

# City Council Work Session Transcript – 2/7/20223

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busted just what the rest of us did. I said, Don't let You die. Good morning. Good morning. Are we going live? There We are. Good morning, everyone. I am Mayor Pro tem Paige Ellis. I am sitting in Mayor Kirk Watson's chair. Today He is joining us remotely and I'm joined here on the dais by council members. Vela Kelly Alter Alison Alter Ryan Velasquez, Council member Pool, Qadri and Fuentes. So I think that covers who always in attendance. Natasha is not with us quite yet, So we hope she'll be joining with us shortly. I will be presiding over today's work session. As Mayor Watson is joining us virtually. I call to order the City Council work

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session this Tuesday, February 7th 2023 at 906 am We are located at 301 West second Street in the boards and Commissions Room. Today's work session agenda consists of items a through D. We are going to be taking up the briefing on 2023 weather. Winter weather Situational update first and then we do have one pulled item and that is pulled by council member Ryan Alter and it is item 40 is the extreme shelter. I fc that council member Kelly has brought and I see Council member harper-madison has now joined us. So on that note, Let's go ahead and get started with today's briefing. Good morning, Mayor and council. As Mayor, Pro tem Ellis mentioned we will be providing a situational update on the emergency that has affected all of us as you know where you're still in response mode, and our focus needs to continue to be in that regard and ensuring that all of our customers are get power as soon

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as possible. As you know, the impact of this event has been profound and I understand that many have suffered as a result, as a father with two Children of my own. I have no doubt there are many other parents who struggled caring for their families and these unfair and unbearable circumstances. Now I feel like we've been a little desensitized to the word unprecedented over the past few years, But this truth this storm was truly historic in so many ways as the chairman of the state's Public utility commission described it, and ice hurricane swept through our community with a brutal and unyielding force. The storm caused widespread power outages and have left many of you without heat and electricity. I acknowledge share and feel your frustration and anger. Every storm is different and presents its own unique challenges for this disaster. We have already learned many lessons and we will do better. I am certain of it. We are still in the midst of recovery, but we will analyze every step of this event and implement changes that we that

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will make us better prepared for the next natural disaster and ensure that we can protect, inform and assist our residents. Moving forward. We are committed to improving our response and supporting you in the face of these challenges. We will be working closely with meteorologists and other experts to better understand the factors that contributed to this weather events and to develop more effective strategies for responding to similar incidents in the future. We will also be reviewing our budget and resources to determine what improvements we can make in order to better serve our community in the face of these emergencies. As a community and as a wider society. We are only just beginning to understand the destructive impact that these extreme weather events will have on our lives in the years to come. No amount of preparation or planning can entirely shield us from the destructive side of nature, and it is important to be transparent about our own limitations and to work together to find solutions. As we are still in the middle of

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responding to this emergency, and with more weather on the way, my focus continues to be on supporting the recovery efforts . Austin Energy has coordinated the largest collaborative effort in the city's history, with utilities from as far away as Louisiana and Alabama, arriving to help restore power to customers. We have more than 1000 crew members working on the remaining power outages. Once again, I offer my heartfelt apologies for any shortcomings. In our response. I want you to know that I'm committed to doing everything in my power to support our community. As we will weather this storm and those to come. We will be stronger together. I will now turn the presentation over to Austin General manager Jackie Sergeant. Good morning, everyone . Thank you. Spencer I'm Jackie Sergeant Austin Energy general manager. As we speak this morning. There are more than 1000 people in the field,

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working throughout the day to restore service for almost 9000 customers that are still without power in the wake of an extremely destructive ice storm. It was a natural disaster with hurricane level just devastation , leading to both local and state disaster declarations. We're here to provide a high level status update. And hope that you will identify questions. You'd like us to dig deeper into In the next few weeks. Today, However, our focus is on the 1.7% of our customers who remain without power. We are working diligently around the clock to restore service, and we will not stop until every customer's lights are turned on. I'd like to give you just one example of how are Cruz helped restore power. For a multi generational family living together in one home. Elderly parents living with their daughter and granddaughter. Three generations in one house, all sleeping in the kitchen, the

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warmest place in the house. They could have stayed with another daughter, but they were afraid to leave the house afraid to leave the house because there was a wire touching the car and touching the house, and they didn't want to leave their pets. And they wanted to be They wanted to be there when our crews arrived to help. Because it was a potential life threatening situation. We were able to escalate their help, including Austin Fire Department. And Austin energy crews working together. Together this multi departmental team was able to troubleshoot the problems, repair the down line and restore power to their home. When an Austin energy staff member checked in on them. A few hours later, the daughter said her parents are adjusting back to normal temperatures and their eyes are getting used to bright lights again. Every household affected by the ice Storm's devastation has its own story. That is just one of the hundreds of thousands of restorations are crews have made in the wake of

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this historic storm. This morning. More than 98.3% of our customers have power. For our customers Still without power. I'm sorry for how long this is taking. I wish I could give a specific estimate for each specific outage. We know it's hard to plan daily life without that. Unfortunately the complexity and severity of ice storm damage on each individual outage just hasn't allowed us to give a more granular estimate for restoration. By Sunday, February 12th. We expect to complete restorations for those ready to receive power? But impending wind rain and thunderstorms as early as this afternoon could further complicate restoration efforts. We will reassess this goal and provide an update midweek. We continue to restore customers each day. Customers are being restored as we speak, and most customers will be restored well before Sunday. Safety is

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paramount for folks in the field. Most people, most of our customers have been welcoming and supportive Arfield crews. Unfortunately we've had some reports of outbursts and threats aimed at the very crews that are there to restore service. Crews feel unsafe. They're trained to leave the site. They will only be able to return once the area is confirmed, safe to work. This impedes and slows our restoration efforts with me today is Stuart Riley, interim chief operating officer. Who can provide an overview of operations in response to the storm. After today's brief update. We'll be back here on February 21st for the Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee meeting where will begin a conversation about lessons learned from the storm response. Before I turn it over to Stuart. I just want to reiterate that are so focused right now is restoring power for every customer affected by this

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historic level. Storm damage Stewart Jackie Good morning Mayor Pro tem Mayor Council members. I'm Stuart Riley, interim chief operating officer for Austin Energy and this, Jackie said, I'm just going to give a quick high level operational update. At about 3:30 A.m. On Wednesday, February , 1st customer outages from the storm began to come in by seven A.m. We had already 100,000 outages on our system, the maximum number of customers we've had out at any one point during this event was over 100 and 73,000 customers. But that number doesn't capture the total number of outages during our restoration efforts, we would restore thousands and thousands more would go out from a separate outage. Since the beginning of this event, we've restored power to over 348,000 customer outages, but I assure you it's currently all about the 9200 customers who are currently still without power. Stating the obvious to anyone who's driven around town lately. The bulk of

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this is from trees that have been devastated by ice damage. Our urban tree canopy has been stressed in recent years from extreme drought heat. And severe storms and the trees have never had to experience icing like this ever. Whole trees falling. Snapping in half all over our service territory. Oftentimes in storm restorations, we will clear a few faults on a circuit. Get the entire circuit back up. In a couple of hours, thousands of customers restored all in one go. But as we've experienced with this one, this is not nothing like nothing we've ever seen before. It's complicated and laborious, and there's so much manual work all over our system circuit after circuit with tree damage up and down the line, broken cross arms, broken poles, dozens of separate issues preventing us from reenergizing those customers until all the problems are fixed. In addition , many of our polls are in customers backyards hard to get

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to and inaccessible by bucket trucks. Customers may not see trees on wires in their neighborhood. And then once we get there, the electric feeder that serves them has multiple instances of difficult jobs in backyards, and many poles are torn down at the communication lines, not by the power lines. We're currently tracking additional storms coming in tonight with wind gusts today and tomorrow that could pose challenges. As these trees are already severely compromised, so we are keeping track of that, but we have over 400 additional personnel in town to help us for over 1000 line workers out there to serve our customers in need. We will continue restoring power as quickly as safely as possible. And we have people working around the clock. With how complicated the remaining jobs are. We made good progress yesterday, and we'll keep chipping away at it. I'd like to thank the hardworking teams at Austin Energy, both out in the field and in the background. This is our community to we truly care about our customers,

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and we won't stop doing everything possible until every single customer is restored. Thank you. Thank you, Jackie and Stewart and we also have staff from multiple departments that have been working around the clock to ensure that we are responding to this emergency. And so if there are questions about the current response regarding debris cleanup, traffic signals any other area that is impacted by the city. We will be able to answer those questions. But, as was noted, this was a high level situational update about the current status while our entire city is focused on The current restoration of those additional customers with that alternate back to you, Mayor Pro tem I will open it up for questions. Council member Fuentes. Thank you first. I just want to get also share my gratitude to all of our city workers for their their strong work and support during this recovery effort,

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especially thank you to everyone that helped stop are warming centers are overnight shelters. And of course, all of our land crew. Director, Sergeant, You know the questions we're going to ask today are really rooted in the frustrations and concerns that we've heard. From our community. So with with all due respect, I do want to make sure that we're asking these questions on their behalf. I know that I'm not alone and that my colleagues joined me as a city manager has previously shared and wanting to get everyone's power back on as quickly as possible. Is there an action that this city Council can take today? A vote that we can take today that commits additional resources or whatever it takes to get more folks online. The short answer is no. We have everybody out there that we possibly could have out in the field. As we've talked about, we have, over 400 additional line workers on our system right

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now, and we can't bring in unlimited crews and put them and just let them loose on our system. They have to have on us Austin Energy team member with them. An employee in charge. Who knows our system whose communicating with our energy control center So those controllers in our control center are like air traffic controllers for our electric system, and they're communicating with people out in the field so that they know if they're switching, and you can't have anybody out there working on anything that you don't know about Just because of how hazardous that the nature of the work is. So we've brought everybody in that we possibly can. And you know we have over 1000 people out there, so there's nothing. There's no action that this council could take that could speed it up. It's just due to this natural disaster. The nature of how complicated the work is, you know, as we've mentioned in some of the press conferences, we'll get to a job that we think is going to take two hours and it takes all our all day and it takes an extra crew even to come out and spend all day on it. And we'll we'll just keep whittling

