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Planning Commission
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The Austin Strategic Mobility Plan is a comprehensive, inclusive and well-written document defining Austin Transportation Department's (ATD) vision and goals for the next twenty years. Tightly woven cooperation between ATD and CapMetro plus other government agencies produced an insightful approach directed toward solving our growing transportation predicament. My comments are mostly concentrated on areas in Northwest West South West Austin, North Austin and farEast Austin and begin with a double asterisk.

Chapter 1: Prioritizing Our Safety

Policy 1: Prioritize the protection of human life over all else in the planning, design and operation of Austin's transportation network.

****Austin's black population is substantially overrepresented in severe and fatal crashes.**

Question: Why? What can be done to reduce these fatalities among the black community? What is being done today, Vision Zero?

Policy 2: Designing for Safety, Institutionalize a culture that prioritizes transportation safety within the City of Austin. Implement plan recommendations and align policies, structures and incentives to prioritize transportation safety across all City departments and among City employees.

****Continue with the COA employee transportation safety culture training and education.**

Education is key and appropriate discipline imperative, especially when employees are highly visible and on the transportation network.

Comment: Extend this philosophy and program to major employers with large fleets of vehicles, i.e., Spectrum, AT&T, Amazon. Incentivize this commitment.

Policy 4: Recognize the expanding needs of different users and modes on the transportation network. Consider how the transportation network is designed, constructed and operated based on the speed and vulnerability of different users.

****Change 2-way streets in highly congested areas to 1-way. Each street would be dedicated to either motorized or non-motorized vehicles, scooters. This could be a short term solution while Project Connect is working on dedicated pathways for the MetroRapid and High Frequency routes. Example: Convert 5th and 6th streets to dedicated mode: motorized or non-motorized.**

Chapter 2: Managing Our Demand

Policy 1: Promote transit-supportive densities along the Transit Priority Network. Require or incentivize transit-supportive densities along Transit Priority Network corridors.

**** Text change -remove "require or". The Transit Priority Network works well in the central core of Austin. Building along these corridors makes sense and should be strongly promoted. However, the plan excludes the Austin residents and businesses in the far East, NorthWest, West and SouthWest sections of Austin. These areas seem to be eliminated from the Transit Priority Network for quite some time into the future.. With the proposed plan, commuters will continue to drive their vehicles to the central core including the downtown business area, if they can find parking. Not affording these areas the opportunity to choose the best mode of travel, the single occupant vehicle**

will continue to increase. These areas are in high demand with large greenfield residential developments popping up bringing with them more people/cars, more delivery trucks, etc.

When Robinson Ranch , approximately 7,000 acres, in north Austin starts residential development, many more on-road vehicles will be needed to support this north area. Think Apple. In far East Austin, several PUDs will bring high traffic counts, CARTS will help however without expansion ,CARTS not be able to carry ridership. The WildHorse and Whisper Valley PUDs are in full build mode. These two PUDs encompass over 3,500 acres.

Central and downtown areas will continue with traffic gridlock until alternative transportation modes are available to all areas. This lack of a Priority Network or multi-modal transportation will become an equity issue.

Policy 3: Parking

**** The policies are generally good. A missing factor is the continued greenfield development outside core Austin. Without an alternative to solo-driver cars, parking is required for these commuters and there is no good solution presented in this plan. Ride-share with strategically placed park and rides would relieve portions of the congested system.**

Policy 5:TDM Programming - Increase the person-carrying capacity of the highway system. collaborate with TxDOT, CTRMA, CapMetro and other agencies in region.

****Through expense sharing, the TxDOT Loop 360 plan will make significant improvements to congestion and safety. The unique area of west Austin bordered by Hwy183 (north), RM 620 (west), 2222 and 2244 (south) and Loop 360 (east) have no plans for near-term transportation options. These state highways rely on TxDOT funding. Strategically placed park and rides could provide a near-term answer. Such as RM 360 & RM 2222 and RM 2222 & Loop 360. Today, a driver cannot get from Loop 360/RM2222 to a connector, such as the 803 bus, due to lack of parking at the transit stop.**

Chapter 5 - Protecting our Health and Environment

****A healthy environment needs pure air and water, lakes and parks, and green open space with abundant trees to filter out impurities. Our transportation plan must consider strict air quality standards in the design and enforce policies that threaten our environment. How can we accomplish this goal: (1) encourage and incentivize electric vehicles by placing low cost charging stations throughout Austin and through rebates, (2) encourage trip consolidation, (3) implement holistic green infrastructure into the proposed designs, upgrades and include in the Transportation Criteria Manual. Carefully follow the Austin Community Climate Protection Plan relative to the carbon load of new and expanded streets.**