

City Council Budget Work Session Transcript – 8/1/2023

Title: ATXN-1 (24hr)

Channel: 1 - ATXN-1

Recorded On: 8/1/2023 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 8/1/2023

Transcript Generated by SnapStream

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[10:01:00 AM]

good morning, everyone. I'll call to order the Austin city council for this budget work session. We are. It is 10:00 in the morning. We are meeting in the city council chamber at Austin city hall, which is located at 301 west second street. And it is August 1st, 2023. We have a quorum of the Austin city council present. Members. What we will do this morning at ten is we will have the staff budget presentation and discussion and the other items will be taken up later today at 3:00. And with that, I'll turn it over to the city manager.

>> Yes, mayor, let me quickly hand it off to Kerry. I think you've got just a brief set of comments. And as I understand, before we get into the comments, if you wanted to take that item up before we're not doing that, we'll do everything else at three. All right. Very good, bro .

>> Very good. Thank you. Thank you, mayor and council. I am Kerry Lang. I'm the budget officer for the city and the financial services department.

[10:02:00 AM]

And we are going to give an enterprise department overview today before we get started. I want to kind of go over what the agenda is we're going to last week we had some discussion Ann, and we told you all that we would come back to you with a update on our homelessness response. And so we'll talk about that a little bit. There were some questions about the iconic venue fund as well as small business displacement mitigation. So we'll have a slide to kind of talk through those things and then we'll give you a brief overview again of the all funds and then dive into the department's the enterprise department's

and give those highlights. So when we think about homelessness response and we think about how we've been showing our investments in homelessness response, it is really a, a cross departmental cross funding sources. It's a

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very complex calculation that we look at when we think about the how those sources are made up. It's operating funds, grants, cip, capital dollars. Some are annualized, some are multi year funds. And so when we went back and looked at how we were showing those dollars year over year, we recognized that there was some standardizations that we needed to make sure we put in place when looking at those dollars. And so this slide right here really shows how we worked with the departments to standardize the methodology and calculating our budget estimates and, and is restating some of the dollars that you all saw in the previous in the budget document because it's really showing both appropriation and some prior year spending plans in some cases. And so when you look at this slide, you see that for fiscal year 23, our budgeted spending plan went up about about \$900,000. That is speaking to increased appropriation, increased estimate spending for

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fiscal year 23. When we look at fiscal year 23 estimate, we do anticipate some savings that we're that the departments will see in the estimate. However, the investment that you're seeing in fiscal year 24 is going up to \$80.9 million. And so as we think about how how the departments are or how we implement many of our funding sources, there may be carryover dollars from the previous year. It may be that, you know, some of the funding is grant funding, that's multiyear funding that we're seeing the spending over previous years. And so going forward, we will make sure that we use the standard methodology so that the fluctuations can be discussed the same way year over year. And it hopefully will provide less confusion on how much the city is investing in our homelessness efforts. And then to kind of talk about preserving iconic venues and small businesses as these these

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dollars and this these programs are a part of the economic development department. We committed to bringing more information to this body about these funds and about the programs that are out there. When you look at the iconic venue fund, it was created by a resolution Ann in fiscal year 21 with direction to commit \$2.5 million million dollars annually until we had reached a 15 million. Investment meant to date. We've invested in those funds through several different sources. The hotel occupancy tax rate, as well as the budget stabilization reserve fund in fiscal year 24, we're doing a transfer from the historic preservation fund and you'll see that the \$5.1 million that is budgeted or appropriated for fiscal

year 24 and proposed it is from the historic preservation fund and it is to serve those venues that are that could be displaced, that there

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are locations that have been toured over the years and we're trying to work with with those entities to make sure that they can continue their services is in our community and then when you look at small business mitigation, displacement mitigation, the economic development department is working with small businesses, small businesses with a display mitigation grant. It is up to \$30,000. There are \$603,000 in one time funding in fiscal year 24 for that program. So going into our all funds is again a \$5.5 million operating budget. We've talked about this several times. Our enterprise departments, which we will focus on this this today make up over 60% of the city's operating budget. Again, the utilities are the most Austin water. Austin Austin energy make up 41% of that. And then the remainder of those funds, you can see here,

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we'll talk in detail about all the enterprise funds and what we're seeing in their operating as well as in their capital budgets. So we're going to start with the Austin convention center. The convention center has a \$141.7 million budget proposed for fiscal year 24. It is an increase, \$8.8 million increase in their operating expenditure is based on the number of scheduled events that they plan. They are they have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels and they they anticipate an increased number of events in fiscal year 24. They are also showing an increase transfer to the several funds because of the increase in the hot tax. And so as you will see on this slide, there are increased to all the funds listed here. The venue project, convention center, cultural arts, historic

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preservation and the tourism and promotion fund. When you look at revenue convention center does anticipate increased revenue, partially because of the increased hot as well as the increased number of events that they're anticipating. And as you can see, the hot actually is projected to increase 40% when compared to fiscal year 23. When you when we look at convention center cip plan for this fiscal year for the coming fiscal year, they do have a \$41.7 million spending plan. It is going to be focused on the expansion, the beginning of the expansion of the convention center planning and design is anticipated to begin in fiscal year 24. The full project is anticipated to be \$1.6 billion. There's also work being done at the palmer event center renovation work that's been ongoing and \$6.2

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million is anticipated for fiscal year 24. Then we'll move forward to Austin energy. Austin energy has a \$1.65 billion budget. You will see that their budget is decreasing 2.7, \$20 million is anticipated to increase the transfers to the reserves. And we'll talk about and we'll talk about that a little bit more about how Austin energy is focusing on improving their financial metrics for point \$2 million is to fund the customer energy solutions or conservation rebates and incentives. And then they do show a 33 new temporary to permanent positions in fiscal year 24. That represents the 1.4% increase in their ftes, in their revenue and rates. There

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is an anticipated a proposed 2% increase in base rates and an increase. This results in just a 1% increase in the monthly bill for the typical a customer. Diving a little bit more into their anticipated or their proposed 2% rate increase. This increase is to focus on restoring the financial metrics of the department. The increase will go into their operating cash and reserves to increase that. As you can see by this slide, there are cash position and there their reserves are at critical levels. And so the goal is to increase that and get to a fully funded reserves by fiscal year 26. The goal is to get to a minimum targeting the minimum days cash on hand by fiscal year 28, when we look at that customer impact, even though that two 2% base rate increase is going to result in a 1% increase or \$1 four per month

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for the typical residential customer. And then when we look at as cip spending plan \$262 million that they anticipate spending in fiscal year 24, these are just some of the highlights that we wanted to focus on when we talked about the spending plan, \$79.8 million for the new Austin energy field service center in far northeast Austin. That construction is anticipated to be completed by the second quarter or by calendar year 2025. And then. \$6 million to continue work on hardening the distribution center that that the system excuse me, that is impacted by weather events, extreme weather events. \$31 million estimated total project cost to rebuild the Brackenridge substation and then \$23.8 million to construct the southeast substation. Austin

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resource recovery has a \$126 million budget proposed. That is a reduction and that decrease is primarily based on the expenditures that they experienced in fiscal year 23. In response to winter storm Mario they are converting a or excuse me, convert Singh temporary employees and overtime to maintain

current service delivery. When we look at the rates and revenue for Austin resource recovery, we are showing a decrease in their total revenue. Their rates are increasing \$0.15 for the clean community fee and the curbside collection is increasing \$1.65 per month. There was some questions and about the northeast service center, I think last week and we wanted to show you the Johnny Morris road , the fleet, as well as our are

[10:13:14 AM]

working to build a joint service center. This service center will relieve severe overcrowding and deteriorating of our current facilities. It includes office and warehouse space. There are current steps that that are being taken or some of the next steps that are being taken is the cbre review of the proposed design. We're going to update the financial model audit and finance will take it to audit and finance for a briefing. And then we'll do an rfp and construction phase as well as budget, a budget amendment as needed. This slide here just shows the current conditions at various fleets, fleet services, facilities and these are the facilities that will be replaced with a new northeast service center. For going back to Austin resource.

>> I'm not sure if you can see me. I'm sorry to interrupt you.

[10:14:14 AM]

I'm sorry.

>> Councilmember. I can't because the slides on the screen, I apologize, but do you have a question or a comment?

>> No, I just would like, considerably more. More, information about that last slide.

>> Okay, then. That sounds like a question. Could you provide her with more information on that?

>> Sure. I'd like to know, just in theory. So district one, for example, has all these fleet service sites and sites where we do things that are city held property is I would just like to know more information about exact what the rollout looks like when I mean, I didn't see anything in the terms of timing or. I I deal with fleet services sites and district one in a way

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that I have deep concern. Burns so I would just like to know more in the way of and maybe this is a later conversation, I would just like to know more in the way of like when it's going to happen and what I can provide my constituents in terms of information. Great

>> Mr. Benigno is, I think, prepared to.

>> Council member Ed Benigno chief financial officer we had heard that you were going to have questions about this slide. Kim Olivares my deputy cfo, is meeting with your aide right now to get into some of those details, but we'll also provide the information through a budget question, response.

>> Thank you. I appreciate that . Okay

>> Moving forward with Austin resource recovery, there are cip spending plan for our fiscal year 24 includes the purchase of new and replacement vehicles and equipment for their fleet. The

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aviation department is. A \$305.9 million budget for fiscal year 24 674 ftes. They did lose five positions through the long term vacancy process. When you look at their budget highlights, they are are increasing their expenditures. They're seeing increased expenditures hours on the operating side, including in parking and interfund transfers is 17.3 million contractual and operational expense is because of the increased traffic that they're seeing. When we look at their revenue, they are anticipate seeing an increase in revenue again because of the increase in playing passengers and increased traffic that they're seeing at the airport. Looking at their cip spending plan. And we've talked about this a little bit. They are they have a \$236 million increase spending plan for fiscal year 24. It does include the baggage handling system, modernization,

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modernizing that system. They will begin that in in fiscal year 24. And then it is also inclusive of the continued work on optimizing the Barbara Jordan terminal 9.4 million for the design and construction of two concrete parallel midway taxiways. And so those are some of the some of the highlights for aviation's fiscal year 24 cip plan. Looking at Austin water. Austin water has a \$748.5 million budget for fiscal year 24. They are going to continue to invest in key infrastructure. They have 20 new positions across several different operating areas within their department. They are seeing a continued food investment in their recruiting and retention efforts as well as increased costs related to chemicals and in water treatment process, water treatment, plant processes

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. When we look at their revenue , they do anticipate a 3.7% increase in their revenue for fiscal year 24. This is the first time since fiscal year 27 that they have proposed a rate increase. And actually in fiscal year 20 and excuse me, in fiscal year, this is the first time since fiscal year 17 that they've done an

increase and in fiscal year 18, they actually had a reduction in their rate. And so they're back to the level a little bit above the fiscal year 17 rate that they had at that time, that 80.79 is represented of the fiscal year 23 rate and their increase to 83.44, which is about what they were at fiscal year 17. I will say that those rate increases will not impact their customer assistance programs. There is no proposed increase for that. Those customers and then looking at their spending plan, again, they have Austin water has a

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number of projects that they are working on across the city. This \$26.6 million is for continued work to transition their meters to electronically. The \$20 million investment is in the water systems operations center that center is a 50,000ft² center that they will have several operating functions, including security facilities, a wellness area, maintaining their department operations center. So that is included as well as the south first center south south, first service center. That is one of the spending plan items for fiscal year 24. And then the south Austin region. They also have work on walnut creek, walnut creek water treatment plant. And those investment, as you can see here, \$17.3 million Walkes within development services, you will see this \$109

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million is increase includes the incorporation of the former Austin code department into development services. There are there are ftes as well as their operating functions. And this also includes an increase in funding for consulting services, for permitting process improvements when we look at their revenue, the revenue is anticipate to increase for fiscal year 24 by 8.7. This is primarily due to just increased volume. There are most of the rates and fees related to develop services will remain flat and then in Austin ISD, Austin code, they are anticipating a 1% increase to the clean community fee to their portion of the clean community fee transport and public works. The newly formed department that merged the former transportation department and public works department. Is \$227.9 million.

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This merger includes funding for the ftes, as well as an increase in contractual and material expenses for fiscal year 24. There is a decrease in this overall budget for this joint department because of the creation of the standalone capital delivery services department that we've talked about several times with you that will focus on making sure that these prior projects that the city has in place are moving forward, these capital and bond projects that we're moving forward in a timely manner. The total revenue for the department is \$209.7 million, a 4.5% increase. And again, for the transportation user fee, we are not proposing a change in that fee for fiscal year 24. For the spending plan for the transportation and public works department is a 296.5 million. This is a result of planned spending in many of our bond

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programs that we just mentioned. So this includes 2016, 2018, and 2020 bond programs. This 243.9 million is going to be several projects across the city, which include street rehabilitation and trail expansion, improvements to bridges and culverts. So just very various improvements and reconstruction across the city for that program. And then there's the 11 million, \$11 million design and construction for mobility and safety improvements on state highway loop 360, as well as the long, long horn down 25.3 million total project that anticipates spending of 5.3 million in fiscal year 24. The watershed protection department. Has \$114.6 million, an increase of 1.8% for that department. They are anticipating an increase in vegetation and creek cleanup for

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fiscal year 2411 position burns are going to be added to the department for creek cleanup. Again, pond maintenance storm drain modeling and then the revenue for the department. They are anticipate rating a increase in the drainage utility charge. So they're anticipating a \$110 million revenue, a 8.7% increase in the revenue. And again, this is for watershed. This is their first rate increase since 2017. Looking at their cip spending plan, they have several projects that we want to highlight today, the confluence project at walnut creek at \$14 million was Roy Guerrero park channel stabilization at \$12.3 million little walnut creek continued work at 4.3 million, and then \$2 million to upgrade drainage infrastructure for along the oak knoll area. So as we talk about

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all of the enterprise funds and their changes, we always want to come back to the typical ratepayer slide and how those changes impact that typical ratepayer. All the charges, all the monthly changes are listed here for. I will note that when you look at the property tax bill, I know I gave some communication on yesterday about the property tax bill and the changes that receive leaving the preliminary excuse me, this represents us receiving the preliminary role. There's \$2.16. I will give an update to this once we have continued to work through the calculations to see what the impact will be for the property tax bill. We do anticipate that there will be an increase, but we want to give you those details once we finalize those calculations. Thank you. Thank you all for listening to the long conversations about all of our enterprise funds. And we are happy to answer any questions

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that you all may have. No.

>> Nice job. Thank you. Council members questions. Councilmember Allison alter.

>> I have several questions, but I'm going to start with the airport and then I'll let my colleagues continue. Can you tell me what the vacancy rate is at the airport at this point? It's 35.

>> It's about 35, 35?

>> Yeah. Okay. And what are we doing to address that? The vacancy rate. I'm going over your other shoulder.

>> I think they're coming down now to respond to that.

>> And councilmember, I want to just say that Jim and Joe kanellis and a group of other departments met yesterday about how we could expedite this just so everyone knows. Jim's only been there five months and we're working hard to get this done. But there may be additional details that Jim can present.

[10:26:37 AM]

Thank you, Mr. Smith.

>> Jim Smith with the airport. The main thing we're doing, I was asked to identify some of the issues at the airport that were hindering it from moving forward. One of them is the vacancy issue. We brought that to the city manager's office and they were very supportive. We now have a consulting on board that's going to look at primarily two things. What can the airport do better than it's already doing now? And as well as trying to bring some focus to our recruitment and retention efforts. So there's a lot going on. The main issue with the airport was the rapid buildup that occurred in the beginning of 22 when we were coming out of the covid pandemic. At the same time, American airlines was doubling the number of flights that they were putting into this market. And southwest was increasing theirs by 34. So the

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result is we had a 35% increase in overall all traffic at the airport. So we created another 130 positions to put into the budget. So that was 130 have never been filled or a large portion of them have never been filled. And that magnifies the number up to 35. But there's a lot of activities going on. I think it's headed in the right direction. The consultant is going to help with the compensation analysis, so it should remove some of the obstacles we've had in the past .

>> Can you be more specific on what is being done? I mean, I'm getting we brought this up in our audit and finance committee . Council member Fuentes and I were raising this issue and we were talking about the Hilton hotel and some questions we had there that led us to really understand and about this

vacancy rate. And I have since heard from some employees from the airport that they had received a 10% increase stipend that is going way. I have mixed

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information that I've received on that. And clearly, employees are not understanding. I've been told, well, they're actually getting the 4% and a 7, but they're not keeping the 10. And I just I need more information about what we are doing to address that. We've taken steps, say, in Austin water, which has also had a high vacancy rate and really would like to understand more careful, more clearly what we're doing. If it's simply just we add a positions and we never filled them, then you know, we need to understand that as well. So can you provide more details on what you are doing to address recruitment and retention at the airport?

>> There was a stipend. It was instituted at 10% that was in place for the past year, the year that we're in. It's proposed for next year that that be reduced to 6, while at the same time the employees would get the standard city raise of

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4, which would go towards the base, pay the combination of which would keep their paychecks from going backwards. But yes, there is a proposed overall reduction in the rear attention incentive.

>> Okay. And they also getting a 1% increase in their yes. Health care. So then they're backwards or is it 7% increase. There's also a 1% increase in the health care. Is it so they're backwards by that calculation at 9% or is it a 7% increase and a 4?

