

Regional Affordability Committee Meeting Transcript – 11/20/2019

Title: City of Austin

Channel: 6 - COAUS

Recorded On: 11/20/2019 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 11/20/2019

Transcript Generated by SnapStream

=====

Please note that the following transcript is for reference purposes and does not constitute the official record of actions taken during the meeting. For the official record of actions of the meeting, please refer to the Approved Minutes.

[10:00:20 AM]

>> Okay. We have a quorum. My name is Delia Garza, I am the chair of the regional affordability committee. Today is -- is November 20th and the time is 10:09, I'm calling the committee of the regional affordability committee to order. Let's see ... Oh, quickly before I -- before we start, if I could just -- I wanted to take a moment to -- because I think that this issue is extremely relative to the purpose of this community and that's affordable housingability. And I wanted to recognize today, November 20th, is Latina equal pay day, I'm going to read a lot of this because there's a lot of statistics and I don't want to get them wrong. This is a day that a Latina earning a median salary would have to work to catch up to what her male counterpart earned in 2018. I just learned about this recently.

[10:01:20 AM]

They determine what a Latina gets paid, how long it would take her to catch up. It would take in a non-hispanic white male earned in 12 months, it takes a Latina 23 months to make that the same amount. The gender wage gap is widely recognized, women earn 82 cents on the dollar that men earned in 2018, for women of color that pay gap can be much more severe. Latinas in particular experience the largest gender wage gap earning 64 cents for every dollar. The median family income in my district happens to be a little over half of what the rest of the city is. About the same as 54 cents on that dollar that Latinas earn compared to men. That's no coincidence, I think. For the Latinas in my district who are paid less than they are worth, the Latina pay gap that I'm talking about isn't an abstract concept, it's real, they experience it in every paycheck. Latinas are also more likely

[10:02:21 AM]

to be the sole bread winners in their families, so this inequality impacts housing, education, food security and the right -- at the right of the center of the affordability in our region. So I want to thank all of you for your commitment to affordability as members of this community. Each of your respective government bodies plays a role in affordability, so I challenge all of us to go into 2020 with a commitment to get creative with our solutions, even if none of us can take one vote or write one resolution to ends pay inequality, we can support policies like paid sick leave and equitable access to services like transportation and grocery stores that make it easier for families to thrive. Each of these local exclusions also makes it easier to fight the big fights in the halls of power where they can bring structural change to solve income inequality. Thank you for allowing me that time to point out and recognize today as Latina equal pay day. The first item on our agenda is approval of the minutes

[10:03:22 AM]

from the last meeting, which was August 7th. So I will entertain a motion to approve those minutes. >> I move approval. >> Thank you. Second? Is there a second? All those in favor of approving of minutes of the regional affordability committee from August 7th, please raise your hand. Any opposition? That passes. The next is -- we have been talking about our strategic initiative which we created in one of our very first -- in our first year as a committee. And that was -- wait, no, I'm sorry. I'm not -- we do have one citizen that wants to speak, right? I'm going to call that person up. Is the person that wants to speak on this particular agenda item or just about something in general?

[10:04:27 AM]

Oh, looks like you signed up for 2 and 4. It's up to you. Would you like to speak now? I can wait. We can have the presentation -- is there a presentation for item 1? Why don't we have the presentation -- who is here to make that? Okay. We'll have the presentation -- this is affordable housingable and attainable housing presentation and discussion on Travis county's implementation of the Austin tenant's council recommendations related to evictions. This was one that was commissioner Shea asked us to -- to have this presentation. So thank you for being here. >> [Indiscernible]. >> So I just now saw when this agenda item was called

[10:05:28 AM]

and -- and while I received the recommendations from commissioner Shea, I -- in my capacity, I'm not able to address all of those recommendations. >> Sure. >> So we're just going to go over those that I

have the capacity to address. >> Can you introduce yourself? >> Sure, I'm Kirsten sigfried from the Travis county health and human services department. They don't have the handouts? Do you guys want the handouts? I'm going to grab one. So, again, I apologize, I wasn't fully aware that this was the -- my task for today. But the handout that you guys have -- more fully addresses the recommendations than this quick, little, six-slide, slide show. So the first thing that we

[10:06:29 AM]

did ... Oh, there we go. Is we made changes to county code. It used to be called chapter 72, now it's called chapter 272. The last time it was updated was in 2007. So these first three slides are just talking about some of the changes that we made to county code. Up until this last fiscal year, in order to be eligible for rental assistance or mortgage assistance or utility assistance from the county's general fund, you had to be at 50% of the federal poverty income guidelines if you were a household full of able bodied people or you could be 125% of the federal poverty income guidelines if you had elderly or disabled people in your household. The new guidelines is 150% fpib for all households.

[10:07:31 AM]

Fpig. The amount of time people could get assistance was once per year. If they were in a vulnerable household it was twice per year. The vulnerable household was considered vulnerable if they had an elderly or a disabled member. Under the new code, it's once per year, but twice per year for families with elderly or disabled members and also twice per year for families with children under the age of six. Assistance amounts. The old assistants were 50% of market rate in 2007 and they were never raised. Under the new -- new policy they are always going to be tied to 50% of the H.U.D. Market rate annual. So they will be updated annually. What you can see we paid out a little less than a half of

[10:08:32 AM]

what we are paying out now for the various different amounts. So this has resulted in our capacity to serve a greater number of people because -- because more people are eligible for assistance. They can get assistance more often and more landlords have been accepting our assistance at the higher rates. That's a 33% of the number of households served. And we have really -- really increased the expenditures. We have more than doubled the amount that we have expended in fiscal year '19 compared to fiscal year '18 on rent and mortgage assistance, it was 1.3 million, now it's 2.6 million. That's all that I have with the slide show. But there are a couple of other things in your handouts that were responses to the recommendations from the Austin tenants council. I will point those out very quickly. Transparency, I think we do a pretty good job of making

[10:09:32 AM]

the community aware of what our services are. We are -- my division, the family services support division is the division that gets the greatest number of referrals from 211 at about 80,000 a year. We have a website that gets about 4500 hits a year, about 30% of those are for rent assistance. And we have brochures that we make available to anybody who wants them. Number 3 the notice of conditional payment agreement. This is the form that we ask landlords to sign in order to accept the county's assistance. There was -- there was some -- some recommendation for a change in the language on that. Making it a little bit more strict with regard to evictions. And so we have implemented those recommended changes. The -- there's always -- there has -- has often been concerns about the timeliness of payments to the landlords from Travis county. We have gotten it down to three weeks and that's --

[10:10:34 AM]

that's -- doesn't sound like it's very fast, but it's as fast as we can go because it has to go through a bunch of different -- different entities through the county. That's it. Can I answer any questions? >> We were trying to get -- one of the people who wants to speak is hard of hearing. We are trying to figure out the closed captioning. Is it working for him now? Is it working? Would you mind just giving like a brief -- like overview of the slides again so he can -- he can -- thank you. Sorry. >> No problem. No problem. >> Okay, back, back, back. We changed the eligibility from 50% of able bodied households -- I think --

[10:11:40 AM]

