

City Council Work Session Transcript – 3/7/2023

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[9:00:07 AM]

Okay. Hi girls and everything. Where. Good morning, everybody. I'm going to call to order the Council work session. It is March 7th 2023 were meeting in the boards and commissions room at City Hall. We have a quorum present, The mayor pro Tim is off the diet when she arrives, all announced for the record that she is here. Council member Natasha harper-madison is also off the dais. And while I'm thinking about it, I want to go ahead and say she had a an unexpected and unavoidable issue that came up for her, and she has asked that if anybody has questions for her about specifically item number 16 is what she was referring to that. Please put those questions on

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the message board. And she will answer those she will. She will be here as soon as she can be. But Hopefully, we'll be efficient enough that, From We'll see if she can get here. That's that's the thing that she she wanted to make sure that everybody knew it was unexpected and unavoidable. And please go to the message board. If you have questions, members of We have Pre select to pre selected agenda items that we'd like for discussion. The way I intend to do this is I'm going to take up items 16, which is the E T O D item first. Is that the Angels? I knew they were all attending our meetings these days, but That all right? Good item number 16 is the E T O D item. We're going to take that up first. And the reason want to take that up first, is we have Ah, a couple

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of our staff people that we know we're going to have questions for that have As I understand it. Excuse me an airplane to catch and so we want to make sure that they since we've we've called on them to help us out. We don't make them miss that. Then we will take up item 22. At that point, we will take up the briefing on the climate equity plan. The word brief in briefing . The root word is brief. I'm just I'm just noticing that that's first time I've ever noticed that and then we will go into an executive session and all appropriately announced the executive session at the time. So I'll turn to the city manager on item number 16 mayor members of council can Can everybody hear me? There's been a lot of discussion about this item and deservedly so it's an important It's important for our city, and it's important for the neighborhoods that surround these districts that we're

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talking about, But I want to just to lay the predicate of what we're trying to get accomplished today. One is simply We're kicking off the process by which we then will begin to evaluate the changes that need to make be made to the development of the code development and then the changes that we need to make to the Austin planner. Imagine Austin plant And so I wanted, and that process is going to involve a lot of community input. A lot of involvement by just not just neighborhoods but people who are interested in this very important topic and issue, so there's gonna be plenty of time for public input. It'll be it'll come back to the Planning Commission will be public hearings. There'll be ordinance amendments. Those will be voted on by the commission come back to the Council for Review in the My last tour duty here. Those were additional public hearings we have at this forum. So that the citizens could be properly heard. And so I just wanted to do that as a predicate private practice this presentation. Good morning, Mayor and council. We actually don't have a formal

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presentation, prepared right now, but we do have staff from both the project Connect Office and the Housing and Planning Department that have been working diligently on the equitable transit oriented development policy plan. And we're happy to answer any questions. I think city manager Garza gave a good overview of the objectives of the action on Thursday. Alright well council, I do think there's been quite a bit of Information supplied. So why don't we just start the discussion with the council and all recognized council member Pool first? Thanks Mayor And thanks to our city manager and thank you rosy for sending the email memo. I think it was early this morning or late last night. That gives a really good Comprehensive assessment of the process where we are in the process what is and is not ahead of us and what we are and are not doing. And I had numerous emails come in from

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neighborhoods in District seven expressing concerns and, some confusion over what they were reading and what I wanted to do just to kick this off. Could you possibly review the memo that you sent to us all I will be forwarding it to everybody who has written it written to me and putting it out in an email blast, But The information that you have launched in that email is really important. And perhaps that would be a good way to start today to do some level setting on what is and is not happening. What the process is and where we are in the process. Sure I'm happy to do that, And I know my team will jump in. If I start to go, awry here, the action that we're requesting on March, 9th would do Four primary things. First it will accept the E T O D policy plan. It will initiate amendments to the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan to incorporate the station areas. And they're identified typology ease into the growth

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concept map again initiating as city manager Garza said. We will , that will all run through a process. There will be ample public communication and opportunities for probably more discussion than all of us are ready to undertake. This just starts us on that journey. It authorizes the city manager to coordinate with Cap Metro to incorporate the Toad policy plan. Tools for the green line and metro rapid stations within the boundaries of the Northeast Austin district planning process . As you guys all know, this was a process that was initiated a couple of years ago, and we're in the process of consultant selection right now, and this is a way to achieve some efficiencies. We have a consultant that's already working on areas, that touch around transit. It makes sense to have them incorporate this policy plan as part of the toolkit that they use. For the more detailed planning of the Northeast Austin district area, that that change doesn't really , affect staff capacity or the budget that we have for that particular planning effort. It

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just incorporates the policy components, and lastly, it will initiate several focus system wide amendments to the Land Development code to implement the policy plan, and we can go into more detail about that here in a moment. There are a number of things. This is a policy document. It's going to serve as a framework for a host of activities related to implementing the development in Austin over the years ahead. The policy plan describes activities that are already underway as well as those that can be taken in the future in the draft resolution includes initiation of several recommended near term activities that I just went over. Those all require formal council direction, including initiation of those code amendments were also going to begin working on the next steps that don't require formal council action, which include analyzing our existing density bonus programs. Consulting with Chito D Implementation leads to identify financing and programmatic support for meeting the goals. Including funding and resource gaps. We're gonna be developing an equity scorecard

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to evaluate proposed Ito development projects. This will be developed in parallel to the overlay and brought back to council as a package and developing an affordable, affordable housing and on publicly owned land goal to provide additional guidance for planning efforts. Will also be collaborating with cat Metro and other public agencies on the strategic real estate portfolio Analysis tool, all things that are next on the list but don't require us to have formal council initiation. So we can go through the more detailed aspects of the draft resolution will probably turn that over to staff to do but I wanted to do a little bit of have a little bit of an opportunity to talk about what this does not do. This does not designate all bus stops in the city as E T O D locations. That's something that we have heard. That is definitely not what is happening. The E T O D policy plan includes project Connect and initial investment, commuter rail stations, light rail transit stations and metro

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rapid stations. It does not include regular bus stops. There's a map within the draft policy plan for project connect light rail and bus transit stations, and additionally, it is likely that proposed regulations surrounding commuter , rail or light rail stations will differ from proposed regulations around metro rapid stations. So the light rail station policies will be different than what we would recommend for. For bus rapid transit stations. This does not change zoning regulations or funding acceptance of the policy plan does not change any regulations, programs, tools, funding or city investments. Some of the some of the tools would need to have funding or resources identified before they could be implemented. Other tools may eventually result in changes to zoning or regulations near some project connects stops. But cannot be implemented without First council initiating changes, then staff working with the community to develop a proposal and then future notice in public hearings, and lastly

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council voting to adopt them. Additionally there are many tools listed in the policy plan that will need to be assessed for where they should be applied to help meet the six vetoed policy goals. The assessment will take place as part of future phases of the work. This does not do it. This is not do away with single family zoning. The city's existing code provisions for transit oriented development prohibit new construction of single family housing within Gateway or midway zoning or Zones inside existing Todos, however, staff does not envision using the existing T O D designations in the current code as part of the updated Chito planning process. Or interim regulations for the overlay staff is especially as specifically requesting that council direct us to work with the community to create interim regulations for E T. O D and E. T O D overlay as described in the code policy plan. The existing transit oriented development court provision

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would not apply to any new areas and I did want to say something about the urgency of the work accepting the plan on March 9th on Thursday allows us to begin the steps of implementing and it's key to the success of the road and the wider project Connect Program for the following reasons. First It's important that we move forward to implement it towed quickly ahead of design and construction of the project. Connect System in order to guide public and private development. The E T O D policy plan, supports and improves project connects grant competitive competitiveness. For Federal Transit Administration, capital investment grants, Small starts and new starts funding and we have staff here that can help address any questions or that come up about that. And then, lastly, taking action related to Chito on March, 9th would align with the timelines of various related project connected community engagement and public decision making processes that will begin over the next several months Happy to go into any detail about the code work. Ah but I want to just open it up there for any further questions. I really appreciate

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that, high level but very detailed overview also emphasized that the work that we are engaged in here has some pretty deep roots from years back on numerous ordinances that have been passed and are in effect. And then specifically to issues that have been brought to my attention that residents were really concerned about was the all bus stops become E Tide locations. We know that that is we have discussed that before, and that is not the intention here at all because bus stops can move and be relocated. So why the rail lines are so important because they are fixed. And we can rely on them. There is some predictability about them remaining there in far into the future, and then the really concerning piece that came to my attention earlier this week about doing away with single family zoning. That is not enough in in fact, what this is about. And I would note that one of the T O deeds that is,

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successfully being planned is in District seven. It's one of the three that had been greenlit in the past, and there's housing there, and there's single family housing in that T O D. And that's their deliberately and with purpose. So I again I will continue to amplify this information and assure my constituents and hopefully the rest of the city that what we are engaged in here is not in fact undermine. Inning. The neighborhoods or, Or their quality of life. In fact, we hope to enhance it tremendously , Mayor. Thank you. Thank you. Before I go to anybody else. Let me ask you if anybody else would like to ask questions about the memo. I think that might be a good way to proceed. Counselor Ryan Alter. Just have one question It is on Page two under the establishing interim regulations that apply to eat toads. The lesson. It's there. You say staff has requested that council initiate code amendments. That would allow staff to review the existing

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initial regulations and proposed new or revised interim regulations is that separate From what we're doing. Here you'll need a separate. That's part of the resolution that is prepared for consideration on Thursday. I want to make sure you weren't needing. Let's do more. Customer valid. You have a question. I did. It's somewhat related to the member but Are there any. From Goals in terms of the number of people that are envisioned to live within a T O D, like kind of population goals for the T O D, specifically. Steve, You're Warner. Hi Good morning. Warner Cook, principal planner with the Housing and Planning Department, so there are not specific goals per station area. One thing that we did look at when creating the typology is was the number of people that live in station areas today and so

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what we did was actually target using F T a kind of criteria. What those thresholds are that they're looking for. Just So you can get an idea of if it's if it's listed in the policy plan is more people today, then that means that it's kind of meeting the target in the area for, for rail stations, a medium high score and for bus stations, Metro rapid stations medium score, and then if it says fewer people today, then that's one that isn't quite performing. But as other people can speak to, it's not about every single station meeting that threshold. It's really about more of the corridor. And that's a very good point. It's a weighted average. Basically of all of the stations were not looking, you know. Clearly for example, there's gonna be a lot more population density in the West Campus station. Then there is, you know, on another station, you know further kind of north outside of the urban core, But so in terms of the population goals, so we're talking about On page. I'm sorry, 65. I guess it's a Nine. 65 on the PDF 89 of

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the attachment that those numbers were the you know, a high area would be 15,000 and above in the I guess at the half mile, the area around the and then the medium would be 57 62 to 9599. Oh, no, I'm sorry. Medium would be 9600 to 14 99 for the rail. And are we targeting the in the plan the medium high level for the stations. Stevie Greathouse division manager, Housing and Planning Department. We have not set specific targets and the plan so really, what the plan is doing is setting kind of a course in a directionality and will be we are set up with the way that the plan is currently drafted. To document and monitor and make sure that the stations are moving in the right direction, which would be moving towards that sort of weighted average that Warners talking about, but the plan itself as it's currently drafted and is in front of council today for consider for this week for consideration does not include any specific targets for housing. And why not?