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away at it as we get further and further along with fewer and fewer outages, the outages are getting more and more complex, so the pace of it kind of slows down, But it's just complicated work, so there's nothing that this council could do an action that could speed up the work. It's just time consuming work, and I understand the frustration because it's not like people knew that a hurricane was coming. But what we experienced was the equivalent of a hurricane. And so even though that might not have been quite our lived experience, it's what happened to the trees and that and therefore impacted our system. Well thank you for that, Mr Riley, and as you can imagine sharing that with our community that there's nothing additional that we can do at this time that it's complex and that, and that will take time is It's not good enough for us, right? So is there a more specific timeline that we can give our families who are still without power. Those who we've told you know,

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Sunday night 10 pm that they can expect to wait until Sunday before we have nearly all of our customers back online. How can we get to a more specific timeframe for those households? Yes And first I'll just say part of the reason why we needed to say nearly all is because we do have additional storms coming in tonight. In addition, we have customers who are not ready to receive power because of damage on their side there, Weatherhead or their service panel ripped off the side of their house. So we're getting word to those customers. Ah you know, and a lot of those customers are, you know, aware they're saying they're going out there seeing what's on the side of their house. They've seen that their service panels ripped down. But in terms of providing a specific estimated time of restoration for each specific outage, I mean , you know, right now, I think they're you know, I can't 600 or so separate outage outages across our system affecting these remaining 9000 customers. And we would have to give you know, to give one message Ah, in

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terms of when we'll be done with this event we really were thinking about Getting out there and assessing these most complicated jobs, and unfortunately, it's impossible right now until we're on site, too. To be able to assess And once we start the work, then we know, but I can't give one answer that's applicable to everyone. Hmm. Is there, can you at least you know, share with us. What is your communication plan for these next? Four or five days. You know what was brought to our attention? What we heard repeatedly from constituents that their power went out Wednesday. Thank you mentioned that By Wednesday morning, we had over 100,000 households without power, and the first email they got from Austin Energy was two days later on Friday, informing them of what was going on. 48 hours is how long it took before our utility provided that message. The methods of communication were infrequent and inconsistent . Some people got more text the

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emails once we started, you know, raising the flag on that We need more communication out. They became daily after that. But there is that that lapse in communication has caused a lot of mistrust in how we're handling this response. So what can we expect in terms of communication for the next 3 to 5 days? Yes As you mentioned. There are more frequent communications and the communications that are coming out are on a regular cadence via text. Email that first day when the storm came in that Wednesday , our communications team and, I can't speak for them entirely. But I do know that they did over 30 30 or so media interviews that day, they responded to every media request. Were active on social media. So while you're right about the emails, we were out there. We were getting the message out via every, Media communication channel that we had available, but it it did take, a couple of days before those that regular email but otherwise we were trying our best to keep the community

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informed that whole time and we're on New every news outlet, you know, media outlet. We responded to questions by every news media outlet that engaged with us and we're trying our best to get the word out. But what can we expect over these next few days for those who are still without power? Yes so you'll you'll see those are communication updates continue over the next several days, and as the situation progresses, and as we have more information, I assure you will get the our best information out to customers. It's not that we have information that we're not sharing. It's that the situation is so complex that we that it's impossible to give customers and accurate timeline and we always try. We always try to be accurate with all of our estimated restoration times. When we're dealing with any outage because, of course, we could always say, you know, two weeks and we could always meet that,

but we're really trying to give people our best estimate of what their E T R or estimated. Time of restoration is going to be, And so, in this case, it

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just turned out to be a lot more challenging than anything we've ever seen before. But our communications are going to continue will continue to give our best information that we have at any given time. Thank you. Mayor Pretend that's the questions I have. For this round . I will defer to my colleagues for the question that everyone else has. But I do on the communications. I would just ask that we take a look at language access and make sure that we're providing that communication and Multilingual formats. Thank you. Thank you. Council member Fuentes. I know there's a number of folks that also have questions, including myself. Let's turn it over to the council member Pool. Thank you, Mayor Pro tem. And thanks for everybody being here today. It's been a long a long week, and it's been a heavy burden for everybody. I share everyone's frustration. The extent of the power outages, the lack of early communication from the city. The failure to quickly coordinate and provide relief. And resources and the length of time that is taken to get the power

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back on for everyone. And so today. I want to make sure that as a body we carefully navigate between the things that the city can control and the things that the city cannot control. We can't control the weather or the fact that a unique storm system parked in our area and coded our city and ice. But we can and should provide the best emergency response in terms of communication. Coordination. And relief resources that we can We fell short, and it's not the first time. I really want to dig in as we analyze our response to this event over the coming weeks right now, For today, I'm going to remain focused on our progress in restoring everyone to power. So I have a couple of questions. Some real specific questions. If Austin Energy can Can tell us how many households

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remain without power. And I know the numbers went down, and then they went back up and Currently right now we have, approximately 9000 customers without power that includes businesses as well as residential. I don't have a breakdown of residential versus . Versus commercial. Thank you. Can you help us understand the cause for the extended outages? You've talked about complex. Situations. The scenarios out there. Yeah the reason that the outages are so lengthy is a combination of how complex and, labor intensive, each job is as well as just how many of those jobs there are. Like I mentioned typically, you'll see a couple of faults on a circuit during a storm. You go out. You clear those couple of faults here. It's just one after another after another after another, and, you know, You can see



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circuits or parts of town with several trees along the street in backyards that have taken down our infrastructure. And so that's that's why it's taking so long. We were out at one of our sites where We thought the job was to straighten Nepal, it turned out the base of it had actually cracked and broken. And so it turned into a much larger job with an extra crew necessary and so the variety of the damage the scale of the damage, and just the breadth of it is very time consuming, And I understand that the repairs are iterative in nature. Is there like a triage assessment team that goes out first? Then you have the debris removal and then you have, a repair crew that has the information from those first two crews that then go in to make the repairs. That's exactly right. What is the strategy to restore power to the remaining 9000 customers who are out? How will you prioritize restoration

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Yeah, and we've gotten a lot of inquiries about from people who have been concerned that they're at the bottom of the list or that their area isn't a priority. And honestly, we don't. Look at parts of town or neighborhoods. I get a lot of inquiries. What about this neighborhood or this neighborhood and what we're doing is we're looking at first are our first priority is critical loads What we call critical load customers. That would be anything for health and safety hospitals. Police stations, fire stations. Water treatment plants, things of that nature, and so once we get through all those critical loads, then we start working it from largest outage to smallest outage and all other factors being equal. Oldest to newest, so that's kind of how things get triage and prioritized. And just looking forward. We hear the forecast for winds and rain today. What do you think about further or future outages as a

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result of the new storm coming in Yeah, it's very possible. I think, you know, I heard that the wind gusts could be you know, 40 45 Miles an hour and, And so, obviously we're still in incident command mode, so we'll be ready. And that gives us concern just because of what we're seeing with the trees and you know, like you mentioned the time consuming nature of this, You know, we have, you know, our forestry teams up in these trees and limbs are breaking off. You know it makes it makes it more challenging and time consuming and it makes it more hazardous. So we definitely have concerns about the integrity of the trees that are out there and the effects of high winds. And I would just add to that that there is a concern for public safety as well because some of these trees that are compromised Might not necessarily impact power lines and, Supply of power to two residences or businesses. But it could be dangerous to be out walking underneath them, they could come down on

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structures. And things of that nature, so I would just plead with the public to be very mindful. Be very focused about where you are. And then, B B, just to be safe. Thanks Mayor Pro tem. That's all the questions that I have now for us in energy. I do have a series of questions for the city manager and I'll take those later. Okay Thanks. Council member. Let's go with Kelly, then Qadri and then harper-madison. And then I'll come over to the left side. Thank you, I want to thank first and foremost everyone who's out there on the ground, working to restore power to the people in our community I myself was with without power for a while, and, I've spoken to hundreds of constituents over the last several days and the last week who, we're at a loss. I'm I was even at a loss of words at times for the way that this situation was handled, and I do have several questions regarding it.

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I'm wondering, though. Last night, the governor did an interview, and he said that the first request for assistance from the city of Austin came in on Friday. Can you explain to us how that was and why that was. If I recall correctly, and I can look into that. But my recollection is that we were looking for a very convenient staging area for all the crews that we had that were coming in because we had run out of space for all of the bucket trucks and trailers and things like of that nature that all the crews that were coming in so in terms of a request to the state. We requested that we have additional space at a tech start facility that was convenient for one of our service centers are South Service Center, so that is likely what that's in reference to. Okay, Earlier you talked about doing media and over 30 different media interviews. When council member Fuentes was

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asking you what your outreach was like, From my perspective doing media is great. But when we lack a basic service such as electricity, and people don't have access to television or news interviews or even the Internet. In most cases, it's very difficult for people to get the information that they need in order to be able to plan for their families and themselves moving forward. And so I guess my question here is, How can we ensure that people who lack electricity in a time such as what we just experienced are able to receive the information that they need to make basic decisions for their family members moving forward. I think that's an excellent question for our collective actor. Action Review. Right now, our focus is really on the restoration efforts, and I think right now we're getting good communications out. And we'll just keep continue on that path and try to get all these restorations handled And we'll look into that in the future.