>> Robert has just told me it's a 7% proposal for the stipend. So that would be about 1% out to the positive. Okay. Manager I don't know if this is the forum to figure it out, but I am, you know, if we have positions that we need filled that are critical

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for the expansion and the growth that we're seeing at the airport, then we need to be taking steps to make sure that we can fill them.

>> If we have just a 35% vacancy rate, we need to take steps so that we can address them. There's always a recruitment and a retention component of that. My understanding is we have some very technical positions that are among those 35% that are, you know, folks are working overnight, but they're being told they have to be paid the same thing as a plumber that's working overnight at the

airport is to be paid the same as a plumber who's working a daytime shift. So I think there's a lot of opportunity to try to address this. And plus, it is the airlines that pay the costs here, not the taxpayers, but it's everyone in our community that suffers the consequences when our airport is not functioning at the right level. So can I just I think in terms of the forum, I think we can continue to present this kind of

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information to the audit and finance committee.

>> This is an operational item. It is on our list. It's totally within our authority to do what we need to do with the compensation plan to ensure that we not just retain associates, but we also are able to entice associates to apply for jobs. So I think that that's all within our purview. We understand it's a critical priority. We may have jumped the gun when we added the number of positions back in early 22 because we weren't really in a position to do the hiring for that. And that's caused that huge number of people that are the huge vacancy rate. But I think it's on our radar. We met yesterday. We've been meeting with that consultant that Jim just referenced and we have a plan to push this forward to get done. What needs to get done in the end, while the airlines are paying for this, they at least this is my memory from 21 years ago that was always there were always prickly when we did negotiate about what their landing fees were, as well as other fees. So we need to be sensitive to that, to that aspect as well.

>> I understand that, but I'm not sure that they're happy with the level of service that

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they're getting, which is also part of the equation. And I understand this is operations, but we're asked to being asked to approve the budget. And so this is very much an appropriate time for us to be trying to understand what is the plan and I'm not hearing that plan. That's there to Mr. Smith just went through what the plan was.

>> He's indicated what he what he wants to get done and achieved. If you want additional detail, we can certainly sit down in your office and provide that additional detail. I think the plan that he and Joe kanellis and several others worked out yesterday is one that can achieve these objectives. And I'm happy to come talk to your or have us come talk to your office to give you that detail. This is something we know is a priority and not just for this office, but a whole host of other offices. I know air is working cooperatively with the aviation air office and we intend to solve this issue. And get some traction on this. And that's our intent. Mayor councilmember Fuentes comment that's related to this

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conversation.

>> Thank you, councilmember alter, for flagging this as an item of interest for our council. And I just want to echo your sentiments and wanting to understand and operationally how we are doing to recruit and retain our employees, especially at the airport. And so city manager a couple of questions that come to mind and we can have this conversation offline is last year, I believe the airport employees also received the cost of living increase of 3% plus the 10% stipend. So I know that there were changes proposed in this budget, but I would be interested in having the stipend capped at that 10. In addition to the 4% cost of living increase, because we want to ensure that we are retaining the airport employees that we have as we seek to staff up. And the other question that I have is from the operational side, air, you know what more can we be doing to ensure that we have the resources within human resource division to ensure that

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we are hiring as quickly and effectively as possible? And how might we get creative with that? So whether that's bringing in, you know, consulting hr resources or figuring out if there is a pathway where we can help the hr within the aviation department, just what else? What are the other creative ways that we can think about and consider as we move forward?

>> Happy to do that.

>> I'll just add, if I really, really quick. Robert good interim assistant city manager right along those lines, we are bringing in a strike team from different departments, from hr to help staff up in the air in the aviation hr, to help recruit and post. So that's we're doing that right now. And as Jim mentioned, just to elaborate on that, we're bringing a consultant to look at not only the internal processes to see how we can do that faster in the meantime, but also compensation study. So we hear you. And that's what the manager said. We're bringing in some resources to help aviation right now, to help get positions posted and at

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least see if we can get those folks hired. Councilmember Kelly.

>> Thank you. So it seems that at least from my perspective, maybe my colleagues as well, that some there are definitely multiple departments that might require a market study. And so I was just curious what your long term goal was to address some of the compensation issues that we've been having across the board so that we can remain competitive as a city and also recruit and retain the best talent possible.

>> That's right. Councilmember and the details aren't at my fingertips, but I know the market study is on the list of work that's being done, especially for those hard to fill positions that the ones that take long

time to recruit. So that's all in process. Oh I see. Rebecca. Rebecca might have that additional detail. Please don't contradict anything I said .

>> We've been doing smaller market studies focusing on specific job families. So earlier this year we were able to implement a planner market study. Our it market study is going into effect this month.

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And then we have an engineering market study that should be implemented in the next month or two. We have a citywide market study that is under review right now for an implementing action in January of 24. So we are focusing on the market studies to try to make sure that our employees are compensated appropriately for the work that they're doing okay.

>> I appreciate that very much. I did just get an email from someone over at the communications department who'd been there for several years and it's my understanding that they're still dealing with compression issues. She's actually training someone who's brand new and that individual is getting paid more than she is, but she has the experience. And so I will send you future. I'll send you details about that. But that's the kind of thing that I would like to see addressed because I believe it directly affects morale. And I want to ensure that we're doing everything we can to be fair, across the board. Yeah.

>> And let me just make a quick comment about that. I and I appreciate the council's concerns on this. This is a personnel matter that's totally within our authority to fix and deal with and to those employees

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that feel compelled to communicate with council on those kinds of issues, well, certainly we can't stop it. It also would help if they communicate directly with my office because we have the power to immediately work on that issue specifically and get it fixed. And so I would want to encourage them to do that. Don't don't mind them calling you or texting you, but the way this system is supposed to work, those items should be coming to our office and we should be able to deal with them in an effective way. And if this office can't deal with it in an effective way, then you need to get a new person.

>> I appreciate your confidence. I know that things have changed over the last few months and so individual Ralls may just need to be reminded to go to you directly. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember mayor pro tem.

>> Thank you. I've got some questions about code and development services on the on page 618 that I really like to reference when I'm trying to track how many full time employee positions are being moved in between departments as as things are either, you know, multiple departments incorporated together or separated out and the code department used to have 164 full

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time employees. But the difference in development services is ftes is only 149. Can you tell me if those were specifically from code or if those are other development services positions.

>> Good morning, mayor. Council Jose Roig, director for dsd. We when we did the consolidation, we actually looked at staffing issues and efficiency Luz. There was a transfer of employees from dsd to transportation and public works, and those are the ones that are showing up in the reduction. It's not from code, it's actually from dsd.

>> Okay. Because obviously with code being incorporated into dsd, that's correct. Positions aren't showing on the code line anymore. Can you tell me how many code professionals you have within dsd now?

>> It is 160. It's the same amount is the same amount of employees, except for the director. So it's about 161. I think it is.

>> Okay. So that's relatively the same. And that is correct.

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>> Other we're not we're not reducing from from the code side, we're not reducing code and from the dsd side, we actually transfer some employees because we need to realign some of the functions. Okay.

>> I appreciate that clarity. And then my follow up question is going to be about overnight enforcement. I know that council member Ryan alter has a question that is still pending in our Q and a about general short term rentals, but I know we've got one constituent right now where it seems like the overnight shift is not being responded to and some of that may be that a police officer is needed and may be attending another call instead of going to a short term rental issue. But are there any programmatic changes to be expected over the coming year?

>> So we have we have discussed that in the past. And it's being it's been addressed in the past, the fact that, you know, when we're dealing with enforcement issues at that time of night, it's actually belonged to the police officer to respond to it. We are now, with the consolidation, reallocating some resources to the enforcement side. We do have overnight enforcement for sound for the venues. So in the future, we're

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looking at, you know, what we can do about that. But honestly, when we're looking at nuisance abatement at that time of the night, it has to be responded by APD. It's a safe thing to do.

>> Is it APD alone that typically goes or is it. That is correct. And an APD. Okay.

>> Our inspectors are working until on the short term rental until 11, 11 at night. You know , in the weekends. And they respond to that time. But anything after that, it has to be responded by APD.

>> Okay, that's helpful. Right. That is all I have for code. I have one question. There's a slide about the longhorn dam project. Is that the wishbone bridge that's being referenced there, or is there another project happening over the longhorn dam? I know there's been some work already completed in previous years. Hello. Director Mendoza. Good morning, mayor pro tem council members.

>> Mayor. City manager. Yes. The longhorn dam is the wishbone bridge bike and ped facility. We're very excited to be getting underway.

>> Okay. And so the dollars that are allotted to that project are ones that will be expended in

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this next fiscal year because I know usually bridge construction takes longer than one year to complete.

>> That's correct. So those dollars are to complete the bridge. Preliminary engineering report. And then we'll start final design.

>> Okay. That's very exciting. I know this was one that was already in the can with community support before we passed the 2020 bond. So I know folks are very excited for that trail connection to be completed. Thank you. And do you have a do you have a deadline of when that's going to actually be open to the public? While we're on the topic?

>> I can get that to you. Typically, projects of that scale are about a 12 to 18 month construction and with about a 12 month design. But I'd be glad to get that more specific and tighter for you.

>> Okay, sounds great. Thank you.

>> You're welcome.

>> Thank you. Mayor pro tem councilmember qadri.

>> Thank you, mayor. I just want to thank you all for the slide on the homeless homelessness response efforts. I think it's a great start on getting a lot of questions answered, but are we going to get more specifics on homelessness response? Yes, at the next, I guess, working session on the budget, what kind

[10:42:58 AM]

of details would you like for us to provide?

>> Yeah, like I said, this this is a great slide, but I think it's, you know, we talked about the operating cip and grants, but just kind of a, I guess, a deeper dive into all of that.

>> So, so we can provide more detail.

>> I think the challenges that we'll see there are is such a complex calculation because it's a cross several different departments. Of course, you know, we have some of the larger departments that are providing resources include public health and housing, but it goes across several different departments on the operating side on all three categories, whether it's cip grants and or operating. And so it's easier if you have some specific questions on what you want to see. And we can try to address those.

>> Yeah, I mean, yeah, I guess it's a breakdown of, you know,

[10:43:58 AM]

money on shelters versus social services versus, as you know, ftes, just like those type of metrics.

>> Councilmember, why don't we do this? I mean, we can get sit down with your office and make sure we get a good a good list of what it is that that we need to crosswalk between the different departments and then we can get a memo or through the Q and a, either get it to you and the whole council. So that we see how that breakdown works. Great. So let's, let's do that. So we can make sure that it's as accurate as it can be.

>> Great. Cool.

>> Thank you, mayor. Since we're on the topic of homelessness, I do have a couple questions on this, and then I'm going to councilmember Ryan alter and then councilmember Allison alter.

>> Okay.

>> Thank you. With regards to our homelessness spending and going back to page four on your slide deck, how much of the total amount that we have allocated for homelessness response is going towards permanent supportive housing?

>> I'm going to ask the health department to come up and I think as miss gray is coming up to the podium, I think it's

[10:44:59 AM]

important because many of us are hearing from our community about the concern that this council might be losing sight of investing in permanent supportive housing.

>> And so I want to be really clear on what our commitment looks like as a city to continuing our investments in psh. And then also understand what other investments we're making when it comes towards addressing our homelessness response system. Good

>> Good morning.

>> Kymberley Maddox assistant director for Austin public health councilmember. Can I ask a clarifying question you were asking about permanent supportive housing funding in the 24 budget? Yes. Okay so for Austin public health right now in the projected plan as planned, spend in 24, it's

[10:46:00 AM]

\$13,433,182.

>> Okay. And then overall, as part of our cip, our five year plan, how much do we have allocated for permanent supportive housing in the cip?

>> I do not have that number in front of me, but we could certainly get that for you.

>> I think that might be helpful, but at the very least we know that 13 million will be allocated for this next budget cycle towards permanent supportive housing.

>> That is the plan spend for 24.

>> And how does that compare to the previous year?

>> Yeah. Rosie, do you have a number? Do you have a number?

>> Hi. Rosie truelove, housing department. I don't have the number, but I would like to through Q and a will provide a breakdown of our capital spend and how that applies to psh. I think we can provide more context through Q and a than that would be helpful. Thank you. Great

>> Thank you all and thank you, councilmember councilmember Ryan alter, then councilmember Allison alter.

>> I have a couple of questions for starting with Austin water.

>> If you give me a moment here

[10:47:00 AM]

are. Good morning, mayor.

>> Council members manager I'm Shea roalson, director of Austin water.

>> Good morning. I was first wondering Lang what I know the smart meters are part of our overall plan to help reduce our leakage because we'll be able to better track in real time where the leakages are happening. But I'm curious just what's what measures we're taking in this budget to mitigate any leakage? Paige throughout our system, we have a comprehensive of leak detection and water loss control program, and that involves a number of different strategies, including running leak detection

[10:48:01 AM]

action, physical sensors through our water pipes and then finding leaks that way that we then dig up and repair.

>> We also have a performance indicator for our response time when leaks are reported in to our dispatch and Eid. Of course, the army is a long term strategy for us where our customers will be able to see leaks on their side in near real time due to that digital metering system. So we have a wide range of, of tools in our toolbox for reducing water loss.

>> And I know you all do some kind of analysis of what is the , I don't know if it's highest risk or oldest, but our replacement schedule that you have and if I remember correctly, that's about 2% of our infrastructure is that correct?

>> I'd have to get back to you on the exact numbers. We don't

[10:49:01 AM]

really look at it from the perspective of what percent of our system we replace. We look at the performance of our pipes and then prioritize replacing poor performing pipes. We have a program called the renewing Austin program, which has been in place. For since 2011. And we reduced our break rates. I can get you the exact numbers, but we were well above industry average and now we're well below industry average in that in that time frame. So we use a data driven approach and asset management based approach that really helps us target our dollars. So that we're actually getting better performance for the money that we spend to replace pipe. Great separately, I was perusing the water forward plan the other day and just wanted to understand in this budget, if we are on track, you know, are there things in this budget that are helping us move along with that plan?

[10:50:02 AM]

>> Or if you just talk a little bit about that?

>> Sure. And we it would probably be better to get that as a question that we can then answer comprehend fully. But just in general, you know, the water forward plan is a multiple pronged approach where we're turning a lot of knobs to get to a sustainable water future 100 years from now. And so there are a lot of elements of our budget that are related to that water sustainability and resilience and, you know, across a broad range of topics.

>> Okay. Well, we can talk more about it. Okay, great.

>> Thank you.

>> Just ourselves. I appreciate your your answers. And that's all I've got for you. Okay, great. Thank you. And I just have a question for Austin energy. We.

>> Good morning. Stuart Riley, interim deputy general manager of business services for Austin energy.

>> Good morning, Stuart. I was looking at your the page

[10:51:05 AM]

outlining some of the significant changes. The \$4 million for the energy solutions, conservation rebates and other incentive programs. Luz I was curious. Are we kind of maxed out in terms of if we put more money in, would we expect more people to get rebates or we're just kind of keeping Lang level with we think this will be the demand. And so this is the rebate.

>> Yeah, that's a good question. So typically what we'll do for our budgeting is what we think we can. We can spend out there what we think the market can sort of withstand in terms of the amount of energy efficiency jobs that can be performed. We saw a big dip during the pandemic and that has kind of rebounded. So we're always trying to hit that mark in terms of the amount of spend that we that we think our our rebates can actually accomplish and the jobs that reasonably could get done within a year.

>> And do we do any kind of proactive marketing on the rebates? I know I see the little

[10:52:08 AM]

pieces in Home Depot or whatever, but I'm just curious what our outreach is for these programs.

>> I would say just roughly speaking, our energy efficiency rebates, our solar rebates, those types of conservation programs are the majority of our of our marketing efforts in terms of advertising. You know, our our thermostat program demand response, all those kinds of home performance with energy energy star all industry leading programs and those are kind of the predominant out marketing budget or marketing activities that we that we take on.

>> Very good. That's all I've got. Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Councilmember councilmember Allison alter. And then I'll go to councilmember Bella.

>> Thank you. Mine was on Austin energy. Just real quick, I just wanted to.

>> Yeah, yeah, let's do that.

>> So we. Councilmember Allison alter and councilmember Whalen, then councilmember Fuentes. Thank you.

>> I can stay on Austin energy

[10:53:09 AM]

while you're up here. Stewart good morning. So on slide 14, it mentions there's \$6 million in investment to harden the distribution system against wildfire and extreme weather events and address overall system reliability. Can you speak to what that entails? Sure

>> Yeah. That's a, that's a continuation of our our long term efforts to really harden our distribution system and make it more resilient. So that's part of our distribution resiliency program, which addresses our underperforming feeders that have the worst reliable Katy metrics in our system. So we look at our you know, each year we're ranking and identifying what our top ten essential underperforming feeders are and our top ten wildfire risk circuits are, and going out and looking at what types of changes we can make on those on those portions of our distribution system that can involve tree trimming. First and foremost. And then it can involve coordination of the

[10:54:11 AM]

lines, equipment on the lines like line fuses, making sure all of the equipment is coordinated so that if there is a fault on that system, that it can trip offline and everything is coordinated appropriately in terms of circuit breakers and reclosers and those kinds of things. And then we also have equipment, kind of newer equipment that we can install on those sections which will essentially detect a fault and open to shut off that section. And then reclose back to see if that fault has cleared. And then it will attempt to do that a few times until it senses that if the fault still persists, then we would roll a truck. So there are those kinds of equipment issues. And then, of course, I think you're aware that longer term we're looking at building out because this is part of a multi year strategy. And so a longer term, we're looking at some technology in terms of wildfire detection cameras and some ai type equipment that in the future we would look to roll out and that's still in the planning phases. Thank you.

