hope. And finally, we would need a consultant to develop an approach to alleviating the deficiencies -- [buzzer sounding] -- And developing approach to improvements. We earnestly believe that you favor this request as the carver museum is a one of a kind gem in which Austin should be truly it provides a candlelight for austinites who have long been underserved. It can make a difference in the esteem of those it serves. And finally, it can be a monument to Austin's greatness. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you, sir. Is Monica Guzman here? Is Kathie Mitchell here? You will be up next. You each have three minutes. >> Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I just want to say, I'm Monica Guzman, district 4 resident, also the chair of the restore rundberg revitalization team. From the team I want to express thanks for all of you, mayor, council, members that we met with, city manager cronk, to listen to our concerns and our express for the city to continue investment in the rundberg area since we are now post-grant. It has come to me that our request has been stayed in the budget and it has stayed there where it's very hopeful for us where we're crossing our fingers, our toes and anything else that is necessary.

[3:00:47 PM]

It's very much appreciated and we look forward to good news later this year. Also, we heard about the clinic, expanded health clinic in the rundberg area, planning and design can be funded this coming budget year. That is wonderful. We are in need of it and we look forward to being part of the planning process both the initiative, the neighborhood associations, the community as a whole. It is definitely needed. And also, this is an add. Many of the people who spoke before me, integral care, the Austin parks foundation, Ms. Doggett for the early matters Austin, I can say even just me myself, I support all of those. All of those have potential impact for the rundberg area. District 4 has the least amount of parkland and we have, I believe, the largest percentage of children under 18 in the council district. We need that. That's a lot of activity for the students, the children, their families to be outdoors, to have fun, exercise, enjoyment. And the more it is used that's another form of public safety and it's not as expensive as to the first responders. That's really important that we have that. We also have a homeless population. Many of them have mental health issues. So that needs to be taken care of as well. So anything that you can do to take that forward to address those issues, we definitely look forward to hearing about that as well as working with all of you. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is suki here? >> Suki is not going to be able to Mike it. >> Mayor Adler: What about Chris Harris? What about Mandy Blott? Why don't you come up. You have three minutes. Go ahead, Ms. Mitchell. >> I'm here today on behalf of the Austin justice

[3:02:48 PM]

coalition and just liberty. These groups support some specific spending that is not necessarily accounted for by the current proposal, but all of them directly address the goals in the March strategic direction 2023. I was going to talk more about that, but in light of the conversation I heard from the dais about the relationship between our current system of addressing mental health first response and what a forward looking set of changes might be, I kind of want to go directly to that. I believe we need to use some one time dollars for a pilot this coming year. The Dallas first response mental health reform. This will directly fulfill your vision for public health, safety for all. Austin has already taken first real steps with our ems first response team that you've heard about. What you heard from them is the piece that this would bridge to, which is that that team isn't the actual first response, and I think you will hear from Mandy in a moment an example of where that breakdown between sort of first response and second response remains a problem. But right now I want to talk to you about the Dallas model. They did a pilot in 2017 and then they rolled out a full implementation in a single district, a large district with the most mental health calls. So they went straight for the big kahone in their rollout. They produced a separate team led by clinicians. They rolled that team out for several months. From the clinicians who got field experience doing the actual first response work, they are now rotating those clinicians through the 911

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call center. So what they've actually done is fixed two problems. They've fixed how that first call is diagnosed, the medical services and diagnosis and work that's done -- and social work as well. So what they found -- and I'll put this in very broad terms -- is that many of these calls reflect a breakdown in the continuity of care for that person in one way, shape or form. And police are not -- I can't even imagine educating a police officer in the work that it takes to reconnect a person to the correct place in the continuity of care where the breakdown occurred. So that's what this team does. In the vast majority of cases there is no arrest. So they say that they have reduced arrests to one person of the calls that they arrive at. There is a police officer on the team providing -- [buzzer sounds] >> Mayor Adler: You can finish your thought. >> I've just spent three minutes on one of ajc's four priorities. [Laughter]. >> Mayor Adler: What you can do is you can follow up with -- one, we have additional comment opportunity. You can certainly send something to the council as well. >> Kitchen: And can I ask a question? >> Mayor Adler: Go ahead. >> Kitchen: So Ms. Mitchell, could you share with us, and I apologize if you've already done this, and I didn't realize it, but I'd really like to understand more specifics about what the Dallas model did and I appreciate what you're suggesting in terms of -- I think I heard you suggest that perhaps what we could do in this budget initially is to plan for that type of pilot. Is that what you were suggesting. >> Yes. >> Kitchen: Okay. Yes, I think that that is something that I would like to work towards so I would like to get more information from you. >> Okay. So I'll real quickly just sort of finish what they did