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Thank you. And then, I have two more questions. The first is about the outage map. I know there's a lot of confusion in the community about the outage map. That is online. Could you maybe explain how that has been working or not working? And why people aren't seeing that, update as to what's going on in their neighborhood as far as restoration goes. Sheriff. So first thing is that, are outage map vendor is, considered really to be kind of the gold standard in the industry. For Outage map, So that's a contractor that we that we utilize, for that, and it's really you know, I know it's been frustrating for people . It's the best tool that they have available to get. You know any information, but it's really good at day to day circumstances, but it's not meant for hurricane level natural disasters. There's a predictive engine in it that that you know, predicts what outages are going to be downstream from another outage

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or another restoration. And you know, I don't know what all goes into that algorithm. But most most of the time when I'm dealing with customers or emailing with customers, they're saying I'm not on the outage map and I look and they are and I have to walk them through it. Some of the you know the different dots. The red ones have the biggest outages, but they might be You know several blocks where it actually shows up on the map might be several blocks away from them. And after I talked them through it, and reassure them that they are covered on that outage map. Okay? I would like to see something moving forward so that if we were to have this type of damage that we have a solution that provides a better outlook. Two individuals online so that they are able to view what's going on. I think that was At least from my perspective. That was a large complaint from the community that they just felt like they didn't have the information that they needed available to them. And if there is a solution that we can provide, I'd like to look into

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that more. Finally, my last question. Customers are still in the dark, both literally and figuratively. What is Austin energy doing right now to ensure that this doesn't happen again and that you can keep customers with the most accurate information, especially to those who don't have power. In terms of how we can ensure this doesn't happen again. You know, that's partly what the after action report is for, but also just as a community being more resilient and ready for these really extreme climate change type events. And unfortunately, we've been. Kind of the bearing the brunt of some of the some of these Really extreme natural disasters lately, and so but but that's definitely something that can be looked into and will be covered thoroughly and after action report, that's what we can do differently. Thank you. I know I just want to reiterate my thanks for those workers who are out in the field, restoring power and who have been working

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tirelessly to get the city back up and running. I think it's really important to recognize not just Austin energy workers, but all across the different departments in the city. And so I thank you again. Thank you. Mayor Pro tem. Council member Qadri. I just wanna, you know, kick it off by by thinking folks at Austin Energy who have put forth the time and the energy to help restore power. I want to thank our first responders of gun. Many sleepless nights. You know, a lot of our first responders of the re-fire M S or Police are understaffed and underpaid and to continue to do the work day after day after day. I can't. I can't thank them enough. You know, I just want to also apologize to the 9200 folks is customers who still don't have power and the many hundreds of thousands of customers who at one point didn't have power and we're in the dark for 24 hours for 48 hours. And as time kept going by, and there was a lack of

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communication, you know, I am sorry. I think as a city I think as a body we've we've lost trust with a lot of folks. And I think what we need to do is do everything that we can to rebuild that trust. You know, the fact is that people could not access these press conferences through their radio. There were the fact is that people are being forced to brave conditions to go into work for non essential businesses out of fear of being fired to the power outage. Map malfunctioned people who had food that spoiled and they could not afford more until their next paycheck came. And for many folks who were able to work because of this storm, there was a delay in that paycheck. There was a delay in getting that food. There was a delay in being able to stay in a hotel. Ah and all of that is inexcusable. I have a few questions for city manager Cronk. But I do have an hour. I will come back to those later. But I do have a few questions for us

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and energy. Have you all been able to reach out to people on the medically vulnerable registry through Austin Energy, and our office tried to access it. And focus on D nine. But we're not legally allowed to, you know, get that information. Yes we have, on our medically vulnerable registry. We have our customers identified. And one of the things for being in that registry is that those customers have backup plans, and they have an alternate. Person to contact and, in case of a situation, So when we Have events like this, we reach out to those customers, to verify that they are okay. They have what they need. And then if we're not able to reach them, we reach out to the contact that they provided us. And if we're not able to reach the contact that they provided us, we actually have a team of

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folks that go out to the residencies. Sometimes people. Don't answer the door if necessary. We call in support services to do health and welfare check. And they also have a backup plan so that if they lose electricity, they have a plan in place for them to be transported to another facility and, depending upon their condition would relegate what that is. And I know many folks have talked about this. We have another storm coming up today and tomorrow do you all have a number and the amount of live wires that are still that still need to be taken care of in the city? They need to be addressed. I don't have that. But I can get back to you. Okay Great. Thank you. Just a few more questions. A lot of folks and this has also been touched on and I saw it

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firsthand. We had a lot of folks come from other cities to help us San Antonio San folks. I think folks from Houston, is there a process that triggers our request from folks coming from other cities? And is there a way that we can improve the coordination to expedite that process? Yeah we have standing mutual aid agreements with other utilities or some of our industry associations. We respond to those to their requests for mutual aid, and you know here, Of course we have them responding to our request, And so those are those are agreements that we do keep. And you know, kind of tend to those agreements to make sure we have things in place. In this event. We also added some additional contracts. But in terms of if we could do a better job of calling in, you know if there's another kind of agreement that would you know, could be faster or something like that. Those are certainly things that will be a

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focus of ours for the after. Action report. Thank you. Well, my last question has to do with one of the situations in our district that You know, touched me the most. And that was what happened at at State Alliance, which is which is headquartered in District nine. It's a major domestic violence complex, and they lost power for about 48 hours. There were women. There were Children whose who were scared, and it wasn't just the fear of what would happen because it got too cold. But it would. It was the fear of what would happen if someone walked through the doors. And I think I think that's devastating that they felt so alone for so long. Some might my question relating to that is Can you walk through the this facilities that were without power that needed to be prioritized? And are there? Still facilities like like safe alliance that are that are still without power. Sure First of all, we currently do not have any critical load customers remaining that are without power . In terms of safe alliance, I

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was in contact with the head of Safe Alliance. Pretty early on. She informed me that they that their generators, had not been working. As we communicate to our to our customers if there are sensitive security needs and a customer has a unique as a situation where they need uninterruptible power supply. They need to have generators on site to cover for that kind of scenario. And they did. I just as I understand it, there was just a problem with it. And they've gotten that corrected. We also attempted to line up a massive generator for their complex. But we and so we had that in route, but they restored we had restored power by the time that and that would have been kind of a time consuming process to get that hooked up as well. But yeah, that's in terms of the critical load customers, though we don't have any that are without power currently, thank you. And those are all my questions for us energy. I think

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I said Council member harper-madison would be next. I believe he did. Thank you. I guess I'll just echo the sentiment around all the appreciation and I don't just mean for the people that are literally out in the field, so I wasn't out in the field picking up trees, but I've been up for days and days and days, So when we say we're thanking people for the work, we're just saying thank you to everybody who's working and Had stopped working. You don't have to be, you know, picking stuff up off the ground in order to be really working very hard, And I know a lot of this is emotionally very taxing, Which sort of leads me into one of the things that I wanted to ask. It sounds to me like there's going to be a lot of stuff that we say today. That's after action report worthy. But you said something that caught my attention because I've been thinking a lot about Somebody told me a story about how this reminded them So much of Katrina, So it's very interesting to hear y'all describe it as a hurricane today because there are a lot of folks who are quite literally terrified. I mean, like, completely trauma riddled and debilitated, just from that, whether Occurrence. And so I've been thinking a lot about Mental

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health and wellness. During the course of these kinds of currencies, and it occurred to me when you said that there were folks who were engaging I'm not going to say inappropriate. I wasn't there engaging in a way that made our field workers feeling safe. It occurred to me that I wonder if So my brother just talks loud. He's not angry and he's not dangerous. He just talks loud. That's a cultural competence thing. I wonder if there's some ability for our folks who go out in the field to make sure that they're fully culturally competent and understand that not everybody talks the same. So what seems like it might pose a threat is just somebody who talks like that. There was multiple there. The other thing I was thinking was Is there an opportunity? I know we don't want them to be. You know all things like, you know, Sometimes we ask our emergency services personnel to be all things. But is there an ability for people to just really recognize when somebody is mentally not okay. And if so, is there protocol about Who do they call? Who do they report

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that to? You don't have to answer any of these things. Like I said, I'm realizing that these are mostly after action, So I'm just expressing what the concerns are. The other thing that occurred to me was, you know we were having this conversation about the construction for I 35 recently and, a lot of what? I'm detailing in terms of what we move forward with this how we prepare our workforce for that. So it occurs to me that if we had what feels like a shortage of, Staff that were qualified. Is that something that we specifically could be preempting right now, as we're moving into the future, like working with our workforce partners to make sure those specified, you know, special Hmm. Positions are always filled. And if so, if that's something that we can help with that, like very much to know that You said something about inaccessible polls. I just do. I would like to know how we prepare better for that in the future, You know? How do we've

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sort of Bucket proof truck. Our Polgar positioning. I know we're probably eventually going to be moving in the direction that we bury more and build, you know, construct less that are vertical , but I'm curious about that if we could go into that, in the after action as well. Well, I think my colleagues have already spoken at length about the communication component. Oh, the other thing I was gonna ask was about and in addition to cultural competence, de escalation training I wanted to make sure that that's something that we're offering her staffers. Then I also wanted to know. Do we need to make them more concerted effort to staff up or Are we experiencing what feels like staffing shortages in this particular instance for Austin energy because of the weather, or are you outside of this occurrence, understaffed? And that is the question. I'm

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asking today, I'll say that we are in a field, the electric utility industry that is very hard to fill currently, and it's a skill set that's in short supply. In terms of our day to day operations, I wouldn't put this. I wouldn't compare this in terms of, you know, shortages and we don't have a shortage in terms of our field personnel. We do have a lot of positions so that are hard are very challenging to fill. And that's a constant work in progress and something that we're always addressing. I appreciate that. I think Councilman Quadri asked about five wires. So to point that somebody else made there was a list that I think I think the people The services that they require overlap, but they're not on overlapping list so much like the list that you weren't able to access meals on wheels has a list of 290 vulnerable people that I couldn't touch and I think I

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think those lists probably somehow overlap, in which case it would be nice to know if there's an accessible database. If there's a You know a person that we can trust at the city that we can say Hey, I happen to know you know, and if those those lists can overlap the specialty services list. Yeah and you bring up a good point that we work with those community partners like meals on wheels to help us identify people for our medically vulnerable registry, but also for people who need those wraparound case management services. We have social workers at Austin Energy who case manage with through our customer assistance program, and we work with 60, some odd community outreach groups to help us get them bill relief. Get them connect them to other social services. All those kinds of things we have existing in house and I think one thing that gets a little bit confusing is we've had for years the medically vulnerable registry at Austin Energy. And that's for customers who require Life sustaining

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equipment, so they require power at all times for that life sustaining equipment. Of course, the pandemic has taught us a lot about vulnerability. You know, medical, you know, vulnerable populations and those kinds of things, And so we're using that term a little bit differently here because we're really talking about those who require based on their their medical needs the power To power that equipment and that's that's kind of how we're using those terms differently, but we do collaborate a lot Meals on wheels is one of the groups we work with and there there are many others. I would love to see moving forward some more integration and our systems where those populations of people overlap. So, for example, I have multi family that lost natural gas. They didn't lose power. But it doesn't matter. If you have a gas stove. You still can't cook for yourself. So if there was more coordination between those types of the Texas gas in Austin energy, and when you no one loses one thing, and not the other thing I just would