[10:55:11 AM]

>> I'm very excited about that system. So of the 6 million, how much is vegetation management?

>> I can get back to you on that . Okay.

>> And if you could also tell me what is how this 6 million relates to similar investments like last year? Okay. If it's different, that would be great. And then can you speak to the proposed fee increase a little bit more? When we were doing the rate increases and the fall, we were not contemplating ING, you know, these other increases. I understand that the argument is that it is for the fiscal health of the utility, which I very much appreciate, and that it is small with 1. But can you speak to it a little bit more than what was in the slide?

>> Absolutely. Yeah. You know, part of what we're trying to address as utilities, not only distribution, resilience, but just being financially resilient , being able to respond to any kind of weather event or emergency that comes along. And so as we were preparing our budget and presenting that to the city manager and looking at

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our current days cash on hand of 93 days being well below our minimum of 150 and industry standard is more like 200 days cash on hand as a minimum. So right now we're our 93 days. Is about \$200 million below our even our minimum target and Eid looking at that and thinking about having the financial resiliency that we need as a utility to be able to respond if needed. So having this this small \$1 per month for the typical ratepayer in increase would go strictly towards our financial health, our financial resiliency, because as we put that rate increase into effect, we had been coming off of two years where we had lost a cumulative \$90 million and we had been funding that gap through our cash. So and then when we put in this \$30 million increase piece through the through that rate case that did not have anything in it to replenish our reserves and to get our financial health metrics

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back on track. And even if it had really what we're seeing in terms of increased o&m costs and inflation has really just completely wiped away any potential to rebuild any of those reserves just because of inflation. And so that's kind of how that's how we got here.

>> So what the ratepayer sees, though, is the combination of the base rates and the psa. We've been getting these reports monthly on the psa and where we're going, which I think have been really helpful for us to understand that, you know, for a while we were over collecting and now with the hot summer, we're probably under collecting is the sense that I have. But yet the budget predicts much lower power supply costs. So can you explain. Yes. What you're what you're assuming?

>> Yeah. And that's where the budget on the power supply adjustment and that that cost that is a pass through charge dollar for dollar to our customers and there's a differentiation between what the

[10:58:14 AM]

budgeted amount is there and what the rate is because the rate was set to make up for an under recovery over a three year period. And so even though what we're forecasting for the coming year is lower power supply costs because of lower natural gas costs and kind of predictions that normally the ERCOT market would track, that and have lower ERCOT market costs. So that's why our budget. But really that rate is that pass through rate has been set by council and that's not going to change even though what we're predicting. So essentially what that would do is if that prediction turns out to be accurate, it would help us make up for that under-recovery that we've been experiencing. But like you said, this summer, we have not really been making up for that under-recovery in the shoulder months. We tend to get a little bit ahead. And then in the summer we dip back down again. And then and then we hope that that ebbs and flows and hits our hits our three year trajectory three that we were on.

>> Okay. So the PSA rate was set so that we would make up the under recovery. But the even as

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the even as the budgeted costs are lower, even as they go down, we will continue to provide council with that monthly update that says where we are in terms of our over under so that we can give you the you know, the certainty that we're on track to meet and that we're not, you know, that the rates not too high or too low that we're we're continuing to be on track and have the right rate. Okay. Well, I think that that monthly report is really helpful for us to understand and I think it's a bit of a lag. So it would be even worse than what we've seen in terms of where the where the rate is. I was hoping that we would be able to reduce the PSA rate at the same time that we're doing this other rate. But I don't think that's possible given given the level of heat that we're seeing and keep in mind that even if we were to, let's say there's \$50 million of under recovery left to recover, that's about 12 days cash on hand.

>> So even if we get that whole thing, we really, you know, not making up a whole lot in terms

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of where our financial metrics and our financial resiliency need to be sure.

>> Thank you. I think those are my questions for I. I had a question for watershed. Good morning, Miss Hartley.

>> Good morning, Sarah Hartley watershed protection.

>> So I guess what I really wanted to understand is, you know, we haven't had an increase in fees for many years for watershed. We have the strategic plan rain two river that is coming and we'll get it right today is I want to understand what is the projection of what we're going to need to do in terms of rates over the long haul. We have climate change. We have growth. We have you know, we're not moving a lot of impervious cover into the system . And your rates are based on that and a whole host of other issues is just that impact our

[11:01:20 AM]

ability to keep our watershed protected. So can you speak to what we're projecting you know, in the next few years we're going to need in order to meet the needs that our community has identified and that you've identified?

>> Sure. Thank you. And yes, we're very excited about the range river strategic plan update. And we've spent the last about 18 months working through community engagement in a very deep way. And we've heard from the community what they want and need from us when it comes to adaptability and resilience and the projects that we're trying to put in place. And as you said, we have not raised our base rate in about eight years. And so we this year coming forward with about a 3.2% increase. And in our financial forecast, we do expect to continue to come forward with additional fee increases as our revenue has become a little bit more flat as as Austin builds out and the impervious cover starts to kind of flatten out itself. So we are in the process

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of putting out an rfq to get a consultant to write that strategic strategic plan update and so as we get more information over the next year, we're going to start seeing a little bit more about what it looks like financially for us when we see what those goals are from the strategic plan update. But we do know that we will need to continue to look at those rates, the base rate, and bring forward potential increases.

>> Thank you. And you know, this is one of those areas with climate change that we are just really, really impacted. So I just wanted to flag you know, for future budget conversations that we're going to have this continued need. Thank you, miss Harley. Appreciate it. For homelessness, I wanted to ask the budget staff in those calculations is the are the arpa investments included.

>> They're not. Okay

>> So if we could get what we're spending from arpa on homelessness and the categories

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and what that's projected to be for this year and next year, and if my colleagues would like it for past years, because that's a huge amount of money that we have outside of the general fund homelessness budget that is also contributing to our ability to respond to the needs of our of our homeless neighbors so that would be helpful. And then I think this is a question for Eid , the iconic venue fund. I was wondering how that's going to work with the Austin economic development corporation. They've been doing some really important work using our bond funding with the creative spaces and it seems to overlap a lot. There's a lot of knowledge there, so I'm just wondering if who's going to be administering that pot and what role they're going to play because they've developed a lot of expertise.

>> Good morning. Synovia holt-rabb, director of economic development department. If the current proposal for the fy 24

[11:04:24 AM]

budget passes, we will come back with an amendment to the Ila with the Austin economic development corporation to manage the icon. The additional funds for the venue iconic venue fund. As you may recall, for June of 2021. As part of the initial process of the cultural trust council authorized them to administrate the bonds as well as the iconic venue fund.

>> Okay. And so will that is that already captured in the 2.5 million like the administrative costs for the iconic venue fund ?

>> Could you repeat that?

>> Are they administrative costs for the edc to administer the iconic venue fund already captured in the 2.5 million that was allocated exactly as part?

>> I can't remember when the council took action, but 10% of the budget stabilization transfer is for administrative costs for the cultural trust.

>> Okay, great. Thank you. Appreciate that. And then one last question before we go back

[11:05:25 AM]

to the airport. Is for the convention center. There was a large increase in revenue. Is that just hot revenues that have exceeded expectations? It was about 20 million, roughly higher than we budgeted in the last fiscal.

>> I might be able to address it before they get down here. That number was budget to budget, so it was a 40% increase, budget to budget in the hotel occupancy tax. If you compare it to the estimate, they're only budgeting about a 2.6% increase. So the fundamental dynamic there is just that in fy 21, hot revenue is less than half than what it is now as a result of the pandemic. And it's come roaring back so quickly. It's been hard to make those projections high enough. Every year to keep up. And so there

seeing a big increase just versus the budgeted number, but not as much versus what they're estimating to collect this year. Okay.

>> Thank you. And then I wanted to go back to the airport. You know, I appreciate that this is

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operations, but we are approaching our budget and it's our budget deliberation. And, you know, we have a very important role at this stage to understand what we're doing. So. Mr. Smith, how was the 7% conveyed to the employees through a memo?

>> Okay.

>> So can I get a copy of that memo? Because we're hearing from employees that they do not know that was in there, and I should correct myself before it was 1% on the pension side, not on the health care side, that they were that they'll be facing come January, which made it 10% overall with with the 4. But I think that there needs to be a little bit more attention to even what you've already conveyed because they don't know about it. The union didn't know about it. So even what you're trying to do is not being understood by some of the

[11:07:27 AM]

employees. And so I think that it is really important. I would like to meet with you and Mr. Good and whoever else is appropriate about addressing these. You know, when you go and you take a 664 number, I believe that was the number of ftes and I think you said it was 101 employees that we hadn't filled, that we had added over the years. You still have a 20% vacancy rate, which is much higher than we would like to be seeing. So I don't think we can ascribe this fully to that. We added, you know, positions. And so I really do want to make sure that we are addressing that. I am chair of audit and finance is well within my response abilities to oversee this and do that. And so I think that we need to have more Conway discussions. And if any of my colleagues want to join in that conversation, then let's let's do that. But, you know, we have a lot of growth at the airport.

[11:08:29 AM]

We need to make sure that we are making it safe and secure for all of the passengers and the crews and all the people who work there. And so I want to make sure that we are addressing this. And if we did need to go up to make that stipend higher, it would be appropriate to do it in the budget. We can have a conversation and decide that's not time yet and we have to do these other things. But I do want to continue to have those conversations. So just I think it's important that we recognize this is an issue. It's

not one that we've talked about as a council much, and it does impact the potential budget moving forward.

>> Let me just say that we agree that the vacancy rate is high. We agree that the bolus of physicians that were added in the early part of 22 are not the sole driver of that. We have we have made an attempt to do that through adjustments of salaries or bonuses, not bonuses, but retention to try to retain employees as well as recruit. We

[11:09:29 AM]

understand all those issues Mr. Smith has been in in that in that position for five months. And he is working to make those those improvements that need to be made so that we can fill those slots so that we can provide the services to the traveling public. And I and I'm I'm new to this game because I don't understand how the these use family stipends used to be the total and sole responsibility of management. It wasn't something we considered during the budget that may have changed while I was gone. We make those adjustments as appropriate to depending on where we are against market and it would be, in my judgment at least, it would be unusual that you would you would make that decision as part of a budget process because we have the discretion to do what needs to be done to hire the individuals. And we're not disputing that you have a right for oversight. We understand that you have a right for oversight. We intend to get you that information to complete your questions.

>> I'm going to. Okay, we'll go . Councilmember Rovella councilmember Fuentes, councilmember pool and then councilmember Kelly.

>> Mr. Smith, a couple more

[11:10:30 AM]

follow up. I'll stay on airport for just a second. I'm just trying to understand, honestly, from a big picture perspective, we have about was about 11 million in planes. Passengers in estimated fiscal year 23 in plane is that is that boardings? Yes

>> Yes.

>> Okay.

>> It's basically half of the total traffic that runs through the airport.

>> That was my question. So all in all, we're close to about what, 25 million people you know, this year will probably finish about 20 to 22 million people. How does that compare? For example, I think about the San Antonio airport. Could you give could you put that number in context with some of the other major airports that major Texas airports?

>> Well, relative to San Antonio , which is a competitor of ours, since we share the catchment basin that we both use, we have more than twice the number of flights and passengers that San Antonio has now. And that's been

[11:11:30 AM]

increasing since about 2008. But right now we're more than twice as large Paige we have more airlines, more routes. We have about about 290 departure hours a day, probably about 32,000, 33,000 passengers per day leaving from our airport.

>> And again, you may not know this off the top of your head, but what would a dfw or a Houston hobby have in terms of passengers?

>> Something like dfw, which is one of the top three airports in the country. You probably close to 100 million passengers. Okay

>> Okay. Thank you. I just wanted to ask those questions for context. Ann and let me go to Austin energy. I have a question.

>> Okay. Good morning.

>> Good morning. There was some talk about a study of burying

[11:12:31 AM]

electric lines. I think \$1 million is that in the budget? Did that make it into the budget?

>> It is in the budget. Our team in engineering has been working on the scope of work to be able to get a consulting firm that would be able to do that kind of work. And so we've been preparing that so that once the budget's adopted, we can go out and we do expect that to be about \$1 million study.

>> And can you just kind of describe, generally speaking, what is that going to involve? What are we asking them to study to do so that's going to involve sort of what all the implications would be within our service territory in terms of what type of equipment changes would be necessary, what does the geology look like in different parts of town for the feasibility of burying the lines?

>> What would the feasibility be for individual customers? Because they're currently fed from overhead, so they have a service panel on the side of their home with a weather head that comes up. If they were fed from underground, you know, basically getting a handle on all those sort of collateral

[11:13:31 AM]

effects. And then also looking at costs and feasibility and just engineering wise.

>> And these are all I'm assuming that we have not looked at this before. I know we've had conversations now going back quite a bit. Obviously with all the winter disasters that that keep hitting Texas. So prior to this and where we were kind of speculating about how difficult or cost or this and that, the idea of this study would be to kind of firm up how difficult and what it would cost. Is that.

>> Yeah, that's exactly right. Because I think, you know, as we've had some of those ad hoc conversations in the past and we've thrown rough numbers out there about what we've heard in the past and when others have looked at it in different areas. And what we wanted to do was kind of tee that up for that policy discussion and have a have a policy discussion around real numbers. And, you know, because we don't want to be seen as as as trying to kind of put our thumb on the scale in one

[11:14:34 AM]

way or the other. But just come back with kind of a very open book in terms of what what the implications would be.

>> I appreciate that and I would be happy to follow that up with some a certificate of obligation or a bond, you know, to do a test. You know, it's one thing to look at it on paper and say, okay, this is what it's going to cost. It's another thing to say, hey, we're going to pick a couple of areas or a couple of test projects and see, I just think that we need to get some experience and we need to kind of understand not just academically, but, you know, like I said, pick a neighborhood. My sense would be, honestly, I know that the Mueller neighborhood has their lines buried. Obviously, we had a, you know, a green field there to work with. I made everything a lot easier. But honestly, I would use that as almost a base and start kind of burying all the neighborhoods around it and just, you know, as much as we could. But anyway, I appreciate that direction. I'm glad to see that money's in the budget and I look forward to hearing what what the study returns. And you mentioned the top ten feeder

[11:15:35 AM]

line problems. Can we get a list of those lines in the ones that are causing Austin energy? A lot of headaches and obviously our customers as well. A lot of headaches. Just anecdotally, I swear, they're all in my district.

>> Every every customer I talk to is sure that they're on that list.

>> But that's that's that's the same the same impression that I get.

>> And then with with respect to the psa adjustment, I didn't quite understand the response. I mean, I know that obviously fuel prices have dropped since we set the psa. I know we were kind of in recovery mode, but in terms of the psa adjustment, will there be any adjustments for fuel costs that the customers will see on their bill over like the next 12 months or so?

>> So that's something that we'll continue to track. So when that when that psa so we come back at the end of September every year with the pass through

[11:16:36 AM]

charges because we need the benefit of looking at the whole summer's worth of data. And so because it can be such a wild swing from whatever the summer is. And so having the benefit of that summer data, we come back to council to set the passthroughs that become effective November 1st. So last year we had \$100 million underwritten recovery for the psa and it was set at a rate that would recover for that for that \$100 million under recovery over a three year horizon rather than a one year horizon. And so that rate is what is in effect. And so we set that rate as as what we thought would get us whole over a three year period. And then also when that was set, council provided us the administer of authority to make tweaks to it, to kind of have these course corrections of 5% up or down. So that we didn't have these big swings, you know, every year. And that was sort of what we had referred to as the self induced oscillation because we'd set it hide over, recover, and then and then we'd, you

[11:17:38 AM]

know, we kept doing this. And so what we're trying to do is manage that more effectively. And so each month we're sending to council a memo that says where we are on the over under recovery and whether or not we think that based on our forecast, whether we need to use that 5% up or down authority. So it's likely that at some point during this three year period, we will need to make some kind of adjustment. Right now, I can't say when or how much that would be.

>> Got it. That's very helpful. So we shouldn't expect dramatic changes in the psa given that 5% authority and given the long term three year time horizon, you had for making up the. Yeah.

>> Our goal is to is to smooth it out and we never know what the market there could be these blow outs in the market that would have a big impact to us and we can never control for that but our our intent is to really smooth it out.

>> Okay.

>> And councilman Fuentes, do you get your.

>> Thank you. Just to add on, since you're there, you know, we've had conversations about the resiliency initiatives that Austin energy is undertaking with this upcoming budget. One

[11:18:40 AM]

item that I flagged for you and director con is the mobile unit . You know, what we saw during the winter storm? We borrowed a mobile unit from San Antonio's utility. They came in and provided a wi-fi hotspot for our community and that really came through at a desperate time of need. So can you talk a little bit about that initiative and perhaps where Austin energy is at and funding?