[3:06:49 PM]

in answer to your question. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> So they moved first response, the actual team that goes when 911 is called is now housed at ems fire. It is not housed at the police department. That team has an officer on it whose job is primarily to do things like let's give an example. Make sure that family members who have gotten engaged with a person with mental illness are sort of pulled back so that the person with mental illness and the clinician can have that moment that they need to bring it down, did he escalate and go for the primary care issue that needs to be addressed. So the officer who is on the team is doing something, but what he's not doing is arrest or detention in most cases. If there is a need for that officer to provide security, then security, there is. But the team is led by and the first response is led by the clinical care people. And so the first person who has the conversation is the clinical care person. And then training those clinical care people in the field and then cycling them through the 911 call center makes sure that during the entire period there is always someone in the call center who is also more educated as to what's really going on here and how this could be addressed from a health care perspective rather than a security perspective. So that sort of two-part piece is probably like the key chain kind of change that we're looking at. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Anything else? Why don't you send us the additional information. >> Okay. And I apologize to ajc for not getting through. >> Mayor Adler: Go ahead. >> Hi, my name is Mandy Blott, I'm a clinical

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psychologist and I live in district 1 and I want to support everything Kathie just said. What I'm going to share today is sort of an example of how this broke down in very recent months. And why I support increasing funding to improve the mental health first response system, potentially before funding new officers and potentially by adding funding to mcot which I didn't even realize they were going to be here today. A few months ago I had my first direct response with APD involuntarily hospitalizing one of my clients, someone I had been seeing twice a week for a year and had seen just the previous day. And they hospitalized this person against my recommendation on the phone with them. Mcot was never called. The officer had zero interest in hearing my perspective on why the client should not be hospitalized. They spent less than 10 minutes on the phone with me and ended the call suddenly without my awareness about to end. The officer openly admitted to me that they felt a need to follow through on hospitalizing because a hotline operator had told them that the client was suicidal, so if they didn't hospitalize and the client hurt themselves, the officer would be personally liable. This fear is totally understandable, 100%, but it also reflects a lack of training and experience in how to fully assess a person's risk for self-harm. These are skills that take years, not hours to develop. As a consequence the officer took away that person's freedom, hospitalized them, removed them from their support system and ultimately did more damage than good for that person. It's very tempting to blame the officer because they were somewhat rude and curt with me on the phone, but I really see it more as a systemic problem that results from asking officers to fulfill a responsibility that they're not qualified or trained to fulfill, which apparently also includes not knowing -- not only not -- not only not knowing when to hospitalize or not, but even when to call mcot and how to use community providers like myself that I'm making myself available after hours to talk with this person and

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explain my rationale, and I wasn't really utilized in a way I could have been. So I just want to support what other folks have said in terms of funding improvement to the way first response is handled for mental health calls. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Okay. Is Edwin Batista here? Walter moreau? Is Sharon Blye here? You will be up next. You have three minutes. >> I'm Walter moreau, the director of public communities. I want to ask that you fully fund public health enrollment. We usually start at zero and it's been two, three or four hundred thousand. We're hoping this year you will fund at least 200,000. We had 150 volunteers that trained and we enrolled five thousand six 34 folks in health insurance this year. \$46.4 million in federal funding and health programming that was brought back to the community for those folks who got health insurance. Most of our clients, 46% speak Spanish or another language. Over a thousand of our clients are musicians. We partner with ham to make sure musicians get health insurance. The good news is right now in the current -- city manager's budget there's 150,000. Usually this starts at zero so 150 is great. We are hopeful that you could get another 50,000 and fully fund the program at \$200,000 so that we can inroll a lot of folks this November and December. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Homer hill here? Come on down, sir. You will have the next three minutes. >> My name is Sharon Blythe. I'm a resident of district