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From staff's perspective. We have the Austin Strategic Mobility plan that does set goals and targets that we track and do on a scorecard. We are planning on continuing to track. Did I say strategically? Strategic housing blueprint. Thank you for the strategic housing blueprint that does set goals at a district in corridor level around the city, and we didn't want to have a set up a plan where we're kind of setting ourselves up on two separate sets of tracking and two separate sets of goals that are overlapping and complicated. When really, what we're trying to do is make sure that with this planning efforts were moving in the right direction, and that we can kind of track that directionality. That's certainly, we've heard, you know, a desire that some folks have to be able to set those targets that either the corridor the station level. That's certainly something that we could monitor and track if folks wanted to set a target, but we hadn't had the ability with this planning process, to go into the level of depth and community dialogue that it would take to

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appropriately set those targets. So we are not coming this week, with targets to recommend Council member, I think if I understand your question, give us some time to work through that issue to come back with a recommendation on the on the housing targets so that we can take care of that sensitivity that was just mentioned. I think it is. It's something that we need to try to address. But I don't think we're ready to say it out to be one way or the other until we get some more details. Just my concern is that those are very vague and kind of nebulous. You know, goals and I if we don't have you know, fixed goals that we're moving towards than that. How does that not guide our planning, especially in the downtown urban core stations? You know, we're gonna I don't see the problem with saying that we want this to be a very dense, you know, commercial area with, you know, potentially like 25,000 people living in that, you know, a half mile radius around the station. How do we what do we need to zone this in order to make that happen? You know, and so that that lack of kind of a firm goal for population

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densities around the station. Concerns me. If I could add a city manager, Mayor Council anybody project connect office. That work that's very important, and the city manager is correct. That work will come as we sync up with the project development process for the investment that is on our horizon that we will be deciding this summer. We have a kick off. March 21st in coordination with our partners at Austin Transit Partnership and Capital Metro. To look at scenarios for our investment in light rail transit once we have that in coordination with Rosie's group at housing and planning, we can start looking at where exactly along those corridors that makes sense to have those targets and to start to hone in. More specifically, as a city manager pointed out, and I appreciate that, and you mentioned that there was another plan that also has

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population goals for the corridor. Which plan was that As mentioned in the strategic housing blueprint , which did set district based goals and, in some cases, corridor based goals for housing accommodation. Remember correctly and please correct me if I'm wrong. We're way under those goals. And my director can address that with with her nodding head head is nodding . Yes okay. And I appreciate that and again. My concern is that if we're not even setting goals Hard number goals for individual stations. Identifying saying , Like You know, this station, let's say, like the government center station again to pick a downtown one, which doesn't have a lot of population around it. At this point, you know, we've got to really commit and say that you know what we want, because I know we're gonna have stations that are farther up north that are not going to have You know, 9000 people in the half mile radius. You know we're going to have their much more surrounded by neighborhoods that are not going to develop in the same way that other stations are

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And if we don't have those hard goals, concerned that we're not going to get the ridership and the increase in housing units that that were and again affordable housing units go along with I mean, those you know, 10% of a higher number is a good thing. You know what I mean? 10% of 2000 is more than 10% of 1000. So that's just kind of my sense of things. Thank you. So I would just want to reiterate that, That we agree with you, and that's what comes next. As we get into individual station areas. This is just the high level policy plan that sets the framework for how we're going to do those efforts. Government Fuentes. Thank you. And thank you for mentioning that director. True love because I just wanted to point out for our colleagues. Our mobility committee met this past week and our housing committee We had a joint committee. We had a conversation and from my understanding cause I also raised similar concerns about not having concrete goals and knowing how we are so off track on our strategic housing blueprint. You know, how can we best develop an implementation strategy and from my understanding of what shared during the committee meeting

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was that staff would come back with more of those concrete clearly defined metrics that I think includes the production of affordable housing, but also I would like it to include the preservation of existing affordable housing along those lines as well. Thank you. Anybody else want to talk about the memo? Sure. You mentioned density bonus review. Is that specific or all? Yes Foreigner Cook again. So we through our process working on Ethiopian the last year and a half, You know, we didn't have time to look at how every density bonus overlays and since what we're proposing is possibly another E T O D

overlay, staff recognized the need to Many of these existing programs are very similar to each other, with key details right and it can be very difficult as somebody looking to use one of them to keep all those details. It's also a lot of staff time to be able to,

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like really focus in on each of those, so we're interested in reviewing the existing requirements in light of the work that we're going to do with the community to possibly propose another program. So that If there's opportunities to streamline , or, you know, make things similar to one another so that it's more easy to get through the development process. That's that's something staff isn't very interested in doing I would just echo something that counselor development Shinde The other day in our committee hearing. Part of that be, you know, and How that has functioned and potentially using that as a model for some of these stations. My producer. Let me and I'm gonna recognize member Tim, but I forgot to notice Note when the miracle Tim she's been here since the book started this discussions of for the record. Present and accounted for. Yes could you talk a little bit more about

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the strategic housing blueprint and you know which corridors aligned with project connect in which ones? Maybe don't Because I know when it was built Project connect with still very much a twinkle in someone's I. I'm not even sure I'm keeping in mind. The strategic housing blueprint was approved in 2017. So it was well before . But folks that have maps in front of them. Maybe just roughly, is it you know, half and half is it 80 20, You know, St strategic housing, blue part really followed some of the growth corridors shown in the imagine Austin growth concepts. So to the extent that those overlap with project connect corridors, there's overlap between the two Oh, There are probably a few project connect cores that don't run down growth corridors and vice versa. There's actually some growth corridors and growth concept that don't but it is a the Venn diagram is if I had to just, you know, Guess is probably a 60 70% match. Okay Okay, That's pretty helpful. And yes, I will flag if someone's got extra time Between here and Thursday, we had a pretty robust discussion. At our

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last Mobility Committee meeting, and it was all in all went about 2.5 hours. With maybe 30 40 minutes for Q and a, but there were a lot of different presentations between capital Metro's involvement in public engagement. You know, the city planning side and then we even had a kind of Rapid fire panel of housing advocates. Urban Land Institute, You know, a professor from UT other folks that have been involved in this conversation for a long time, So if you want to dig into those presentations, they should be archived in the backup from last Thursday. Right. Thank you, Maribel Tim. I want to ask a couple of

questions about the memo, of course, based upon questions that I'm receiving from people and I also I echo. What counselor Pool said is this is a very helpful document. But I want to know what kind of questions I'm going to get based upon the document, and I want to start on the first page. Bullet number two under action requested it begins initiates amendments

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to the imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and then the fourth bullet also says , initiate several focused system wide amendments to the land development code. For clarity purposes while that initiates those amendments in both of those instances, that's not Setting anything in concrete or even setting a path on what might happen in terms of amendments to the imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan or the system Wide amendments to the land development code . It will not. It does not set out what will happen and doesn't even create the first step in a path to what will happen. Is that correct ? Opens the door to allow us to start having conversations as staff. We cannot initiate code amendments that has to be done either by the City Council or by the Planning Commission. And we recognize that these are some critical things that that we need to start to address and some shape form or fashion. And this allows us that's what it does. Is it it? Legally allows for the discussion about those amendments, but

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it does not in any way preordained outcomes and the process. That process is yet to be carried out. Very true . Okay I don't page. Two I would like for you to describe the first bullet says it does not designate all bus stops in the city as E T O D locations. But yet. It sets out. It sets out that there will be Matt Metro rapid stations there will the and I would like for you if you that will be designated as E T O D locations. We have heard is as council member Pool indicated. And you all know we've heard otherwise. You wouldn't have had this bullet in here. We know that there's a lot of concern and question about the bus station aspects. I would

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like for there to be a if you don't mind a greater description of how there's a difference. Between metro rapid bus stations and everyday bus stations. Steven Greenhouse that will attempt to answer that one. So under the project connects system and actually, under today's system, we have metro rapid lines that provide service. That's a little bit closer to rail service. That has, dedicated lanes in some locations. The stop spacing is separated. The stops themselves typically have a little bit more infrastructure involved in construction of the stop themselves. And they function. More sort of closer to the way a rail will function in the future. And then we have all of the sort of daily Busses running around Austin local bus

service that have close stops, The stops can move around as they frequently do , and something every time a couple of Metro does the service change that are

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really providing kind of lower intensity service with bus stations that function a little bit, you know that function like bus stations and not like real stations. So the from the perspective of the Equitable theory policy plan and the discussions that we've had with community to develop that plan and the direction that we received from council that initiated the work to develop. That plan indicated that we should look at making sure that we were including both the future metro rapid lines, which are those kind of higher capacity transit lines with that function a little bit more like rail. In the work that we're doing to look at both Metro rail and light rails. Wines as well. And so the policy plan that is before the council for consideration this week. Looks at all 98 station pairs on both the rapid bus system. The light rail system as well as the metro rail system. And the resolution that is in front of council this week would propose to make to initiate

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as we just discussed. Changes to the code that would provide new regulations at stops for both. The light rail system , or I keep saying both, but it's actually three. The light rail system, the metro rail system and the future. Rapid bus system. The part of the reason behind that, in addition to the communication from council and community that we had sort of leading up to the plan of looking at our full system, including those bus lines that function that are the rapid bus lines that functional little bit more like rail, is that the system as we build it out over time will be Could be transitioning. In some cases. We will have lines like we do today that are rapid bus that will be transitioning to become real ones. And other cases like the gold line on the project Connect Vision plan. We have something that has been identified in the Vision plan as a future light rail line that will be starting out before it becomes a future light rail line will probably spend some period of time as a rapid bus line.

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So it from staffs perspective and the reason the recommendation is written the way it is, we would be differentiating the regulations there would definitely be in need, as Rosie mentioned in the summary of the memo. Their regulatory needs are different at rapid bus and rail, so there's no intention to treat the two systems the same. But at least the proposal that is currently on the table would direct staff to initiate changes that would potentially make changes to regulations along both the rapid bus system. And the light rail and Metro rail systems. Great Thank you for that on the urgency of the work. Could you tell? Could you describe what the timeline is needed for? For us to meet the fda guidelines? When

you you first were laying this out? You talked about that, and that's a key reason we're moving now. Ah and I would like for you to kind of outlined that in more detail

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about And let me add my what was gonna be my second question. My second question to that would be is why do we move on this now? When? As We know. It hasn't really been decided. And on the as you pointed out on the 21st, there will begin that process of laying out what we might actually see in terms of, The lines, including Metro rapid all that, so why now, when we're not sure what eight P might actually end up doing Thank you, Mayor. I'll take that for the group today with the project Connect office, and I'd like to invite up Jennifer Pine, who's with the Austin Transit Partnership, also to help me address this question. As you know, the tax revenue election that happened in 2020 City revenues collected and transferred to Boston

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Transit Partnership to focus on the design and implementation of light rail. Jennifer is the executive vice president for 88. P over planning and controls. We worked very closely together. On monitoring what's happening with the Toad plan as it syncs up with the project development phase of the new starts and grant Project grant process which we are currently in. I have a couple of comments before I turn it over to Jen to talk about timing and why now? To add on to what Miss Greathouse said, you know the characteristics of metro rapid are more similar to a fixed a fixed light rail line than they are to a local bus stop. They're less likely to move. It doesn't mean that they can't but they are less likely. The infrastructure for the stops are much more intense. And if you want to go out to the Pleasant Valley line or to the Expo line, they're currently under construction . So we are we've been making great progress. On