I think there's issues with the slide show comes up and the closed captioning. Do you have a copy of your powerpoint presentation by any chance? >> I don't, but I have a copy of this, which is all the same information. >> Can you maybe give that to him and just like speak from your slides but not-- have them not put the slides up. >> Sure. >> Thanks. >> We changed eligibility requirements so that anybody who is at 150% federal poverty income guidelines are eligible for our assistance. We changed the frequency that -- so that vulnerable households can receive assistance two times per year and we added to the definition of vulnerable households those with children age six and younger. We also increased the amount of assistance that we will provide for rent and mortgage to 50% of -- of H.U.D. Fair market rates and that will be -- that will be updated annually. The impact has been that we

[10:12:40 AM]

have served about 33% more households since making these changes. Because more households have been eligible to receive assistance more often and more landlords have been accepting our assistance. And, finally, we have spent more than twice as much money this year on rent and -- and utilities -- mortgage assistance going from about 1.3 million to 2.6 million. >> Anybody have any questions? There's a little mic on there. Thanks. There it is. >> Can you hear me now? >> Yes. >> So I'm going to work through this as I'm -- think through this as I'm speaking about this. I'm going back to the just in time economics of our landlords. I'm fairly certain that our landlords want to do everything that they can to help those that -- that are

[10:13:41 AM]

facing economic challenges. And so they -- they have their bills to pay as well, right? So -- so I'm not sure it's a matter of we don't want to help them, but we have mortgages and we have our bills and we have, you know, our economics that we have to consider as well. And I'm sure that impacts their ability to -- to enter into these agreements and say, look, I'm going to -- I'm going to withhold eviction or foreclosure. I'm trying to understand what that would look like upstream of that in terms of help from any governmental agencies in terms of, look, I'm trying to work with these folks that have fallen on some hard times, but I also have my financial commitments as well. Have we given any thought on the other side of that equation in terms of providing assistance for the landlords to enable them to provide assistance to those that be facing economic challenges. Does that make sense? >> Yes. The answer is not within my

[10:14:43 AM]

purview, no. We have not given any consideration to -- to providing landlords' assistance specifically for the landlords rather than on behalf of their tenants. >> I think that's part of the equation. How do we as a government -- it may go all the way up to the federal government and tax relief. I'm not sure what that looks like. That's not my area of expertise. But it just seems that everybody that's involved in this process needs some level of support to help those that are facing these economic challenges. I think we're missing part of that picture somewhere. That's going to be my do out, I'm going try try to research to find out what has been considered at any other governmental agency or level or what we can do with that to help the landlords help those that need the help. >> Do you mean in -- do you

[10:15:44 AM]

mean -- because my understanding of the way these programs work is -- is this is a subsidy provided to the family and then do they make up the rest of the -- so if your rent is 900, the county gives 567, so instead of them paying 900, they are paying the difference? That's how these work, is that right? >>

That's often how it works, but also landlords sometimes just accept our payment and -- as good enough. >> Okay. So I always think -- are you saying like additional help? Subsidy for the landlord? Because this is essentially what -- what -- they can continue to ask for a market rate, that -- but this allows the family to live in that apartment with a lot of help; is that right? >> Yes, oftentimes they combine our help with help from other entities, churches, non-profits, cousin, aunts, uncles.

[10:16:45 AM]

Sometimes -- sometimes judges are very -- very persuasive in getting the landlords to accept our assistance. >> So peeling this back just a little bit, some of this language talks about eviction and foreclosure. Those don't take place until a tenant has missed several payments. Which puts the landlord -- I'm thinking specifically of the -- of the -- not the big corporate entities that own, you know, multi-family units, but I'm talking about the -- rental house, for instance. They have their economic commitments based on that. If we have gotten to the point where we're at foreclosure or eviction, those folks have missed a number of payments, which has caused an economic hardship on the owners of that property. And so -- so while this -- I understand what this is designed to do, bless you. I understand what this is designed to do in the short

[10:17:49 AM]

term. I'm just thinking aloud, is there a way that, you know -- is there a tax credit, is there some sort of a -- of -- not casualty loss, but capital loss that you can claim on your income tax if you are that landlord? Is there some sort of relief that they can receive because they are trying to do the right thing and help folks that -- that have fallen on hard times? Again, really it wasn't a question that I was looking for an answer, just more of a -- of a thought. >> Garza: Sure. >> That we could noodle on. >> Garza: But isn't there -- like can't any -- doesn't any business have the ability to -- to write losses off? Would that -- I'm wondering if that's a way two them to -- >> Yeah, these are the -- >> Garza: Yeah. >> That's why I brought this up, so that we could think about this as a group, maybe there are some things that -- that -- that are out there that we're just not thinking about that may enable the landlords to be able to provide that

[10:18:49 AM]

assistance and -- and make it as easy on everybody as we can to help those that need the help is where I'm going with that. >> Yeah, did you want to say something? >> I did, thank you so much. Hello, everyone, I'm Sheri Flemming the county executive for health and human services with Travis county. To your point, I just wanted to indicate that -- that I think Kiersten was correct. None of these programs anticipate assistance to the landlords. However, those landlords who -- who routinely support our

residents in the community, who are lower income, do have the opportunity to partnership with those residents to apply to things like our weatherization program and our home repair program and -- but it is a partnership because, of course, if we go in, for example, and replace appliances is a really good example, then the landlord would agree that those appliances actually belong to the -- to the renter

[10:19:50 AM]

because they were -- they were provided based on that person's income. But -- but that's not only thing we do. We may repair the floor boards in the bathroom, we may, you know -- of course, anything that we do that's affixed to the property would certainly stay. But that's where -- where is our best opportunity to -- to help landlords because I think a consideration that you guys are -- are sort of mindful of is the fact that a lot of our rental stock requires a significant amount of maintenance and you are correct that those landlords don't always have the resources to make the necessary changes that would make that property viable and a long-term, you know, housing stock that we have available to renters in our communities. >> I appreciate that, thank you. >> If I could just provide a little bit of context. When I first brought this issue to the regional affordability committee, it was after we had had a

[10:20:52 AM]

number of meetings at the county, I think they started in 2016, where we pulled together our health and human services staff, the -- the justices of the peace because they -- they are the ones who get these eviction cases in their courts, the constables because they are the ones who serve the eviction notices, and take people's belongings out of their units, if they have to be forcibly evicted and put so, we've been having meeting was all of the various entities with sort of the county and law enforcement context, just trying to get a handle on it. There was no one place we could go to even get current data as how many evictions were happening or how many eviction notices were being served. So not every service or filing, that's the first step. The result is an actual eviction, because some people just choose to move. So, what then happens

[10:21:53 AM]

they end up on a black list that's literally circulated to all of the apartment owners. There's a service that purchases that information of the filings of the eviction, which may not always result in an eviction, but once an eviction has been filed, you end up on this black list and you can't get into an apartment again. So, it's an enormous problem. There's a lot of moving pieces and there's no one place to go to to get the information, but the changes that you're seeing in the increase in the rental assistance, the double -- more than doubling from 1.3 million to 2.6 million of the assistance we're providing through the county, is a result of these meetings that we've been having over the last three years to try and get a handle on

this issue and understand where can we have the best impact. And we've also been meeting with the tenant's council and advocates for people who are caught in these circumstances, the legal aid

[10:22:53 AM]

associations and all of that. So, we're really struggling to get a handle where can we have the greatest impact. But I appreciate your questions about the landlords and they do have the ability to write it off on their taxes. Frjts I need some classification day six of the month, you're in breach of the contract and by law the landlord has the right to stand eviction right there and saying in 24 hours you need to be out and it can just happen so I don't understand at what point you see consistency. Because I want to rent this apartment and I will not qualify with my income, can you help me and is the county on the hook to provide this assistance every month until some point in the

[10:23:53 AM]

future? >> Thank you. No, we're not. This is one month of assistance. I will tell you back in 2007, when we made the changes that we've now changed away from, we used to have a requirement, you couldn't come and ask for assistance until up until the third of the month. To your point that creates additional stress on residents because your rent had to be late before you could come and ask us. So we removed that requirement back in 2007. Folks anticipating a crisis or can demonstrate that a crisis has occurred that is going to affect their ability to pay rent and we have contact with that landlord.