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6, city of Austin. I listened to all the parks pleading for additional funding, and I agree with that. For many years I ran and have continued to run my parks day project at our local park, mountain view, as well as Austin memorial park cemetery. In all the parks comments I heard a sucking elimination of any funding for the cemeteries dedicated to the cemeteries. You talk about parks, parks, parks, but the cemeteries are within the parks budget and it needs to be funded too. The cemeteries are not a discretionary -- a discretionary service. They're needed when they're needed. And you lay the increases on the backs of the elderly by increasing the cost of the plots as well as a maintenance fee that's well over -- those two items are on well over \$3,000 for the burial cost plus the funeral home. You're talking 10 or \$12,000 for one burial at the city cemeteries. This is not affordable. And it should be absorbed some of it by the city budget. I bought my lots in 1989 at \$565 apiece. 2017-2018 budget says they're \$2,775 apiece plus a 416-dollar maintenance fee. That's just for the lot. It's not for the stone or anything else. So I'm asking you to find additional funds in your budget to the tune of \$200,000 to be dedicated to Austin memorial park cemetery to fully -- to partially fund some of the costs that the elderly are absorbing now and this possibly could be funded through hot funds because that is an historic cemetery. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is was assar here?

[3:14:56 PM]

Sir, you have three minutes. >> Good afternoon, mayor, city council, city manager and district 1 councilmember Ora Houston, where I live, grew up in Austin, I'm a native. I'm here on behalf of the Austin urban music festival. We spawned from the city manager's office back in 2005, responding to the African-American quality of life initiative. And so we were part of that initiative and we dealt primarily with cultural and entertainment issues affecting the African-American community. 2019 would be our 14th annual festival. I believe that we have done a tremendous job in terms of being consistent. And trying to promote positive results for the African-American community. The reason that I'm here today is concerning fee waivers. And we would like to be considered for fee waivers. We do receive a grant from the cultural arts division of the economic development office here in Austin, but often times the grant gets chewed up with fee waivers. So we can really do what we need to do for the community to keep the festival affordable to program it for all. One thing about us is that we program a family friendly environment and our goal is to encourage African-Americans to see Austin as a positive place and part of that is to make sure we do everything in the right way. And a part of that also is having the funding in order to do things the right way. So we're asking for your

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support in this budget cycle, if it's not there already, but to please consider us. We look forward to continuing to doing great work for the city of Austin and beyond. This festival is probably the biggest afro-centric festival in central Austin. Many people try to model us. And when they come to vic Mathias shores they are amazed at the beauty of it, the aesthetics. And for many African-Americans in central Texas and Austin, it's one of the few times that they go down to the shores to appreciate the true essence and beauty of Austin. So we truly need your support if we're going to work this displacement and other issues concerning the African-American population. It's going to -- you know, a joint effort would be needed. So in closing, thank you very much. The city has been very helpful but we just need a little bit more. Thank you all. Any questions? [Buzzer sounds] >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is perlik Cavazos here. >> >> Mayor Adler: city councilmembers, city manager cronk. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk to you today. I serve as the vice-chair of the lbgtq quality of life advisory commission and I serve as the representative of the commission, the joint inclusion committee. The lbgtq quality of life commission is very pleased to see that our recommendations, our budget recommendations that we have made have been included within the are budget presented by the city manager and we're hoping these changes or these recommendations will move through and stay in the final budget as well. We're particularly happy to see included in the recommendations a quality of life survey for the lbgtq population of Austin. According to the 2015 Gallup survey, 5.3% of the Austin region identifies as lbgtq,