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the first two lines of the four that were approved by voters in 2020, so that's an important distinction there more fixed than a local bus stop. As we prepare for our grant application, and Jen, we'll talk a little bit more about that. As you can imagine. There's a lot of work that goes into that application. And so Moving forward with the E T O D plan is the first step. The city has control of Landes regulations, not at P not kept Metro that is our and it is and land use future and existing Is a part of the fda criteria. It's not the only part and we have some slides to show you how Ah the E T O T Eat trd work actually fits into that fda criteria so I know that we are looking at our first, scoring. Scoring event with the F T. A In, summer of

[9:35:55 AM]

next year, 2024, which is not that far away, and there's a lot of work that needs to be done before that Simon and handed over to Jan ticks to explain that timeline. Thank you. Thank you. Good morning. My name is Jennifer Pin and Boston Transit Partnership. So the timeline for the federal process? As has been mentioned, you know, we are looking to engage in a community dialogue starting later this month, and ultimately, you know, affirm this summer with the definition of the light rail project is that we're going to continue to advance. So as part of the pursuit of federal funding That takes years and there are a number of different Gates. And what an iq was referring to as far as a preliminary rating of the project, which is critical obviously to being competitive and obtaining those federal funds we would be putting together that package for submittal next spring. So any work done in the next year? You'd be able to take credit for as it

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were. And so the slide that's up on the screen is just to talk a little bit about what the fda considers This looks like a little bit of a complicated graphic, but I can break it down simply that about half of it has to do with the financial commitment. You know our commitment of funds, and we're actually in pretty good shape That way. You know 80 P is prepared to finance using prop a and the federal funds, for not only the capital costs, but also operations and maintenance costs, So we're actually in great shape there. So on the left side of the equation is the project justification, which is the merits of the project, and we're competing with other projects from across the country. And so this is their way of normalizing that evaluation to award projects funds. Probably the items that are most directly related to the topics we're concerned with here this morning, our land use and economic development. And so that is looking quite specifically at what is the population density within a half

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mile of each station area and how many jobs are located there that would then be accessible by this light rail project. In addition, they also look at parking and presence of affordable housing. On the economic development side. That's your more qualitative assessment. They're really looking at plants and policies that have been put in place to promote transit. Supportive land juice. You know, as you know, this is a generational type of project and the long term view in some ways is just as important as the current conditions. And so that intentionality to support Transit, supportive land use a mix of uses a sufficient density , is of great importance in assessing the merits of the project. Thank you for that, And then my last go. I think that covers. I just wanted to make sure we had a record of what the time situation is that I meant to ask questions little bit earlier that, What went on Metro

[9:38:58 AM]

Metro bus and on simple what we call regular bus stations. When I think of regular bus station, I think most people think of maybe a place to sit a sign that says this is a bus stop. Maybe maybe, place to get out of the rain, But that's different than The station that you're talking about that are currently being built. Is there a way to identify those and make sure that we have a definition of them in this resolution so that people will know what are the actual places that will be impacted as opposed to routine bus stops. I would say yes. Sorry I was saying, yes. Also Luckily, good, good. I'm glad you're consistent. And because that may be the right answer, so yes, there. There are maps, actually throughout the in the, Todd Policy plan draft itself. There is a map that shows the location of the future Metro rail. Metro

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light rail and the metro rapid stations and we could absolutely reference that in the resolution All right. Thank you all very much. Counselor. Rhino, Just save it. The my on She She sent that memo at 10 o'clock last night. So thank you for doing that. I hope you didn't come in before Eight o'clock this morning. Well you know, I did. But it was only because I had to drop off the kids at the middle school. But I want to recognize Warner and Stevie and Erica Leak and Andrew Bates, who were working with me until 10 o'clock last night, to get that put together so that we could be able to have some some good information for you, too. Thank you for doing that. I'm gonna go to counselor Ryan Alter and then Councilor Pool, and then I'll go to Council member Allyson Ultra. To follow up on one thing you mentioned and that was about Density within a half mile as they're analyzing it. Is that current or if we were to change the zoning? How would that interplay with their scoring saying? Well, it's not very dense right now, but they just changed

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it because it's going to be a rail line. How's that work? So they do look at current and future conditions, so we would be providing information on what's there now using, because the existing census data and Campo forecast and also looking at plans and policies, what's being promoted What's anticipated in that area. Thanks. I would add to that, too. In talking with John, that Once we submit in the summer of 2024 for most likely for initial scoring. Towards the end of the process, they'll really look at our numbers, and that would be an opportunity to show what they call, demonstrated progress. On plans and policies. So passing a plan and policy is one thing showing demonstrated. Outcomes of those plans and policies is also would be the most important part right And so towards the end of the process will have the opportunity to see the outcomes of some of our

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policies, whether they be land use, whether they be parking, whether whether they be related to connectivity, connectivity and local mobility, first last mile type improvements , which was also on that chart. So there's a lot of things that go into that, non funding 50% that we that we're doing well, but again will have an opportunity to show that demonstrated outcomes of the actions. Councilor Pool and Council member Alison Alter. I wanted to add to the conversation about density to remind the diocese and all of us who are working through all of the various threads and the important pieces that the displacement dollars still need to be brought into this equation. And we need to be cartons in of our timing. If we are looking at changing what the zoning is on a piece of land that could very well and likely will increase the costs. But we need to first I think, and that says what we have. On a policy level, been promising. Take care of

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the people who are living in those areas now and who may be displaced so that they don't lose their homes. So I would ask that we kind of remember that and focus on that, and do it in sequence so that we can get that taken care of before we may move into Taking some actions that would intend to increase the value of the soil that were that were focused on If that makes sense to everybody. Yeah, sure. Councilor Alison Alter. Thank you, I want to just reflect that. From what I've learned about toads and Eto O D S just because you designate something a T O D or an E T O D doesn't mean that you solved the mobility issues and create a space where more people are using transit and giving up their cars, So I think it's very important that we, Be intentional here, and we understand that. There's no guarantee if we move forward with the need toad that it's actually going to do what we hope it does there very few

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of these projects that actually function very often you end up creating a lot of market rate housing, and the people who are in there are still using their cars. So I just asked me as we move forward with this process. I think we have to keep that very much in mind. With respect to, the memo. I wanted to just clarify what is happening to the existing Todt. So we have nine Designated T O D. S, three of which that were cited in there and it doesn't sound. We're doing very well on those measures, which is the impetus for tryin to do it in an equitable. WHE but what happens to the sixth duties that haven't been planned that we have been long saying we wanted to be todos do they become E T O D S now and what happens to the existing three that are gone further in the process. Yes we'll tackle that question. So part of what is being recommended in the resolution as a code amendment would be to go and

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look at the existing regulations that are called the initial regulations that apply to that set of nine And actually, it's slightly less than nine because if you have them just had points on a map and didn't ever get boundaries that the regulations applied within But staff is proposing as part of that a code amendment to really go look at those code provisions. See if they still make sense if it will still make sense to have sort of a separate kind of set of Todos that have one set of regulations Andy todos that have another or if it makes sense to revise the regulations. And consolidate them in a way to cover the entire project Connect system, So that's part of what's being initiated with the Code amendment. With respect to the three stations that have existing station area plans and regulating plans in place those stationary a plans and regulating plans would absolutely stay on the ground until we are out of place that we're ready to propose, either Corridor based, or station based planning services to either modify those plans that replaced them, so that's a slightly Those are two

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slightly separate, discussions because we recognize that those policies those station area plans and regulating plans had quite a bit of community engagement and interest desire around those plans, so that would be that would be kind of future stages as we move towards doing focused, stationary vision planning and a particular location. To look at how we need to modify those plans. But for the right the base initial regulations themselves, in the code. Today we are proposing with this resolution to take a look at those in concert with the proposal that we have to discuss interim regulations that would apply to a larger set of stations. Thank you. And for the F D a funding process. Obviously, the real costs more than the Bus, rapid transit, So when we're looking at that chart is that largely for rail or how do we think about that? You know, because one of one of the choices we have is where we put our resources and our prioritization. Even

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if we have a plan that says you want to eventually do it for E. Todd. There is an argument. I think to be made that you should focus on The rail first. But I just want to understand what the fda process. You know how much of that is based on what we do. With rail or is it both? Or how is that working? So the slide I head up there in the process I was referring to was for the new starts Grant program, which is for light rail. Those are for the larger transit investments. Some of the metro rapid projects actually recently received small starts grants already , and the process is not dissimilar. But maybe a little different. So that slide was primarily referring to light rail. Okay so the bus ones have already gotten the smart start. Yeah Yes, it's called small Start. Sorry Smaller. A smaller cost. Yes the Expo Center and Pleasant Valley metro rapid projects have received their federal funding. In fact, the

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federal fda administrator will be here this weekend on Friday to do a ceremony for that signing of that grant agreement for venture Rapid and Expo, which is very exciting. Great Well, congratulations for those who have been working on that. That leads me to my next question, Which is, you know, with timing and staffing, And I'm not sure if that's this memo or not, I am concerned about whether trying to do everything we do Nothing. We've done that for many years here. And I think we all agree the around the rail stations that that we should be putting the density in those areas. How does this plan allow for that flexibility and that prioritization So we have a plan that has prioritization within rail and has a prioritization within bus. But how does it help us prioritize across rail and bus in how you're going to be spending your time? We know that the Housing Planning Department has limited Resources. We cannot do Everything really important. Part of this is the context sensitive nature of the planning. Because

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these stations all look different. I know. You know, the few stations that I have in my district, you know you have your they're literally in a floodplain. And it's gonna look really different than places that are, you know, big transit centers in terms of the planning. So how are we? How do we prioritize the cost? Rail and bus and then we have the factor that you brought up earlier about. You know, we're gonna be making some investments and changing some things and some things, maybe bus rapid until they become real. How How are we thinking about that prioritization Because you cannot do 100 180 stations. At once and do them in the context sensitive way that they deserve and that you're saying that should be done. I'll start and then and then I'm gonna pass it to Stevie with it with a couple of suggestions and what we talked about, as we were. Discussing this all week. The you know, from the perspective of the project connect office, the light rail stations are definitely a priority. Given where we

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are in the C I G Capital improvement grant process for new starts. They're absolutely a priority. We can focus even more on prioritization of the stations once we go through our public input process and public comment process on the scenarios that starts March 21st that process. And so I would pass it to Stevie to talk about there's ongoing planning work around transit that would continue. But I would hope that the coordination that happens and the sinking up a future planning work with the resources that we have. Would be focused to the light rail stations that are part of the scenario is that the community has told us our priority. And I'll just add to that. I think what is in the proposal that is on councils dais this week really considers the workload impacts of the

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work. By moving in the direction of developing that you taught overlay which would not be the be all and end all like that. I want to be really clear that you taught overlay is a tool. To get our system part of the way there it is not a blanket, you know, rezoning or re regulating of the entire system? Because we know we can't do that. But that tool atleast allows us to shore things up on a system wide level, so that as we put focus resources into those actual detailed stationary or corridor based planning activities along the line, we aren't waiting across the entire system for something to happen that the Todd overlay would be the tool that kind of shore's things up. Temporarily with a particular set of regulations, and then we would be focusing planning resources are your one work program at this point is really, focused around station areas that we've already initiated so North Lamar Transit Center and

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Partnership with Capital Metro South Congress Transit Center in Partnership with Cut Metro, We've already actually been out working and community, with with the leadership of capital Metro over the last couple of months. On station area planning in this two locations as directed by council in November, and then the Northeast Austin district plan, which has already been initiated and has a lot of station areas within that planning area, making sure that we're leveraging those resources, But in terms of future years of planning, we have recommendations, in the top policy plan for how to prioritize stations. The way that we want to prioritize stations may, differ. Once we work with community to figure out what the initial investment is moving forward , there's definitely the opportunity for council to provide direction on what that sort of year two and beyond. Work program look like, or To add additional resources to try to shifted ahead to be a year, one work program, But I definitely hear the concerns about resources, and that's really the philosophy of the plan.