[10:25:13 AM]

Of time. And -- that's more work to even have to qualify. >> They don't have to qualify. They have to apply over the phone, with facts with e-mail >> What do they have to have to prove they need assistance? >> They need to have 30 days of income statements for every working member of the household. >> How do you know they have that on the phone? >> We explain it to them. We explain -- >> No, they would have to submit it to us by e-mail, or -- >> Assuming they even have that access. Okay. >> Does anybody else have any questions? No? Okay. I had a quick question. The -- I think it was to what you said, commissioner Shea, this was county code that created the program, or the criteria of the program. And so you were saying this was the work of the working group that helped change the criteria?

[10:26:13 AM]

>> Yeah. The county staff, I think, had been doing sort of ongoing evaluation, but we did get recommendation specifically from, I believe, the legal aid representatives and from tenant's council representatives requesting we look into increasing the rental assistance, because it hadn't been revised since 2007 and obviously rental costs have increased dramatically in the region. But it was part of this work that we've been doing with the various representatives from the county and the community. Is that fair? I think that's -- >> Yes, ma'am. >> All right. If there are no other question, thank you for this presentation and for the good work. I think that's part of why we have this committee to -- so we can all learn about these programs, and when we -- me, personally, constituent calls and knowing where to direct people. >> So, if I may make one final comment, I think that in terms of your discussion around these issues, the delicate

[10:27:15 AM]

dance that we have here is the provision of rental assistance, and having rental stock available in our community, and the landlord's right to monetize their property. And so oftentimes, despite the changes we make to policy, our community conditions are driving folks' ability to continue to rent at a certain rate, and to provide, you know, much-needed rental -- affordable rental housing. So, I think those issues around our property rights, and how we use our property, certainly are impactful, because it is not just the ability to pay rent that is the difference between whether you stay or you go. It is requirements that a landlord might have in terms of the rules of what might -- you know, what behaviors might be

[10:28:16 AM]

going on in the property and that sort of thing. So, it is a very complex issue. And many of the questions that we get oftentimes is even after we've agreed to pay rent, there are behavioral issues that cause landlords to move forward with evictions. So, I felt it important to say that, because while money is certainly a big part of this issue, and the availability of stock and property rights this also, you know, some of the issues that our residents are being judged about in order to secure housing in our community. So, thank you for letting me say that. >> I really appreciate those comments, because one of the issues before us on the city council is our land development code, and there's significant discussion about the need to increase our stock. And I've often heard people say, we have enough stock. It's not a -

[10:29:18 AM]

it's not that. That's not what is creating this issue. But I certainly believe that we have a housing crisis, not just in Austin, in the entire nation is facing a housing crisis. But I do believe it's a stock issue, and it's -- it seems as easy as supply and demand. If a landlord knows they are going to have -- there's people

waiting in line to rent, it's easier to say, sorry, I'm not going to be lenient with you at all. So, thank you -- it sounds like that's what you were saying. We have a stock issue and that's a bigger part of the policy that we need to be thinking about as well. >> Stock and behavioral. Stock and behavioral. And the issues that affect other aspects of our quality of life also affect this issue as well, so -- >> If I can just add a final point, we are working with our low income housing providers, some of whom have a new eviction policy and have

[10:30:19 AM]

programs in place, to work with tenants. So, they can help them with their financial literacy to help them better manage their money, help them with any behavioral assistance that they may need, and we're attempting to essentially have those models be things that we replicate in any of the affordable housing providers who come to us, seeking support for the tax credits. But we also partnered with developers, and are bringing close to another thousand units of affordable housing online, both using our Travis county land, but also our partnership with them, that enables them to lower the cost of the housing and make it affordable. >> And I'm going to add two things. One is ditto on the development of workforce housing that we've got quite a bit going on and not nearly enough in Williamson county. But my second question goes back to assistance. What's the frequency with which they can

[10:31:20 AM]

ask for assistance? >> So, for a person that is not elderly or disabled, they can receive assistance once every 12 months >> Okay, okay. And if they are elderly -- okay, over 60 is now elderly. Yay boomers! [Laughter] >> Or handicapped, what are the restriction on that? >> So, these are -- you know -- >> Case by case? >> -- Case by case, but for the most part, our policy allows them to assist them twice. >> For 12 months? >> Yes. >> Okay. Thank you. >> Thank you. >> Thank you. The next agenda item is approving the -- -- I'm sorry, sir, would you like to speak? >> You have three minutes

[10:32:22 AM]

>> I'm John Woodley I'm with advocates for disability access. When it comes to utilities, and if you elder or disabled and you don't have an income other than disability income, and I know some people that tax credit properties they move from one tax credit property when everything was all electric and they cover the entire year pretty much, and you be located to another tax credit property in Travis county, they have all of the utilities split up, and the cap electric, they only pay for eight months. The basic needs, assistance, covers gas, water and rent, but only two times a year. PUC, electric, tx energy, atomic energy,

[10:33:22 AM]

overs gas, city of auguste J plus 1, covers electric and gas. If they don't qualify for cap electric. So, when they split up, water bills at the other tax credit property is only 25 bucks a month and new property \$100 a month. She's not able to pay that. Also has a housing voucher. That's the problem when it comes to the utility. The other problem with the election process, is the -- if you're an elderly person or disabled person, they don't necessarily have time to find and locate another accessible

[10:34:25 AM]

unit. So, somebody with one tax credit property needed reasonable accommodation with having a living caretaker, and that tax credit property, in that case, did not have a two bedroom, two bath, only had two bedroom one bath and they wouldn't let her relocate to another tax credit property for accessibility reasons. And they also have -- can't afford to relocate themselves, if they are on medicare, medicaid access less than \$2,000. And barely gone month to month on the disability income, it's problematic. And then tax credit property wants to go through an eviction process and you can't do anything about that process. Once you're in the state of Texas, once you get an eviction, you stay on record for

[10:35:27 AM]

seven years makeses it almost impossible to get into housing. >> Okay, that was your three minutes. Thank you. >> The next agenda item is the calender, so, do you all want to look over that? You should have it on your -- it was passed out on the dais. It looks like this, just the dates. Does anybody have any concerns about the dates? With that I'll entertain a motion. >> The only date I'm not sure is July 22nd. I don't know if there's an ability to move that one to July 29th . >> Okay. Does anybody have a problem moving it to the 29th it >> Let us look

[10:36:27 AM]