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but we have no way of assessing how many folks are actually lbgtq in the city, how many folks, you know, have needs, what are those needs and how do we fulfill those needs. So this quality of life survey will go in a long way in helping us achieve our goals as a commission and to fulfill our duties. We're also really happy to see that a lot of the recommendations made by the other quality of life survey commissions and other commissions within the joint inclusion committee have been included. We're really happy to see that and we're hoping that again those recommendations will stay in the final budget. Are just as a last thing I want to thank all of my fellow commissioners in the various commissions, the city equity office, the budget office, various other staff, our staff liaisons, assistant manager Sarah Hensley and a lot of other folks who have worked with us on these recommendations and we're hoping that the recommendations from the quality of life commission will be a part of the budget. Thank you very much. >> Tovo: Thank you so much. Ms. Coup Voss S.O.S. Welcome. And you will be folded by Avon cameron, and. >> Thank you, good afternoon. >> Mayor Adler: And mayor pro tem tovo, city manager cronk and councilmembers. My name is Perla and I am vice-president of government affairs at central health and I'm here to speak in favor of a collaboration between central health and the city of Austin to expand health care services in the rundberg area. Specifically I believe there will be an amendment presented for planning and design dollars to expand the Gus Garcia recreation center. And I just wanted to mention briefly that currently central health convenes an eastern Travis county health and wellness collaboration which is a multidisciplinary group of government and community-based health care and service providers. Austin public health is a

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part of that collaboration, a very important part of that collaboration. And really the purpose of that group is to address the health care challenges faced by residents of eastern Travis county in a strategic and collaborative way, we believe working collaboratively with our partners will address social determinants of health and improve health outcomes. So as we're planning to expand health care in del valle and colony park and other areas that have great need, we developed this planning report, a demographic report, that identified nine focus areas where there is the most need in Travis county. Rundberg is one of those areas that continues to have a health care need. Any effort to expand health care services in the rundberg area is certainly a priority for us and is in line with the vision of this collaborative that I mentioned. We currently have a community care health center there in the rundberg area and my colleague, Yvonne camerona from community care is here to speak about what that health center does and the additional need for the rundberg area. I just want to close by saying we appreciate councilmember Casar reaching out to us to propose this collaboration, city of Austin, central health collaboration, and we look forward to having conversations and we welcome the opportunity to explore how we can help in those efforts to expand health care in rundberg. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Is Armando delgado here? You've already called that. >> Good afternoon. Thank you, mayor, city

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manager, mayor pro tem for the opportunity to speak to you today along with Perla to talk about the services we're providing at our rundberg location. We currently provide services at our location that the address is 825 east rundberg lane and we have the need to expand services at this particular location. We are at capacity, we're land locked in this particular address and we believe that there is significant need in the area and we're not able to meet the capacity in our current location. The data is indicating to us that we have well over 16,000 individuals at low income status that do not have access to services at a health care center and more specifically we also have 5,782 uninsured individuals that are not receiving any services at a health center. , As far as community care we are currently serving 8,632 individuals at our rundberg location with about 2800 being in the 78753 zip code. We also from that same zip code we serve over 12,000 individuals throughout our her centers. And this is also demonstrating the need for health care services in the area and we support central health's position in the need for additional services. And I'm available to answer any questions that you may have. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Mr. Delgado, have you already economic development to see if Naomi delgado is here? Then you will have five minutes. I think we've already gotten through Ann Howard. Is Mandy Blott here? >> [Inaudible]. >> Mayor Adler: She spoke? Is Seneca Savoy here?