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And the reason why there is the recommendation to put in place the unarmed regulations and to put in place that you taught overlay at a system wide level. Is to make sure that we have something in place while we were working towards allocating planning resources to do the more specific focus planning in the corridors that need it. Thank you. I'd love to hear more about the Utah to overlay, but but I want to pause here and just, Speak to the interim city manager here. I don't think this plan tells us that we're prioritizing rail over bus. I. You know, I understand. I don't not sure totally understand what's going to be in that it Todd overlay, and it's not created. So maybe I'm not supposed to. But, you know, is there something that we need to add in this resolution, or, you know is that just understood that we are going to be thinking through that. I mean, how would we? How How do we make that happen? Within within this plan when we have limited resources, and we have to make Choices.

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I mean, they ask this that I think it from the discussion. It's clear that that that rail is the priority. I mean, it's the How we word that or how we put into this resolution. Comments are sentence or two or whereas I think that would be helpful so that we have that clear direction from the council that That that's not just from the discussion today, but that's kind of from the history. That's what we want to get done. Forget it achieved. Yeah I mean, and that's brawl. I just want to We don't know what's going to come out on the on March 21st. So that would broadly you know, there may be some stations that are transitioning from br T. Terrell and those might be treated differently. But I just I think that the worry is that is that we're going to spend time you know, on transit stations on the Mara that are in a floodplain versus doing him on the rail. You know, in the rail, centers, etcetera. Well, I think that I mean, here's what I've heard is that we need better definition around each of these, tools and transit. Modes, so we'll

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have that and if we need to emphasize that rail is the priority, then that that will be easy for us to do. And and that's where I mean, That's what we're focused on work and then to the degree that To do that, to the degree that we don't end up, end up compromise any of the grant process for The Federal Transportation Administration to award to us so we can work through that. Thank you work with law on that. Yeah that would be that would be appreciated. May I have a question about that? You taught overlay, but I can read other people. Yes Mary Protein bit of interesting conversation about prioritization. The Oak Hill Metro Rapid was very, very early to be identified as behind the mark for land use planning. Some of the other Metro Rapids were able to get out the door and have documents submitted to the federal government, and that local line is still not quite up to that level of being able to have the is that's not. It's not scoring high enough. So I think it's really important even though we know that the rail lines

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are going to have higher ridership. They're going to have different land use patterns that are needed because of the proximity and the population served. But we cannot forget about that Pinnacle campus. That parking ride. You know, we in southwest Austin have I think four bus routes. Four and two of them overlap. And the one near me runs every 35 minutes. So if we're going to get serious about people being able to participate in the mode shift goal, we can't forget about some of the ones that are way farther behind. So I understand if there's certain nuances around floodplains or things like that, but All those tracts of land heading out to the pinnacle campus. They predate S O S. They need to. They need to have their parking lots taken out their end to end concrete there. They don't have stormwater controls a lot of them. And so I'm just really worried that if we try to get the rest of the plan right before we start talking about what land use patterns need to be happening at the Metro, Rapid for Southwest Austin, we're gonna entirely missed the boat, So I just want to make sure that we're

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looking at this in a way of All parts of this community, you know, participate in Project connect. They pay into the tr E that voters approved and I want to make sure that we are not going to end up at the bottom of the list simply because we don't have a lot of ridership right now. We need to be making more efforts to encourage ridership in Southwest Austin, and I want to make sure that Okay, I'll is not forgotten. I don't know if you have any comments on that, or if that's more of a stump speech, But yeah, the only comment that I will make is the plan itself did include a planning prioritization activity where we looked at all of the 98 station pairs and develop sort of a priority list. Based on three factors, and the three factors were sort of the presence of publicly owned land the amount of recent sort of change and turn that we're seeing in that location in both in population around unemployment. As well as looking at some economic real estate metrics related

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to improvement value to land ratio to try to figure out how likely that places to redevelop and the next near term to make sure that we're getting getting planning ahead of that. So that was the prioritization method that that staff used to kind of identify. I ranked list if you will of where we would recommend services move first, But we can definitely look at adding additional criteria to that and we can definitely look at adding additional direction through the resolution one way or the other. And I guess that that is a response to your question Mayor Pro tem and that that was really looking at it neutral to whether it was rail or rapid bus that we were looking at the full system with that analysis. Yeah I appreciate I know that Central part of the district is where a lot of the market rate affordable housing is. And I know with the ec bonds, where they included dollars for redevelopment of the Pinnacle campus. I really want to make sure that we are You know, we're thinking way ahead of the game here because things could redevelop at some point and we will have missed the boat and lost our chance at

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getting more affordable housing into that central part of my district. Thank you. Very lieutenant counselor, Pool. I wanted to add on to what my colleague Mayor Pro tem Alice is saying, including our work together which you are newly appointed to cap Metro, which I'm really glad about. Maybe we can work together with the service. The route , distribution with cat Metro to analyze that and see if there's waves. That we can send more Busses to that part of the city and then also, I'd be curious to know if any of the, Ah, Is it this that Start Grant the Smart grant Small start. Grant might be appropriate for the Southwest partner, the city just asking. We've gotten grants for the Northeast District. We got \$600,000 for that. Planning effort and we got almost a million for the blue and Orange lines. So there

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there's funding out there and perhaps you're part of the city. We could do some focus on I'd appreciate that in any guidance. You have to lend me on better advocating for our bus routes, even the regular ones in southwest Austin, But, yeah, I know that. There's a lot of people who want to ride the bus, and there's a lot of people excited for Metro rapid and I want to help make that vision of reality. Councilor Ryan Alter and then cast member Allyson Ultra. I'm curious that I have more fundamental level as you are planning forward. What do you envision? Coming first, the infrastructure, the transportation infrastructure, and then the housing. And development that support that, or Vice versa. Where we get the housing and that other, development and then bring the transportation to it. You know, here we're talking about the Northeast bus Rapid and it seems like we're doing more of the former. We're bringing the infrastructure and then Developing around it, But

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I'm wondering, Are we It seems like we're always be playing catch up. I will be years behind if we if we bring a station and then zone and then allow it to go through. The process developed, you know, will be many years behind in terms of actually utilizing The investment Some I'm just trying to understand how y'all Envision that? Yeah and I just say, I think it's a little bit of the reality is a little bit of both. The ideal, which nobody is ever going to hit in any city in the history of City is would be. I think they have the land uses in place, but on like the day that through hands it opens right because you don't want to lag time. You don't want the you don't want high intensity, dense, walkable development without any way to get there without a car. And the longer that lag time is the longer. That's the case. Right So you know in an ideal university would have the land uses, and then the transit but with you know, very little lag time. In reality, it's going to be coming online simultaneously , and in some cases, there will be development that happens years later. Well I

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would. I would recommend going on the side of Development a little earlier . Given how that has been a great challenge and is most often slower than we think it's going to be given some of the other administrative side of things so that maybe we do end up actually having them line up because of that challenge and where we have the ability to influence that. We certainly will. That's what publicly owned land that's with our ability to acquire property along the areas are along the transit. The station areas. I think ideally, we would be able to do that. And that is one of the goals were pursuing and the interim city manager just committed to fixing the permit process tomorrow, so Tomorrow. Yeah tonight. Yeah

I'm ready. Councilor Alison I'm sorry, Mayor. I think Ms Pine wanted to add something on that. If you indulge me this to one other thing on that, just looking at other cities

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really across the country when they've Planned and built new light rail systems. You know one thing about light rails once you locate it like it does not move. At least not very easily and the word fixed. That's the word fixed. I'm learning so much. I think you'll see sort of experiences that you know, development activity and, around station areas happens very, very early during the planning process. And Kind of some lessons learned or that you almost can't plan for it too early or otherwise, You can't control it or, you know you kind of lost your opportunity. Councilor Alison Alter. And where you thank you. First I want to just respond to my pro tem Alice's comments on Oak Hill, and I really appreciate that context and you know, the government investments that are being in made in that area. My initial question was, how

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are we prioritizing across the two because we have a prioritization for one and a prioritization for the other . You know, and I just looked at it and okay. Liz is listed among the high priorities for brt. And so maybe some combination. I don't know what the right answer is for the prioritization, but we do have to have Some prioritization, and I think we give folks an impression that we're doing something. You know, we have limited resources. Let's make sure that we're spending those in the in the best places, but I can't tell from having two separate ones Where that Should be or to guide people to help them understand? When we would be doing that. So I think some Clarification of how we would do that. Would be would be important because obviously the Metro Rapids are important. But they are still a different Animal with respect to the fda, process that that we're looking for. My other question had to do with the Todd Overlay. So you

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mentioned that you know, part of what we were doing was to create this E Todd overlay so we wouldn't be absent regulation in these areas. Without you know, before we did the small area planning, But that concept is still very vague and I think it is causing concern in the community. And it would be helpful to have, Some clarification because I think it's one of these, like this is a zoning jargon that nobody understands and On the face of it sounds sounds very scary, but it's not clear what what? What did the scope of that is and whether you know something like rezoning. Single family homes is in that overlay, or you know what exactly are the kinds of things that could go in that overlay as you envision it the end. I understand that the existing trd overlay is Fairly minimal in terms of the basics that are in that, So

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we also be helpful if you could provide some insight on how that would compare. So I'm I'm gonna go ahead or Rosie. Would you like to know? I was just gonna say Warner and Steve, You're going to make it not scary attack demystify it, So I'm going to sort of provide very high level. What's being recommended by the resolution and then turn it over to Warner to talk a little bit about what the plan actually describes as a possible you taught overlay because it we're really talking about is sort of based on the plan document itself and the talk it in the tool that's in there. But what is what's envisioned at a very high level based on the resolution is that we would identify an appropriate boundary so we would have to do boundary setting at the station areas. And within that boundary, it would apply a set of regulations that are property owner could choose to opt into so the base zone regulations would still be in effect, but the property owner similar to but not the same as the emu and similar to but not the same as you

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know, overlay because that's the details are what still needs to be developed and what I'm going to have Warner talk about. The property owner would be able to make the choice to either develop under the base on entitlements or provide community benefits in exchange for additional entitlements. And those community benefits could be a variety of things. They would probably definitely include housing affordability, but there are other community benefits that we might look at, based on the direction from the community and the Todd plan. Those entitlements that they would be trading community benefits for could be things like height and Floor ratio. But the level that we're setting those trade offs at is not being said. This is really the at this point they would be set in the code amendment that would ultimately come back to council to have a conversation around. But at this point, the initiation would be to have the community dialogue to look at the best practices to look at the calibration of the market and what the market will actually deliver