>> Absolutely, yes. And thank you for calling that out. We do have that in our budget for a leased unit that we would have in our customer energy solutions budget for the coming year. And that's actually something that's in our as we as we work through the details on our after action report to identify the best way to deploy that, because we didn't have them in our fleet during the storm. And so we kind of scrambled to figure out how best to use that kind of unit, where to take it, what the best use cases were for it. And so

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that's something that we'll be working on in terms of where it needs to go, what what all it can do for us both within an emergency and just in terms of a marketing and community outreach tool. At other times as well.

>> Yeah, because I think having that that mobile unit available not only to provide power in times of need, but just to get, you know, signups for the customer assistance program, to get signups for the medically vulnerable registry. Having that out in our communities when we're having our community events would be very helpful.

>> Yes, agreed. Thank you. I appreciate that question.

>> And we had an event with council member qadri where the CPS brought not just that they had this big rv that it has a lot of hookups and, you know, you can charge up and they'll have water and they'll have different things and they can take it wherever they need. But then they also had a number of smaller vans that that perform a similar function, but on a smaller scale. And I thought they were extremely useful. Obviously in an emergency. But

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like I said, even as just a marketing tool, as an outreach tool, you know, and the personnel that that I talked to from CPS, you know, they thought that they were great tools for the utility to use for outreach and events. So and that's all I have for Austin energy water shed would be the next. Good morning Sarah Hartley watershed protection. Good morning, miss Hartley. So your question my understand ING on the oh lord, I lose track of the winter storms that that we have and their names. But the one where all the trees shed their branches most recently Mara, the. I understand that the costs for the limb collection and clean up after that was about a \$21 million or so. Is that about correct? I

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would have to double check on that number.

>> Okay.

>> And the related to that in more directly related to what we're doing today, I understand that FEMA will reimburse us about 75% of those in other words, we have about a \$15 million check coming from FEMA at some point. And I would love to have it come in this budget cycle. So we could add, you know, \$15 million of essentially revenue to this budget cycle. Do you have any sense of where we are on that reimbursement process and the timing of the FEMA payment for winter storm? Mara yeah.

>> Yeah, I would I would need to defer to budget or heesom for the overall because they are actually looking over that for us.

>> Thank you so heesom is leading the process to get the

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FEMA reimbursement.

>> And although we've been working through several of the public assistance projects that it could take, we could get some money in fiscal year 24. It could take several years to get that full reimbursement. We work really closely with with them as well as with the controller's office to really look at how soon we think those projects will come in. But we'll have to get back to you on which projects we think will be reimbursed as early as next fiscal year.

>> Okay. I would appreciate that because obviously that is additional money in the in the pot that we can then use for there's a lot of one time items and different projects that that the Dyess would would like to fund and councilmember the only the only caveat I'd say is that the dollars that come in for watershed protection is it's a enterprise fund and the dollars would have to be credited to that fund.

>> I'm assuming, unless or maybe you guys can correct me. But I also got a Austin resource recovery as well.

>> Correct. So for the

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enterprise departments that have expenses that relate to those FEMA reimbursements, they'll go directly to those funds in the instance of Austin resource recovery in particular, because the general

fund would forward them that those dollars this fiscal year, any reimburse payments for rr will go back into the general fund reserves. Okay.

>> Yeah. That was my understanding is that we pulled 15 million or 20 million out of reserves to pay for the cleanup. And so it is owed back into reserves again. That was my understanding. But up to 20. Yeah. And if we could, my colleagues, I think, have questions in on the on the on the budget q&a about that. So but that would be great to get answers on that then. Ann, I just have a couple of questions . Burns on the this one actually would be for rr regarding adding the transfer center. And mayor

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while rr is coming down, there was a question from council member harper-madison also about the north service center.

>> We have staff who's ready to prepare to answer her question about the timeline on that and would be a good time to do it.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Good morning. Richard Mchale , interim director for Austin resource recovery.

>> Good morning. Good morning. The in in the lord lordy is it the estimate that came out and kind of like a March may time frame was just an initial kind of look at the budget that was a line in there about \$1 million for a planning for a transfer center for Austin resource recovery. You know and again, please correct me if I'm wrong on any of the details on this, but right now, I believe we take the trash that we collect and drive it down to kind of southeast Travis county and deposited at the landfill at a private landfill that we use over there. The city landfill having been closed, you know, a long time ago. The a transfer

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center within the city limits would allow current customers to drop off potentially bulk items , mattresses, sofas, you know, easy chairs, all that kind of stuff that that we're currently doing the bulk pickup for. That said, like, for example, in my district, I've got a lot of apartment residents and apartment residents don't get bulk pickup. So when an apartment resident, you know, when that couch comes to the end of its useful life there's very limited options for disposal at and I would really like to see that transfer center. I'd like to see us moving towards the establishment of that transfer center. Did that million dollars for the planning for the transfer center make it into the budget?

>> That money did not make it in the into the current budget. We too would like to have some transfer stations. We anticipate having a north and a south transfer station. We did do some

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work on our on the northeast service center where we had some money in that program for the feasibility study and some other work, which we did not spend all that money. So I think we can still move forward with the transfer station with existing funds, and we don't have a locations identified yet for those facilities. We're hoping that would be on some city property, but we would be able to do a feasibility study for a transfer station with the existing funds we have. So I don't think that would just because it's not in the budget, I don't think that would preclude us from moving forward with that project.

>> And that's good to hear. And I my interest is really just that we're moving forward with the planning for that project, with the idea that at some point we're going to have a certificate of obligation or a bond go out to build Ed the transfer centers. My understanding is that they also there will be potentially operational savings to rr instead of having to drive down all the way to it's basically a 45 and 35, right? I mean, that's

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a good run for the trucks that they would have a shorter run than they dump their trash at that location. Ann and then it's loaded onto a much larger kind of more efficient truck for a drop off. So I guess there is a possibility for operational savings for rr if we were to do it to restructure kind of our trash collection using north and south transfer center.

>> Absolutely. I mean, that is part of our goal. Also just the creation and the building of the northeast service center will create some operational savings because we'll be able to instead of having driving to our only service center on Kenneth Gardner in southeast Austin, that northeast service center will be able to save us. The transfer station won't only be just for trash, it'll also be for all organics, which right now is a considerable drive for us out to bastrop county to put that material down. So we would also have the ability to do recycling transfer station as some of our routes are close to our drop off sites for recycling. So not all of them would go to that center.

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Additionally, this transfer station would be open to the public. So there's also an opportunity for revenue. So yes, there would definitely be some savings and open to the public if again, I'm thinking about, you know, for example, in Laredo, if you go to the dump and you show them a bill basically in your name, a utility bill in your name, you can dump like your kind of you know, bed truck, bed full of trash.

>> I don't know what the limits is that what we would envision some kind of similar process whereby existing customers would have a spot to take bulk items or I know again, this is way down the road, but yeah, I don't know that we're at that point to make those kind of fine details , but that certainly could be an option. Ann all right. Well, again, I would just and a good to know that you will be able to move forward with the study. I would just I was disappointed to not see that million dollars. But if there is sufficient dollars, I'm going to that's fine. I don't need to get deep into it. I just want to make sure that the studies and the planning for the transfer center

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is moving forward. This is something that I think we need to my understanding from from the former director, Ken snipes, is that we're one of the largest cities in the country without a major transfer center like that. And so, again, I would just urge the department to move forward on that. I think it would have broad support from the community and I don't want to speak for the rest of the council, but from the council and councilmember.

>> One of the first conversations I had with Ken was that the need and Richard was the need for a transfer stations. That's always part of I mean for large cities, it's part of the solid waste collection plan. And so this is one that will move forward with I think it's something that's needed for that department and just the efficiencies and savings. It's the convenience to the public as well.

>> Great. Well, that was one of my possible amendment one time. But I'm going to go ahead and tentatively shelve that one with your statement that that you have enough money to move forward with the planning. And then the last couple of questions that I have are are regarding homelessness.

[11:30:55 AM]

Homelessness. Homelessness

>> I mean, you're welcome to give it a shot, Richard.

>> You don't you don't need to you don't need to answer this.

>> This is a Q, you should step back from the microphone.

>> Mayor, can we bring up staff , though, please? That'd be great. Please

>> Whoever. Whoever. We need to answer.

>> This is the northeast center.

>> All right.

>> Good morning.

>> Kim Olivares, deputy cfo. There were some questions that I received from council regarding the timeline for the northeast service center because of a council approving the new public facilities corporation, Ann for our office administrative warehouse service center type facilities, we're able to utilize approach similar to what we used for the permitting development center and the Austin energy headquarters. Construction Ann, which will accelerate our timeline significantly for bringing that northeast service center to fruition. We're attending there's some various steps that need to go through internally, but our plan right now is for us to release an rfp for that

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project this fall from the time the rfp is released to we are moving in and operating would be four years or less. Is that's our current estimate that at the same time. So that means that we'd be able to relocate our operations from Hargraves to that site at the same time, there is work going on to assess the site conditions at Hargraves and what remediation Ann work might be required for that property for future redevelopment and reuse. So we are working as quickly as possible as we can on both sites. But the northeast service center is kind of a it's a critical path for us to be able to do anything different on Hargraves regardless. We're very excited for both of those projects coming forward.

>> Thank you. Anything more?

>> I do. Just on homelessness.

>> Okay.

>> Hang on one second. Thank you. Anybody have any questions or. Yeah well, well, well, I'll come back to you when? When the time comes. Thank you. I just want to make sure while she was

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there. Yeah. Back to council member Vila. I have a question.

>> I have a question about homelessness is what he's going to.

>> So if whoever thinks they can answer those questions, make your way.

>> And I'll ask the south bridge and north bridge. I just wanted to make sure that both of them are fully funded for the entire year. Are to bridge shelters. I know last year I think we funded half a year of north bridge because we were anticipating potentially converting it to a psa. But then I don't think we have converted it to a psa. So I just wanted to make sure that both bridge shelters are fully funded for the entire year.

>> Thank you. Council member. I can speak a little bit to the plans for north bridge and then we'll let Kim Maddox from abh speak to the budget. You are correct that that originally the plan had been to convert north bridge to psa eventually given

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its operation as a bridge shelter, the need for that shelter and our other pipeline for psa, we have elected to continue to operating it as bridge shelter and therefore, to your point, would be needing to look at the full year's operation. Kim kymberley Maddox assistant director, Austin public health.

>> So we do have full funding in the budget, in the general fund, social services funding for the south bridge shelter operation for the full year. We have a portion of it in social services for north bridge and have made alternate funding. Arrangements for the other half for 24.

>> Okay. Then then I just wanted to make sure then that that those were fully funded and if you all are telling me that that they are, that's, that's, that's great. And I support I mean, I think northbridge and southbridge play a critical role

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as bridge shelters. I can totally see at some point down the line moving them to psa or one of them. But given kind of the lack of psa that we've seen coming online recently, I think it's probably for the best that they stay in their in their current role. And then on that well, actually, let me ask about did we I'm almost certain and I remember discussions with council member kitchen with regard to this, but I believe we had budgeted I want to say \$10 million for the purchase of another hotel that was going to be a new bridge shelter and or or a psa. But but again, I'm working from memory. But then I think we had budgeted, let's say, 10 million. But it turns out that the bids, the quotes that we were getting were like 14 million or something like that. And so there was kind of a shortfall and I don't think that

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that project ever moved through. I just wanted to, to check on what the status of the potential purchase of another hotel. Well, where we were with that, I think I can give some context.

>> Councilmember and then I'll allow Ed and his team to provide any detail. In 2022, we were looking at the possible ability of replacing north bridge with another bridge shelter to allow for its conversion to psa during budget cycle. Last year, the discussion was a that we had some home arpa we might utilize for a portion of that purchase, but it would not alone be enough . So that may be the funding that you're thinking of. The thought at the time was that if we moved forward in that direction, the companion

funding would be certificates of obligation. And as it turned out, in the 2021 session, the tax code changed slightly such that that was no longer an eligible use. And so that's part

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of why we ended up deciding to keep north bridge is that we didn't we didn't have budgeted money. But our path forward to financing a new facility was was curtailed.

>> Okay. Got it. That makes a lot of sense. So are we still considering another hotel or is that completely kind of off the table at this point.

>> So as you know, so the homeless strategy division recently gave a briefing to council about the need for additional shelter beds in the community at large. The there are no specific capital dollars in the budget currently for new shelter. The mayor may have some comment on that because there have been some recent influx of resources in to the community on the capital side. But no, to my knowledge, there's nothing in our capital budget for new shelter facilities per se.

[11:38:02 AM]

>> Great. And I would honestly love I know that that I read the Watson wire and I was happy to see the news with regard to the hca funding. That's honestly just tremendous. I think that Esperanza is a great spot. They do great work and I think, you know, move moving that forward is just a great model. And now last question on on homelessness or any other topics. I was hoping to have cut ribbons on psa projects that were moving forward that were kind of anticipating or that in conversations, I would say last year there was this idea that, for example, the hospital at Rutland, I think the family eldercare project, I want to say like last year, they were telling me kind of, you know, March, April of this year and March, April has come and gone, you know, nothing yet. And I, I, you know, await with with on

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pins and needles for the opening of our next psa facility. Can we get an update on as to where we are with with that so I don't have a date for you council member but I do understand that we are very close there.

>> They, like many developers, have experienced some supply chain issues. Luz, but I believe they're pre-leasing. They're beginning to take on potential tenants and so we'll get back to council with a date certain as soon as we have it. And thank you.

>> And I think director truelove right behind you, actually, she might have another I don't know that I was going to say anything different than what Diana said.

>> They have experienced some supply chain issues and we are very excited to see that open. And just like you all are. And we will get that date and put it in q&a. Back to you.

>> And just out of curiosity, any other psa project that are on the verge of opening, we all I'd have to go back and look at our spreadsheets of the pipeline , but that is part of what we're going to use to answer the questions that councilmember Fuentes asked.

>> And so we'll include that in there. We do have a number of

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units that are in the pipeline. I think you guys will be pleasantly surprised to see. I think it's I think it's close to a thousand units that are in the pipeline for psa, and that's the pipeline of projects that we have funded. But that are in either predevelopment or construction that will be coming online in the next three years. Okay. Thank you very much.

>> And no further questions. And I would love to hear any details on our latest psa project. Mayor. Well it's just real quickly, I started working with hca and the governor's office before I was in the mayor's office trying to figure out if there was a role to play in how we might get some additional funding from the state to help us.

>> I think we probably would have been able to announce something earlier in the year, but for the legislative session which preoccupied a lot of people. But the good news is last Thursday, the hca board voted to provide funding to a number of nonprofits in Austin,

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there's about three plus million between 3 and 4 million for planning Lang that will allow for planning of how we go about doing some non-congregate shelter and expansion of Esperanza. There's above 56 million for the actual building of non congregate shelters and the initial anticipation would be that many of them would be like what you are now seeing at Esperanza, where you would have tiny shelters where there would be a hard door and people would have have those. That adds up. Obviously not to 65 million, but there's another 5 million that is split evenly between Ann, caritas and lifeworks, 2.5 and 2.5 for home stabilization in including rental assistance. So another \$5 million for rental assistance in our community. So I'm very appreciative of the role that hca and their staff,

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their professional staff and the governor's office in helping us be able to get \$65 million for Austin to address the homelessness with regard to Ms. Gray's report, recent to the entire council on an emergency shelter, beds, of course that that shows that we're about a thousand behind when you count 150 temporary shelter beds because of what the city is now doing with the old salvation Army facility, you count about 300 with the marshaling yard and then what? Over a period of time, this could get us up to. And by the way, the marshaling yards also done as a temporary. But this could get us to another 700 shelter beds over a period of time because it's just a lot of funding. So thanks for asking about that. But I'm real pleased with where we are on that.

>> I appreciate your efforts, mayor.

>> Thank you. Councilmember Fuentes, did you have your questions answered?

>> No, not okay.

>> Well, then I'll recognize

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you. It'll be then. Councilmember pool, councilmember Kelly and then councilmember Ryan alter.

>> Thank you. City manager. There was a number of questions regarding permanent supportive housing that we don't have information for yet. So I do want to highlight that as an area that we can touch next week at our scheduled work session. And director truelove, what I'm looking for her to help you and your team be able to provide answers is, as you know, the types of permanent supportive housing we're investing in this year. What we have in the pipeline and also just updated timelines on the permanent supportive housing and how it compares to previous years. Thank you. Yeah.

>> Okay.

>> So my first question is regarding the small business anti-displacement funding. I believe that question will go for Ms. Holt-rabb. I'm very pleased to see that the city's allocating Lang dollars towards mitigating the displacement of our small businesses. Those small businesses are the crux of our local economy and certainly I appreciate the focus and want

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to give you an opportunity to talk about how this came about and then talk through some logistics of the program. Thank you for that question.

>> Sylnovia holt-rabb, director of economic development department in our brainstorming with our small business division as well as with the Austin transit partnership project connect, we realized that

there were going to be potential displacement not only on small business but the creative spaces along the corridor. And so just doing a pilot program this year of focusing on a \$30,000 grant with 50 or less employees to see how we can assist those businesses to stay or relocate. And so if the pilot program is successful, we will more than likely come back with an additional ask because it's one time funding.