>> I know we have a cap metro meeting at noon. If we start at 10, about an hour, hour and a half, I think that Bo be fine >> Manager? On comments, that the advocate for disabilities said. Is there a mechanism, he went through the utilities and various assistance programs they have. I don't know what we do with that. That's usefuls in information, I just don't know what we do with it. >> I have my staff. I don't know how we connect them to services, or -- do you have suggestion Z? Just if there's policy regulations that

the committee might be looking at to address concerns. I don't know if we weighed in, other than the city of Austin, the council has great deal of influence over the policies that are chosen there. I think

[10:37:31 AM]

there's value in at least raising concerns. I don't though if we had communication, there may be value hooking at that. The other thing, can we get incentives, to reduce the pull for utilities, better insulation. Are there incentives we can do just to reduce what it requires to be comfortable inside that space? >> Austin energy does have rebates and are doing exactly that. >> The green building program at Austin energy has actually, despite the enormous growth that Austin has seen, because of the requirements for all new housing being very energy efficient, they have essentially kept the peak relatively stable. Which is amazing. With all of the growth we've seen they kept peak energy use relatively stable because of these

[10:38:32 AM]

requirements for very energy efficient housing >> I don't think we have that at all. We have lots of players and energy. It's broken up all over the place. I don't think we have anything consistently to help drive that home. >> I don't think the city but the counties can dictate that. An inclusive body may be useful. >> We can definitely, if anybody wants to draft a resolution, about something we can write to our local utilities about the concerns that we've heard, and how they can work with us on how to address those, and that dove tails perfectly into the last item which is the strategic plan and we can certainly add it to that. But, on the -- back to the calender >> Manager? >> Yes. >> Jamie? >> I just wanted to point out, may 27th the week of aid

[10:39:32 AM]

commencement exercises, so, I suspect we'll be present in spirit should you go ahead with that meeting on the 27th. >> It's also memorial day and city holiday. Wait, again, 2019. >> Let's leave that for now. Maybe we'll still have a quorum if you're not available >> So, we're moving from the 22nd to the 29th? >> July. >> Is that locate? >> July will be -- July 29th. Not the 22nd. >> Let's leave it where it is for now? >> Yes. Does anybody else have any concerns about dates? >> Not a concern, but I won't be able to make it the 29th. It's a national holiday. That is my daughter's 11th birthday.

[10:40:34 AM]

[Laughter] >> July 29th. Okay. July 29th -- January. >> If it's a holiday, will Bibi at work? >> I think she was joking >> That's the national holiday. I'm thinking what national holiday -- [laughter] >> Got it. >> I'll entertain a motion to pass the moved by commissioner Shea. And second by commissioner Chadwell. All in favor say aye? Any opposed? Passes with everyone on the dais. And the last item is, looking at our strategic

[10:41:35 AM]

>> Yes? >> Will we get a calender invite? >> Yes. Staff is saying yes. The strategic plan, and -- there's things that have been suggested, kind of at this point. Any of of the markouts you see are more -- just correcting some of the language, correcting the language -- but to commissioner sea's point, we can definitely add in if there is more specific things I noticed here on page 4, for example, the strategic goals and six initiative, and I would say that most of those would probably still be -- apply. But I would -- I know as council, one of my priorities has been the homeless situation that we're in. Many other cities are trying -- are challenged to address page 4.

[10:42:39 AM]

It has strategic initiatives. And so, I don't ife want to add some things more specific about homeless. I can see where that could also fit into affordable and attainable housing, but looking under that one, I don't see anything that specifically calls out homelessness? No? Okay. Why don't we do this by going through each -- the strategic initiatives? And so, the first one would be initiative 1 is affordable and attainable housing. And then there's -- we have one, two, three, four, five, six --

[10:43:43 AM]

wait. Yeah. We have eight out comes to that. If everybody wants to take a moment to read through that, and then Katherine, on my staff, will help us kind of facilitate any edit or additions that we want to make >> Madam chair, something that might be good to do is seeing the introduction, B and C, we might want to update those, so I think these are going back to 2014. That might be a good thing to look at to see if we have updated statistics which talks about the cost burden and see, it was the city of Austin, June 2013 market trends and issues for affordable housing in Austin but there may have been some updates since then and may have been updates, too, as far as cost burden. >> Sorry, hi. I'm Katherine

[10:44:44 AM]

nicely I'm mayor pro tem Garza's chief of staff. I'll be facilitating some of the conversation. If we start at the beginning of the document, we want you to take about five minutes to read through it. It's a very small document. You probably know already what changes you would like to make but I'm also going to be describing and taking notes. So, if you all can help me with that, by raising your hand and making sure I'm able to write down everything. And, noted, that section, it is reflective of what was done when we were working on this before, so I'll put that -- but, for, five minutes if you all could look at the document, that would be great. Thank you so much. >> I'm wondering, this is just an idea, I wonder if we can split up the document, so, for example, those of us on the -- are ISD people, can look over the -- we can split it up

[10:45:46 AM]

to the kind of subject matter areas, so that would be maybe quality affordable child care, possibly, an mdba -- and -- so, initiative 4 and initiative 6, what do you all think about splitting it up into where our expertise lie, and then -- and so that would mean, initiative 4 and initiative 6 would be -- that's where commissioner Chad well, Mathias McKay and Dr. Come stock, if you want to look over 4 and 6 and suggest any possible changes? Is everybody okay with that, and we trust our -- and then -- >> As long as we have an opportunity to comment on it. >> Oh, sure >> At the end of the day, we're trying to find alignments

[10:46:48 AM]

>> Absolutely. Today is kind of like a brainstorming session, it won't finalize anything, we can put this on the next agenda, go over all from the suggestions, add any additional things, so maybe commissioner Travillion and I can do the initiative 2. Just for today because of accessible transportation and our rule on cap metro government efficiency, wellness equality and health care. Commissioner Shea, you want to do -- I think I could weigh in on affordable and attainable housing. I don't see anything that mentions specifically -- >> Let's just talk about the assignments. You'll focus on -- >> You focus on initiative

[10:47:49 AM]

1. Commissioner Travillion and I will focus on initiative 2. Does anybody want to take 3? >> Is that something representative Greenberg? >> Yes, commissioner sea I'm happy to look at that as 5 >> Perfect, health care. >> I'll also take a look at 1, given the social determinants of health. >> Commissioner cook, do you want one in particular? >> I'm sort of outside of the city, so, I've got different issues in nearly every area. >> Yeah. If we are stretching this out to the region. I was looking at 5. 6, I can work on outside of the

[10:48:50 AM]

city >> So, let's try to take no more than two each so you can do 5 and 6. >> Is there anything missing council member? >> Maybe you should finish your thought >> I was going to ask if there's any you want to work on >> I have interest in training efficiency. >> Commissioner Ellis? >> I made note on a previous copy in 1 and 2. >> Is there anything missing? >> No. It's two per topic right now. So, you guys are good, pairing up. >> So, let's take just a couple minutes to go through -- can you read out -- so, initiative, I want to write these down over here, so we can see and the board.

[10:49:55 AM]

So, initiative 1 would be -- commissioner Shea, Greenberg and Ellis. Initiative 2, Garza, Trevillion Ellis. Initiative 3, Greenberg and harper-madison. Initiative 4 is the ISDs, so we have a couple -- we have more. So, Mathias, mackaye and come stock and 5, wellness is Greenberg and cook and no. 6isd commissioners, including cook and harper-madison. >> Okay, why don't we just -- I'm going to just set a little timer for the next -- let's do four minutes and if everybody can kind of -- do you think we need more time than that? Let's do five Americans, go over, and this will be our first draft of any changes that need to be made to this

[10:50:57 AM]

document.