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like to see it feels like our system. I can appreciate that. It's supposed to be clunky and not too nimble because then you introduce problems right? But If it's so clunky that it feels like it just doesn't function and I think often times that's how it feels like it's this juggernaut. That just doesn't work. There's too many pieces that don't talk to one another. So I'd love to address that moving forward as well. I think one of the last things I wanted to touch on that specifically. Hmm. I'm sorry It was on my first Paige. So the other question I had was so when So when folks have questions about things like a down wire, you know the what do I do? Who's the best person to respond to those types of questions? Is it 311? Is it 911? Is it Austin Energy? Who do they call? It would be

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for down line. That's not sparking or creating a fire hazard. To call 5123229. And that is an Austin energy line. If they have a line that is down and is sparking creating a immediate hazard their direct are we direct them to call 911. So when they call 911 or 311, and they established that it's not, urgent than they just direct them to this 3 to 2 91 103 11 might be able to Yes, they would direct them. To that number. Okay, Thank you. I appreciate it. Let's go with council member Alison Alter and then council member Ryan Alter. Good morning. This is exhausting . It's frustrating. It's challenging. And I want to thank you know everyone who's in this room. My colleagues included the staff who are here who lead all of these departments. The line

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workers, the M S folks, everyone across the organization has had to stand up in this emergency. And it's a challenge. My colleagues have asked a number of the questions that I wanted. To ask, so maybe a little bit scattered in my questions, but But I do want to start with a few remarks about where we're at and as someone who's, on the more seasoned end of our of our diets at this moment. I think it's really important that we recognize that multiple things can be true at once. So it can be true that we experienced an unprecedented extreme climate. Event and ice hurricane If we want to say that, where the weight of that ice pulled down trees in ways that maybe we should have anticipated, but we didn't that we got hit harder than other cities. And that it

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left a lot of devastation in its wake. It can also be true. That we failed at our emergency response and that we didn't learn the lessons of the series of crises that we had or certain parts of our organization did not learn those lessons and that we failed to prepare well. Both of those things can be true. And if we want to understand what's going on, we have to understand both of those things. There were also certain things that went really well. You know, from what I'm hearing from the field folks are generally very happy with how a are are stepping up and getting the debris how public works is clearing off the trees , from from folks over 300 calls were diverted from 911 by the work that we did that that I was involved in championing with the community. Cares Collaborative and I'm probably got that name wrong, but it's the E M S dispatch center that has people who you can talk to, together with the paramedic practitioners

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. They've been able to deliver oxygen do a whole lot of other stuff, So there's been a lot of really good stuff. But at the same time we failed in our emergency management preparation . We failed to execute in the crisis. We did failed with respect to communications. We failed with respect to customer relations, and I'm very concerned about the emergency management preparations. We had generators. That didn't go online. We had generators that were never put in place where we thought they were being in place. We had positions in the emergency management department that we had authorized some even you know, back in June of last year that they only just got authorization to reclassify people, and there's like 19 positions that they got. In October and they weren't able to fill those because our hr department didn't get them able to fill those positions, and I have to wonder what would have

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happened if those positions had been filled. And that is not a question of being able to go recruit. Department can't go recruit unless hr lets them. So . Thursday was Groundhog Day. We all know that This event is Groundhog Day. And if we do not move out of this event in a better way that we can move beyond being stuck in Groundhog Day, we will not move forward. As a city. Every single thing that we've observed that my colleagues here, many of whom are new the diocese have seen we saw before. Look at the after action, website that we have. We talked about the outage map. We talked about the need to communicate to people when they don't have power and that it looks different than during a regular time. We talked about vegetation management. We talked about an outage map that was not meeting the needs at the time of crisis. We talked about the need to shelter people. We? There's

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so many places where we heard these challenges. We talked about them. They were raised. I cannot tell you how many times everything that came up over the last week. I was like we talked about that already. We talked about that We talked about that again and again and again. We have got to figure out how we learn the lessons. Some departments did learn the lessons. Others didn't but it is not just an often energy this is a whole city that has to respond to emergency management situations. Austin Energy has to keep the lights on. And we didn't do that very well. But we still have a lot of other things that happen. In that process, So we have got to do that. I also want to call your attention to the Austin Water review that just came back. I think it is very, very instructive for this situation that we are experiencing right now. And when you go and you look at that report, it says that 99% of the time we do really well at

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delivering clean and safe water. We are not prepared for that 1% of the time with the extreme events and we are not prepared, according to that report because of management and organization. There's very little in there that says go invest in infrastructure. So we need to keep that in mind. I don't know if that's true. In this case. I don't have enough information. But if you think this is all about investing billions of dollars in our infrastructure than that is just not accurate. We have to make sure that we do the real preparation and it involves being prepared. So thank you, went a little longer. Then I anticipated there, but I think it's important that we have that perspective as we move forward. I want to ask about the outage map. We had these conversations. It was problematic. In your E. That was problematic. Not just in your E. But in the three days before, Yuri when we had the ice storm

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in my district. Which was similar in some ways to this, but it was only concentrated in my district right before, that ERCOT outage. Did we ever test this outage map with a simulation for large amounts. Of outages. Well, first of all, in terms of the after action report in relation to the outage map. We made a lot of changes, to the outage map. We worked with the vendor to tell them what worked and what didn't work. And like I mentioned before, this is a vendor that does the outage map for a lot of utilities around the country. If you look at their outage map And we were providing them and put on how to make their products. Better One thing that we heard from customers that they did not like during Winter Storm Yuri with Apollo polygons on the map that would show these big, you know, shapes and some of the shapes would be wrong, So we moved away from that We changed

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to this and now There are a lot of concerns with how it's set up now and, so we'll continue to look at that, in terms of whether there was a simulation for something like this. I don't know if that's possible. I can look into that and see. And I'm happy to get back with you. Thank you. Further after action, we're gonna have tons of questions on the outage map, and I understand that it works really well when you had sort of individual outages on the day to day, But then what do we do? In the case of an extreme event? We may need to have a different system. I know. Last time with water, we had to move to a system that was much more manual. But people at least felt like when we added that system that they were they were being heard. On the fly. What though? Can an individual This was sort of asked before, but I'm not sure that I understand an individual whose power is still out. What kind of communication can they expect from Austin Energy about the nature? Of their outage. And to the extent

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that any timing can be delivered, what? What should they expect? Can you explain your question a little bit more. I have. Let's say I'm a person with my power out, and I know some of my colleagues may still have their power out. What you know. Will I be getting texts? Will I be getting emails while I'd be getting a phone call is somebody you know we're now at a point where it is more manageable to be reaching. Out. More individually to particular customers. Obviously if 175,000 are out, you can't do that. But now that we're under 10,000, can we Are you going to be marshaling some mechanism? Are you going to be sending them texts? What What kind of information can they expect? We have been sending morning update and, afternoon update to customers who are without power. And that update just kind of tells the overall status of what we're working on. Unfortunately

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, like like we've talked about. We can't provide individual restoration times for each of those outages, but we're doing our best to stay in touch with those customers to let them know that we haven't forgotten about them. Even if they don't see us in their area. We could be working on a segue section of their circuit. That's Not not close by. Thank you. When did you request mutual aid? I believe on. I will go back and look, but I believe it was on Wednesday morning. Okay? At one point you said it was lined up in advance, but The contracts are put in place, and then you have to get the request out. Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that. In the after action, it would be really helpful to understand how other utilities fared in what the differences were in terms of the ice that some of our neighboring, utilities were experiencing.

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City Manager. I want to also talk about our own workers. We've not only failed our customers, but I think in some respects we, failed to communicate with our own. Workers we were being reached out to I think everyone here was reached out to by afscme, that in the middle of the first day of whether you know like You had people go in. And then there was the weather. And they had to come into the office and brave the weather because there was very mixed. Messaging about what's going. We still have a problem that we need to resolve. I believe and with respect to pay for the workers who just really couldn't safely come Into work that day, which cannot be fixed by hr unless you the city managers say, that we need to allow them to take that as a as a weather day, and I think that we should be able to do that. I want to apologize, to our workers that our system has failed to be organized in that way to, help you other or

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institutions like a I S D, told their workers to stay home. And I think we're gonna have to look at that that call. As well, I have lots of questions about vegetation management. As some of my colleagues know, I was been very involved in vegetation management pushing that and we have had made some progress. But what I would like to ask you is that this time? You know how much of a difference with more vegetation management? Have made at times when we've talked about it. You said it was marginal, but I think people need to understand going back to the first. Part of what I said was true was that it was a nice hurricane. You know, we do need to do vegetation management. I'm not saying that I'm there are a whole host of reasons, but would it have made a marginal difference? More than a marginal difference in this case to the damage that we saw? If I had to give you my best approximation at this point, I still think it would have made only a marginal

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difference because of what we're seeing. You can't trim Away from from the lines sufficient to account for a 40 ft tall pecan tree. You would end up not having any trees anywhere close to any of the lines, including communications lines, as I mentioned in my prepared remarks , a lot of these outages are from trees coming down on the communications lines, which were required to provide to as a, You know, utility provider to have our infrastructure available for those communications providers, and so that can pose a challenge as well. When a whole tree falls on those, and typically we're focused on preventing outages from Vegetation making contact with energized lines, and this is something completely different. Thank you. I think that's really important. You know, as we move forward, the goal here is to understand what we need to do what we could have done in this situation, but also the other things and we do need to do vegetation management, I mean, can do better. And we've been working to accelerate that.

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But I'm not sure if it would make a marginal difference here many other questions, but I will pass it on to council member Alter. Thank you. Council member Ryan Alter. Good morning. Thank you all for being here and you know, I will once again Echo our thanks for the hard work. I know it's been many sleepless nights and I have worked with numerous of your staff have been incredibly helpful and as much as they can be, so thank you all and all the workers out there who are Doing the really hard, laborious work hour by hour, and I know how painstaking that can be, just looking up and down our street multiplying that across the city. I can't Even imagine. All that they're dealing with. So I appreciate that, you know. What stands out to me. I talked to so many constituents. One individual who Had medicine in her fridge. That She lost power.