>> Good deal. Thank you very happy to hear about this. And I want to highlight that vic's barbecue, which is right off of

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71, is a small business. And while it's not not necessarily within the project connect corridor, I wanted to see kind of your thoughts are is the funding for this displacement anti-displacement program tied to the atp dollars or is it through our general fund dollars?

>> It's through our general fund dollars. Okay.

>> And can we have consideration for other businesses in the city that might not have that or also at risk of displacement?

>> Let us go back and consider that considering the budget size, we can definitely look at that.

>> Yeah, I think that would be helpful. Just, you know, I highlight vic's barbecue as one example, that of a business that's been operating for decades that is at risk of closure. Just understanding that we are a growing city and that we're seeing the displacement of our small mom and pop shops. So I wanted to flag that for consideration. Since I have you here. The other question I had

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was around the iconic live music, fun and venue fund. Can you remind me how is this allocation different from last year's allocation?

>> So in 2020, council approved for the creation of the icon venue fund with funding up to a maximum of \$15 million. And so we have done completed three transfers. To approximately 7.5. And so this would get us the next transfer to 9.9. And so we still have a ways to go to fund Ed up to \$15 million. But there was a resolution passed with a potential list of venues as well as restaurants, and we can put that resolution as part of a q&a . Just a reminder.

>> Okay, yeah, that would be helpful. And since we passed this initiative in 2020, you mentioned Eid. What were some of

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the barriers or challenges we faced in getting these dollars out?

>> So as you are aware, the responsibility has been transferred to the Austin economic development corporation and they provide a memo on how they took applications. Burns and they're still vetting projects. Butts but very close to completion of the first to coming out from the iconic venue fund.

>> Okay. So I guess perhaps we can have edc come chat with us on that manager. I just want to flag, you know, when we have such critical programs for me, what I'm looking at is how quickly can we get these dollars out. And since we're three years out of having it expended, it's concerning. I think.

>> No, I think that's a that's obviously a valid concern. In fact, it's been a while since I talked to the director of the Austin development corporation. But I think she raised some

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issues with with our office that we're not moving in as we were not moving as quickly as we needed to. She indicated there were a couple of hang ups within parts of our organization, so we owe you to figure out how we can best bust those things loose so that we can move the dollars out more swiftly. Thank you. And part of this is that we were maybe being a little risk averse. We just have to work through that to be able to get those dollars out in a faster way.

>> Good deal. Thank you. All right. Thank you. Okay. Thank you so much. My next question is about fleet services. Do we have the director of fleet services here? Yes. Wonderful I know. Last council meeting, councilmember Kelly had flagged the issue we had in our fire truck, fire trucks, division and what I would want to speak to you today is regarding ac functionality within rr and how we're handling that, because I know the budget request, it

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seems like there's been an increase to handle maintenance on our fleet street fleet vehicles, but wanted to talk through what else is the department considering? Lang okay.

>> So Jennifer Ralls, director of fleet mobility services. Yes, we are experience Singh a number of ac failures in our rr vehicles. So give you a little bit of insight into that issue. Is when a lot of times the specialty trucks like fire trucks and garbage trucks, a lot of the engineering goes into the function of the truck. Whether the part that puts out fire, the part that picks up the refuse, not a lot of engineering goes into the ac and stuff like that, that's kind of standard off the shelf. So with our R trucks, they're put in an extreme duty more than fire trucks. They're running up and down the street compared to the national average of what regular fire trucks do. And this brings us back to the transfer station conversation

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our trucks put on 50% more miles on those trucks. So they're running up and down. They they they operate far beyond the scope of what that truck is designed to do. So we have a lot of maintenance issues with those trucks, not just ac just in general. It's a tough duty cycle. Those trucks go into landfills. Our technicians call landfills truck killers. We they can go into a landfill. It punches a hole into the oil pan oil drill. I mean, it is trucks have driven out with entire mattresses in their undercarriage. So this is a hard, hard, extreme duty vehicle . So with that regard, we struggle to keep up with maintenance, ideally with our own vehicles. We're looking at, you know, you do your pm, you shouldn't have very many problems on a personal vehicle. These vehicles, that window between pms, all kind of crazy stuff can happen to that truck. So yes, it's hard to keep pace with repairs on rr trucks, not

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just ac, just everything in general. So with that with that being said, what what are you thinking of doing or what are some strategies and initiatives that you are considering?

>> So one of the strategies rr came up with was adding redundancy.

>> You know, putting two, adding a second air condition air to the trucks that comes, you know, in addition to the one that's installed on the trucks. That's one initiative we have. One of the things we just recently did was taking R out from a enterprise. Type footing and putting it under the public safety footing with that involves is taking a look at their reserve fleet putting a mobile mechanics that can go out to the trucks in the field to try to help service those when they fail rather than calling a tow truck and bring it in and taking that time up. We've instituted Saturday pms or our

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technicians come in on Saturdays to address the maintenance issues and ac issues. Another thing with rr too is the window of opportunity we have to repair these vehicles so they're out on their routes. Sometimes they can come in as late as 7:00 in the evening, seven and 4 A.M. In the morning, I believe 4 A.M. The trucks roll out. So that's our window. And you saw the facility that we're working out of, right? Yes so and so shortage of technicians again, we're working closely with HFD and our team to try to look at opportunities to recruit in that position. It's a nasty job. We all know that. I mean, those guys crawl in the truck and it isn't just them crawling under the truck. There's a lot of critters that like to fall off those trucks. So recruiting for that position is difficult. We're it's just we've thrown everything at it. We're working with rr to try to find a solutions, but it's just it's a constant drive. It's a constant demand.

>> Well, I think and I certainly

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understanding that you're considering having a mobile mechanic go out to the truck to help fix it on site.

>> I think is great. And that's good to hear. I'm also interested in hearing about you know, should we be, you know, control acting out mechanical services to help? Because when a truck is out, then we're putting our workers in dangerous conditions. If they're driving in, you know. Yeah.

>> And that goes back to the conversation about there's a nationwide shortage of technicians. We send stuff to vendors and they take longer than we do because we have to get in line behind everybody else so that we're it's just from all corners. This has just been a very difficult situation to try to work our way out of it. Speaking of the transfer stations, I think operationally that will be the biggest boost if we can keep those trucks out of the landfill and let trucks that are designed to operate in a landfill go. Then that reduces maintenance because they're not all those other types of repairs

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are associated with going to the landfill won't be there. So we can focus and on not having to go out of our way to do those kinds of crazy kind of repairs that are just pop up depending on what happened that day. And we can get more streamlined and predictable about staffing and what have you to fix those kinds of repairs, transfer stations will do that. They'll also open up the opportunity for electrification of the refuse fleet because it's a fixed route . It's those trucks can go peterbilt. And I think Mack are having a are building electric refuse trucks so they don't have to go to a landfill. Right. That's that's the maintenance on those is less so it's really something that if those transfer stations are there, it'll cut out a whole lot of maintenance issues that keep us from keeping pace with the ac repairs.

>> Thank you.

>> I appreciate your and also another additional thing we're working with rr to help the

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drivers identify when they truly have an issue. Historically ac wasn't in refuse trucks because they opened the doors a lot. So a lot of perception Ann about whether the cab is cooling may be just that you need to close the door more and what happens is when they're in and out, that's normally a part of their job. I get it. But it makes that motor run harder to try to cool, which make it can make it burn out quicker. So then that's just repetitive council.

>> That's one of the things that I think we'll need to look at with respect to fleet, we talked about it yesterday is the is that one is these miles that are being put on do we have enough reserves to be able to get the maintenance done? So Jennifer, I think what we owe the council is a is an analysis of all this. It

gets let's not get into the to the minute details. I think we can do in terms of a memo and we can get that to the council saying what are the things that we can do to make sure these trucks get back in service faster? Yes, the transfer station is going to be a huge

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benefit once once we get the studies done in terms of siting in terms of the capital expenditures that we need to do to get that done, to kind of help the Austin, not just Austin resource recovery, but help the community as well. Thank you, Jennifer.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Thank you, councilman.

>> I still have one more.

>> All right.

>> I'm happy to pass it off and we'll go ahead.

>> Let's keep going in rotation. Okay. If you don't mind.

>> Okay. Next, I have transportation and public works. I want to talk about the cip spending plan. Thank you. And so I'm trying to find the slide for this one. My question is on the cip spending plan. We are projecting to spend about 300 million with this upcoming fiscal year of our spending plan . Is that assessment was that an incorrect what was the amount that we spent last year?

>> I don't have that number right offhand. I know it was a little south of that because primarily this year we are

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entering the construction phase of many of our programs, notably the 2016 local mobility bond. We are substantially complete it like on vision zero sidewalks, but we are moving into construction for a majority of those local mobility projects. Yes, but last year spend I don't have right off the cuff.

>> I guess I'm trying to get a sense with the creation of this new capital services division, how does that division accelerate our spending plan?

>> Ann yes. So the new capital delivery services division and interim director I'm sorry, I'm interim transportation, public works director Richard Mendoza, interim capital delivery services department director James snow is here, but they are moving forward with a majority of the large cip to include the corridor program. And now with the dedicated department they have consolidated resources to focus on expediting those

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projects moving forward. So the capital spending plan for the transportation public works are namely the local mobility programs. So these are the smaller, numerous sidewalk improvements are some of the urban trail improvements, the vision zero intersection improvements, which we substantially completed. The 2016 program. And these are spread out throughout the city. Some of the safe routes to school projects as well.

>> Right. But when we look at our bond projects, the majority of the 800 million that's unspent are in our mobility bonds.

>> Is that right?

>> Of the 2016 80% of that program is substantially spent of 2018 bond. We're at about 40% spend. And on the 2020, we're about 8% spend. So what the teams have been doing are focusing on the more mature bond programs, clearing those off our plate. And then like we have sidewalk programs across all

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three bond programs. So as we substantially complete the older bond programs, we free up capacity, then we can start executing and implementing on the newer bond programs. Okay

>> I think that's it for now. I may have some questions later, but that that's helpful. Thank you. You're welcome. Councilman pool and councilmember Kelly.

>> Then councilmember Ryan alder .

>> Thanks, mayor. I had a couple of different questions, but I think I'm going to take most of them offline in the interest of time. I would just like to ask our cfo, Mr. Benigno, to talk a little bit about what we accomplished in the legislature around the cares funding for retirement and the contributions that the city is making and mainly I'd like to press the point on the 1% that is being asked of employees to add to their contributions, which is essentially a as part of their

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retirement, which is for me, I look at it as a savings account because it will be drawn down by them for them in the future as we have put into this budget. Elements that relate to senate bill 1444 that was successful passed on the reforms. If you could remind us what those elements are, please.

>> Thank you. Council member. And maybe if I could just take a quick step back, broaden the tent a little bit. You know, there are three pension systems, one for police, one for our civilians and emergency medical services, sworn personnel, and one for the fire system. They are all established in state statute. There are requirements put in place by the pension review board of Texas for how those systems are managed. And one of the requirements is that you maintain a amortization period of less than three years if you have more than that, you get put on to a watch list. And if you're on the watch list for

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more than three years, you're essentially compelled to come up with a funding restoration plan . In the last session, in the 87th session, we had that situation with the police retirement system where they were on the watch list and we needed to fix this system and we did. We were able to enact legislative reforms that resulted in a lower benefit tier for new hires and resulted in higher city and employee contributions. It was a 2% increase for police member contribute pensions. We had a similar situation Ann in the 88th session where we wanted to go back and implement similar reforms to our civilian system. We worked hand in hand on this with our our colleagues at the coast system, the staff from coast. We also briefed and received positive feedback from both afscme and the ems president at union representative. So we went up to the legislature hand in hand on this. We were able to get the same similar reforms, put in place for coast. We did not do a

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lower benefit tier for coast because we had already implemented a lower benefit tier way back in 2012. But we did go forward with a plan that increased both the city's contributions and the member's contributions. The member contributions were a 2% increase but phased in over two years. So there'll be a 1% increase effective January of 2024 and another 1% in January of 2025. But with these reforms, both of those two systems are in sustainable shape. We will stay off of that pension review board. We'll start paying down our unfunded liabilities and to ensure that these important systems are there for our retirees when they need the when they need to withdraw funds from them.

>> And can you tell us what the city's contribution to both apps and coast was?

>> Yeah, you know if you want it had been statutorily it was 8% to coast the city council for many years had approved supplemental contributions to keep the fund in in reasonable

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shape. We had increased our contributions voluntarily up to 19. With the new legislation in the way it's done is a little bit different. But if you wanted to try to keep it to apples to apples, it would be about a

20% city contribution rate to the to the coast system in this fiscal year, it's not shown as a percent anymore. There's what's called a legacy liability contribution, which is a set dollar amount, and then there is still a percent of salary piece to the component. But if you were to put them all just for comparison purposes to how we used to calculate it, it's roughly a 20% city contribution to the coast system. The employees contributions are going to 9% of salary and the last piece on that, there was a the lump sum contribution from the city to coast specifically is that the legacy contribution, which was about 18 or \$19

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million? No, it's certainly more than that. Our overall contribution is 160 or \$170 million to the system annually. But yes, there is a legacy liability portion. So you know, the system had substantial unfunded liabilities. And what we did is we pulled that out of the calculation Ann and essentially put it on like a mortgage payment. Over the next 30 years, we are going to pay down that mortgage dutifully. And just like you have an amortization schedule for your home loan, we have one set in stone for paying off that legacy liability. And so that's that's what that piece is. I don't have the exact dollar amount. It is the bulk of the city's contribution right now is the payment to that legacy liability .

>> Thanks. And if anybody wants some additional details on that at the coast annual meeting last week, there was a really good conversation that was led by the investment folks who work at

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coast and I think you can look at that stream ING in the archive on the coast main page. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Councilmember pool councilmember Kelly, then councilmember Ryan alter and councilmember harper-madison.

>> Thank you. I'd like to go back to when councilmember Allison alter was talking about vegetation management for Austin energy. I don't need you to get up or anything, but just to add to that, I'd like to see how this year's spending on vegetation management might compare to the previous few years just so that we can see if there's any adjustments there. And then I sent you the information councilmember Allison alter, but I wanted to call my colleagues attention to the budget q&a question number 80, which outlines the arpa spending and the timeline for that. I want to thank the fleet department. Ms. Walz, for coming up here and explaining everything. I also just want to say that I really appreciate your responses over our last two meetings to help us understand better how things work. I had the privilege of meeting two employees of fleet management in

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the garage just yesterday, and thank them for their service. I know it's a tough job and I know you guys are under a lot of stress to get things fixed and done. And I just want to make sure that we're supporting you in the best way possible. Mr. Van van eenoo, I would like to kind of piggyback a little bit on councilmember vela's question about the reimburse payments from FEMA. I'd like to see any outstanding reimbursements in some sort of spreadsheet that we're still waiting on broken down by disaster. And then perhaps also get the anticipated amount of reimbursement, at least going back to 2021 and what wasn't reimbursed because it's my understanding we had some iso fac issues or claims that were not reimbursed. I'd just like to kind of understand that a little bit more. I don't really need a response from you at this time, but if that's something you could provide, that would be helpful.

>> It's a lot of detail. We have it. We can put it into a budget. Question response. Okay.

>> Thank you very much. I appreciate that. And then city

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manager, perhaps you could answer this. Is there a reason that our lifeguards don't get holiday pay?

>> I'm sorry. Say that again.

>> Our lifeguards not getting holiday pay. I think that was brought up at our last meeting. And I'm just curious about that. It's my understanding that they don't get that, but managers do. I is Rebecca still here?

>> I think we're I mean, rather than me trying to keep answering questions about hr, which I think you need more information, let me let Rebecca try to answer that.

>> Hi. Rebecca Kennedy human resources. That is correct. Our lifeguards are majority temporaries and our temporary employees are paid for what they work. And so they are not they do not receive holiday pay. If they work a holiday, they are paid when they work, but they do not receive an additional bank of time to use at a later date or another set of pay that our regular employees do if they work. One of their benefited days is that simply because they are a temporary yes.

>> Okay. So is there a way that

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you could perhaps get us a breakdown in the question format to find out what the cost would be to provide them with that additional pay? They work the summer months. There's lots of holidays during the summer. And I just would like to see what impact the budget we might have if that happens, we can do that. Thank you. And then finally, actually, if you could stay up here, please, miss Kennedy, I'm sorry.

We're making you work hard today. I appreciate it. Do we have any, like, I guess, workforce development programs that could potentially get our lifeguards into other city services? I think that there's probably a high potential to encourage lifeguards to get into 901. Ems or fire. And I'm just wondering if the city provides any kind of workforce development support for that.

>> We do through our organizational development division and human resources, have academies that are all any of our employees can participate in. And that's temporary or regular. So there are different courses that we have if they're interested in different areas to learn about the city for specific quick on the job

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trainings, we don't have anything outlined to train somebody to go into a different job function. But it could be something that we could work with other departments to see if we're able to put something together similar to some of our internship programs to potentially do something in the future.

>> I think I was just thinking outside of the box about other career pathways to help some departments that are lower or have higher vacancies. I think that might be a good way to go about it. Thank you very much. That is all that I have.

>> Thank you. Councilmember Kelly, councilmember Ryan alter, then councilmember harper-madison. I have a follow up question from what councilmember Fuentes was talking about.