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in order to propose. Both the boundaries and the regulations that would apply. Those regulations could also include regulations around preservation and around tenant protections. If we applied that overlay to say, and existing, development that included housing, and it's somewhere to what we did with the vm you to last year Where we've put in place some pretty heavy duty preservation as part of that tool. We are referencing a tool that was developed in the tool kit that couple of Metro and their consultant team in partnership with community delivered that describes it a little bit more, and I'm going to turn it over to Warner to kind of provide any additional detail that may be in the plan and at least to tell you a page

number to look on. Yeah I can definitely give a page number. 8, 58 and 59 is kind of where we lay out this idea of an overlay for affordable housing. Think Stevie did a great job of explaining The extent of

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what we know because we don't know yet. What those bonuses should be We know that we've heard about things like childcare and about affordable, nonprofit space and, of course, affordable housing, So we know that there's like a realm of community benefits, but we need to figure out which ones are most appropriate. Wear what the community is interested in. We also need to think about what additional entitlements Could be offered in exchange for those benefits where they actually get built. You know, for instance, the plan talks about the current fee in lieu part of a lot of our programs maybe isn't necessarily calibrated right? So that's an important aspect. We need to think about whether if he and Lou was even allowed. And then a Stevie said. The half mile kind of planning boundary. The circle. We don't envision that That's a that's where the overlay exactly applies in the future. We need to work with community to figure out where it applies and there might be certain types of property. It doesn't doesn't apply to as far as existing uses. It might apply to all but there'll be different kind of like sub Levels in

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there or is Stevie said preservation levels. You know, these are just things that we've looked at from across the country and heard during our feedback. But we're not yet at all. Sure what they would be because we need to talk to our community. We need to talk with our partners. We need to talk with developers of private, public and nonprofit so that we can understand what would make sense. In. One typology or on a rapid versus a rail station. Right That's that's another factor we need to think about as well. Thank you. Can you also speak to the value capture ideas that you have recently been learning more about some of the other cities and how, they're using that in Texas to get affordable housing, which we have not really successfully been doing. Can you speak to you how you're envisioning that part working? And when that would happen in this process, because it's sort of the sooner that happens, The more money you have. And as I understand it if we want

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to make the E T O D S successful, we have to We have to be, shaping them and the value capture is really one of the shape ways that that's being done and really different ways in other cities than how we've been thinking about. So I when we say value capture, at least from my party kind of describe this way it planning conferences lately that includes things like trading entitlements for community benefits. But are you are so you speaking talking about like her. I'm talking about like a tiff fritters. So we have definitely there is there are tools related to kind of innovative gap financing that are listed in the toolkit

with the description and Tiff. Hers is not the only innovative financing kind of gap financing tool out there. There's also some rotating loan funds through the build America Grant program that we've heard a lot about recently. And I think the plan is to kind of continue having conversations with our partners in the Financial Services Department and with other city departments,

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including economic development and a D. C that do this kind of community that's kind of work to provide that sort of layer. Capital and figure out value capture to identify whether there are stations that would make sense for those tools. At this point, I know that you know, I am not the I'm not the expert on tax increment finance. I do know that our financial services department has, some fiscal policies in place that are in place for very good reasons to keep us, solid and solvent as a city, and so the conversations will need to include the financial services department. But we have had The initial conversations as part of the work to develop the toolkit. And envision those conversations will continue. Thank you. Did you want to answer? No I was just going to say I mean, we're happy if there are additional questions that you want to submit through Q and a. We're happy to work with fst to try to get those answers before the Thursday meeting. Yeah, I don't know that they need to be in the Plan for this week. As much as I wanted to make sure

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that we were Really looking at those seriously, because you know we're You know that you have a limited time. But there is a time. You know That's another way that you make this happen that if we wait three years to do, it's going to be problematic to be able to leverage it to actually, accomplish any of those goals that were guiding that have to happen from a money money standpoint, correct. Careful, Merivel. This question is from Ms Pine. My understanding is that we're planning on about a 50% federal grant match from the government Is that correct? Yeah Excuse me. Yes That's her current assumption that we're comfortable with you, but we're not guaranteed by any means to get that 50% What are the ranges of federal kind of shares that you've seen out with the new starts projects? So you're right that it's not guaranteed Jose. It's not guaranteed till we signed

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the grant agreement, Really, but 50% has been a pretty reasonable assumption. For most projects of this sort. It really varies a lot, depending on conditions. It can, Be as low as 40% haven't seen too many higher than 50% lately, but it's interesting that there's actually quite a bit of funding for transit projects right now in D. C So, we're kind of tracking that to see how things change. You know certainly what percentage you end up with is dependent on the merits of the project, certainly, but also other things

like the nature of the congressional appropriations. And what are the other projects in the pipeline that you're competing against? So not all things that are in your control because the land use policy aspect is one of those areas that is actually within your controlled influence. And I appreciate that. And if that chart that

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you were showing with different kind of the scoring metrics, I mean land use economic development. Environmental benefits were all on their at 16, 16 and 16. I mean, so just by my just eyeballing that chart, you know if you have good land use Then that's good economic development, and that also produces good environmental outcomes. So, I just wanted to really emphasize that you know again. We don't have you know hard numbers on what this whole project is gonna cost yet, But the difference between like a, you know, 45% imagine a 50% match of 55% match. I mean, that could be in the hundreds of millions of dollars is that correct? Yes it certainly could be, so I just really want to emphasize that point because what we're doing now in our E T O D policy could you know bring us hundreds of millions of dollars and again? I mean, that could mean You know an extra station and you know what I mean? I could do that affects the scope of the

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project and how much we can build in all of that, So I just really want to emphasize that what's a good and I know you all have to go in about, like, five minutes or so, Yeah, but what's a good example of light rail land use planning? Like what other cities would you look to and say they did a good job with their new starts plan? Oh, well, that's a tough one. I think because a lot of it has to do with intentionality right that you are putting a policy in place to support your these are mutually reinforcing investments and policies between the transit investment land use, affordable housing parking. You know all of these factors. So I think the cities that have been most successful have had that. Kind of comprehensive view on how it all fits together . And have, you know kind of tended towards action. You kind of moved through the process so that and just in terms of being competitive for federal funds, that's all part of, everything that you're doing the position

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the project to be most successful. Well, thank you . Just a couple of quick, you know, comments really, But I really appreciate council member Allyson alters comments both about prioritizing the light rail planning. As opposed to again, I mean, it's all important, but the light rail planning involves bringing down you know billions, you know, in federal dollars, and the light rail planning is really has the potential to be transformative. So my sense would be the same That that I mean, if I have to pick and

choose, you know what to work on first. What to prioritize. I picked, you know, light rail, stops over anything else, And I also really appreciate the tourist comment. Ah. We're going to have to put in a lot of infrastructure investment into the corridor . I know there's been discussions with watershed about but you know potential. Like, you know, Watershed improvement. There's a lot of things. I mean, when we're tearing up the street to build a light

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rail that's going to be really expensive. But, you know, while we're doing that we have the opportunity to make additional improvements around there and the question and it's a great timing and we should probably do it. But where do we get the money? Then That's not the Terry money can't go to, you know, watershed improvements. So I kind of look over to the some kind of tours around. You know, the light rail kind of map, and we can use that for infrastructure improvements. We can use that for affordable housing . So and again to her comment, The sooner we do it the better, I was talking with singular black. On the reconnect Austin and stuff and you know, he was How do we pay for, you know, caps on. I 35 that kind of stuff like that. He was like, you know that we need to do a tourist on around. You know, the I 35 the portion is going to get redeveloped and he was like the time to do the terms was 10 years ago. And I mean, I think he's right. So with two that I think we need to take a

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really hard look at, you know the infrastructure investment that we need to make around the light rail and how we're going to finance it, And I think the sooner that we make those decisions, the more value we capture. So again. I appreciate those comments from councilor broader and just noted, and will work with financial services on that. Can I add one thing? Sure. Just in the because you asked sort of about national examples. I didn't want to acknowledge that our partners at capital Metro did work with their consultant team to put together some best practices as part of the Equitable TOD work that are available on the website that look at places like Seattle. San Jose, Denver, Raleigh, Atlanta To come apart Langley Park, Maryland as well as Chicago, which is really sort of the origins of the idea of this kind of equitable TOD plan that we looked to as well. And on the point of sort of tools and tools, I think the point that the Equitable TOD policy plan that we're presenting this week is making is that we need all the tools in the toolbox. No . One tool is going to get us to where we need to go. And so really, you know, we're hopeful that we're setting ourselves on a course of synchronizing and

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using the various tools that we do have at our disposal to make the vision of equitable. TOD a reality in Austin. Thanks Thank you. And thank you all for a really good discussion. I think the whole counsel I can

speaking for the whole council that we appreciate the level of detail. You obviously want to say something. You want to say one thing. The information I sent to you last night. I'm gonna whip it into a memo and send it out through official distributions and loaded his back up to the items. So everyone will have access to it. That's great. And before everybody leaves, and I know people got planes to catch, But if you're if you're with Capital Metro and you're here today to help us out, would you stand up? Yeah. There they are. Yeah. Good. I just want to recognize you all for taking time to be with us today. There's a lot of folks working on this and helping us out. So thank you all. I hope there's not any traffic going to the airport. Thanks. Okay

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members that will take us to a discussion on item number 22. That item was pulled by council member Ryan Alter. And while staff is coming up, is there going to be All recognize council member Ryan Alter. I just have a very brief question related to this as it pertains to prioritization or how we're choosing. What gets funded from the capture of these Funds, you know that we have the exhibit that kind of talks about All the various options of things that we're going to do with these funds. I'm just curious can hang on to your conversations until you get outside. It would help us. Thank you. Who will be making these decisions. Is there a prioritization list that we'll just go down? How does that work? You know? Good morning. Good

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morning Council members. Richard Mendoza, interim transportation director. And thank you for your question. Council member also joined by assistant director. Mr. Segura and then, Jason Redford, parking manager. Okay certainly. Yeah. The proposed parking management, trash trip parking management district is set up so that revenues that are derived from that, that parking district can then be reapplied into infrastructure improvements and, right now. The process is that the Transportation Department works with the community. To identify those mobility improvements. Typically they're around safety, extension of sidewalks, crosswalk improvements. You know, bike path safety connecting to transit. Ah and it varies. And so the process is we work with the community. We

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work with all the stakeholders to develop a candidate list of improvements. Of course, you know, it's dependent on the revenue that we derive and once funded. Then we assigned a project manager and move forward with those improvements. Well, I had an individual asked me specifically about sidewalks, and so you touched on that just wanted to understand how the if there was any kind of prioritization or one number. I think you touched on it, so that's all got. Just appreciate it. Thank anybody else got

anything. Yes, Councilor Pool. This is on a different item now. Oh well, let's go to the other items, All right? Anybody got any questions on this item? Great Thank you all for being here. Appreciate that. Mayor. I just wanted to note on item 25, which our colleague, Council member Ryan Alter is bringing and that's the Charter Review Commission amendments. And we really have to be proactive in this area, and that's why I would