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Her medicine went bad, and she didn't know what she was going to do. And she's not someone who we would, you know, be on the medically. Medically fragile list or whatever that is, Whatever we turn that, but These are the individuals who Are really Wondering. How am I going to get by today? Tomorrow How am I going to survive? You know, an individual who lost all their food and just can't afford to go to the grocery store and fill that up so It's real people. And I know you know that, but I just want to echo. That we are talking about. The livelihood of people and their ability to just survive. On a day to day basis, so I also want to echo with related to the workers, I know are wondering about that Tuesday. You know, I would ask and encourage that we Do make

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that a cold weather day or whatever the hr term is so that they can, Not have to worry about that day's pay that that for many people is crucial. It is that grocery bill, so, but I want to talk about something. You mentioned a little bit ago and follow up regarding your list. And you said that we prioritize people. You have your critical load. Are there How many? I know there's critical load one and critical load two does it go beyond that? Or is it just one and two? Up to three. Okay? And so The way I understand. You said it. You've got your critical load one. We're gonna take care of this first because There are top priority. And will prioritize by size and how how old the outages and then we've got a critical load, too. Biggest to smallest. Also factoring in is that right is so critical loads are Facilities that, like a hospital would be critical. Load one.

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Okay And, you might have a fire station. That's a two or a three, for example. But in terms of once we get through those so we might be out in areas during a storm or during an event like this where people might see why are they working on this isolated one outage? And Ah and that I'm saying There isn't once we get through those critical customers that are defined based on health and safety, and you know strict criteria that they have to register in advance with us, and we keep that list up, You know, a surgery center of dialysis center. You know, there's different and that paperwork is filed in advance. There's a verification process. And then once we get through those individual customers, then we will start the work of getting entire circuits reenergized that will have the most bang for our buck. Essentially they will get the most customers online as quickly as possible. And then we start working down until we get to kind of the one onesie twosies

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of the You know, the really granular level of all these different outages, because as we work down that That line. You know, First of all, our focus is getting as many people back up as quickly and efficiently as possible. But then also some of those isolated individual customer outages can be some of the more time consuming and you get the least, you know, scale for all of that work, so that's and I didn't mean to suggest there's a list beyond the critical load customers. There's not. It's just all about Getting the most back up as quickly as possible. But if I have 300 customers out here and 300 customers out over there, which one has been out the longest? Yeah, that makes sense. Well, I know Our our home was without power for over 100 hours in my neighborhood, I think was hoping I was on some special critical load list that turned out to not be the case and, and nor should should we be. And I suggested that, but, what I think has been

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the most frustrating for people in my interactions with them. Has not necessarily been The outage map. You know, they weren't asking me. Do I have power? They were asking me when will I get it back? And so. What I don't understand. And what I think the public doesn't understand is if you have a way of prioritizing, right, you're going to choose Where you go next right there, you're going to say I've got this largest outage, and so that's where I'm going to head. And so on and so forth. Why is there not a way to say You know you Your address is part of this. 4000 person outage and so You stand higher in the list, then maybe someone else who is one or two and just tell them that you're outage. Kind of this is where you fall and don't

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necessarily need to say it's going to take us five days to get there seven days to get there but to be able to say I am part of this priority, or, you know if we were to able to have a list of the size, running down and see where I fit in that list , why is that not something we can do? Because I might be part of that one of those 400 customers, But, what Austin Energy is doing is based on all of the different within that 400 . There could be multiple polls . Multiple cross arms, multiple trees down on wires and we were switching, to reroute power to energize as many of those customers as we can. So as we Whittle down that list. You might be. You might end up being a one off in the but within its like outages within outages within outages, and so that largest we could start working on that. We could say you know what the scale of this challenge is going to take us all day.

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Let's have one of our crews go over there and get those 200 up in two hours and let's come come back over here and work on this overnight. You just never know what the circumstances are going to be in

this this level of damage from this natural disaster is just too great to be able to provide that. Normally we can provide a pretty accurate estimated time of restoration. Once our people get to a site during a normal storm event. I mean, we do that all the time, and we're and we're pretty good at it. But in this case, it was just a completely different scenario. That makes sense. Side note just but it's I don't want to forget it as we talked about the outage map. One thing also that people kept saying was, how come this person who is only part of a 20 person? Outages is ahead of me, and I see that I'm part of this 3000. If there is a way and I don't know if There is because of security or confidentiality, but to identify

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on the outage map. If something gets fixed because it's a critical load. I think people would Feel a lot better than understanding that, okay? I realized that they got fixed before me because they were higher priority, not because of where they were located or or something like that. Just I don't know if that's possible, but I just wanna No. We're not gonna release where critical infrastructure is, just due to homeland security requirements. We have a lot of regulatory requirements in our industry, and unfortunately that makes it a little bit so every time we're communicating something we kind of have to layer on several several different regulatory bodies and all the requirements that come with those But, you know, sometimes this is why the outage map is kind of challenging for these scenarios because somebody might see there's a 400 person outage here and right next to that is a one person outage. Why is there a crew there? Well, if we have one of our people look into some of our systems that are too

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complicated for an average user or most of our utility to use. Actually they could look in there and see Actually, the outage. Map is representing those as separate outages, but they're all in the same circuit. So what they're doing at that One person outage is going to affect that larger outage. That's right there. It's just a function of how the algorithm within this vendors, outage map works and I don't have much visibility into that. That's fair and going back to what we're talking about, with kind of listing and prioritizing for people as you are looking forward. If there is a way and I understand how you're talking about outages within outages and to some degree You just can't know. When you say that you're part of this multi 1000 versus you know, one or two off. But on . For at least for the individuals who are already at the outset. Part of a 123 You know very low priority if there

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is a way for at least those individuals to know that right now we already know You're very low on the list that we can tell them that so that they can properly prepare. And Make whatever plans they need to



make. Or even build into where You know? I think of an algorithm where you're At some point there was a prioritization right? It's either done by hand or by a computer. And if it's being done by hand, then there's really no reason why it can't be done by a computer and automated and so that someone could be able to find out even if I was part of that larger one, and they fixed it. And it turns out that I've got three other problems. And now that drops me from, you know, number 100 on the list to number 10,000 on the list. Canton Ewing to have that ability to know has been the most frustrating that I'm you know, I'm sure you've heard what's all say? And so If there's this way to think You know, more sophisticated and

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more cleverly about that. I don't. I don't know if there's a solution, but I would like us to not just say we can't do it, but actually think about Ways that we might be able to Innovate around that challenge. Yeah That's certainly something we can think about. I do just want to point out that you keep saying go from 1 to 2 on the list to 1000 on the list. There is no list. That's what I'm saying. There should be, but the situation in the field is so it's so dynamic that you we could get to a site and somebody and it just depends on on what we find in the field. It's going, it's we're going to work. Where we can get more customers online as quickly and safely as we can, and our controllers, like our air traffic controllers are going to be dispatching crews where it's most efficient and effective to do so. And in that change that's going to change as they start restoring here and there and that that situations That's my exact point

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Fluid your your dispatchers. They have to choose where to send somebody, right? And when they're choosing where to send somebody, they're sending them based on Some metric whether it's like you said them getting the most people online. There is a choice being made of where people are going, and that choice is being made based on information and that information is to what I hear you saying, Who's going to be? Where are we going to get the most people served? And so To the to the degree that there's not an official list of your number one. You're number two. You're number three. There is a prioritization happening. You are choosing where to send somebody. And so you are saying that this Outage is the most important because that's where I'm sending my next crew. And so and maybe I'm just missing something, but there is a priority happening. It has to, because that's how you make a decision where people go And so to the degree that we can actually turn that into some kind of Usable. Information that

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we can push out to people and I understand it's dynamic and it's going to change and people might bounce around because of the situation on the ground. Unless I'm just completely missed something. I don't understand why We might not be able to come up with a way to get that information to people. But I'll move on. I have one question about smart meters. Someone asked, and I just truly didn't have the answer. I said do I even need to report an outage if I have a smart meter? Two. It's kind of a belt and suspenders. We do prefer that people report outages just to ensure that that we know about it. But, yes, they have smart meters. But if they're out in this scale of an event, so the smart meters have a well we'll normally send a signal normally smart meters or to give customers real time insight into their consumption habits and all those kinds of things and we can help them be more efficient. In this application. It's being used for

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telling us where outages are, but As you pointed out, I think that they don't have power. So what we're doing is over this mesh network of sending radio frequency signals getting sending a ping to that meter and seeing if we get a signal back, But But when you have 200,000 out. Yeah it's gonna take a really long time to get that signal out to everybody. So that's why we do prefer that people also call in, Do we do you have the capability to text your customers is that Something you can do? Yes and Why Was there an active decision to email versus text or not text ahead of time or during, you know, on Tuesday or Wednesday, what goes into sending a text out to customers and that decision. I don't know. That's something that I'm not as

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familiar with and I I'm sure that will be covered in the after action. Okay? Yeah, I apologize. As as much as we can reach people directly and two councilor Kelly's point. You know, when you don't have power , you can't watch the news and that's a challenge. And so I'm sure we'll review that. The very last thing I want to ask about with regard to the individuals doing the cutting, and The bed, you know. Trimming trees to fix the problems. I just want to make sure That we are being careful about Oh quilt. It is, Oh quilt season and I want to make sure that we are taking all the precautions to do that, and I just want to make sure that that's happening. I bet your colleague Alison Alter could probably answer that question very well. But we definitely do take that very seriously. And unfortunately it it does kind of inhibit the time frame in which we can do a lot of the trimming. And so, Oakwell bird habitat,

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those kinds of things we are making sure that we abide by those, those requirements and that I assumed you were, but I just wanted to double check. Yeah, thanks. Thanks, guys. That's all good. And

as you were talking about, you know, outage alerts and text. I do want to say that the outage alert text Sign up, You can text R E G as in register WREG. Text R E G 2287846. All right, let's turn it over to council member of Velazquez. Thank you for being here. I go. Everybody's anger, frustration. And thanks. I'll keep it brief because I really want to get back to your restoration efforts. In this city. We forget a lot of times that we still have a lot of poor people and that there are still a very deep digital divide. We There are numerous barriers to accessing information, and those are exacerbated when people don't have power. My ask today