>> I have had a couple of meetings, both with fleet and when director snipes was here about the electric opportunities and options when it comes to our trash vehicles. And the answer always was that we want to do it, but we need the transfer station because we can't have them driving out. But you said something that I've never heard

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before that made me wonder is, do we have an opportunity today? And that's around the recycling routes, because you mentioned that some of those routes are very locally contained. And so I'm wondering, is there an opportunity for us to explore more on the recycling side, having vehicles that are more local for shorter routes each day?

>> Sure. That that conversation was actually involved having a northeast service center. So once we have that northeast service center, we would then have an operation center north and an operation center south at Kenneth Gardner. So at that point, our recycling trucks could go ahead and convert because our CXC south operations would just service that south area. So you don't have the mileage distances that that we currently have. Same thing with with with the north side. So we can actually begin that process before we have a transfer station. The thing is, right now, the technology for trash trucks and the electrification is not quite there. So we're

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getting from what I've seen from some of my counterparts around the country, they're getting about 60% of the payload that they can get on a normal truck and about 40% of the distance. So that's kind of been the issue. And the cost right now is extremely high. We're looking at about \$750,000 just for one electric truck. So has that compared to a regular truck, a regular truck, right now we're paying about \$390,000. So

>> Okay.

>> Well, I appreciate that. I, I thought you uncovered a nugget for me, but. But you did not.

>> We're trying. We do. I mean, once the once the pricing comes down a little bit, we do have the possibility of doing our downtown route because that route will strictly leave our south service center and service a CBD. So a not not a lot of driving on that one. So that would be a good one to start out on. But like I said, the costs are still considerably high at this point.

>> Thank you very much. That's all.

>> Thank you. Councilmember councilmember harper-madison.

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Councilmember Harper, you have to forgive me.

>> My kids, they love to make mention the fact that my lack of technology is an issue. So my apologies. No problem. I have multiple questions. One of them includes so, like, along the lines of this discussion around fleet, I really appreciate my colleagues questions. This is something I've been working on for literally five years now, because I recognize denies that we have fleet services in our districts and, and it's something that was a source of concern. And I just want to give a shout out to miss walls. She is not once not responded to my request or concerns. So quick shout out Mr. Snipes quick shout

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out. Thank you very much. One of the things that I would like for us to put on our list of concern burns as a body is, is along the lines of we have fleet service laws which require a remediation and all our districts that if we're going to do some kind consolidation service. Rs we should all be thinking about how do we get fleet services out of our districts and put them into a consolidated space. So that's one thing I wanted to point out . But also that said, Eid, I have some questions, that I'd like to voice, so I'll start with, so in theory, while I recognize and appreciate the

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goal, I'd like for somebody to explain for me the scope and the desired impact out of the. \$30,000 grants for Eid. She's coming down just a second.

>> I know it's hard to see on the screen.

>> I can't see anything.

>> Does she need to repeat the question? Sylnovia. Okay I'm looking for my response.

>> Sorry. No, that's all right. So as part of the \$30,000 grant, it will possibly include technical assistance. Assist

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with relocation or staying at their location. And so that's the scope around the 30,000. If we could potentially break that down a little bit more, even if it's outside of the course of this meeting, it would be helpful because I'm having some trouble understanding ending exactly what we're trying to accomplish here. We can put that into the form of a budget Q and a and get back with you. But again, it's going to be dependent upon the business and where they are currently, because most small businesses aren't cookie cutter. Some have better financials, some have better leases. Not so. So it's going to be dependent upon what the business will need. And again, it's going to be at 30,000. We only have an impact of 20 possibly businesses. So we're going to have to figure out how to equitably distribute that funds. But again, it

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depends on where the business is in their stage of life. It's just different from business to business. But we can put that into the form of a Q and a, and when you say from business to business, I think from a protocol perspective, it might be prudent for us as a body to recognize that, that we should just have more in the way of so like, if I'm asking you that question today, it's because I have no information Ann and I think moving forward, if we could fragment, just have columns and make it more systemic. So noted. Yes.

>> Thank you. Appreciate that. Then my next level of questioning is around other

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department. Bartz. So thank you, miss synovia. I appreciate your response. The Austin convention center is one. I have questions about. I'm certain that's a separate person.

>> We have staff here. They're coming down. Thank you.

>> This is Tricia Tatro, director of the Austin convention center.

>> Thank you. I appreciate you being in presence. So my understanding is that the convention center parking garages are a part of the Austin convention center enterprise fund, two of the convention center parking garages are downtown and have ground floor retail spaces. As I understand

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that the city is unable to provide its own. Its own. Rdj real estate at a discount. But can create programs that provide community benefits and rent frankly, that are cumulatively equal to market rents and rates. How how does and do you just out of curiosity, I want to explore how do we utilize these ground floor retail spaces for pilot projects to support and uplift locally owned and locally owned retail businesses.

>> Councilmember the convention center retail spaces in the second street garage and in the fifth street garage. Those are

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run by real estate services.

>> I'm sorry, if I may, I hate to interrupt you. It's a pleasure to meet you. And thank you for your conversation. When we say real estate services, I don't know what you mean. And I think my constituents don't know what you mean.

>> Sure, those office spaces, those retail spaces are within the Austin convention center apartments enterprise fund. They are within they're under our control. However the leases for those spaces run through Michael Gates and the office of real estate services. They negotiate the contract. S they assist with acquiring the tenants within those office spaces. And so are you talking about the city of Austin? Correct. That's correct .

>> Thank you, councilmember.

>> One of the things that was brought to my attention the other day, and I have not had a chance to talk to cenovia and economic development, but when we have real estate that's

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belongs to the general fund that is not to an enterprise fund that we might want to figure out whether there's a way for those to be incubators for local businesses that I think there's a lot of detail that needs to get done and an evaluation about how we would go do that. But with respect to enterprise funds, my guess is, is that you're probably needing to use market rates to protect those to protect those funds as they exist. But we need to get you some additional detail about how that kind of real estate can be employed in the manner that you're suggesting.

>> So to be fair, assistant or. Almost called you because that's just what I do. And to be fair, when you say they are not a part of the enterprise fund, is that what you just said when, when, when we have a real estate that is part of the general fund and

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maybe Ed can help me here, then there may be some incubator or that that real estate to be used to spur develop especially for small businesses that otherwise local businesses.

>> I don't have any ready piece of real estate where we'd be but I think it's one that we need to think about and I can be corrected, but I thought on enterprise funds, it's most likely that you've got to use market rates for that kind of for those kinds of retail leases . But I could be I could stand corrected.

>> Would you mind offering me the opportunity for Mr. Benigno to respond? Sure sure.

>> And some of this we might want to provide more detail to the council. But, you know, as director Tatro mentioned, we have ground leases or leases on the fifth street and second street garage. We can provide you a list of what those leases are. I think most recently it was the escape room that was brought to council for to lease that space to the escape room group. But these are spaces that that that are market based

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rents. We go out do an rfp to see what the interest is in leasing these spaces and we've brought them back to council and those have been approved. We do have a council resolution, a policy related to providing below market rents and a performance based below market rents largely for not for profit organizations that would provide some community benefit. We do have protocols in in place to do that, but for these particular property is where the garages were funded. I believe through hotel taxes, we have pursued market based rents at those at those properties and there would be some limitations in regards to where we could do below market rents and what type of community benefits we could realize on city owned spaces depending upon what the funding sources were, would would depend on that would change what would be appropriate in those spaces.

>> Mr. Benigno you know, you're one of my favorite people, so I won't give you a hard time. But

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I will say I like having a more clear. I don't think you were un thorough with your description, but I think it would be helpful for my colleagues and I to have just a better understanding of what that means. So so when you said below market rate and then market rate and then incentives , if we had a clearer understanding of that, it would be very helpful. Do we can certainly provide that to you. Thank you. I appreciate it. Then the last of my questions is around Austin energy. Where does our smart housing and or other rebate programs exist within our budget? Does the budget increase our requesting, including

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support for those programs.

>> Yes. Good morning again. Stewart Riley interim deputy general manager, business services of Austin energy, I believe the smart housing rebates you're referring to would be on our line extension fees. We require developers to pay for their own costs of serving that new customer, with the exception that any affordable housing that qualifies as smart housing gets a waiver of those costs to the percentage of affordable units. So if it's a 50% affordable complex, it would get a 50% cost waiver in terms of the cost needed to serve and those are included in our operating costs in terms of for our distribution system and the costs that we have to pay to extend service to new development.

>> So is there an opportunity for us, my staff and I, my colleagues and I, to see when

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you say the operating cost, can we see like some comparative graph.

>> I could what we've what we've done in the past is we have we do have some information that shows in the past kind of how those costs have compared from year to year in terms of the amount of smart housing waivers and kind of what we would anticipate for are those costs going forward. Eid and that's just basically going to be driven by how much affordable housing is being developed in Austin, is going to determine how much of that waiver we're going to have to absorb. And then that basically gets socialized among our among our ratepayers. But but we can I can follow up with your staff and provide the information and we'll see if that hits the mark .

>> I would really appreciate you following up with my staff. I lied. I said I had one last

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question. I have one more. For fleet services. I just want to say I am so excited to see movement on the north northeast service center, especially for no other reason. The domino effect it will have on Hargrave site. I would love for y'all to , you know, I think Mr. Walls walked us through expertly, but can you walk us through just briefly the timeline for the buildout of the joint service center at and what would the next steps be for the site? I don't think I heard that. Okay.

>> I think that would be Kim Olivarez, who might be best to speak to the timeline for the project. And she provided that earlier. She's coming down. Kim

>> Kim Olivarez deputy cfo. So

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yeah, so the timeline for bringing the service center to fruition would be approximately 48 months or less from the time we release the rfp up until we are moving in. During that time, I think I'm not sure if I noted this previously or not, but fleet is actively looking at and researching what remediation requirements might still be required on the Hargrave site. So we're doing that in parallel . We will do everything we can to look at opportunities to accelerate the ability to vacate the Hargrave site. It's a little bit complicated in terms of how we handle the project agreement for the northeast service center, but I will definitely I commit to seeking that as I don't I don't want to disrupt.

>> But when you say a little bit complicated I think having some information for myself and my colleagues, what are the

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complications?

>> So when we typically do a project like this, there's a it's what's called a purchase and sales agreement, Burt where you take possession of the new facility in its entirety upon completion. If I am going to look for opportunities to accelerate the ability for us to vacate the Hargrave site, I need to I have to look at what options we have with that that purchase and sales agreement to allow for that, because it like I said, it would typically be you do not take possession until completion. If I'm going to look for a phasing opportunity that just makes the agreement, the agreement would have to look a little bit different. And I need to work through the legalities of that to see if that's truly possible or not. But I absolutely commit to seeking the opportunity to do that because I know that vacating the Hargrave site and making it available for other uses is a is a is a priority for this body and also

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a priority for fleet mobility services. And Jennifer to just to get her folks into that new facility I would fully encourage you to interact with my staff and let us know what are the challenges and, you know, I'm not a new phone who is?

>> But if we have opportunities to help you through this process, we need to know what those opportunities are. We need to know how can we help you walk through this? The truth of the matter is we have this enormous site at the corner of 12th and Hargrave. The centrally sourced in some of the most beautiful downtown views are being encumbered currently by fleet services. A bunch of busted up fire trucks and police cars.

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This is truly important to me and a thing that I've been working on for literally years. I just want to make sure that we don't lose sight of one. The basic level of importance. But two, if there's something we can do to help, please let us know what we can do to help.

>> Absolutely. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Council member, mayor pro tem.

>> I don't want to jump in front of any other questions, but I had a question.

>> So far there aren't any. And we're very go for it.

>> We have found over some years it's helpful for us to have deadlines for when to put in our Q and a when we can get the staff responses back, because we know that takes a little bit of time and then understanding our process for amendments and when is appropriate for us to start looking for co-sponsorships and making sure we have all of our information about other people's

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proposed amendments as well. So I'm not sure if we were going to talk about that today.

>> We were reyes and if you don't mind, I'll just start with what I think is kind of out on the table.

>> We are currently scheduled or we have posted so that we're in compliance with the law for the ability for us to meet on the third and on the eighth. We have from the very beginning looked at those two dates as potential dates of the thought process is with the number of questions that we have had as a council and the number that are still out. One thought was that what we do is we make the eighth, we make the eighth a Q and a day a day where we come in, we meet at the posted time and that is a day for

us to follow up on all the questions and where they are in order to pull that off. We're going to need to probably have a

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cut off date so that we're not rolling right up until the date and there's still additional questions and there's been a thought on that would be that we would use the fourth or the fifth as that date that would give the council all also the all day of the third to see if there's anything else that they don't have answered or they want to members want to have answered and then use the fourth or the fifth as a deadline. Ann and granted, there may be other questions. It's not it's not a deadline that causes you can't ask any questions, but it is a goal that we all agree we will try to achieve and then that gives a few extra days if we if we set it for 6:00 on the fourth, then that would give the staff until, till we meet at 10:00 on the eighth and that'd be my recommendation I think is to give that amount of time. Then the 10th has been dead

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dated in a general fashion as the day that we would come together and, and put out a amendments and, and or ifc as amendments being items that would affect appropriation in either by adding adding items that cost money or taking items out that save money. However that would look. But they amendments would be dealing with appropriations and ifcs would of course deal with policy. I would hope that what we would do is only have ifcs that actually relate to the budget as opposed . To anything else. That is a policy matter. If for no other reason, if it's not germane, I worry about posting requirements and that sort of thing, that being said, we need to set a time. It would be nice if the council had the proposal

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amendments in advance of that meeting so that there at least be some understanding. And since the eighth is a day we're going to be meeting, one thought would be that we have those in. We have amendments in sometime either the day before the eighth or or maybe noon on the ninth to give everybody time, depending upon what works out on the eighth. I think it would work better for us, and particularly if we have the third and we you know, all this this additional time that we're getting ready to have, if we would say by 6:00 on the seventh, then we would meet on the eighth. That would give us time to look at it on the ninth, meet on the 10th, go through all of those items in a controlled fashion. And that would put us in a position where people would know more as we then move toward the 16th, where we'll have the meetings, where we start voting. So that would

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be my recommendation motion and I lay it out for discussion. Council member Kelly I believe that our financial services department had suggestions and I was wondering how that fell in line with what you just described. If they do, they haven't shared it with me. Okay then.

>> No, maybe that was just related to the.

>> Oh, sorry, the timeline of our meeting schedule and the public input. So I apologize.

>> I worked closely with their them on the original timeline for dates. The only thing that has been added in what the dissertation I just went through is what would happen on the third, the eighth and then timeline for filing, getting all your questions in so the staff has time to answer them and getting a timeline for when amendments and ifcs might be shared with the council members on the message board so that on the 10th we have a more productive day, then I

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completely apologize for misunderstanding necessary. It's just I didn't know about it if they did it.

>> I very much appreciate the thoughtfulness that you put into laying all that out so that we could understand it today. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Council member Vella, any thought?

>> I know there's a bunch of questions and they're complicated questions, but in terms of a timeline for the responses on the budget questions and I ask because we have amendments that may or may not be relevant depending on the answers to the questions. So it's kind of hard to, you know, to have the amendments ready until we have answers to the questions how are how are y'all feeling about the budget questions in a timeline for kind of getting those answered, getting the responses posted?

>> Sure. Staff is really working. Really hard to try to get those answers to the questions. I know we have a number that are being pushed out. I think about 30 are being pushed out today. So we're working, really working with departments, working across several things to try to get it done. The goal is to get them

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out within five days of receiving the question. And I know there's been a little bit of a lag, but we're going to really do a push over the next couple of days to try to make sure we get these out as quickly as possible.

>> We appreciate that. And I think I've seen it probably go from a third answer to more like half answered over the last like 12, 15 hours or so. So appreciate that. And again, we'll be on the lookout for the responses as.

>> So with that, let me again, hopefully I'll lay it out the way I just said it a minute ago. So but here's what I here's the recommendation, Ann is that at the third, we don't meet it so that there's time for council members to work on any additional questions and time for staff to be working on answering questions. On the fourth at 6:00, be the deadline for questions is again with the

[12:39:21 PM]

understanding that a council member has the prerogative of asking an additional question, or if something pops up. But but that is the goal and the desire of the council would be that that would be the disciplined deadline, the seventh at 6:00 would be the deadline on the goal deadline of having amendments proposed amendments and ifcss shared with the council through the message board. The eighth would be what I'm calling a Q and a day, which is us being able to ask questions about the questions and the answers that we got so that everybody has the ability to try to make sure those are fully answered. And then the 10th would be the day that we would gather to lay out amendments and ifc's ask members questions about their

[12:40:22 PM]

amendments, or ifc's, as may maybe discussed, whether there's somebody wants to offer an amendment to the amendment, whether that becomes a new version, just so that on the 16th, when we start this process, we will have had time to go through these in a way that allows for the an orderly fashion of the meeting. Councilmember Allison alter, thank you.

>> I appreciate the clarity here and you've already said that we can continue to ask questions and often we'll get answers back and they won't answer our question. And then we need to dive deeper. So I would anticipate that I did want to suggest, if we might be able to take some time on the eighth for each of us to, you know, to the extent that we know what amendments were proposing so that if other colleagues are interested in joining us in those amendments, it's just a little bit cleaner and faster if we've daylighted. And you know what, some of those things are to the extent that folks haven't

[12:41:23 PM]

yet.