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And if Mandy Blott could also come down and speak. Sir, you have five minutes. >> Thank you very much for allowing us to express our opinions and thank you so much for the work you can do. I don't know how you guys can sit up there day after day, meeting after meeting and not lose it, but you're doing a good job. First of all, we're in the rundberg area. We've got some good people down there. We have a community center that is awesome. That is meeting needs of seniors. When I say seniors, we're talking about maybe 100, 110 everyday, everyday, Monday through Friday. Four days a week they exercise and we have people from 55 and our oldest is 92. They love it. The average that we have in class is about 70. Why do we have 70? Because it's a need being met. We have a problem. We only have four rooms in that center and the gymnasium. We can't have classes that we need for the community: Wellness, housing. We need a department for that in that area. So expanding our center would make sense. First, we would like to see a housing group. We would like to see our wellness group, clinic, something that can provide for the citizens. And then we would like to see our senior center come with a reality. We have a need there, and

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that need can only come through our leaders. Thank you for the city manager that you chose because he is showing our people that there is potential help. One of our biggest problems that we've had here in Austin is that city council cannot sell the people. The people would be full in here if the city council could be trusted. That's one of thing biggest problems that we had. I talk to people on a daily basis at the center, on the street, because I live in the area. And our biggest thing is I don't trust the city council. We make a call downtown, we have to go to the city manager's office to get a response. We deserve an answer whether we're construction workers or a lawyer, but we deserve an answer. One problem that we had with the underbrush of Gus Garcia, we have a lot of it that we need to cut. The reason why we need to cut it, we have dobie across the street. A couple of years ago we had 12 young ladies wound up pregnant. That underbrush is concealed to homeless, various other stuff that goes on. So we need a police department or a substation down there. We need a library in that part of town and we need a pool. A pool not only just a recreational pool, but a pool that will serve everybody in Austin, and especially the people with needs, like seniors. Young adults, kids, a special pool. And I don't know if we do have one in Austin.

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The parents can't afford special therapy for their kids after their insurance is gone, then it's up to them to do it. So they need a place where they can go and do this. We need a place where the common guy can off the street come in and ask a simple question like how many cars can park in my driveway. They don't need to call downtown to find out that. Somebody that can answer just simple questions, common sense questions, not a big thing. But we're in desperate need for a bigger place. Our mayor, ex-mayor, Gus Garcia, he's in bad health, but he's good, he's doing great. He told me one thing one time. The education that you have in your head, nobody can take it away from you. What you put in your head,

you will never lose it. [Buzzer sounds] So what I have learned from him and many of you as leaders is that what we say, we better do. Thank you so much. >> Mayor Adler: Go ahead. And then Ann Howard will be up at this podium next. Is Sarah wheat here? No? What about anjeniti an gelia. You will be at this podium next. Go ahead, sir. >> Yeah. I'd like to start off by saying that --? So much as budgets are moral documents that the overall tenor of this budget is extremely in line with a just set of morality, with priorities towards ending homelessness, towards public

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health and towards house, right? But I think as others have noted, particularly those of us here with Austin justice coalition, the increase in total number of police staffing in some ways seems at odds with those priorities. In particular what we face is an extremely low violent crime city with a small uptick in 2017, and attempting to resolve what is a temporary uptick problem with a durable set of expenditures, right. Police officers don't just come here phonation year and then go away. They remain here for decades and their pay increases over time. So if we are going to use something that has an extremely long-term investment we want to make sure that it contains dividends that are in proportion to the problem that's being caused. And frankly, the literature on police staffing, particularly patrol police staffing towards reduction of crime is very mixed in effect size. Particularly in a city like Austin that has for a very long period of time sustained both extremely low rates of violence and a relatively low per population number of patrol officers. A lot of that has to do with how the city is laid out and the demographics of the city. But fundamentally we have very little reason to believe that the addition of these numbers of officers is going to cause a drastic difference commensurate to this up stick in violent crime last year. We know that they require funding and that's a finite resource. If we want to have diversion towards mental health, that costs money, and officers are not likely to be trained to perform the tasks well. We already ask police officers to do too many things. Way too much burden in proportion to the amount of training one human being can feasibly get. So that's why you have to have dedicated staff towards particular problems. As noted before, mental