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from you is to help us help you by figuring out a way to provide district specific outage, information and contact information in order to for us to help dispatch Resources, dispatch community groups and activate activists in our area and better inform and communicate with our constituents that that aren't necessarily getting all the pertinent information. Council member of Ella. Thank you very much, and the great questions that's already covered a lot of the ground that I was wanting to ask, particularly about the tree trimming and other areas, but I want to, Ask about. The biggest sense of frustration out there and again. Everybody sees what happened. You know you don't have to be you know, Meteorologist or, you know, have some special knowledge to walk around your neighborhood and see

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just devastation to the. Canopy limbs down everywhere. Trees down everywhere. Like I said, it's pretty obvious. I've lived in Austin for 30 years and have never seen anything even remotely. I mean, through the worst storm, you know the windiest thunderstorm that we've ever had never seen the scale of tree devastation that that I saw. Last week. The and again Everybody. Intuitively knows that those trees are falling on the on the wires in their backyard. My question would be more along the lines of the initial, timelines that were put out. There was First like a 12 to 24 hour Kind of, you know, statement that was made and then I think it was like Friday at six pm and then you know, and again. I don't know if this was Austin energy that released it

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all gets muddled. You know, we've been trying to track so much information. But then it was kind of like Sunday at at six pm or something to that effect. And then with the most recent statement about you know, by next Sunday, we'll have the majority of it. At what point did y'all have a good sense of the scale of the damage? You know? And again, I understand that Wednesday night Thursday morning after that, Wednesday night that that rain and freezing ice storm that we had on like, you know, late Wednesday night, early Thursday morning. Sure made the kind of that was, I think the straw that broke the camel's

back in terms of, you know, the weight of eyes and all that. But at what point did you all kind of have a good grasp of what the scale of the damage was going to be to the local grid? So honestly, in terms of what day a certain thing happened. My memory is not so good right now. But really, it took. A little bit of time

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considering all the conditions on the road for us to get enough of our patrollers out there to see enough of the system and to get into enough of the backyards and enough of the tricky situations. That and I don't remember which day it is, but I think whenever that adjustment was made to kind of, say That that initial, kind of optimistic if everything goes right, you know, Here's Here's what the timeline it was. It was, you know. Around that it was whenever that day was sorry. Thursday or Friday. Basically I mean and honestly, I don't think people really able to get out and about until Friday because Thursday was pretty, iced over difficult, But I think by Friday there was some, you know, semblance of normality, Obviously, without electricity. You know things weren't that normal, But I think Friday the roads were essentially possible Stoplights were out of that kind of stuff like that. And don't get me wrong. We did have people out there in all the conditions icy and everything but some of

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our other vehicles, some of the smaller vehicles. We're having a lot of challenges out there, so it was just a tough situation. And I just want to say, that. I appreciate so much the people that were out there. I've seen crews in my neighborhood working by flashlight. You know, trimming limbs and restoring power like at eight o'clock at night, you know, And then I will say you know from, you know, it's great to see them. I remember when they were CPS energy trucks that rolled onto, you know, into the neighborhood , and people were, like cheering and stuff. You know, like it was It was great, and we were just absolutely delighted to see those trucks roll in. But to that, you know there as an attorney to as a private attorney with, you know, criminal defense clients, you know, the we really get into the habit of under promising and over delivering, you know, you never say Oh, I can get that dismissed. No problem, you know , like, no, no, no. You know, it's always you. You've got to

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kind of manage expectations and If there's one particular area where I think we did not do well was to manage the expectations. You know, there was an idea that You know this is going to be fixed by Friday, Maybe by Sunday , and when that slips that initial deadline slips. I think we lost a lot of credibility with the public in terms of now we have no idea and people get very upset, and they don't know what to believe. And they don't know what to think. So I would just Or urged in Ah, in in, You know the future.

We've got to be very, very careful about the expectations that we set and the idea that I would rather come out on. You know, like a late Thursday or Friday and tell them Give him the bad news. You know what I mean? Just give it to him straight and just be like this is absolutely horrible. Where pulling and crews from all over the state. We're going to do everything we can, but, you

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know, really let people know right away that this is bad than that. You know, we're not sure when we're going to have things repaired expectation setting, I think was probably if there's one major failure. I think that was you know, and I hear from my constituents to you know that that's their kind of major criticism is not the fact of it . You know, everybody understands that that this was a horrible storm. We can't control the storm. But But expectations was was a real, with a real problem. And going back to again to communications. That Sunday release. That Sunday press release was really. Kind of a punch in the gut to a lot of people. Huh. And I'm glad that that you know, we got that out. But. And I remember that Sunday night I was, you know, aware of the press conference, and I was waiting for it myself so I could kind of convey that to my constituents actually had fallen

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asleep. You know, just on the couch. Kind of, you know, waiting for it. And then, And then I woke up and I looked at it and the way I read it, and I think the way that a lot of people read it with that power is not going to be restored until Sunday. I know That's not how you know what a close reading of it, you know, revealed that that's not what it said. But that was, I think the message that was conveyed. And that was another kind of. I think a very difficult thing for people to hear. And it was misunderstood by the General public that Oh, my God. Power is not gonna be back until Sunday. We have to be better with our communications. Where again we're gonna you know, And I'm not. This is not my area. I'm not gonna try to tell you all you know how to do that. But you know, some kind of timeline. I mean, just in the sense of like, you know, we're we're restoring , you know, I don't know. 5000 day or whatever you know, but some kind of projection to wear, you know, not saying Sunday as kind of a an end date because everybody just was like my parts are gonna be back until Sunday. That wasn't true. We know it. We

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tried to, you know, get out there and tell people like no, No, no. You know it'll. Most people will have power before Sunday, but but again, I just want to emphasize that you know the importance of getting those the having a soft touch, having a, you know a little bit better angle on the communications. Did we have enough equipment on hand in terms of like, you know, transformer supplies and all of that to

make all the necessary repairs. Yes And we got a report out this morning on from our warehousing folks and supply chain people, and we do have enough resources materials and supplies. And can I just add a quick thing that you know, I've talked to counsel before about a lot of the supply chain challenges that we've had and how you know I would put things into you know the three main buckets. You've got new development. You know, you got

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mate routine maintenance and you've got storm restoration and you kind of have you want to have enough supply on hand for all of those things? And we've had a lot of trouble with all of the new development and getting enough of that equipment. But we this is why we have our supplies on hand for emergency situations . However you know, we'll see how things shape shape up at the end of this because it's likely that we'll continue to have even greater supply chain challenges in terms of meeting all the demands for new customers coming onto our system. I just want to provide that kind of You know? Advanced, you know, warning just to prep greatly appreciated. I. New Really. My wife was the only one that heard me say this, and I wasn't gonna say it in public. But I was just like I got. I hope we have enough transformers to fix all the ones that just went down and you know, I and I heard you, Miss Sergeant, say that. I think there was a question I wanted to press

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conference and I heard you say that we do. And I was like, Oh, thank God. Thank God Ah, it's ah, I know it's a tough environment. But But that was just, you know, like, said I was. I was worried about it quietly worried about it, And I just wanted to make that question to you know, the general public can hear that and they know that it's not like there's a You know, we're waiting on transformer deliveries or, you know, wire deliveries. Something like that. 111 additional point. Sorry to believe the labor this, but one of the biggest challenges that we've seen in terms of supply chain has been the pad Mount Transformers, and those are for underground customers. And so, you know, However way you slice it. It's there's just different challenges everywhere you look, I mean, so. So here we're we have overhead transformers that are impacted. Those have been easier to procure than underground served customers for the pad mounted transformers just well and that, honestly, Segways into you know my next question, which would be about bearing lines and You know,

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moving in that direction as a utility. Ah I know that I live right next to the Mueller neighborhood, which is all buried lines again. I know that was empty field when it started, and it's much easier but The Intuitively. I. Understand the benefit of the buried lives, and I think the general public and we've seen it

a lot. The kind of the calls for Can we move in this direction to help harden our grid? I understand the cost . I understand that if we, you know, put back holes in people's backyards to do all the work that that you know, a lot of folks are gonna scream bloody murder and their gardens and their chicken coops and there, you know what I mean? All that kind of stuff like that, But Given everything that's happened over the past week. How do you all see that? Well in addition to that trees, because a lot of

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these would be in the critical root Zones of trees, So, and that's a requirement in terms of assessing whether, you know, new development can be served underground, but it does add a great deal of cost. You know, kind of the Austin energy has 12,000 miles of distribution lines. And even if we were to assume that half of that is overhead and half of that is underground. You know, overhead . You know, I've always heard these numbers, but, you know, we probably are in need of being updated. You have always heard that overhead for a mile is \$150,000 and a mile of underground is \$1.5 million. So you know, even if you were to assume half of our distribution system is currently overhead. That's that's \$12 billion to do to do something like that. And so there it's there are a lot of challenges, and it also would make the cost of new development greater because of our line extension policies so new development has to pay for

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itself in terms of getting hooked up to our system so that new development comes along, and it's required to be under grounded. They would have to assume the cost of that, Whereas now there Doing that, and they're doing that largely overhead, and so it keeps the cost of development down. So you know again, it's these. These all of our challenges are really interwoven. Hmm. And I'll say I am You know, very voice if Chris about keeping development costs down. Ah and affordability and housing costs. But after I mean , what is the fifth ice storm in three years or, you know, fifth major, you know, I just I feel like when I feel like this used to happen once every five years or so, You know, we'd get a major kind of freezing event in Austin and after the last three years If there's you know, one place that I would give on on housing costs, it would be, you know, infrastructure and strengthening our our kind of

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critical infrastructure, whether it be water or electricity. I mean, there's just so fundamental to what people do every day that you know, it's really I mean, you can't put a cost on it. It's just so Horrible when things go down. I do want to remind people that in Winter Storm Yuri that was a completely different situation that had you know largely nothing except for the storm that had just proceeded it in which we got everybody back online. That was an market directed load shed event and market great emergency in

which there wasn't enough generation supply to meet all the customer demand. And so those outages work. Were directed by ERCOT. They didn't have to do with you know whether the lines were overhead or underground, and so I just want to make sure our customers know that these are completely and I know the impact to the customer is the same, But in terms of how it impacted our system, it's completely different, and that's very well said, and that's an important point to make. And the last question would be again going back to the tree trimming and