[10:52:13 AM]

Thanks.

[11:01:36 AM]

..

[11:02:51 AM]

...

[11:06:27 AM]

>> Just a quick reminder, five more minutes or so, and then we'll regroup.

[11:08:04 AM]

All right. If you want to start wrapping up, we'll start at the -- at initiative 6 because the first one is the really big one, so, we'll start from the back and go up. Katherine, remind us who was doing initiative 6. >> We have harper-madison. Mac >> Caller: Kay. >>Kay >> Katherine will describe 6 >> Whatever you have is workforce training documents. Anything you have, I'll start describing. >> Out come 1 is just not Austin. >> Yeah. You want to change

[11:09:05 AM]

remove Austin, and put workforce training. >> Is your mic not working? >> Support workforce training programs. >> Renal? >> Put central Texas >> We are in page 11. Initiative 6. Facilitate access to quality education and workforce training. Who wants to be the reporter of that group. >> As we put this together. Sometimes word smithing, I know you have a round how this is put together, in outcomes and stratdies. If we put someone in charge of that document, we can feed it back for the next session with the exact wording that we want to use. I'll put

[11:10:05 AM]

the general thought and then bring back that language as well. Just to give enough opportunities for input. >> Tremendous. >> Council member harper-madison >> I was waiting to be recognized by the chair, is that how we'll do it? >> You can do it by her facilitating. >> Several things, including, I think when we talk about workforce development, we can consider the possibilities. >> So for accessibility by way of micro lending. In addition to supporting workforce training programs, I added under bullet item no. 2, plumbers, pipefitter, et cetera, more skilled trade focus. And apprenticeships.

[11:11:08 AM]

>> Yeah. Okay. >> Real strong emphasis on financial and digital literacy. More partnership was emergency services training program, service industry programs. And then lastly, my contribution, it seems abstract but I was taking the opportunity to sort of reverse engineer what are some barriers for folks, but it includes things like formerly incarcerated people's re-entry barrier, so, under where we have -- where we name specifically examples of organizations, we have American youth work, a center for learning Austin area, learning league, et cetera, et cetera. I put melj, an organization

[11:12:12 AM]

that help was re-entry work specifically around formerly incarcerated persons getting access to some real sort of basic health care. I mean, going to the dentist, getting new clothes and shoe, some personal development services and there are not a lot of organizations that spend a lot of time on that part. And lastly, some of the other barriers include dent related scenarios where wages are garnished. Back lodge support, irs debt, et cetera. To sort of think through how and where it's appropriate to alleviate people's access to the workforce in general by way of these kinds of barriers. By think on that we can add a fifth one, so it will be two actions. The strategy will be identify, analyze and evaluate hose barriers. So, we can add

[11:13:16 AM]

a no. 5 to talk about that and not necessarily talk about it but add the melj and re-emphasize it in another way. Is that okay? So it would be identify, modify and evaluate. And we can work together on that paragraph, so it does make sense. So, the four of us who are looking on quality education boifrs training have various idea, one the question where we are under various items. I know I raised this in the past but there's consensus, is there a way to develop a stop light report. No. 1

[11:14:17 AM]

familiarize committee members on such and such, have we done this sabd if so call it green or call it red. And is there anion line depository so we can keep those -- if I wasn't at that meeting to hear that report where I can go and find those materials? We have various outcomes that we're proposing here. One, a new outcome for this would be support, education and financial literacy, and life skills at all levels. We like to propose another outcome that is labeled something like support affordable housing for those in education and workforce training. >> We have something similar about that, in the affordable housing section. >> There you go >> But we can repeat it as well >> There you go. >> We like to propose an

outcome that might be worded something to the effect of, support measurements for college and career readiness,

[11:15:17 AM]

and the 60 by 30 plan or something, I mean, the title of this is quality education, so our question became, how do we express that part of it with one soul outcome currently, on workforce training. >> So, going back to adding metro to where you are on each one of these, initially when this document was put together. I know there's new faces here, this is put together when the committee started. So, when they started they wanted to focus on what they were working on during this period of time. But some of these have been already, like you mentioned, addressed or we have had presentations or something like that. So, finding a space in the document where there is just a detailed like presentation or something that could be put in, that's a good idea, so we can figure that out on how these metrics kind of work through their way of updating >> I think that was our group's concern, when you said some of those have been

[11:16:18 AM]

addressed especially for the new kid on the block, which one last been addressed and if so, where can we go to learn about this? >> We need to find a space where that can happen, and we can work with our staff to understand where we can house those. I don't know if it's the website itself, or we can have a matrix that you can click on the link and have those guide you to that presentation of the day of when they were done. So, I don't have the answer for that. But it's a good -- let's part it here and come back at the next meeting and have an understanding how we do that. Is that okay with everybody? >> Can you hear me? >> Yeah >> I'm not sure it's a public facing document but just, to Jamie's point, a repository of where we've been, what we've accomplished and where our direction is moving forward, so that we're not duplicating efforts. We can so where we've been and where it

[11:17:19 AM]

is we're going. I think that's critically important that we have that space, whether it's a sharepoint that we can go back and refer to documents and presentations that help us do the work. >> Okay. >> When you say not public facing, you mean, so it's -- I was thinking we're all hyper linked here so we can all look at it, I can go back and just click on it >> I think we have come to do something similar to that at the city. What we asked for is an asset map. Ultimately, there are a number of people working on projects with various levels of success and maturity. And whether we put that in a skill point environment, or a link driven page, the idea is to look at each area, to see who is doing the work in those areas currently, and

then to connect people to those organizations and the names of the folks who are leading those organizations so that that will get you to

[11:18:20 AM]

annual reports, that will get you to different strategic activities that they are undertaking. But it willing be nice to have a space that we could go to that would lay out everything, and we call that an asset. >> So, it would be a resource page or a resource space. >> It's called a space, because I don't know how it will be put together, so we would have to work with staff and I don't want to say we can do something when we can't. So, let me get back to you on that. >> I have a question for, I guess -- so, don't we have a website? The rac doesn't have a website that has all of the past meeting, including any, I guess, backup that was used that day? So, as I was going through our part, I definitely noticed there's stuff we have accomplished, as far as at least a presentation, or educating the members of --

[11:19:21 AM]

>> That's a difficult part of this committee is, it's much more of a -- we can't pass policy for each of our separate jurisdictions, and so it has been much more of an opportunity to educate ourselves on the different things and take that. I know that I have used the dialogue from this committee to have policy pass on the city council level, and so -- but I was thinking as we read through this, many of them have been accomplished or are irrelevant. That's why we're doing this whole process to take things out that are no longer relevant. So, maybe, as you suggested, this would be -- this document, and I'm not trying form with the hyper link, I'm also including what trustee Mathias suggested, the red light, green light thing is lost. >> Okay. That's a great