>> So that sure and so the seventh at 6:00 so the day before the eighth would be the goal for council to have put on the message board what their amendments are or their ifcs are .

>> And then what I get from your question is that at some point during the eighth call on the council to ask them, is there something you see that you might want to be a part of? So that there would be some discussion in that regard? Is that what you're saying?

>> Well, I'm saying it's not.

>> I'm saying not fully lay out our amendments, but flag what we're working on. And then folks would be able to either do it in that meeting or or outside of that to connect with.

>> And that's what I think we'll I'll ask about that on the eighth.

>> I'll make sure that that's part of what we deal with. But again, want to make sure council members here on the seventh at 6:00 is the goal of having the

[12:42:24 PM]

deadline Ann so that in order to have a more productive eighth along the lines of what councilmember alter is suggesting, take a look at those because that way you will know what everybody's up to. If people live with that. But I'll I'll make sure we do that that way. Yes, councilmember pool I also wanted to point to the fact that we will be those who are bringing amendments.

>> We posting them on the message board Wright that also is a really smart way for all of us to indicate our support in advance. So that we can push through that information portion early on and make quick work of that as well.

>> That's good. Good reminder. So again, let me quickly run through this and I'd take any other additional comments on the we will not we will cancel the meeting that has been posted for the third. That will be a work day on the fourth at 6:00. That will be the goal to have all

[12:43:25 PM]

questions in to staff. Seven at 6:00. That will be the goal for proposed amendments and proposed ifcs to be posted on the message board and it doesn't have to be just all at that time. If you got one and you're ready to go, get it out there and that way people may have the opportunity to provide input before them. But that will be the seventh. The seventh at 6:00 will be the goal. The eighth will be a Q and a day. And will have some opportunity for our council members to weigh in on amendment S in advance of the 10th, but the 10th will be the day that we ask council members to lay out their amendments as in advance and ifc's in advance so that

[12:44:27 PM]

there can be discussion questions, offers of well, if you did this, it might be for it, that sort of thing. And I suppose at that time two people will have additional opportunity to say whether they're joining in on something that is my recommendation. And unless there's objection, we have an objection, not an objection, but just clarify Ann mayor, please, on the when council members present their amendments and ifc's, in addition to putting on the message board, can you please send it to the budget office as well so we can start vetting that information and making sure we have the most updated documentation as possible. I've made it very clear there are no such things as friendly amendments, but I'll take that as a friendly amendment. No that's a great idea and I'm glad you pointed that out. Yes. Councilmember Fuentes, thank you.

>> Just wanted to highlight for next Tuesday's work session on

[12:45:27 PM]

the eighth that we would want a briefing on permanent supportive housing from our housing staff.

>> Okay, good. That's that's a good again, that's an example of . What I'm thinking about on q&a day. Something that hasn't been answered or fully answered and if you know what you're going to asked in Vance, but it also probably be helpful to them so that they're prepared, just like you did just then. Council member councilmember harper-madison, you have your hand raised.

>> Do also, I wanted to just offer some praise and edification. Is, Ms. Mcnealy still in the room?

>> I don't see her. Doesn't appear to be.

>> That's unfortunate. I will just put it on the record. That that kymberley Mcnealy has helped us work on this east

[12:46:28 PM]

Austin north east Austin project . I mean, to her detriment, because I'm certain she is overworked herself. So I just wanted to offer some praise and edification.

>> Okay, good deal. Thank you. Councilmember Allison. Thank you .

>> I just wanted to ask for clarification for the memo that we received yesterday about the tax rolls that indicated there was 5.2 million in additional general fund. What do we have to budget for? Reserves from that would just be 17% of that would need to go into reserves. If we kept at the level proposed in the budget. Yeah. To the extent it was devoted to ongoing spending, every dollar of ongoing spending, you need to devote \$0.17 to reserves to maintain that policy.

>> Thank you. Of course we'd recommend that you devote it to one time items or even bolster the reserves further. But thank you.

>> I appreciate that. I just raised that because in a past

[12:47:30 PM]

budget we didn't account for the reserves when we had these additional funds shared and it created some havoc at the end and, you know, we had really gotten to a place, I think, that everyone was comfortable. And then we had to make some last minute adjustments that were on the fly that I think it would be better if we accounted for that as we went.

>> Good deal. And councilmember Vila, when are we going to get the next best sales tax monthly report.

>> Let me double check and if the answer is the 18th at 5:00, that's not a good answer.

>> I think we should get it on the morning of August 9th. Okay

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor pro tem.

>> And I'll just flag we had a very successful budget town hall yesterday.

>> So thank you to Carrie and the rest of the team that was on our call. But there are a couple other budget town halls, I think, still yet to be conducted . And so we're very excited

[12:48:30 PM]

about those. But there's always more opportunity for public input either. Sure. Later today, I think on the 16th, we'll probably have some as well. But check in on some of the other budget town halls if you haven't been to one yet, because there's a good opportunity to hear feedback from the community and get some more questions answered for folks. Great point.

>> All right, members, that completes agenda item number one. And without objection, the council will be in recess and take up items two, three and four at 3:00 pm. We are recessed at 12:48 P.M. Until 3:00 pm.

[12:49:35 PM]

Keep keeping alive alone.

>> That's our. Hope. And maybe it will stay.

>> Show me the way. Maybe brighten my day. Take away some of this pain deep in the night when I lose sight and thinking that'll never end. Break it and I'll

[3:00:06 PM]

good afternoon, everybody. It's 3:00. I'll call back to order after a recess. The Austin city council. It is as I just indicated, 3:00. And we are back in the council chambers at Austin city hall. And we have a quorum of the council present. First item on the agenda is item number two, and I'll ask the city clerk to call those people that have signed up to speak on item number two.

>> Thank you, mayor. I'm going to start with it looks like we have one remote speaker on item two, but they have not dialed in. So I'm going to start with the in-person speakers. Once we call your name, please make your way to the podium first. Speakers missile Ramos followed by chibueze Watson and Ann and Jayla peoples. If I've called your name, please make your way to the podium. This is for item

[3:01:09 PM]

two.

>> If she's called your name, please come forward and if you're not the speaker, take one of the seats here in the front so that out of respect to people that will be following you as a speaker, we can move more efficiently with our testimony. Would you call those three names again?

>> Yes. Mayor missile Ramos. Chivas Watson, Jayla peoples, if you are here, please make your way to the podium. I'll call the next three then. Carla Parado Shea. Chase Wright. Sasha rose. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium. I'm. I'll call the next to Chris Edelman. Charlotte Davis. And those are all the speakers for item two in person

[3:02:13 PM]

. Let me call them again. Mayor. That's what I was going to ask you to do. All right, Mr. Ramos chivas Watson. Jayla peoples, Carla Parado. Chase Wright, Sasha rose, Chris Edelman and Charlotte Davis or any of those people present the signed up on item number two.

>> Okay, members, we have item number two in front of us. I would ask if there's a motion to adopt item number two. Council member qadri moves to adopt item number two. It is seconded by council member pool. Is there any discussion? Hearing none. Item number two is adopted with council member Ryan alter council member harper-madison

[3:03:15 PM]

Ann and council member Velasquez off the dais members that will take us to item number three. We'll take up item number three and it's related to the maximum proposed property tax. We have a resolution to adopt the maximum maximum proposed property tax rate that the council will consider on August 16th for fiscal year 2023 to 2024. Under state law. A vote on the motion to adopt the maximum proposed tax rate that the council will consider requires a roll call vote. The maximum rate that the city can adopt without exceeding the, quote, voter approval rate. Close quote, set by state law, is \$45.58 I'm sorry, 44, \$44.58 per \$100 valuation. If we go above that rate, we have to call an election members the way I

[3:04:16 PM]

would like to proceed on this is ask for a motion, then we in a second. And when we then I will call on the public that has signed up to speak on item number three and then we will go to a vote. Is there a motion to approve the resolution setting the proposed maximum property tax rate that the council will consider for fiscal year 2023 to 2024 at \$44.58 per \$100 value motion? Yes, sir.

>> Eric Nelson financial services. I just want to clarify. It's 44.5 \$0.08 per \$100 of taxable value.

>> Well, that would be different . Thank you for that correction. Let me ask that again. Is there a motion to approve the resolution setting the proposed maximum property tax rate that council will consider for fiscal year 2023 to 2024 at 44.5 \$0.08 per \$100. Valuation the mayor pro tem makes that motion. It's seconded by council member Vella members. I will now turn to the

[3:05:17 PM]

city clerk and ask her to call those speakers that signed up to speak on item number. Three

>> First speaker is Robert Lilly . Followed by chivas Watson, followed by Sasha rose. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium. I'll call the names again. Robert Lilly chivas Watson and Sasha rose.

>> If you've heard your name, please make your way to the front of the chambers.

>> There's only three speakers, madam clerk.

>> Try it one more time.

>> Robert Lilly, chief as Watson

[3:06:22 PM]

and Sasha rose as. Okay members, we have a motion and a second to approve the resolution.

>> Ann adopting, adopting a maximum property tax rate of 44.5 \$0.08 per \$100 value nation for council to consider adopting during the fiscal year 2023 2024 budget and tax rate approval meeting on August 16th, 17th and 18th if needed. In other words, we're now voting on what will be the maximum property tax rate that could be adopted on the 16th, 17th or 18th, when we will take up and vote on the budget. It is there any discussion? Will the city clerk please call the roll?

>> Mayor Watson.

>> Aye.

>> Mayor pro tem Ellis yes. Council member harper-madison.

[3:07:25 PM]

Council member. Fuentes I council member. Vela I council member. Velazquez council member . Ryan alter council member. Kelly nay council member pool yes. Council member. Qadri I council member Allison alter I member kors there being seven eyes one no and councilmember alter would you like to be shown voting and how would you like to be shown voting there being eight eyes one no and two off the dias council member Velazquez and council member harper-madison the motion is adopt Ed so the motion.

>> I want to be clear. The motion to approve the resolution that adopts a maximum property tax rate of 44.5 \$0.08 per \$100

[3:08:28 PM]

valuation for city council to consider adopting for fiscal year 2023 to 2024. Passes on a vote of 8 to 1 with two off the dais. I'll now open the public hearing without objection. On item number four for the proposed city of Austin fiscal year 2023 to 2024. Budget as we start this and as we've discussed a number of times, we will not actually vote on the budget today. The vote on the adoption of the fiscal year 2023 to 2024 budget will be on August 16th, 2023, here in city hall 301 west second street, Austin, Texas at 10:00 am. The council budget and discussions and voting will continue to August 17th and 18th if necessary. We will also allow testimony or

[3:09:29 PM]

public comment on the 16th. With that it madam clerk, I will call on you to begin the public hearing that has now been opened . It is my understanding that we have a number of Spanish speakers and we have a time limit on our interpreter. So I would request without objection from the council that we call the Spanish speakers that need an interpreter to please come forward first so that we can meet the time constraints as. Mayor.

>> Mosque start, I'll find the Spanish speakers just a second. I'm just going to call speaker a get started. Casey Sodergren.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Casey Sodergren. I'm a resident

[3:10:31 PM]

of district nine and I'm speaking in support of the community investment budget and to express my concern with the city manager budget proposal to increase APD funding public safety is not achieved through the police, as mariame Kaba has said, quote, a system that never addresses the why behind harm never actually contains the harm itself, unquote. Funding the police ignores the why, and it makes our problems bigger are fueling the false narrative that more police are needed. Real public safety and moreover, public wellness requires investments into things like permanent supportive housing and expansion of the guaranteed income pilot program and support for home based child care providers who provide affordable cultural, relevant care with flexible schedules. For Austin families, they make unlivable wages so people who have children can contribute to our economy from an economic and moral standpoint. They require city support, a back to basics budget is dismissive of

[3:11:31 PM]

progress. We've made, I.e. The equity office and does not reflect the values of myself or this community. Thank you.

>> Okay, we're going to move over for to in-person speakers. Mayor for Spanish translation. The first speaker is Claire Morrell.

>> Okay. I'm having a hard time hearing the name. Whose first? Claire Morrell. Followed by Yvonne Tenorio.

>> Yvonne. Buenas tardes.

>> MI nombre es Yvonne Salinas soy resident. Una de MI casa en el distrito dos.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Yvonne Salinas. I am a resident and I own my house on district number two and media Y con el

[3:12:32 PM]

trabajo en las comunidades veo la necesidad de Tener mas acceso apoyo en las personas de color para navegar los sistemas tan complejos Y confusos in my day to day life, when I work in the community, I can see the need for access and support for the people of color. So we can navigate the systems that are very complex and confusing.

>> Es por esto es la oficina de ciudad sigue siendo independiente.

>> It is the reason why I'm asking you to please keep the equity office in the pendant.

>> La oficina de ciudad para nosotros como Latinos de inmigrantes representa la Esperanza podemos Tener Una ciudad Justa en la que podemos sentir estamos incluidos E somos bienvenidos.

>> The equity office represents for all of us Latinos and immigrants. They hope that we can have a just city, one that

[3:13:34 PM]

we can feel included and welcoming.

>> A Tener la Manera autonoma es un gran Avance de la ciudad en cuanto a la relaciones con las memorias ha having it in an autonomous independent is a big advance for the city in in areas that have to do with relationship with the minorities . Independencia sera regresar a los antiguos obsoletos Formas de gobernar en donde la voz de la comunidad no importa taken away its independent will be going back to the antiquated way of form of government, where the voice of the community is not in important apoya el presupuesto de inversion comunitaria also ask you to please support the budget from the community de un ejemplo directamente Al estabilidad de economic de las families en el programa de ingresos garantizar este

[3:14:35 PM]

programa también les ayuda alcanzar otras metas Q lleva a Tener Una Vida mejor.

>> An example is to support the direct stability, economic stability Katy of the families in the program of income, warranty income. This program will help achieve the goals of the families that are receiving it.

>> Otro programa Q necesitamos de fondos es el programa de la Renta Al Dia de hoy Toda la Familia. Q no Ann podido recuperarse de la pandemia.

>> Another program that we need your support is the funding for health to pay the rent today. Pay their families. They're still struggling and unable to recuperate from the pandemic.

>> Oh Jesus Familia trabajador viven con mucho stress. Y desesperanza por no Tener Una vivienda totalmente segura.

>> Today these families hard working families, live with so

[3:15:37 PM]

much stress and desperation under a roof where they feel insecure. Thank you. Gracias.

>> Thank you.

>> Next, Spanish speaker is Gerardo Sanchez. Okay.

>> Those. Those. Hola MI nombre es.

>> Gerardo Sanchez. Yo en el distrito, cuatro Austin, Texas, hello.

>> My name is Gerardo Sanchez. I live in district four in Austin, Texas.

>> MI papa trabajan pro Maria MI mama trabajo en un jack in the box. My father is a plumber and my mom works at jack in the box . But MI MI me gusta Tener mas pa Y Tener mas de agua Y me gustaria la ciudad nos ayudara a MI casa. But I would like to have more parks.

>> I would like to have more water parks, and I would like for the city to help us fix our

[3:16:39 PM]

home.

>> Porque es un poco Rota me gusta la ciudad de mis Papas porque son muy trabajadores Pero necesitan ayuda.

>> Because it's a little bit broken. And the city could help us fix our home because my parents work so hard.

>> Tengo hermanos es Una hermana son muchos gastos de la Renta quiero ayudar para tengamos Una ciudad Feliz.

>> Because I have two brothers and one sister and it's a lot to pay rent and I want to have a beautiful city. Salud

>> Bendiciones. Thank you and god bless.

>> Thank you.

>> Cuantos. Unjustness. Bienvenidos. Thank you. Gracias

>> You're welcome.

>> Next speaker is rosario Nava .

>> She's not here.

[3:17:39 PM]

>> Magdalena Alvarez.

>> Not here.

>> Luz Tapia.

>> Felicidades. Despacito puede! Ayudar Bueno.

>> Ya empiezo de Una vez, senora. Buenas tardes. MI nombre es Luz Tapia el Dia de hoy representa a la organizacion misma.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Luz Tapia. Today I am representing the organization misma la representa mujeres trabajadores Y nos vamos Al trabajo de Lugar together we represent 300 women who work in people's homes. De Ninos taking care of children, personas, caring for senior limpieza de Casas. Caring for pets and cleaning the houses.

>> Los regidores el presidente municipal.

>> I'm coming here to ask the

[3:18:40 PM]

mayor and the council.

>> El apoyo para el puesto de inversion comunitaria support for the community budget at el servicios de NUESTRA comunidad, which provides services to our community. Para la ayuda de este abuelas, which is needed to help the schools programs. Para Ninos especiales especial children especial needs children. De Verano para nuestros, Ninos and summer activities for our kids. De la Renta, parks and rental payment. Apollo para el programa de ingresos garantizar to support the program to guarantee warranties income en el distrito. E muchas gracias por Su atencion live on district seven and thank you so much for listening.

>> Thank you. Gracias

>> Next speaker is Leonard Garcia. Garcia okay, go.

[3:19:47 PM]

Oraciones

>> Si. When I start.

>> My name is Leonard Garcia Marquez.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Leonard Garcia Marquez. El Dia de hoy estoy representando NUESTRA organizacion misma.

>> Today I'm representing our organization misma es Una organizacion de lucro.

>> It is a nonprofit organization.