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again. I'm catching up on a lot of this. I know that, council member, Alison Alter has been deeply involved in it. Ah a lot of the tree trimming, issues, but I understand there was a policy change in 2019. I was wondering if you could kind of walk me through the kind of the tree trimming the change of in tree trimming policy over the last 15 years and again. I just want to in advance. Acknowledge your response about how it would have been a marginal difference in in in this case, but I just would like to kind of know the you know the handful of policy changes that were made by over the last decade or so. So I know that that's a topic of a lot of interest lately, but I really want to go back and look at what those policies when those policy changes when the iterations of those policy changes came when Austin Energy, you know, wanted more tree trimming, and subsequently you know this. The City Council, you know, was much

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more receptive and in recent years, and the community was more receptive in recent years. Due to, Wildfire Risk and council member, Alison Alter was instrumental and gathering a lot of support within our community for enhanced vegetation management. So I have been my focus has been elsewhere. I can't recall all the timelines of everything. And so that's certainly something we can look at and come back. And I appreciate that. And my understanding is that, That often energy did push for and get policy changes to allow you to do enhanced kind of tree trimming, and I appreciate that. I mean again here looking back and again. I know it's the marginal difference like you said, But I do appreciate that. That you know and again. I want to give credit where credit is due that that y'all were pushing for that and trying to, you know, clear the area around the lines. I mean, Whether it makes a huge difference now or not, It

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does affect things and we have to make sure that that we have reliability. And I didn't mean to suggest that that vegetation management we were doing only made a marginal difference. I meant the marginal difference was how much catching up we had to do. So kind of the Glass half full glass half empty



Almost. But the kind of the flip side of your point is whether or not the tree trimming had a marginal difference. More like our Kind of the pause on it that existed for a little bit. We were able to do so much catch up that, I think what we're left with and based on this event there, there wasn't a whole lot that we could have done. That in terms of additional vegetation management that would have really changed the scale of this to a large degree, But this is sort of anecdotal. Because at this point we're seeing down trees and I can't tell you specifically, our crews are out there. They're working quickly, and they're not really gathering this type of information and again. I appreciate the clarification. I haven't had a

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chance to ask questions yet, either is this fast or it will be super fast. I just wanted to refer my colleagues to the May 2019 Austin Energy Oversight Committee meeting. One of the briefings there has some overview of the initial changes that were made to the policy. We started looking at this in 2018 when we were seeing reliability issues. The policy issue is brought. To my attention, and we talked about it, and they just changed the policy like it was just at Austin Energy that day that they did it, and there's several other sessions where we talked about the vegetation management. And the last thing I'll just say is I want to be really clear. We still need to do more vegetation management, But that doesn't necessarily mean it would have made a difference. In this case. There are other reasons we need to be doing the vegetation management and it might, in some other instances, making a huge difference for reliability. Just we need to keep that in mind for understanding this instance but we still need to keep pushing on it. Thank you for pointing that

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out to us. I remember when I first took office in 2019. Mr Dickerson came and gave me a presentation on vegetation. And so I didn't know the context. Then so I'm really happy that y'all were proactive in that moment, saying You know, Vegetation has been a conversation that we need to make sure that we're doing this correctly. And appropriately. You know, you know we love our tree canopy here in Austin. But we've got to look at how are we doing? The vegetation management ? Are there any other changes That council needs to direct to make sure that we're doing what we can to avoid as much as possible in the future, knowing that we can't necessarily Stop the weather. Some people would argue you can stop the weather if you start being more resilient. So I have a couple of questions I know. Council member Pool said she had at least one more question for the city manager and I want to give space to the mayor if he's got any questions or comments that he wants to give, a lot of what I had brainstormed was in line with what a lot of my colleagues

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have have spoken about. And so I know there was some detailed questions about the software system and the information being presented in it. And trying to make sure that people have accurate information. I know there was a lot of frustration because when people heard the 12 to 24 hour, statement that council member available, wrought up that they essentially I have no patience to give. But I can suck it up for 10 or 20 or 12 or 24 hours to try to get through this and then when more information kept coming out again and again and again, and delays and delays and delays, you know people are out of patients and their they should be. They've been without power for a long time. There's still some districts that have you know hundreds of people offline. I believe some of my neighborhoods that are extremely frustrated. Have just come online in the past couple of hours. And so I know this has been a long haul for a lot of families, and we're getting similar notes as council members about exactly what questions people have, so I know there was some frustration with the way the text messages were coming

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out where people would say they said they came here and the power's on Text, you know, out O U T again if it's still out, and so I think people just started feeling like Why am I continuing to text the word out? If it's not going anywhere, or I'm getting error messages or I'm not sure that my information is even getting through. And so I think that's where we as council offices had to step up and be an extra person for them to talk to. That could try to send Updated emails, even though we didn't necessarily know ourselves until the crew was a sign that that somebody was on the way, so I know I know that tensions are running high that is warranted, given the circumstances that a lot of families have been dealing with over the past week, and some are still dealing with to this day, trying to get their kids ready to go to school, not knowing how they're going to cook how they're going to Make sure their kids are clean going to school. You know, I think this is just a really tough time for folks. And so I want to try to keep that at the forefront of our minds that a lot of people are back up and running. But there's a lot of

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people that that still aren't and they still don't have timelines. We talked about the vegetation management, which I'm very curious about. I'm going to shift a little bit into, debris removal, And so I wanted to ask. I'm not sure if we need you know a R R folks as well. But is there overlap happening with, you know, public right of way. Stuff I've been hearing is getting cleaned up pretty quickly. Is there. Coordination with cat metro? We're safe routes to school. You know, folks that are needing to get to the bus to get, you know, get back to work or get back to where they need to go. So I want to talk a little bit about where are we right now, with debris removal? How's that prioritization happening? And then what are the next steps so that people can get their debris picked up at their house or if their apartment

complexes where people can take that? Good morning. Ken Snipes Director Austin Resource Recovery. Those efforts are ongoing and in partnership with public works,

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James Snow here could better answer some of the things related to the right away. But we are out shortly after the start of the event, Austin Resource recovery managed to make up its normal collection schedule, and so, as a result of that, we've been wholly focused on debris management. We have a number of teams out into the community collecting right after the storm event we had about 29 crews made up of city staff out in the communities collecting on Friday Thursday. I'm sorry Friday and Saturday. We also on Tuesday of the weather event made notification to our emergency contract haulers that we would need their services. They started spinning up their teams. They started arriving in town here on Saturday and Sunday . Their trucks had to be certified in weight so that we are able to qualify for being a reimbursement. Should we meet the criteria And so that's what was happening on Sunday. And over the weekend and as of

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yesterday Those folks actually started hauling and I want to turn it over to Deputy Director Richard Mchale. Here some really good, data that I think will be informational and very informative. Good morning, Mayor Mayor Pro tem Council. Richard Mchale, deputy rector, Austin Resource Recovery. Just want to give you some information about kind of the situation that we're looking at, and some Some historical reference just for comparison. So Winter Storm Yuri . That event was about 41 Day event for our our Throughout that event the city received about 4900 service orders for service and we collected about 9500 tons out of that that event. This event. We've already CV as of this morning over 13,000 service orders. We are debris. Contractors have given

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us estimates of what they think maybe in the field. They're estimating anywhere from 3 to 400,000 cubic yards of material. Just to give you a sense of that. A a dump truck that you might see on the road is 12 yards, so that equates to about 25,000 dump truckloads of material so quite a bit of material out there. The good The good news is that we had some preposition contracts in place. We as early as Tuesday. We had reached out to those contractors just to put them on notice that we may be calling them. What's the situation deteriorated? We did go ahead and activate those contracts for those those vendors to come in town. We had solicitors contracts back in 2021. We chose to go with three vendors at the time instead of a single vendor just for situations like this, where there could be very large. Debris piles and we did as much assistance as possible. So what we've done is we've assigned

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each contractor to a certain zone of the city. Ones and Mike One is between Ben White and 20 to 22 roughly And the third vendor is north of 20 to 22 so They began operations yesterday was like like director, Snipes said, was a really their full first day and we're very happy. What? What we saw so report this morning shows that the Contracted crews removed about 1000 tons, yesterday from the areas that they worked in. They worked on some of our existing routes. We had previously sent out some mailers to residents for our Semiannual brush routes that we do just on a blue sky type basis. Those areas are still being collected. We're going to keep those on schedule. So one of those, was Lost Creek so we are working in. Excuse me Circle, See? Ah this is their weak for collection. So we're maintaining that service and

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city crews will be working in circle C collecting through the week. If we don't finish, what we will do is we will have the contractor finish up that route and our crews will move to the next week. Previously scheduled route which will be in the bold in Travis Heights area and just south of Old Wharf. So, We do have crews working all over town in all council districts. We had crews working yesterday, of Wells Branch area east of 1 83 in south of 2 90 Pleasant Valley Area, Cherry Creek. Decker Lake Circle C Lost Creek. Other areas and far northwest Austin as well. So we have all districts covered. We have most of our brush routes covered two. We divide the city into 24 different Zones for our typical brush collection, so we have operations and it was nearly all of those owned at this point, so Just give me an idea of those 13,000 or so service orders about 50% of those were west of

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Mopac. So in Areas Council District, 68 and 10, so the majority of the damages over in that area but there is damage in all council districts. The vegetative material in eastern Austin. The East side's typically less smaller tree diameter trees, So it's not as bad so we expect to move through east Austin relatively quickly. West Austin Northwest Austin is gonna take a little bit longer, so But our contractors are working, They're able to scale up one of our contractors actually doubling the number of vehicles he'll be bringing in. So by Friday, he shall have doubled his contingent of vehicles. I think from From 15 to 30 crews that he'll be working. So That's promising for us. They are also having to recruit staff these contractors recruiting folks locally to help out with the collection, but they're also having to bring in assets from other parts of the country. So one of the company at least one of the companies has brought in folks that they