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health, arrests on mentioned elsewhere in the same release from the Austin justice coalition, for oversight. As the last version of the contract I saw excluded civilian oversight from the negotiations because it's something that shouldn't be under negotiation, but if we're going to have it, efficacy requires funding, right? The oversight and the ability of civilians to interact with it is part of the function of the police. And if you want it to be effective that means dedicated funding, dedicated staff, right, the ability to launch investigations. That doesn't happen for free. Are in addition some of the things that are most effective in policing, notably the kinds -- [buzzer sounds] I don't talk nearly as fast as I think I do. Thanks. >> Good afternoon. My name is Ann Howard. I'm the executive director at echo, the ending community homelessness coalition. And I'm sort of at a loss for words. The need is so great in this city to take care of the people who are suffering. You've heard a lot about that, but you also heard about kids

who need swing sets in parks. So your job is hard. And I applaud your service and I applaud this team over here who has worked really hard and tried to dig in to try to figure out how complex homelessness is and what the solutions to homelessness are. And I still welcome city manager Cronk to helping us solve our problems. I agree with the volunteer who spoke to you earlier who calls me frequently about the people up in northwest Austin who she and her church members are helping and trying to help. And I tell her what I tell everybody, here's what you need to do, but then the people wait because we've figured out the recipe, but the cake we're baking is not big enough. We've got to scale up resources. I'm excited that we're about

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to launch the new federally funded youth initiative, but it alone will not end homelessness for young adults under the age of 25. We're responsible for 25 percent match, which is about \$600,000 a year, and we're trying to raise that money. The state has been funding integral care to help build the Oak Springs project and we've used that money while we wait for Oak Springs to help provide rapid rehousing to folks and to help us do that whole coordinated entry system to triage the folks who are experiencing homelessness to determine who do we need to house first. Last night we celebrated the boldness of the housing bond because we believe it's the right size to try to impact affordable housing. This morning we celebrated the opening of the sobering center. People have been working on that for 10 years. The MCOT program is very successful. All of these are really good things coming to fruition or needing to be sustained, but we've got to do more. We've called for a public-private partnership and things are happening, the Austin Community Foundation is working with the St. David's Foundation. The pay for success initiative you guys are leading on is going to bring about nine million other dollars to help us with chronic homelessness. Things are happening. But I'm concerned. I want you to know that the budget we're presenting I don't think is going to make a big accident in homelessness. One concern is that the Arch will not be able to function as needed if we don't scale up the housing programs, the budget for the Arch and repair the Arch before we have something new. I look forward to working with you in the coming weeks

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as best we can to see if there's more money we can scrub out and keep talking to our partners across the community. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. >> Thank you. >> Pool: I have a question for Ms. Howard. Thanks for being here. I brought up the youth focus. I believe it's HUD. Could you really quick give us an overview of what that effort is and what the council should do. >> So we're one of 10 communities. We have two years of funding, 2.5 million each year. So in -- we'll launch -- the funding will start to flow in October of 2018, a couple of months. And it's \$2.5 million. Lifeworks. >> Caritas and Safe Place are the leaders on that money. We have to come up with a \$600, 25% cash match. So we're looking for that. It could be rapid rehousing dollars. We're looking to the private sector as well, but that's what we're talking to our team about. >> Pool: Great. Thank you so much. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. And then after you

Chris Harrison. >> Thank you for this opportunity. My name is (saying name) And I'm a transplant. I was not born here, but I love this city. And just wanted to kind of give you a background. I moved here in 2005 and was here until 2012 and moved to California for four years and came back in 2016. And one of the things that I did that was very shocking to me is that the cost of living has escalated -- it was almost comparable to some of the California cities. Tends this was not the city that I left. When I lived here the cost of living, I used to live at Ali, which was on Scofield, and a luxury apartment was for \$696.