[11:20:24 AM]

idea. Anything else on the workforce? >> Anything more, council member harper-madison? >> I was seeking clarification on quality education and workforce training, I was operating on the assumption that wasn't exclusively about adults. However the conversation has to exclusively reflect adult education. I was working on ISDs to discussion education for primary and secondary secondary were we exclusively talking about education. >> Ask when this document was put together, you're right, the wording does make it seem that way, also insinuates that. There's a lot of work that's

[11:21:24 AM]

been done on city council or ISDs on how to focus on high school and midskill so there's an opportunity to add that as well and could be updated in that matrix we're talking about, like who is doing what. So we can add that one as well. >> I was just looking for some clarity. >> Great one to ask. >> I think that's critically important because at the adult education level we're talking more about remedial education, whereas at the primary and secondary education level we're talking about proactive to prevent or hopefully prevent folks from fall on heartache and hard times due to lack of quality education. I think both of those are critically important as we address the -- you know, our overall objective. >> There's just a disparity between what's listed here and some of these, American youth work, urban league, goodwill, and what you hear about when Google and Facebook and they build these big facilities here and say we can't find enough talent, we're just not going to -- and it's like there's

[11:22:25 AM]

a huge gap in what they're looking for. And I'm in the semiconductor business and if you don't have the latest technology expertise you can get left behind just as easily. >> Interi think it's a great opportunity -- and we appreciate the diversity of this group is amazing. That type of conversation opens the door to understand what's being done in order to prepare folks for that type of skill. So thank you for addressing that. But also if you guys have the opportunity. This is one where we have to go back and then you guys can sending me the wording, but there is a lot of companies, and when we talk of Austin community college it's not only ACC, right? There's other colleges that are really working on this, on how to prepare high school students. They go into the high schools to do this. So if y'all can help us put that together in a good paragraph and, councilmember harper-madison, of course as part of the group -- your group is really diverse and great so I think one number 9 that will address

[11:23:28 AM]

that will be -- we'll be able to cover all that, be the umbrella for that. >> I think we need to point out there are at least three different types of programs. The county has a program where we are trying to train people who are in jail, who are coming out of jail, give them cdl's, for example, so they can come out to a job. Then there's another program where we're talking community colleges. Sometimes I work with our school districts, and that's a good thing, that they, you know -- capital area training foundation and that type of program, where you have short-term training for immediate jobs. But then we have a system that exists within our unions. Ivw electrical workers, pipe fitters, any number of programs that provide apprenticeships which go up to five years and will train you and move you on a more professional track. So we can catch folks

[11:24:28 AM]

normally locked out of the workforce. We can get to students who are trying to find their way into the workforce. And then through apprenticeships we can get people who are underemployed and try to move them to a vocation that will move them quickly towards the middle class. So there's several different types, but I know that the ivw has a very well renowned program which creates electricians and puts folks in high-paying jobs, so we need to pay special attention to our unions that do that type of work. >> I do like how you laid them out as three levels, so maybe that is really what councilmember harper-madison was saying, the number 5 is what you were talking about, the barriers. And then we have the high school and midlevel, and the apprenticeship. So you have different age groups and levels of education and skill. >> If I may to sort of piggyback on what commissioner Travillion

[11:25:30 AM]

said, one of the real wefts of the apprenticeship programs and some of the plumbers and pipe fitters, et cetera, skilled trades, you get paid while you're learning as opposed to accumulating educational debt, you're actually in the workforce as you acquire the skill and the talent, which I think is also addressing the barrier. >> And addressing -- >> It's really important. >> And addresses the overall affordability, which is the goal? >> Yeah. I've met with them as well. I was thinking of that program and I'm so glad so many other people know about it too with the electrical workers but they also are trying to recruit women because they're -- maybe because they have smaller hand, too, that be there's an added layer to the way that women are able to learn on the job and get, you know, this amazing opportunity that most people may not think of if they're a woman and they want a highly skilled job like that, but they were out there trying to make sure that women actually knew this program was out there, which is amazing. >> On the record, I'm glad I didn't say that. [Laughter] >> But it's true.

[11:26:31 AM]

Manufacturing especially. >> It's coming from women who have been through this program. >> So there's an opportunity to add women and skills and equity as well, because when we address these three, we have to address equity in our whole city, right? And where they're placed, and where we're seeing these happening, maybe in some schools and not in others. The goal really is they get paid while they learn and able to address some of the affordability hardship that they have, correct? So all of this looks like a brainstorm but this all fits together. I promise you it will look good. But, yeah, this is great. >> Two things about -- one of them was ACC at our last board meeting, we had a presentation by Garrett groves about really building this whole model and bringing all the various pieces together that identifies individuals and how they fit in, and most importantly the collaborations that are required by all the various entities that we have identified at this table and more, that that collaboration is what's

[11:27:31 AM]

gonna make it possible to kind of really use the resources in the most efficient ways. >> So I like the words we're seeing. It's collaboration, it's resource, and, again, this is a great platform because everybody is doing something on this field, right? So what are we doing? What the main goal is. Again, collaboration, resource, rise from affordability by paying while you learn at different levels, in a community that's diverse as ours, right? So we're good on that? Anything else you would like to add? This is a great conversation. This is a brainstorm. >> [Off mic] I'm going to email you stuff for what's going on in Williamson county. >> Please do. >> The other point I wanted to add, e3 alliance is very involved right now as well as trying to raise awareness in our entire central Texas areas about the opportunities, the needs and starting at the elementary school really and going all the way through higher education, to bring the

[11:28:32 AM]

pieces together. So there's a lot of work right now taking place to try to build collaborations and identify all the pieces and how they fit together. >> This is great. We have a lot for that item. Let's move to number 5. So number 5 we had Greenberg, cook, which is health care. That's the topic. So we'll start with that. Do you want me to go through the -- read through it or you guys are good. >> Are I don't think you need to read through it? >> Okay. >> A couple of things that we thought that we would want to add as far as emphasis, and we can wordsmith it later, but the initiative talks about facilitate access to wellness and quality health care but then we don't really speak to wellness and the strategies, so I think we need a -- we think we need to add a wellness strategy. We also -- we speak about examine the social determinants of health but we also need to add under the strategy something about

[11:29:32 AM]

coordinating with public health. And then there was another item, and I don't know if we want to put this here or if we want to put it, frankly, in the housing affordability, but it's the issue of care that is needed, respite care for people who are leaving the hospital and no longer need hospital care but they're homeless. So housing, a place for them as far as convalescing. That may be more appropriate in the housing one because it's actually an issue of temporary transitional housing beds for people who need to convalesce. >> The way that we address it on the next point was we add them in both, yes, and we can sort it out. That's what we did with

[11:30:32 AM]

board member Mathias. >> Exactly. >> When we create that matrix that's gonna be informational, we see where the outcomes are. >> Is exactly. >> Okay? >> Okay. >> I think we need to have strategies or recognizing roadblocks to medical care. >> Is it that goes back to what we did on this one, right? We -- councilmember harper-madison did mention barriers. >> Right. >> And education. >> Right. >> Is we can definitely address some of the barriers or roadblocks that are happening in this health care outcome, okay? >> Couple other things that -- when you talk about wellness and access to quality health care that we have been paying specific attention to at the county, we have been working with central health to get a diagram of where all of their health care facilities are located, and then we identified the gaps, particularly in the areas where the greatest health care disparities lie in the region at 77824, 78725, so we've been working to put