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like to have my name added in support of this item to be one of the co sponsors. That would be okay with the bringer of the resolution. Always I appreciate it, and I know you've done some work on this and appreciate working with you on it. Very good. Thank you so much. Thank you. Council member That'll take style. The next item, which is a sorry can't remember. Fuentes apologize Similar to what customer Pool just brought up Consumer report. I believe you have an item on creating an equitable plan related to charging stations. E V charging stations. And I also wanted to requested to be a co sponsor on that. I would be thrilled to have you as a co sponsor. We will add you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Tim. Can I jump in on co sponsoring that as well? Absolutely Thank you. Mayor Pro tem. Happy to have you on board Morales and alter this maybe not the right timing since Mr Bela and Mr Miss Harper Medicine or not. Okay. I just wanted to go back to the E T. O D. F people are

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proposing amendments that we need to see them asap. It's not. It's a super complicated plan and Adding some last minute. Thing on Thursday, I think is, I'm not going to be well received by the community, So I just really want to encourage you that if you are bringing amendments that We're getting those well in advance so that people can can comment, in their comments to us on on Thursday, and I was playing picking you too, because I had talked about having amendments. Other people may also be and that's considered I was going to send out. Probably not until tomorrow morning. The typical email that I sent out that tells you how Things might go on Thursday , and that was one of the things that I was gonna ask, is that We try If there's going to be a lot of amendments, as we know we moved better when we've seen him in in advance, So please and I'll try to coordinate from a presiding position position how we lay those

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out and let everybody know how those will get laid out.% Probably won't be able to do that in advance of the meeting, depending upon how the amendments come. But certainly at the meeting like we did last week, council member Kelly Thank you very much. Council member Pool for item 27. I will be posting two amendments that my staff and I put together yesterday on the message board today so that

you can take a look at them and council member of Ella. I responded to your message Board post, So thank you very much. In that same spirit, I do. We're working on an amendment. We have not , finalized it yet, but I want to set some goals around the populations that we want to see around. The that to me is just a huge missing element of the plan . And we're working on it, so we will be coming forward with some kind of amendment regarding firming up the You know the population densities that we want to see around the light rail stations in particular. Anything else before we go to the briefing. I'll now

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call up the briefing on the climate equity plan. Boom. Just to remind the staff that We've been given an ascent incentive to be brief. Little reward. I'll just remind you that this is a council like this is a council mandated quarterly briefing to the full council . From direction from council, So there are some of us who really do believe that this is important. I know I do. Well, Good morning, Marian Council. We'll see if we can strike a perfect balance there. Jason Alexander, chief of staff for the city manager's office. We are here in front of you today to do just that. Give you a very quick briefing on the implementation of our climate equity plan, just by way of quick background for some of the new members. This was a plan adopted by City Council in late 2021.

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It is. It outlines our climate goals in the different strategies that will be using to achieve those goals. Late about this time last year, we were in front of this body and committed to and have since begun doing quarterly updates on specific sections of that planet is broken up into five focus areas. Today we are going to be briefing you on one of those focus areas that the natural systems With me today are Zach Bomber our interim chief Sustainability officer . He and his team are the ones that kind of shepherd and convened. This work can be in the different departments together to fulfill the work involved. Katy Coin assistant Director for Watershed Protection Department and also our environmental officer, and then Andrew Smiley with tree folks, one of the key partners in this particular focus area today. So with that, I'm gonna ask Zach to take us to the slides. Great Thank you very much. Jason Heimerich Council. I'm Zach Bomber. So let's get going on this briefing. So the

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outline for the presentation today is I'm going to cover some overview topics sort of the big picture of what's in the climate equity plan to get everybody up to speed, then community sport and community engagement in our efforts to address climate change are essential. So we have Andrew Smiley, who's going to talk about some efforts there and then Katy coin is going to take it the rest of the way and talk about efforts at Watershed protection, Austin Water development Services and Parks. So the city of

Austin climate Action goes all the way back to 2007. That was the first major initiatives that were passed by City Council to address climate change. Fast forward up to 2015 was the first Austin community climate plan. 2019 was ah, was. The climate emergency resolution . Then city staff worked with hundreds of community members between 2019 and 2021 to create the Austin climate Equity plan, And this plan is meant to address climate change and the sources of emissions that cause

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climate change, as well as racial equity issues in our community and the confluence and the connection between those topics. Really important part of this plan. That was adopted with resolution. 99 was this goal to reach net zero community wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 . So those are the emissions that are caused by the burning of fossil fuels and trying to get to using close to zero fossil fuels. And so we can by 2040 also passed on that same day in 2021 of Resolution. 1 10 , which set priorities, from council. One of which was to have these quarterly briefings on implementation of the plan. It's really important to remember, when implementing activities and actions related to climate change that this is not something that the city can do entirely on its own. This absolutely involves. Action all the way through the city organization, especially with departmental action, which you're going to hear about today, but even more importantly, to get to zero emissions community wide. We have to have engagement with the

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community support from the community and action really be taken being taken by individuals , businesses nonprofits to get those activities spread through our community to get off fossil fuels and be pulling down more carbon from the atmosphere. So what's in the climate Equity plan? I'm just going to hit on a couple of overview slides, because we have some new City Council members. There are 17 quantitative goals in the climate equity plan focused on reaching, Quantitative metrics by 2030. There are 74 strategies , which are focused on the next five years and the climate equity plan in itself. Has. All of these golden strategies, but it really fits in a constellation of other plans. So Austin Energy's plans Project Connect Awesome Water zero waste , land use plans, transportation . All of those other planes fit together with the climate equity plan to really make our sort of comprehensive city approach to address climate change. So five

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sections in the climate equity plan that addressed the major sources of emissions in our community, So the first one is consumption of goods, food and products. Second one is sustainable buildings, so all of the energy natural gas that we use in buildings section three is natural systems, which we're going to go

through in detail today. Natural systems meeting. Everything around us that's pulling carbon out of the atmosphere for it to grow and then two sections on transportation, transportation, land use and transportation, electrification. It So why natural systems natural systems are The trees, the plants, the landscaping, the rivers, the, the creeks, the riparian areas, agriculture, wildland areas, everything around us, the ecosystems that create sort of life as we know it. All of those systems use carbon oxide for food and if we can enhance the activities of those natural systems, they will pull more carbon dioxide down from the atmosphere. So they not only save energy on our buildings, they capture carbon. They clean our air. They clean our water. But they really help, all sort

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of humans in our community have better quality of life outcomes as they as they interact in outdoor spaces and parks, etcetera. So there are four quantitative goals in the natural systems section. One of them is great out the great out. Action is going to be covered and picked up in our food and product consumption presentation when we when we hit that one and another quarter this year But the three major goals that you're going to hear about today and hear about activities there were implementing to reach our protecting additional carbon pools, 20,000 acres of carbon pools and natural lands in our community. I'm achieving at least 50% citywide tree canopy cover by 2050 and done in an equitable way. And then forth, including all city owned lands like Wildlands and parks under land management plans. No result in neutral negative carbon emissions. So those are the sort of general topics you're going to hear about, and our other presenters are going to talk about how we're going to get there. So next Andrew from Tree

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Fox. Yeah Zack. Thank you. And, Mr Mayor, City Council, appreciate the opportunity to be here. I've gotten a chance to meet a lot of folks at some of the folks events and we appreciate your support and encouragement and really a pleasure to meet some of the new folks to, for people who aren't familiar with three folks. We really started as a small group of neighbors planting trees about 30 years ago. And that has grown into a multifaceted approach to addressing climate change. And and tree canopy coverage in the area. The climate plan the climate , equity plan really parallels a lot of the work that tree folks is doing currently and we were. We were happy to be able to contribute to the development of this section of the climate plan. Specifically treat folks organizes up to about 20 different tree. Community tree planting projects every

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year, including several on watershed protection lands and others at schools and parks, libraries, other public spaces. We also we also are involved in floodplain restoration where we're planting between 50 and 75 acres of central Texas flood plain land every year. And then enrolling that land into carbon credit. Programs and the carbon credits and then traded to the city to help with our zero net carbon goals. True folks also distributes trees to neighbors to plant in their own yards, anywhere from 5000 Up to about 7000 trees are distributed every year to Austin Energy customers to plant in their own yards. And everything that we do from the tree planting here in the community, the larger scale reforestation and floodplain, The tree distribution all includes an educational component. And of course it's all about the trees. But it's also all about the folks. So

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there's also a community engagement element where we mobilized about 1000 volunteers every year to help do this work. So, obviously this, this work is all in, is made possible really, by a lot of our partnerships with the city, and I wanted to point out a few of those specifically today, we worked really closely with the office of Sustainability on our carbon plus credits program to trade the credits from reforestation to the city. They're they're kind of locally grown and organic credits if you can compare from the from local food systems work. We We also worked really closely with the watershed Protection department that identifies our ready set plant. Community tree planting projects along creeks streams along the river here in Austin, We also work with Austin Energy to distribute trees as I mentioned five to up to 7000

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trees every year. That's funded in part by by Austin Energy. We worked with the development Services department on a couple of long term contracts and also shorter term grants to achieve a lot of our work and then were housed at Hornsby Bend, which is just an amazing facility of folks haven't visited, we've been out at Hornsby Bend for about 20 years and hope to be there. Well for a lot longer. Ah so those are just a few of the relationships that we have with our city department. So I should mention too, that we procure trees and work in partnership with pard to do tree plantings as well. So our goals are shared with the city as far as reaching this 50% tree canopy coverage and we're going to do this by continuing the work that tree folks does in partnership with the city. I think we've made great progress so far, and we'll continue with more trees on public lands, more tree protections and mitigations, more community tree plantings

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getting the public involved because again, not just about the trees. It's about the folks to promoting tree health and then using data that's provided from the city and other sources to really help drive the investments that we're able to make in our urban tree canopy and towards climate resilience. So thank you all for the opportunity to share that information. Good morning, Mayor and council. My name is My name is Katie Coin. I'm your city, Boston environmental officer and assistant director of Watershed protection. Ah, this is truly one of the best examples we have in our city of a one city success story . Ah, this is departments working together toward this implementation work. But even beyond that, working with community members working with organizations like tree folks, so I can't understate the importance of those ongoing partnerships. Ongoing collaboration amongst city departments, even even my role in this began prior to my journey as city staff as a private citizen, I served as co lead of the steering committee. Ah for this project, and so

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it's fantastic to be able to come full circle to speak about this now. So I'm going to dive into Austin's urban forest. As was mentioned earlier. I'm presenting on behalf of a number of different departments. We also have representatives from those departments. If we have questions. Ah but I will. I will do my best with all of this. So we have about 30% of our city shaded by trees. Currently, you can see that map on the right the boundary of which is all of the watersheds that touch the city of Austin are shown in that map in green, you can see the distribution of tree canopy is not equitable in the city. Ah that's not news to any of you. I'm sure but that that is a huge disparity that we can remedy by Also furthering these climate goals of ah of planting enough to get to 50% canopy cover by 2050. So that goal specifically can be furthered by continuing to enforce our regulations are tree protection and planting regulations are some that are very, very much to be proud of.