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When I came back that same apartment, that same apartment actually a smaller size, was at 1135. So I just was very shocked at this reality. We are in Texas and the prices are almost comparable to that of California and some California cities. My concern is that I looked at the budget and I know you guys have worked very hard on getting this together, but I wanted for people to keep this in mind. And is that senior citizens, a governing body is -- can measure its effectiveness on how they care for the most vulnerable of its communities. That means the young and the old. So specifically the old because they have greater needs, and that not only are they sustaining themselves in a fixed income, but they also have to -- they're not generating any more income. So if we're raising these taxes on a yearly basis, where is that income coming from? Do they have to go get a job? Just to fit that increase? I want you to take that into consideration. I want our -- I come from Africa. That's where I'm originally coming from. And young people as well as old people are very, very precious to that community and how we care about them is very, very important. And for me when I see a parent or a grandparent that is going back to work at age 65 or 70 because they cannot keep up with the cost of living or they have to sell their property and move out, that is a concern to me. And I want people who have retired to actually enjoy their retirement. To enjoy what they've labored for and not have to go back in the work world where they have to compete

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with the likes of us. I just want you to take that into consideration before you make this decision. What is it going to cost a senior citizen? Do they have to forfeit their medication in order to fit this tax bill? Do they have to forfeit their cell phone bill? [Buzzer sounds] I want you to really not as a group, but what it does to the individual constituents. Please think about every senior citizen and every child. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. >> Appreciate it. >> Houston: Mayor, before you leave, on behalf of all of us that are over 65, thank you. >> I mean it. It's hard breaking. >> Houston: I can tell you do, thank you. >> It's really heartbreaking to me. >> Mayor Adler: Mr. Harris. >> Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Chris Harris. I'm with the grassroots leadership and I live in district 1. I've had the privilege of being involved with the police oversight working group over the last couple of months led by our opm [indiscernible]. And part of this process, one we recently had a -- set in on a report from various city personnel working with the I team about the complaint process, and a lot of recommendations they had to really overhaul and revolutionize how our police oversight agencies work with the community and

take in complaints as well as compliments from the community. We've also during this process met with our had conference calls with various other cities around the country as it relates to how they operate their oversight. And in addition to discovering all the various ways that really we have fallen behind as it relates to police oversight, the main thing we've learned is the amount of Independence that these bodies need to have northbound and southbound to really enable civilians to have a formalized role in the policy, in the investigations, in having correspondence with civilians.

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And really all of the various ways that oversight really works in the other big cities across this country. And those things are going to require funding. So I'm here today first and foremostly to say that as we come forward with the recommendations in the coming weeks that we will need some funding set aside in order to ensure that these recommendations can be implemented fully and we get the type of oversight that we deserve and that again much of the rest of the country and the big cities around this country enjoy, as well as those that are smaller than us. Other than that I'd also like to say that obviously we continue to dedicate upwards of 40% of our discretionary budget to the police department and we continue to have issues that is object R. Our city faces that do not require police response and the community desperately seeks alternatives for. One is detox and so we're very excited about the promise of the sobering center and look forward to seeing that. The currently is -- the county is currently in consideration along with state dollars on funding a 24 hour walk-in center that will support additional types of substance use issues that are happening in our community. And so we -- we very much would like for the city to help with that effort and contribute to that effort. Every person that goes to jail because of substance abuse issues or detox is a waste of resources for our city as well as going to impede their ability to recover and contribute to our community. So this 24 hour walk-in center is something that really should be considered by the council. Subsequently, we have many folks with mental health issues that again our police are being directed to address when many times they are not the right answer for that. [Buzzer sounds] And that includes folks in our homeless community. So I again would implore you to consider funding mental health first response that doesn't involve police where possible to ensure again that we're spending our public safety dollars in ways that really allow our

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community to be safe. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is there anyone who has signed up to speak that I have not called on any of these items? Okay. That being the case then, I'm going to close the public hearing on item number 1, which was the proposed rate fee changes for Austin energy. I'll now entertain a motion to recess today's public comment portion of the budget hearing that support -- that relates to the agenda item number 2. Councilmember Renteria makes that motion P councilmember alter seconds that. Any discussion? Those in favor, please raise your hand. Those opposed? It's unanimous on the dais with councilmember Flannigan off. Thank you. By a vote of 10-1, today's public comment portion of the budget hearing related to agenda item number 2 is recessed.

Again, we have no further speakers on agenda item number 3, which is the proposed maximum property tax rate. For that reason this first public hearing on the proposed tax rate is closed. Without any further discussion, I will adjourn this meeting. It is 3:46. And we are adjourned.