[11:31:34 AM]

more health care facilities in those areas. Colocated, one clinic at Overton, for example, colocated another clinic in a county space, we moved it from a level three to level one on 71 and 79. We've had working partnerships with pflugerville ISD, manor ISD, and del valle. So identifying, a,ing where, where you already have bricks and mortar that's being underutilized where we can colocate facilities so we don't have the cost of building the clinic but we have the cost of providing the service. And -- >> [Off mic] >> Yes. Then we also paid specific attention to making sure that if we're in the city we're looking at metroaccess, do people know and understand how it's used. And then the carts program if they live outside that area, and then partnering with United Way 211 for the transportation piece. Once you put the clinics

[11:32:34 AM]

there, there's still a need to get to them. So how do we work together to identify the gaps. Let's let them lay out where their assets are. Let's analyze where the gaps are. Then between us figure out how to put resources into the gaps and building a transportation network to get there. >> As -- and if I may, madam chair, I was going to bring up some of the same issues when we get to the affordable housing -- to affordable and accessible transportation, as far as transportation to wellness and health care. So I have a couple other items. I'll wait and just bring it up there. >> So the -- identifying the barriers -- >> Identifying barriers and asset mapping. >> And asset mapping. >> We love that word "Asset mapping." >> Does okay? >> Is the city didn't coin it, but we use it a lot. [Laughter] >> Is analyzing

[11:33:34 AM]

[indiscernible] And access. And then identifying outcomes and strategies to do that. So we've done this - - you guys have actually done this in several instances. You did it with child care. You guys did it with

identifying public land. So throughout the document, again, that matrix that we're thinking about will happen -- will identify that so this one would be another way to go through health %-úcare and go through that same process, right? Identify barriers and assets, analyze location and access, look at transportation system, and identify the outcome. Okay? >> I have a question, if we're still on this topic. >> Yes. >> I wasn't working through this one, but I've been thinking about access to healthy food as something that is really important to families, budgets, and wellness. So it didn't really fit into a specific category and maybe that's a larger discussion of whether this group wants to include that somewhere in a strategy, but I feel like, you know, starting with prevention and healthy food -- >> If I may I think that fits into social determinants of health.

[11:34:35 AM]

We have as strategy number 5, examine the social determinants of health and I definitely think healthy food would fit in there as well as what I was saying about having specific strategies on coordinating with public health but even more so with wellness. I think that healthy food definitely fits in social determinants. >> At a city level -- and y'all may have other experience with your capacities but we've had things about zoning for grocery stores or food trucks or farmers markets, you know, all these -- >> It came up in our discussion too. >> Right. We're doing that at southeast health and wellness center. We have a food market that's once a week. We have cooking classes, cooking classes are free if we're looking at having an actual mobile-type healthy food store. >> How cool? >> So there's a lot of -- first of all, food access and access to grocery stores. So we'll expand number 5 when it says examine the

[11:35:42 AM]

social determinants of health, it's in the strategic plan so we can use some of the wording in that strategic plan for this one. As we look at this this applies to ISDs, county level, city level. Again, with the three that we have identified over here. >> School district as well, we talked about free to reduced lunches. What was the word you used, food insecurity? Not just healthy but just basic -- >> So we can do levels, like we said, levels of training and workforce. We can talk about the levels of -- of action. >> So you're talking about two things. Healthy food and you're talking about access, when I use that word "Access to food" that's what you're talking about there. >> So food security, actually it transcends just about every one of these initiatives. >> It does. >> You can look at food security in terms of are we growing food locally? Do economically disadvantaged individuals have access to this healthy food? Are we utilizing available spaces within our communities to grow this? Is there an education

[11:36:43 AM]

component where we're training folks how to grow food? It -- really it transcends every one of these initiatives, and you could almost food food security as its own -- as its own separate topic, but absolutely -- >> So the -- Travis county and the city, they both have, under economic development, food access staffers, so that's kind of the thing I want you guys also to think about, how do you want to bring that conversation back as an update, right? Those are joint -- this is a good way to join -- >> In the city it's the sustainability office, right? >> Mm-hmm and economic development. >> You bring up a good point, there's a local nonprofit and the name escapes me, specifically it has a property where they are farming and involving high school students in this, and it's an existing nonprofit, as I said, the name escapes me, but there are certainly people we can bring in to speak to this. >> Okay. We're running out of time. I want to make sure we get

[11:37:44 AM]

to the other ones. So anything else for wellness strategy? Wellness and quality health care? Okay. We're gonna go to child care, which is number 4. McKay, Chadwell. >> Happy to kick us off. We have for initiative number 4, what we noticed there was one sole outcome at present, which is raising awareness. For us the question becomes so what? Or what is the policy implication there? We're suggesting two additional outcomes. One, that might read something to the effect of encourage facilitation of partnerships for quality and conveniently located child care. Another possible outcome, something to the effect of encourage the development

[11:38:44 AM]

and implementation of child care and early childhood development curricula that provides services by students and schools to low-income communities. >> High quality child care, right? >> You've got it. >> If you can share that document. >> Happy to. >> There is also some efforts that the city has done with United Way, and so that's another opportunity to bring different -- from nonprofit to city/county level efforts as a whole presentation for y'all, okay? >> One other thing, while we're there, I think that as we talk about the importance of child care, we also need to talk about the importance of training child care workers and that, you know, the United Way is working on a great program called two generation, and the whole

[11:39:45 AM]

idea is to assist the parents with child care so that they can get the training that is necessary to get living-wage jobs so they can take care of them with one job instead of three. So how do we build a pipeline of child care workers? How do we work with ACC, for example, to create some type of pool so that if I need 20 hours of child care, maybe one thing that I do is volunteer for 20 hours so that child care

is affordable to me. How do we make sure that we have a healthy stock of interested, caring folks that want to provide child care? I think that we don't pay enough attention to developing the pool of child care workers. Because it's not a really high-paying set of jobs, so we have to figure out some better way to incentivize people to participate. >> That's a good one to adhere, and also we would

[11:40:46 AM]

add -- which councilmember harper-madison mentioned, the different levels of training, right? We need to figure that out as part of it. So I'll add it to both. >> Is we have it as part of the curriculum for ACC at those various levels. The most important thing, biggest challenge I see is low wages. How do you really put together a job that is sustainable for a family with the low wages. >> Thank you. Councilmember harper-madison? >> I think it would be helpful for us to make reference to a presentation that we got for the health and human services committee. They councilmember tovo -- there was an organization -- do you remember what they were called? They were working on this intergenerational child care arrangement, because what they were talking about was not just taking care of kids, they were talking about building community. So frequently for families existing in the margin, not only are there not four grandparents, there aren't any grandparent, so being able to build in that archetype and what the health determinants of that were.