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We look at also opportunities to increase canopy cover in right of way in capital improvement projects. We just had a conversation about it, Todd, We have a lot of work happening around transportation right now . Working with Corridor Program office, working with Project Connect, looking at opportunities in those corridors to actually increase our tree planting efforts is a huge win win. Not just for climate but also to reduce urban heat island effect and have some of those co benefits of having a functioning urban ecosystem. At the same time as a functioning transit system. Ah we also look at how we can prioritize tree planting more equitably. So ah, this work very specifically has set up goals around equitable planting that look east to try to remedy some of those disparities. Ah and like we've already mentioned those P three public private partnerships are going to continue to be important, not just for planting, but also for education and increased stewardship. Diving into watershed protections work. We are updating our strategic plan , and so this is called rain to river. You can find out more about this plan at rain to river

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80 X ah .com. Ah this is the first time we've substantively updated. Our strategic plan is a department in 20 years. It's also the first time that we've had a chance to really meaningful E incorporate. Climate Ah, justice and environmental justice, really racial equity at the core of this plan, and that is so important. We're really following the lead of the climate equity plan, which I have to say is one of the best examples nationwide of a climate action plan that integrates racial equity at its core, So that is something very much to be proud of. Ah so we're taking a lot of cues from that in our rain to river plan. We're currently an engagement for this . I believe Council member Fuentes gave us a huge shadow when we came to present on rainy river engagement earlier in the fall. Ah this is as someone coming from urban planning, private sector work. The engagement we're doing on this plan is best practice. Times Times, 10. Ah again some of the best engagement we've done as a city really looking at how we're

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going to guide departmental planning operations, all of the work of the department for years to come. One other item I wanted to talk about related to watershed. Is there black Line Prairie Stream Court or study? So not only have we had some disparate outcomes in terms of trees, and our tree canopy East and West, we also just haven't had as much science that really covers the black line. Prairie ecosystem Out east. It's a very different ecosystem than what we have to the West. And so we have made sure that we put effort and funding toward understanding that ecosystem better so that when we're asked to make decisions about how we change regulations, how we protect that ecosystem differently, we have the science to back it up. So this study, talked talks about how there are a lot of Hyperion areas to the east in black Lynn prairies that are in poor condition. And I want to mention that that's that's despite having relatively low development, we know that's actually where we have so much of our development pressure. Now that if we already have poor ecosystems, we need to pay attention to these now before

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they get worse and worse. We also need more stewardship for these ecosystems to recover. These are places where we've had so much deforestation East that there aren't enough trees to provide the seed source for these ecosystems to heal themselves, so we need to help them along a little bit more. We also know because of deforestation that in eastern ecosystems in this black line, prairie soils can't stabilize themselves. It's not that rocky ecosystem where even if you don't have trees to the West, soils can hold on to Ah onto itself and not erode. Ah, so we need more tree planting to help with erosion Problems East as well. So some of the key actions that came out of this really look at revising some of our regulations to provide equitable protection for East side ecosystems. It's not going to be exactly the same as Westside two different ecosystems. Ah one other item is really meant making sure we're looking at this in Ranger River, making sure that we're looking east at opportunities for restoration.

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We want to improve management. Want to look for opportunities to protect land in in good condition and other opportunities to protect and restore land That maybe is in poor condition so really looking at adding to that goal of 20,000 additional acres protected by 2050. Really focused on black line prairie. Moving on to Austin Water. These are some historic winds that can you continue to be managed, with climate in mind, and so Austin Water wildlands conservation balconies. Kenyan lions was a visionary plan that came out of the 19 eighties. We have about a little over 32,000 acres in protection. That is protecting our drinking water. Supply. Ah there is restoration that's actively occurring. That really is looking to further our ecosystem service goals to further our climate resilience to maximize the amount of carbon we're able to sequester in these lands. So Austin Water continues to build that opportunity for these lands to function well and

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also be opportunities for communities to engage in nature. Another example of protected lands that that are under under Austin waters, purview or the water quality protection land, So ah, these were established in 1988 created to protect the Barton Springs recharge. A lot of that recharge 30% of it is actually coming from Onion Creek . A lot of our current acquisition efforts are focused on Hays County. And again. This is furthering those those acquisition goals as part of the climate equity plan. A little bit more about our restoration efforts from Austin Water. A lot of this is focused on cave restoration, seed collection and climate resilience. There's a lot of opportunities for education. We're looking at how we can enhance the way our aquifer is recharged to the West . And I believe, are really looking at making sure that we're updating that 10 year management plan with climate in mind. Getting into pard. Hopefully I'm keeping this as brief as briefing can be, part are parks. Our future long range plan? Is, the strategic plan for

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the Parks and Recreation Department to guide Ah, from 2020 to 2030 the way that department functions operates plans acquires land, etcetera. One of the biggest wins, I can say for part is that ah since the 2018 parks bond and with Parkland, dedication, either land or fee and Lou 460 additional acres of Parkland have been acquired since 2018 and that has resulted in 40,000 additional residents within walking distance to a park. That's a huge win. So not only are we protecting land, which helps us with our climate goals were also increasing quality of life for our residents. Ah We also wanted to talk about some of our partnership opportunities . Some of our community partnerships programs. Ah, Ah. And so these are key opportunities where our residents are interacting with these spaces. We know that results

in better long term stewardship when people feel connected to their neighborhood, their community to their ecosystem, so things like activated park projects opportunities for Children to connect with nature Nature play

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guidelines that have been published and established as part of the Parks Department are all huge wins for that. And Austin Civilian Conservation Corps, I know has been a priority for council in the past partisan, the process of hiring two full time permanent positions, and continuing to engage in work there. Looking Historically, though, there's still a lot of work to be done in terms of the way Parkland and conserved land is distributed in this city. This statistic is jarring 87, a half percent of conserved land and 98, a half percent of restored land is west of I 35. That's a huge number. Ah and so again, driving home this point that we need to focus east on tree planting on acquisition on climate goals on ecosystem, restoration on access to parks and access to nature. This is a huge opportunity. Ah just one more update. Land management plan is something that part part has been working

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on. That really looks at how we're going to address. Ah making sure that we are managing those East side lands that we do have with equity in mind and so really looking at how we're addressing climate vulnerability through the way we manage our Parkland. As well as looking at priorities based on some key factors, so part is using social vulnerability Index ah, and really looking at environmental risk and environmental vulnerability whose most vulnerable to major climatic events or environmental disasters as well as some chronic issues like urban heat or local flooding, etcetera. And how do we align that with the way we invest in our parks is a key way that they're starting to really think. Bigger about what Parkland can do for our residents. All right. So that land management plan I believe it's, going to y'all sometime this spring in draft form that will really look to rethink how we're thinking about resilience and health of those natural

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areas. And we'll align with a number of our existing plans, including the climate equity plan. Lastly on part we have to mention sustainable sites. Sustainable sites is basically lead the room. Know what lead is like sustainable buildings, lead sustainable sites. If you don't know what it is, it's basically lied for landscapes. This is a certification program to say that the landscape you know you've divined you've designed is sustainable. We are the first city worldwide to incorporate sight the sights rating system into local policy, and we have more participating projects than anywhere else in the world. So that was established in 2021 with the goal of all parks investments. Ah aligning with those sustainable site

schools, Let me get into next steps. So I want to leave you with four key next steps and happy to answer questions. First We believe that it is vital that we create climate and environment focused land management plans for all city owned land. So you're hearing from some of the

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departments that think about this the most part, Austin Water Watershed Development Services. We're thinking about how our lands can function to have a functioning ecosystem. I think we really expanding that work out to all city owned land and really understanding how we can manage all land with these goals in mind. Is going to be critical. Number two ah, an increased focus on Eastern Crescent lands. That was a thread You saw through this entire presentation that that is a vital need, and really listening to and collaborating with community to understand what those needs are. Ah ah and working in collaboration with community organizations. Third remedy disparities in the East west distribution of protective and actively managed public lands. Through land acquisition and funding for increased stewardship and restoration activities. Ah you know, we have a legacy of folks on on on council right now who have Ah, really doubled down on land acquisition efforts historically

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, And it's time for East Side acquisition in the near future. Finally completed equity assessment of City environmental code. This is something that I committed to as a part of our conversations with council member Tovo resolution that asked us to bring back environmental code updates to council were still in phase two of that, but are working this year to scope out what it would look like to do a deep dive assessment of environmental code to make sure that we're not missing opportunities to have more equitable outcomes for East side communities. Thank you. Thank you for that really thorough and brief update. I appreciate it. You know, I really enjoyed it. The focus on preservation of East Side land and one area that you highlighted that is a key component of our natural systems as part of the climate action plan is ah, preservation of farmland, and I saw that list

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about wondering, Can you talk to talk us through? Like what? Like what is the synergy there between wanting to have land acquisition? Understanding Historically, that the East Side land has significant ties to farmland and ranching. One more can the city be doing on that particular strategy? I can take that. Maybe pitch it to Zack if I missed something, but I see all these strategies is very complimentary. If we're to acquire 20,000 additional acres east, I think we need to look at a combination of goals. And so, if we're looking at climate goals we're looking at how lands can sequester more carbon when we restore black Lynn Prairie or when we have regenerative agriculture, which is an economic opportunity, which

has cultural ties to East Side communities. Those both sequester carbon those both Affirm the where ecosystem functions and the way we support our local food systems that is complementary to ah, larger habitat Biodiversity goals. That council member Pool I know has has recently spoken

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about being important scientists onto our international biodiversity targets that we will come back to you in the next eight months or so, to talk more about biodiversity, So there's biodiversity. There's soil carbon. There's habitat goals. In addition to really looking at the way we're having all this focus on transit, having a focus focus on affordable housing , and how do we co locate land acquisition with these goals in mind, with some of those other pieces that are critical to having a resilient city and make sure folks have access to nature access to transit as both infrastructure items that people need to have good quality of life, So it's to me all all come all, Really a unified goal. Yeah, I'll just briefly. Add that, From council direction from over a year ago. We are currently collaborating with Travis County on creating a regional food system plan that just kicked off in the last month, and that plan is going to really dive into

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the details of land acquisition, focused on agriculture and preserving agriculture in not only just Travis County but also the sort of six county region Thank you. Thank you really appreciate your presentation and all the work and, colleagues, this is ah, real passion of mine. This focus on climate change and how we prepare, I think, there's no doubt That climate change is real. We have big, huge snowstorms in California. We had ice storms here. The list kind of goes on and on, and I know that you all share the concern and the urgency of this, In 2019. I let a resolution that declared a climate emergency and it really called in the city manager and our staff to create treat the climate emergency with urgency that it deserves. And you know, laid out a number of things, one of which, was accelerating our targets for

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net zero and carbon emissions. But it also talked about the need to have interdepartmental. Cooperation and, a real focus on how we address climate change. And I think the work that we're seeing today is an example of that. Interdepartmental work is really, really hard. And you know to our interim city manager. I would just really encourage you to maybe take a look back at that resolution. And really think about how with your new fresh eyes how you can support and uplift the work to make it easier on these folks who have been been gallantly working so hard to try to advance these issues. And I think there's a lot of ways that the city manager's office could support that work. In new ways that was really allow us to take the plan, which as our staff mentioned just is considered one of the best plans in the country and really help us

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to implement it. A plan is only as good as its implementation. Which is why I sponsored the implementation resolution for This as well. And you know, that has, Some elements that I think are not yet, being implemented. We had asked for a mid year Budget amendment, which we really didn't get a mid year Budget amendment. The climate equity plan has fallen in the budget process year after year at a point where it's not getting funding in the budget. It's coming up in September, and we've just done our budget. And we really need to think about where we need to invest. And you know, I have some ideas from what I've heard, but I would ask. Zachary Jason, if you could speak to sort of some of those resource needs that you have, whether it's bodies or funding. That you think would be really strategic. For us and if you want to focus on the natural systems area because that's