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had doing debris collection material in Florida from the past hurricanes, so Those crews are either here or on route to assist. We've been partnering with Austin Energy to help them get some of that material out of the right away, So they're contractors can work solely on getting material cut and not have to haul or shipped that material. So we are recording our efforts with them to make sure we were able to get that material picked up. We've also have crews where we have a cruise from watershed protection , working with our our today in other parts of the city, So we've been partnering with other departments. I'll let James talk about public works here in a second. But we've also been working with part to help them out. Through our debris contract . We are able to offer those services to other departments. So we have let them know that we will ASUs, pard and public works and any other department City department and getting that material removed from the right away so they can focus on the

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cutting and other services that they provide. It's very difficult with ice storms. You know, it's only been really the last 15 years that modeling has been utilized on those typically we've had Army Corps of Engineers has done modeling for hurricanes and tornadoes. But it's really the only last 15 years that Modeling for ice storms has been utilized, so it's kind of a new thing, but it's insane because as we drove around some West Austin, you could look to one side and see a cold a sack with this complete and utter utter devastation and then look to the other side. Same trees, same age of trees and no damage at all. So it was very hit and miss, and, Not completely. The areas have differing levels of damage. We've also been working with Travis County to assist them, they are looking for assistance . They have a lot of debris in those areas, too. So we're seeing what resources we can

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offer to them as far as information or if they need to enter into a mutual aid agreement or anything like that. So those conversations are ongoing with Travis County. We have established a drop off center for the public at Hornsby Band that that center is always open, but obviously now it's in much greater demand. Typically in an average month. We'll get about 1000 customers out there. And I think through I think since the beginning well since February, 3rd through yesterday , I think we had already topped that amount and had about 1100 or so customers and about 666 tons of material that they have dropped off. So that side is very, very busy. Very active. We are trying to establish other drop off sites throughout the city. It's not a quick process. Though We have to identify the sides. We have to receive permission from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. There's several.

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Requirements that must be met. We have to do Some historical background on the site. Archaeological information that not record to see if there's any sensitive areas that may be impacted. There's certain distances that we have to be from creeks and other property line so We are undertaking that work as well as our contractors are so our contractors also have the ability and authority through the contract to identify sites in their region to reduce hauling costs so they can pick up, pick up material and drop it off at a closer material and then either either Hall that material to Hornsby for final disposition or to grind that material and sources have some source reduction and move it so The material will end up horns. We end as much as that facility can take with that facility may be, may run out of space. We are trying to get some numbers from Austin Water right now. What type of capacity they have, but we do have built in some redundancy into our system, So we do have alternative places to

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take that material if that need should arise, but Our first corrections would be horny band because that's where that material is brought, and it was all beneficial reuse so all the material that is collected will be recycled and turned into mulch or turned into mixed with biosolids from Austin Water utility To make dealer dirt so We do expect more mulch. Then also, water can probably use so we'll be giving that material away to the public as well. So But like I said, we're trying to establish some other sites. We'd like to have one south as well. One north to ease the work contractors. We have one contractor looking up in far Northwest Austin believe there's some property up there. They have the ability as a city to contract with private landowners , so I think they may be talking with those folks. In order to get some property secured to do that. We do have some, we've had some questions about why we've skipped some of stops. So the

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situation on in that is some of the materials is too large to actually fit in the truck where there may be a tree that fell and it And we tell folks to put your material at the curb. Well, the whole tree fell at the curb, and they just leave it there so we can't necessarily fit some of the larger pieces into the truck. So we're having what we do. We make an exception. Report. Where unique situations like that city staff will come back and evaluate and find a solution, so we're not We're not gonna skip anyone. Our goal is to make a multiple passes throughout the city. So a lot of folks don't have the material out of the curbs at this point, so we'll be making multiple passes to collect material. So if we don't get it on the first round, we'll get it on the second round. You know, I'm hesitant. I haven't been asked, but I'm sure I will be hesitant about giving out a date for when this will be collected. But In conversations with our contractors. They feel that I first past can be completed by by the end of February. So we're still like me Consider amount of

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time. We would hope for considerable completion. Hopefully sometime in April. I'm I totally understand the, you know, over deliver on under promise over deliver, but I just want to be real about the expectations of what we can do. Thank you. I was going to ask for a date. Along with about half the other things you covered. I was gonna ask some follow up questions, but I decided to keep letting you go because you kept answering everything that I was going to come up with. So I appreciate your thoroughness. On that. I know I do have a question I want to throw in. And maybe that can wrap into what you gentlemen want to say as well. But when people are made aware of the locations where trees and branches branches are blocking sidewalks, bike lanes, transit stops or car lanes. What is the appropriate way to reach out to you? Is it 311 or there? A specific phone number? Right now we're using 311. As far as the routing. It would helps us that then public works can put in the queue and address it. Using a pressurization system. But yeah , 31 right now is the best as

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far as for the calls, to give you a little update of what public works is doing as a the way we attacked. This was usually as we all talked about an ice storm. We see it a different way and what our priority during ice storms are traffic ability of the roads. Mostly that's de icing and making sure about Wednesday night Thursday we realized that the storm was not typical, and we had to move to starting, removing trees and the right away. So what we did was starting Saturday. We retooled. Our approach. Going from 29 crews to 41 crews. And also usually in a winter response. It's a response emergency. We go out. It's a It's a reactive approach. So we started on Mondays. We, went to a recovery approach, which we actually broke down the city, usually in responses in three sectors. We broke it down into 68 sectors, and what we're doing is we're do now a systematic approach, clearing each grid. We have split up our crews that way so that we have diversity across, across the city, and the other

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thing that we started to realize was because of The mass devastation. I'll just say as far as the trees out there and working with a are are we taught her crews. The most important thing is to clear the right away and then work where they are with a pickup because we're concerned. If we start picking up we would not be able to clear as efficiently and also will be caught in a traffic jam it Hornsby Bend, trying to get information, So the other things that we've done is we took a coordinated approach to let you know. It's just not public works in those 41 crews. We've had watershed part and we also had Texas forestry help us on that. As of Monday, we're able to pull up our contract and crew that is contracts that have helped us to vegetation management to help with the clearing so that we're focused on that. And one point I would like to go. Essentially that this isn't director Mchale said. A lot of this devastation is where the more dense and tree company was. And that was in the West. So we do have crews clearing all the

sectors across the city. But as you'll see in a few ask where we put some of our specialties more the complex situations where in the West

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where the more deaths canopies were, so we are taking that systematic approach. As of this morning, I think we've had clear 20 sectors. But I want to bring up to mind that we talked about earlier today We are. We have new weather coming in. Ah what we're told are crews too Is they start looking to make sure where we're placing the debris because we were now concerned with the rain that we could possibly clog up some of Some of our drainage systems. So we're going back in evaluating that to make sure that We have at least a month, if not two or three months of clearing to make sure any debris that we have in the right way that is sensitive to that. A lot of people right now are just throwing it. You know where they can throw it, But we're as we do it. We try to make sure that we're not blocking any drainage because we're concerned that that caused just another. Issue, even even though that wasn't meant to be Ah, as of right now, as I said, we received 1637 service requests as of last night we have done we have completed 949 that leaves about 688 left. Yesterday we only did 69. Some people say, why were you so slow? It's because we switched from a response to actually accept systematic approach to make sure that we're

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clan grid by grid. Because again , usually in a storm. It's usually pointed in certain areas . But this way since it's across the whole city, we had to take an approach that we could feel comfortable. That's similar to what Austin Energy said earlier. With the weather coming in, we might have to go back and re clear clear some of those grids because of you know, the trees are weaker than there's soil issues so that we might have more damage in something that we said Hey, yesterday it was cleared. We moved all the we cleared the debris. We had to go back, Maybe after the next two days and have to re address so we are keeping keeping that on our radar. Also The last thing Ah no. I think I've covered all that. I just want to make sure that if people do have still see trees down if they call 31 and allows to get through that again, I just want the patients because now we've gone from response to actually a systematic approach, so it might seem slower, But then we'll feel more comfortable that something has been addressed. And we can report better statistics to you. Because right now, again with all the flooding of the calls, and you ask us where we've been.

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We're just trying to be able to So show you how we do it and also work with our to make sure that we're picking it up in the same approach. I like to make. I'm sorry. I was gonna ask, Would you ask them about



the exception? Report Do they notify people if they're on the exception report because they have a larger tree than they can pick up or You just added to your report and then go back for it. But those people don't get a note on their door that says And we've determined this is doesn't quote God. Thank you Know we're not doing that at this time. It's usually pretty quick turnaround because a lot of the exception reports are actually done by the contractor to so they don't necessarily know this who they all the customers are. What one point I was going to make that kind of microphone. The difficulty of trying to come up with a mix aren't on. I apologize for interrupting, but the sound system does not appear to be working.

[1:53:46 PM]

Is this microphone working? Sounds like it is. Alright I apologize. My apologies to folks who were watching earlier. We had a little bit of, audio difficulty, and so we had to pause our meeting. I'm going to read into the record the language that I had read into the room before we went into executive session. And this is where it is. It says the city council will now go into closed session to take up four items pursuant to section 551.71 of the government code, the city council will discuss legal issues related to E one nobles out the Richard eagle and Maxwell Johnson. Item E to Gallagher V. City of Austin, Iran versus city of Austin and Underwood versus city of Austin. Item E three city of Austin 2023 labor contract negotiations and I to me for a potential election in may 2023 concerning civilian police oversight. So that

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formality now being officially on the record, we have concluded our discussion of legal issues related to items E one E two E three and E four. Today is February 7th 2023. The time is now 1 55. Pm okay? I'm really glad the city manager is here. I also put up a post on the message boards. So even though our discussion was getting close to being wrapped up about the ice storm, and one of the pulled items number 40. I did post on the message board for my colleagues to finish up any potential statements or questions that they may want answers to moving forward and to add potential amendments for item 40 onto council member Ryan alters previous post about it. So look for that public communication available on the message board. And with all of those being read into the record at 1:55 P.M. I am mayor, pro temp, a jealous and I am hereby adjourning the work session of

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the Austin city council. Thanks for joining us.