[11:41:47 AM]

So I think being able to refer to that might be helpful. >> Okay. I'll park it here so you can have those. And these will come up as we're working. If you guys want to see this in the upcoming months because we have to put together sort of a time line of what's coming up so we can park these as well. >> This might transcend just the one and be applicable to two, but I know one of our commissioners in fact, his organization is working on some multi-family with child care built into the property. Momark. >> Jeremiah? >> No. That's not the one. Terry Mitchell and momark, they're working on it, but similar. >> Commissioner Shea? >> Just a note here. The -- through the workforce commission, there was a child care assistance fund? >> That's the biggest one. >> But it routinely falls short, and the waiting list for families to be able to

[11:42:47 AM]

access that child care assistance is -- sometimes has grown in excess of a thousand families waiting. The county has stepped in and doubled, I think, and tripled now our gap funding assistance so that more families can access that child care assistance and I think we're close to a million dollars at this point in terms of our increases in funding for this program. >> We can add it as well, like we did for the other ones, levels of access. Because the levels of access is not only the economics, backup also what you

were mentioning, commissioner Travillion, where they're located. Do we have enough? Are they located where families can access transportation, like councilmember harper-madison was saying, the working parents, so where do they go? Is that something that we need to look at? So if we add the levels, assist, access, and analyze, I think we would cover those as well. And it's a good platform to do with each one of them that we're seeing because

[11:43:48 AM]

they are about how people access at different levels. >> What were the three levels you just said? >> The three levels we said we were -- identify barriers, analyze, and then assist. We had those three. And we can change the wording as well. >> Is that's what I was looking at -- >> Just the three as the ones that we -- >> I do want to quickly get back to a statement that was made, and that is the workers who are actually working to provide the child care. If we want outcomes that provide opportunities for students and for small children to get to school ready to learn, then we have to look at the training of those who are providing the child care. And there's a direct relationship between that and how low the pay is and, frankly, the need to subsidize people who are working in this industry to get training that will then allow them to provide the kind of education that we would like for these

[11:44:48 AM]

children. >> So there's a big push statewide for full-day pre-k. You're talking about imposing even further. >> Yes. At one time the state of Texas, I know it existed and I know that it doesn't anymore, had a program that people who were working in child care could access to go get an accreditation or associate's degree or bachelor's degree. It doesn't exist anymore and it's a real issue. >> Is so this is another opportunity where we can see what the county is doing, what the city is doing, because they all have departments that are working on child care and readiness, right, the pre-k programs and how they can do that. Okay. Anything else that you would like to add? And I did add, commissioner, again, the land use, where is it, and where the gap would exist because there's a child care desert also that we all have heard about. Thank you. Mayor pro tem Garza? >> I was going to say, to respect people's time, I

[11:45:49 AM]

didn't want to go past noon. So I think this -- we can move this into future agenda items and this can be - - we can continue this process and then hopefully at our next meeting we can put some of these rough edits into a document and be able to continue to work on it that way so that if anybody took notes on their -- on this, could you hand it to staff and so we can try to start putting together a very rough draft on the initiatives that we've discussed so far? And then I also thought, as I was thinking of how work on this committee has helped me in policy initiatives that I've prioritized, if maybe in the -- just a

suggestion. In the different -- the people that concentrate on the different initiatives, if you want to bring back something that you could work on at your respective board or commission or whatever body it is and

[11:46:51 AM]

then, you know, while I said we can't pass policy, we can definitely pass supportive resolutions showing that we have, you know, discussed it, studied it, and provide some backup if there is any policy initiative that you would like to forward at your respective body. Commissioner Shea. >> Madam chair, one of the things I would love for folks to think about with this group, because we represent such a broad regional perspective of elected officials across many different governing bodies, I actually think that we can really have an impact on policy in the region. And so one of the things I'd like us to consider doing in the future is using these meetings as a mechanism for convening entities that we've talked about or referenced in various briefings and discussions over the years. For instance, on the utility

[11:47:53 AM]

issues, I think the speaker raised a number of great points about all the different utilities that have differing utility assistance programs, some is of which may or may not be as useful. So one suggestion might be to convene that group and just have a presentation and a discussion about what the various utility assistance programs are and how might they be improved. I think we can do a similar thing, looking at various affordable housing developers, some of whom have established a no-eviction policy and have programs that help their low-income tenants to, again, encourage across the region sort of best practices. And the other thought I had on that is related to evictions. I have briefly reached out to for instance the apartment association, they need to be at the table and this may be an opportunity to convene as well a session with both the tenants council, the legal aid advocates, and the apartment association to just look at this issue.

[11:48:53 AM]

But I think our body can really have a powerful impact by acting as a convener to have these larger discussions to try and move policy in the region. And I'd love for us to think about that as part of our strategic goal. >> Sure. Does anybody else have any future agenda items that they -- go ahead. >> I apologize. What I'm wondering is, at least in the Austin ISD, we are seeing the decimation of many school communities due to the increasing lack of affordability in Austin, and we have various properties that are not coming available for the possibility of affordable housing, so my plea for this group, is there any way for us to come together outside of this, to be able to discuss how it is we as policymakers can

move forward the idea of affordable housing? I was communicating with commissioner Gomez just yesterday and essentially she's been saying the same

[11:49:53 AM]

thing. We've been talking about affordable housing for years. Apparently none of us has heard -- is there any way for us to be able to move this forward? I welcome conversations off-line. >> Sure. Is that not a topic that gets discussed at the joint aisd/city/county? >> Frequently. Again, the needle doesn't seem to have moved much, but we frequently make it -- we've told them it's our top priority. >> But one thing we have to do is, we have this discussion. We have talked for a couple of years now about looking at all of the public property that is owned, whether it is school or city or county and working through the land banking or community trust policies so that the affordability is not just first generation. Because many of the projects that we have seen skip, for example, in and several others, the first renter to

[11:50:54 AM]

own was in an affordable place but when they moved away, the second one was in a market-rate space. And what we have to do, particularly if we are talking about public property, is make sure that we guarantee affordability. We have tried to do that by -- on sponsoring projects that are in what the fair housing act analysis would call low-opportunity areas, but we know that they will be high-opportunity areas within a short period of time. But we think that we arrest the cost of the property and make affordable projects possible by putting them into -- by putting them into trust or putting them into a land bank or creating the expectations with our contracts to make sure that that land will always cost what it costs today, not the future value of it. >> Okay. Well, thank you for all of those comments. I -- I would agree that there's a huge opportunity

[11:51:55 AM]

for a large impact, but I must also suggest, we have one staff person that works on this. And so if we -- for example, the utility idea, and if we want to convene and if that's something that you would like to organize, commissioner Shea, and let us know the players and the people and the panel and the presentation -- and I guess that's where I was going with the idea of each of us owning some kind of policy area and please help with whatever that -- whatever would need to be put in place for us to have the ability to have that conversation here. Because we all know that this is not the only committee that we all sit on. And so if there is something specific and you can provide us -- I mean, really it would be on each of us. The onus is on each of us to provide the planning and the

[11:52:55 AM]

speakers on the presentations to be able to have that conversation. If we can -- I agree we can have a big impact, but we each have to do the homework to get there. And going back to this, this has been something we've been trying to do for about three meetings now, and I'm glad we started to move the needle on it, but if we can please, please, please each take the time to go back and look it over so at our next meeting we can really move some of these suggestions forward, I'd greatly appreciate that.

Councilmember harper-madison. >> I'd be brief. One of the things I'd like us to bring up as a future agenda item that is not listed here is that -- I believe for communities to thrive we need viable business corridors that serve the communities. And I don't think we're having conversations about affordability in commercial real estate and in creative spaces. I'm certainly happy to make the necessary helps and help line that up but it's something I'd like to

[11:53:57 AM]

explore. >> Sure. All right. If there's no objection, we are adjourned at 12:02. Thank you all for being here.