

**May 18, 2022**

**Re: May 19, 2022 Austin City Council Meeting Agenda Item 87**

**Mayor Adler and Council Members,**

We ask for your support of Item 87 on the May 19, 2022 Austin City Council Meeting Agenda. The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan identifies downtown as the Regional Center that should have the greatest density of people and jobs and the tallest buildings in the region. With the addition of Project Connect's planned light rail and bus rapid transit routes, it is critical to add a denser pattern of transit oriented development along downtown's activity corridors. We support code changes that allow for maximum development potential in areas of downtown where density is expected and where sites are already constrained by Capitol View Corridors.

Approval of Item 87 will help maximize our transit and mobility investments by allowing sites within the Capitol Dominance Overlay to utilize density bonuses and build higher putting more housing, jobs, and destinations directly on and near Project Connect's future light rail corridor on Lavaca and Guadalupe Streets. It will therefore create more opportunities to generate affordable housing, provide more ways for people to live, work and play near the Capitol and help the city achieve our housing, mobility, and climate goals. It will also unlock millions of dollars' worth of badly needed tax base that could be used to fund more affordable housing, public safety, parks and pools, and so many more vital city services.

The Capitol Dominance Overlay is outdated and superseded by Capitol View Corridors. The Corridors are condensed and overlap most heavily around the Texas State Capitol dome, where it makes sense to keep development at a distance, sufficiently protecting views of the Capitol. Some of the land around the Capitol is owned by the state and not subject to the Capitol Dominance Overlay. If allowed to participate in the Downtown Density Bonus Program and exceed the Capitol Dominance Overlay, a forthcoming privately-owned project located at 14th Street and Lavaca Street would produce over \$1 million in affordable housing fees and produce ~90 additional housing units while staying within the height and FAR limits of the program and complying with the site's Capitol View Corridor. If limited by the Overlay, it would produce only ~\$70,000 in affordable housing fees.

We respectfully request your vote to approve Item 87 so that all privately owned parcels within the Overlay may participate in the density bonus program and generate these much needed community benefits. Thank you for your consideration and your leadership.

Sincerely,



Dewitt Peart  
President and CEO

The Downtown Austin Alliance mission:  
To create, preserve and enhance the value and vitality of downtown Austin.