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your focus today, that's fine. But but for me, this is really important for the budget. We've just missed the mark year after year in terms of providing the staff with the research that they need to tackle the challenge that's before us. Well I will first just acknowledge that and just commit that with our new interim city manager that will spend some time with him as we start thinking through the budget process. What those kind of investments look like. I know that, Zack's been kind of work shopping. The different needs with the different partner departments. I can't speak specifically to those right now, but we can certainly get more information on that and be happy to brief you and others as well. Yeah, I just had, to what? Jason mentioned that we are having these cross departmental workshops and all five of the sections of the plan to help departments create priorities. Create budget asks to go into the budget process for this year. We're

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also looking to, create hopefully another sort of net zero summary as part of the proposed budget like we did last year, Because a lot of these things are specific climate equity plan projects, but many of the projects that get funded End up being rolled into department budgets and rolled sort of into things that don't really look like climate change or look like , you know, tagged as the climate equity plan, but are , so our hope is to make sure we pull out those things and highlight and communicate better on those, So, it's easier to see and more accessible. I might add that you're from Katy. You're from watershed management. Correct. Yes that's an enterprise fund. So I mean, I think there's what and you talked about the need. You know, when we think about Parkland east of 35. What really Talking about is open space. And if there is a connection to a drainage system that we can that we can make an investment in that can preserve the water quality in those areas. The drainage

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department or the Watershed Department has an obligation to try to figure out what the capital program ought to look like. What capital investment to look like. And I would encourage you to work with Jorge. Along with Jason to figure out whether there's a way to connect those dots to deal with that issue. Absolutely We can definitely talk to Director Morales more and work with y'all on that, but point taken using watershed funds , Usually using their funding for that work is something that we're Really looking into more, including black player prairie restoration to East so just had a conversation with part staff and watershed staff about what that might look like in collaboration, recognizing that they don't always have the resources, But we might, And if I can speak to your point, you know beyond just budget. We need funding to acquire land and I don't want to speak to what that mechanism is. I think we need guidance from y'all on on what that could be. But 20,000 acres is a lot of acreage We've committed to that if we wanted to buy carbon credits

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on the global market to offset the equivalent of that 20,000 acres would be a lot of money and we're not going to get any of the co benefits. That we would get if we acquired it locally. Ah, and there is a race to acquire Land East right now, so that that to me is the most critical piece that we need to have conversations about. Thank you. I appreciate that. And I'll just for those of you who are new to the diocese Just underscore that are pregnant . Dedication rules, by land where we're developing, and that development is happening a lot on the East side. And so it is putting that Parkland on the East side. Part is not up here, but they're in the room. I don't know that I need them to speak to this, But I do want to flag the land management plan which came out of our 2019 wildfire audit, will be coming back to us that will need funding and resourcing for staffing . They have two people in the land management division or something like that. And they're also working on homelessness. We saw the destruction in our parks

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from the trees with the ice storm that is going to take months. I was just over at Great Hills Park and you know they had crews out there and Crews. We're going to be there for days. Just to be able to cut down the trees, let alone take the trees that debt debris out. So there's an enormous amount that we need to do for the land management that links not just a climate change, but also our climate preparedness and our and our medication risk. I also wanted to ask about the overarching strategies. So you said you're having you're having meetings about the five goals but one of the ways that was really unique about this plan. Is it set out? Don't remember. It's three or five. Overarching strategies about how we were going to accomplish this. And one of the things that I found problematic in our budget last year is that one of

the key mechanisms is to create green jobs, which is also you know, beneficial from an equity standpoint, it's super important, for us to be able to deliver on this plan, And yet there were no

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investments in the proposed budget. From the city manager with respect to new investments into green jobs , and we had passed this, the September before there was not a midyear amendment, as we'd asked for that, so can you speak to how you're working on The green jobs or some of the other overarching strategies and what you might need their, to really make those happen. Sorry about that. Kymberley Mcneely serving as the parks and recreation director. So the Parks and Recreation Department has something called the HPC program, the Austin Civilian Conservation Corps. It is a green job Workforce program. We have,

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at this particular point in time. We have, Well, it's been something that we've we've put into in place. I think two years ago it recently transferred. It didn't recently transitioned over to the Parks and Recreation Department last year were in the process of hiring two full time positions. One is already higher than the other is advertised in closes on Friday, those as a program manager who manages the entire program, who will try to continue to make sure that the program is sustainable, puts together the policies. Also make sure that we have sustainable funding and in multiple ways , and then we have also the coordinator who is running crews. And so right now we have, we have an internal pathways program where we're working specifically with the other departments and within our own department to be able to hire individuals to perform work on our own Parkland or in in ways that are benefiting our our fellow departments. And we have, 31 youth staff that

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work in their internal pathways program. And then we also work with the American Youth works, and so you'll see a contract that's coming before you a certificate of exemption that will come before you on Thursday, and that is for land management crews that will go out and do land management work throughout the park system and other lands on Watershed protection land on Austin Waterland. Through the American Youth works, and it is also a youth youth. Workforce Development Program and the Thing about this particular program as we are targeting underserved communities we are targeting , groups of individuals who are not normally representative in the green jobs. Our arena and we're trying to ensure that those individuals received the job skills and the training that's appropriate that will help them then be able to apply for full time jobs. So that's just In a nutshell. The a Triple C program and we hope to provide you a larger update after we get

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the program manager hired on and we're able to execute many of the plans that are in place you wanna have them if you want me to. I can also just speak generally about watershed protection and also some of our community partners as again this is community and city, not just city. We have some amazing organizations like Austin Youth River Watch urban roots that does urban egg work, that that are supported by the city. For instance, Austin Austin Youth River Watch has funding that it receives annually from watershed protection. And what they do is they train youth, and environmental science in a variety of different ways. And so that is worth that we continue to support. I will also say that Many conversations between myself and the assistant director Phil operations in the water should Protection Department . So that's Ramesh. So I mean, Nathan, we have a lot of conversations about how we can better build up our green infrastructure and land management teams with equity in mind. And that is a core green jobs function within watershed. Thank you

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. So the manager, I We also have a, Report that U T did on the UT on green jobs, which indicated that Green jobs were really big growth area for our city. And they planned out several different ways that we could build up our green jobs infrastructure in the city. Whether it was city led, or or not. Hr policy is one of those mechanisms and, obviously I'm big fan of the Triple C, but there are other things that we need to be doing. And the absence of investments in green jobs, which was one of the overarching strategies that was supposed to be, allowing us to implement this plan. You cannot implement a climate equity plan. If you don't have people who can take on those jobs and you cannot do it equitably. If you're not bringing in people into that workforce, you don't have access to those jobs. We also as you know, have a retention and recruitment challenge. And through the programs with a triple C, working with our departments and through other mechanisms, it is a great way to be bringing in those people and addressing

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the needs so that not every department has to be a master of Or that's the wrong word. The has to know how to do, equity and know how to recruit folks in that way, and you can centralize things that solves a lot of contracting problems, but there's an enormous opportunity there and it is critical if we want to implement this plan. We'll be happy to follow up. Thank you. Yes, ma'am, And I just like to add really quickly. If you don't mind just to speak to the efficacy of some of these programs, so anecdotally tree folks has hired several individuals that have gone through the Austin Youthworks program, including several who are now in leadership positions with the organization. So I would say as far as

creating Green, already green workforce. Austin Youthworks is doing the work. We also participated recently in an a triple C green jobs accelerator with the focus on on creating equity in those job training programs , and that has enabled us to

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now incorporate green jobs training. Efforts into some of our into some of our newer initiatives like our seats, two trees, pipeline to harvest seeds and to actually start our own native tree nursery again with in partnership with a triple C to create those jobs and get people ready to then enter the workforce and go even beyond what tree folks can offer, so it's working. I have a question a few questions as it relates towards the generations side of Emissions. I'm not exactly sure who here I would target that, too. But . What I am trying to understand. And as your present this update You know, there's no discussion of generation. And my.

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Rudimentary understanding of where we are is that we are off track largely due To generation. Particularly. Our continued investment in coal generation. And so. I want to both understand. If we did everything you're putting forward and everything you're suggesting , and we don't solve that piece of the equation. Can we even ever get to the goals in this plan, and especially look at the dashboard? You know when I click on The various years of where we're supposed to be clicked on 2030. And our . Emissions from electricity dramatically shrinks. But how can we do that? If we are continuing to Invest in a power plant that makes that not possible, so I'm am flagging that as just something that I don't. I

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don't feel like it always has to be part of the conversation. But separately. I'm wondering if in the future we can have kind of breakouts of similar to what we see in the strategic housing blue blueprint. Here are various buckets of things, whether it's green jobs, whether it is electricity refrigerant, however, you wanna break it out. But where are we? Are we on track? Are we off track? Are we meeting our goals? Are we not? So that we can continually see How we're doing. And if we're where we need to adjust so I guess that's more common than question, But Ah, I just want to put that out there. Yeah So, let's see. So we report our Total community wide emissions annually and we update the dashboard of implementation of all the strategies in the plan annually, so all that information is provided online, in terms of the specific electricity

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generation, Austin Energy will have to answer that question. But they are our emissions have been dropping. Community wide, primarily due to Austin, eight Austin Energy's renewable investments in energy efficiency investments. We didn't touch on that topic today because the climate equity plan is so large that we're sort of going piece by piece, but we will. We will make sure that we hit on that that portion of the plan in in future briefings Council member. I think that's that's an issue on our to do list with respect to the Austin energy, just so you know, one of the things that is an inhibitor. For us to bring in green energy is that we don't have the transmission capability to bring it in. We got we got chokepoints in that transmission from West Texas wind farms, and so we're gonna have to address the capital program to try to address some of that. But it would surprise me that we lost money. Like 33 or four years in a row at Austin Energy, and that is really Red flag from a in terms of

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this is the department. That was not just a jewel within this organization. But it was always healthy. From a financial standpoint, we got our bond rating downgraded because of that, And so that means when we sell paper, we spend more money on interest , and we otherwise would. Those are things that are critical, and we intend to try to bring a report that tries to be holistic with all these issues that were brought today was trying to balance the needs of that very important department for our community. Anybody. Question I'm sorry, Kelly. Thank you so much for your presentation today. Real quick. I just one question, in regards to the American Youthworks program. Can you tell me how many youth have been trained and employed since the start of the program? Oh, my gosh, I cannot

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because I don't have that data with me. But I will get that to you. I actually have a meeting with Leland later today. Leland from my office . Great Yeah. If I could have that That would be very helpful for me to review. Thank you. That's all. Thank you, Councilor. Thank you all for that briefing. Appreciate y'all. With that members, we are I'm at that point in the agenda to go into an executive session. The City Council will now go into a closed session to take up two items. Pursuant to section 551.74 of the government code. The City Council will discuss the following personnel matter number one He won employment duties and evaluation of the interim city manager. Pursuant to say, also pursuant to section 551.71 of the government code. The City Council will discuss legal issues related to item E to the search for an appointment of a new city manager. But the record reflective council member Natasha harper-madison is here. Is there any objection

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to going into executive session on the items announced hearing none. The council will now go into executive session. I will return at the end of the executive session to announce the end of the executive session. For anybody that is watching and paying attention to that. Headed to executive session in the executive session room. Thank you

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good we're out of closed session. In closed session. We discuss personnel matters related to item E one and legal issues related to item each, too. Without objection, the city council in this work session is adjourned.