>> Ann significa mujeres inspirados and suenos metas acciones and it means women's that are inspired on dreams and goals. Es Una organizacion de mas de three cientos mujeres de Austin Y los medidores.

>> It is a group of more than 300 women in Austin and the surrounding communities.

>> Domestic as we are dedicated to working in people's homes, as in poder de las mujeres conozcan sus derechos laborales E reciban un trato Justo Y digno en Su Lugar de trabajo and empower

[3:20:47 PM]

women so they know their rights and they can receive, adjust treatment and a place of work that is dignified. El Dia de hoy vengo a los regidores el presidente municipal.

>> Today I'm asking the mayor and the council to apoyan en NUESTRA organizacion to please support our organization.

>> Ann como parte del presupuesto comunitario by supporting the budget, the community budget para acceso a mass ayudas a la comunidad so we can have access to support our community. Como por ejemplo, for example, el ayudas para la Renta help to pay the rent. Para el programa de ingresos garantizar with the work guaranteed program of income. Muchas gracias a todos por Su atenzione. Thank you very much for your attention.

>> Soy de distrito cuatro. I am living on district number four

[3:21:48 PM]

grand senora.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker is candy Aguilera. No. Okay then I'm going to move back over to remote speakers because we have a French interpreter that's going to be coming down right now. If we can have the French interpreter come down, please, to the podium. Good okay.

>> Yeah. Good afternoon.

>> You can have the French interpreter come down to the podium, please. Stand solidarity. Hi.

>> How are you.

>> And I'm going to call the speakers name. It's Marguerite. Lisa Giorno. Yes.

[3:22:57 PM]

>> Once Marguerite. Jehmu. Good afternoon.

>> My name is Margaret. Jomo

>> You see that the exact.

>> I live in Austin, Texas. Reservoir payment avenue after de moi.

>> Beaucoup de France. Can you repeat that as is could you repeat reservoir reservoir payment revenue guarantee after France more or coming to this country has made a difference in my life. Yeah, that's good. Avec de la yep, yep. We all free. Cité de la nourriture completed for payment. McGuire receiving

[3:24:00 PM]

the help has helped me pay for rent and buy groceries for my family. De vous Escott vraiment invest de la stability financiere de grand ménage.

>> I would like to exhort you to invest in the stability of the households that are like mine.

>> De la améliore de and clients . La guarantee de la carte because it guarantees us that it will help get that money from the budget of 2023, 2024 de la keep. I will take all the support you. LE bureau de la keep un role important de la realization revenue.

>> The office has played a great

[3:25:02 PM]

role in the realization of this project. Since to develop rapidly a de facteur de stress climatique Watson is going to help in a curbing the stress that's created by the climate change and the seasonal priority de communautaire and help in the common investment.

>> Let's say this socio initiative de qualité de vie social services and the quality of life de la criminality help to reduce the criminality. It is a security social protection.

>> And can you repeat that Escott difficile de d'entendre

[3:26:06 PM]

LE select the security social protection. And the social security that's helping. That's protecting us.

>> De Macy thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> And thank you for your interpretation.

>> I hope I did my job.

>> Thank you. I'm going to jump back to we have two more Spanish speakers in person and I'm going to call Luis Ordaz. De verdad.

>> Okay.

>> Muy buenas tardes. Consejo MI nombre es Luis Ordaz Gutierrez, soy director. Artistico ejecutivo de proyecto de otro estoy aqui en solidaridad de la comunidad de Austin. For my English speaking community, my name is Alyssa das Gutierrez, and I'm the artistic and executive director of proyecto teatro. And I, as a director of a cultural arts organization,

[3:27:07 PM]

I'm here in solidarity and on behalf of the Spanish speaking community of Austin. Now I was I moved here when I was three months old by my family, a single mother who moved from Mexico here to Austin. And I've seen four decades go by. So I consider myself an Austin ite. And truthfully, I don't want to go back to an Austin of the 90s or the 2000 where community engaged Swint was an afterthought, not where I would see my mother to not be able to have access in her language, not have resource in her language, and maybe not even have the opportunity to be here today to speak in her native language as a contributing member of this city. I'm a living, breathing intersection of the most

vulnerable communities of this city. I'm an artist. I'm an immigrant. I'm a Spanish speaker , and I'm a member of the lgbtq community. This means that I have the privilege and the

[3:28:09 PM]

challenge of living with these four identities and representing these four communities. So my fight for equity is. Four fold. This new budget proposal has numerous flaws, but I only have time to maybe give feedback on 2 or 3 that directly impact my four identities. As the reorganizing of the offices of equity sustainability, civil rights and resilience. Let's cut the bs. It's basic business 101. We know what happens to offices that get dissolved.

>> I'm sorry, sir. Your time is expired.

>> Thank you.

>> The next speaker is Hector Ordaz. And Maria Luisa Gutierrez .

>> Maria C mucho gusto. Okay. Mucho gusto. Buenas tardes. My name is Maria Luisa. Good afternoon.

[3:29:10 PM]

>> My name is Maria Luisa orgullosamente mama de Luis Ordaz. I am very proud to be Luis mom.

>> Madre solteira immigrant de Mexico México en los Anos ochenta tree hijos uno con paralysis, cerebral one with paralysis, parsley otro Anos. Three years E un bebé and a baby aqui van eenoo se habla espanol. I came here and no one spoke Spanish Bien para darle Una Vida mejor a MI hijo con la discapacidad.

>> I came here to give a better life to my son.

>> Gracias a dios doctores Al destino.

>> Thank you to the lord for the doctors and the neighbors.

>> Madeiran Q Yo ahora tengo Q

[3:30:12 PM]

retriever.

>> I got, but now I need to give back mijo con paralysis, my son with paralysis.

>> Muchas operaciones salio delante Y ahora camina many operations and now he can walk memantine.

>> And he pays for my bills.

>> MI otro hijo gay orgullosamente MI my other son.

>> Gay may, December E vive realmente la equidad de help me see and leave the equity la la comunidad de Austin LE represent the community of Austin I represent.

>> He may un dado la oportunidad and he has given me the opportunity para poder fundar as veinte Anos so I can create.

>> 20 years ago proyecto teatro , proyecto teatro compania

[3:31:12 PM]

artistic is an art organization .

>> Estoy aqui porque los cambios de la venta.

>> I'm here because the changes that I saw in the 80s to today son grandees, they're big. Podamos nosotros and he makes for us poder de nuestro mejor potential give our best self la gente nos dio tanto to the people that gave us so much por eso no estoy aqui en Austin. That's why I don't leave. And that's why I'm here in Austin.

>> De estoy ante ustedes pidiendo Luz.

>> And I'm here in front of all of you asking you compromiso commitment etica Q Latino an ethical that you have Pero muchas veces nuestro ego, but many times our ego es Una Barrera para no poder

[3:32:13 PM]

desarrollados is a barrier that doesn't allow us to develop Bueno es un TREs minutos, no puedo contarles mucho me gustaria platicar con ustedes. And it's only three minutes. I know I cannot talk to you that long. I have so much to share.

>> The todo lo Pío es MI Vida soy exitosa of all the beautiful things that I have lived, I am successful E solamente Q nos escuchen.

>> I'm only asking you to please listen.

>> Trabajar juntos and to work together.

>> Nosotros estamos dispuestos we are here. We are willing también ustedes.

>> Gracias.

>> Please be. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

>> That concludes all Spanish speakers who have requested interpretation service. Liz mayor, I'm going to jump back to remote speakers.

>> Thank you all very much for being here and thank you to our interpreter. Thank you, mayor.

[3:33:13 PM]

Yes. Councilmember vela, just wanted to say a quick thank you.

>> Muchisimas. Gracias. A todos hablaron tan, tan, Fuerte de el Corazon la agradecemos Su sus palabras es Su presencia. Aqui es. In Palacio municipal. Thank you all to the Spanish speakers there. They're speaking from the heart. Their voices are strong, and it's a great to have them here at city hall. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Rafael guillén. Mr. Guillen, please unmute.

>> Good afternoon. Can you hear me.

>> Go ahead.

>> Good afternoon. Yes, thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Rafael Guillen, a resident of district seven. I'm also speaking today in support of the

[3:34:14 PM]

community investment budget. I'm very concerned with the city manager's budget proposal to increase APD funding by \$32 million. The city of Austin has paid around \$30 million in settlements to victims of police brutality. Yet this proposal budget would increase APD's budget by the largest amount in history. To my knowledge, Paige public safety is investing in programs highlighted here already, such as the \$16 million for emergency rental assistance, public safety is \$18 million for wage increases for paramedics and the rest of the workers that make the city run. I agree with my fellow Austin residents testifying today. Interim city Garza is back to basics. Budget reverses the clock on civil rights, equity and social justice. And to my mind, doesn't reflect the values of this community. I am a public school teacher. I teach high school and in addition to supporting the other demands here today, I wanted to emphasize and highlight that I'm in favor of funding for the parents support specialists or the program who are often the first responders to families when their students are facing crises and they help their parents get involved in

[3:35:14 PM]

their students education. In my first language in Spanish, I am the son of a carpenter and a housekeeper. I wouldn't be here testifying to you in English or studied at the university of Texas without the intervention of public service like this. When I attended public school in Texas, the current funding system is a patchwork of grants and district money. That often means job insecurity for the team and uncertainty for campuses and students. Ensuring one funding source that takes into account the cost of living in Austin, which affects teachers as well, helps us eliminate that uncertainty and retain staff who are vital to student success. We can't do this unless we do this as a community. Take the money from APD and don't hide behind unnecessary increases to the general reserves. We simply can't have another budget cycle of manager. Garza pool public safety is the full scope of the community investment budget and you can make it happen with a balanced budget. Thank you for your time. Good evening.

>> Thank you. Speaker next. Speaker is Noah. Man. Hi there.

[3:36:18 PM]

>> Can you hear me okay?

>> Yes, thank you.

>> Hello. My name is Noelia. Man and I live in Austin city council district seven and I work in the city supporting renters. I'm speaking in my personal capacity and in opposition to the proposed city budget. Like 55% of austinities, I'm a renter and I'm deeply concerned that community request for significant increases in rental assistance funds and funding to protect tenants from displaced Swint have been ignored and that instead the proposed budget defunds existing tenant support programs, leaving renters in Austin vulnerable to displacement. Landlord neglect and discrimination over 900 evictions were filed in Travis county in the month of June alone. In fact, on June 20th, 129 eviction petitions were filed. The highest number of eviction filings in Travis county in a single day. So far this year. And since the beginning of the pandemic, the vast majority of renters I speak with who are facing evictions are in this position because they are unable to pay ever

[3:37:19 PM]

increasing rents in this city. Rental assistance programs are a vital component of keeping our neighbors safely housed. As I'm sure you're well aware, evictions are associated with negative health outcomes, including mental illness, substance use, suicide and high blood pressure. Mothers and children who experience eviction are at elevated risk of material hardship, depression and poor health outcomes. Youth with a history of housing insecurity tend to have lower test scores, more absences are more likely to drop out and are also more likely to experience behavioral issues and come into contact with the

criminal legal system. Defunding programs to support renters in Austin is just one of the many ways in which this budget fails. Austinites and I once again urge you to vote no. Thank you. The next speaker is crystal link.

>> Hi. Can you guys hear me?

[3:38:19 PM]

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Great. Good afternoon. Mayor Watson and distinguished members . My name is crystal young and I . I'm a resident of one. I would like to discuss the concern in the budget regarding appropriate oversight of our public safety agencies, specifically relating to the office of the chief medical officer, also known as hmo, the office of police oversight plays an important role in ensuring police officers meet the high standards expected by citizens. Austin the budget placement of this police office under management services as opposed to under the police department, is crucial in unbiased oversight of the office. What isn't as well known is that Amo performs a very similar role for medical care that is provided by both the ems and fire departments. Every emt and paramedic in the ems and fire departments works directly under the medical license of the Amo. Chief medical officer, who is directly responsible for

[3:39:20 PM]

ensuring the quality of care that is provided. Because of these responsibilities, primary function can also be described as the office of medical oversight. City council previously approved the separation of the budget from the agencies that it oversees in the same way that the office of police oversight budget is independent from the police department. However this back to basics budget attempts to oversimplify department structures and combines Amo, aka the office of medical oversight, into the ems budget. It's a combination presents presents tremendous conflict of interest for Amo oversight responsibility to ems and it also discounts the responsibility that officer has to the hundreds of fire department personnel for optimal effectiveness and impartiality is contingent on its Independence, just like the office of police oversight. I asked mayor Watson and council members to reexamine the proposal and budget and ensure that the city provides and

[3:40:20 PM]

maintains high quality patient care to the citizens of Austin. Thank you.

>> Time has expired.

>> Excuse me. If the speaker is still on, this is councilmember Allison Alter. If you could please write my office so that we can be in touch with you, I'd appreciate it.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Mayda Gumbo. Vedros.

>> Hi. Sorry, I'm actually in the room. >>. Yeah. Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor. Council members. My name is Mayor Vedros. They use those pronouns. I'm a member of 1624 and Austin DSA and I'm imploring you as my union siblings on the dais to vote down item four, because not only is every penny we add to the budget a penny, we never get back because of HB 1900, the increase comes from moving civilian positions around to artificially increase their budget and gesture at a bias to action which doesn't do much at all. And not only is Mr. Garza so-called bias to action just

[3:41:21 PM]

smoke and mirrors, he has shown a lack of respect for staff as he moved and reorganized his departments on a whim in Friday memos, he said teleworking is unfair to our hard working field staff, but instead of giving them raises and benefits and many attempts with little job security and no benefits, he decided to make unfounded and unpopular cuts to a working condition that improved the entire city. So I'm begging you to invest in the community and in workers. Invest in rental assistance and fair housing and EMS and early child education and not the cops, and not a return to austerity. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Francesca Lee. Good afternoon.

>> Can you hear me? Yes go ahead. Great. Thank you. Good afternoon. Mayor Watson and city council members. My name is Francesca Fraga Leahy and I live in the south central Austin area

[3:42:21 PM]

of district five. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public testimony today. I am opposed to item four. The proposed fiscal year 2024 budget because it does not adequately reflect community priorities. And I am especially concerned with the discrepancy between the priorities as laid out in the community investment budget and the proposed FY 2024 homeless response effort. Appropriation described in the section beginning on page 60 of the proposed city budget. I want to acknowledge the language in the proposed budget describing a future in which Austin can, quote, unite Wright through a community of governments organized nations and citizenry diligently and passionately working together to functionally end homelessness by making it rare brief and non-reoccurring. However ever. The proposed budget does not live up to this aspiration. Instead it seems to effectively defund program aims to support and stabilize tenants and includes no funding to expand or create new programs that would minimize displacement pressure for both tenants and

[3:43:22 PM]

homeowners. I encourage you to address the discrepancy between the community priorities as laid out in the community investment budget and to provide prioritize a holistic response to supporting our unhoused neighborhoods, neighbors and the city of Austin and to effectively support all Austin, austinites and strengthen our community investments in all areas of Austin and our core values as Austin as Austin voters. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

>> Next speaker is David Johnson .

>> Hello everyone. My name is David Johnson. My pronouns are he him? I'm a policy and research organizer with grassroots leadership and I wanted to speak in opposition to item four. The budget that has

[3:44:23 PM]

been submitted is not the budget that Austin needs or deserves today. It is actually much closer to the type of budget that city manager and interim city manager Garza was known for during his previous tenure at the city of Austin, and it was funny because I it seemed so similar. I thought I'd go back and look into what the press had to say about it. Then and it's so wonderful that the Austin chronicle said every year Garza and the council, both armored with the perceived will of the people butt heads, ritual combat over spending priorities. And that's what happens every year that that ever worked with the city manager. But what we see today with city manager or interim city manager Garza is the same makeup of funding priorities that he's always pushed. He's always pushed business first. He's always pushed. He's always pushed police first. That has been his Mo. There's nothing new or

[3:45:24 PM]

different about what he's doing. And the sad thing about that is very much has changed in the two decades since he worked in the city of Austin, very much has changed about Austin. This is not the same city and therefore the same tools that he and mayor Watson use two decades ago aren't the tools that are going to work. And when you use the wrong tool, you instead use a weapon. So please stop weaponize using financial needs and neglecting what our city truly demands and deserves. Please say no to this, to this budget proposal and push for a budget that is more equitable, that actually addresses the needs of our community, like the community investment budget. Because Luz know that the very last thing that we should ever think about is what the business interests need in order for the people who keep everything moving to survive.

>> My time has expired. Next speaker is John Harris.

[3:46:26 PM]

>> Hey, my name is John Harris. I am in district six and I'm opposed to item number four. I appreciate the time of mayor Watson and the council members, but first of all, the budget is a reflection of our values and priorities. That's what it is. So what? We vote on means what we believe in is about priorities. The first issue I have is with homeless prevention services. We're reducing this program by 95. So basically taking away and leaving them with 5% to make sure we stop homeless before it happens. I work at a food pantry down here in Austin, and I also work with people on the verge of homelessness and I see it every week where people are literally one paycheck, one bill from being homeless, and we're taking away that program for other priorities that people think Ann and this will lead to more homeless. We complain about it, but then we don't want to do anything to solve it. There's a huge difference to be able to do

[3:47:26 PM]

an ounce of prevention and actually give somebody a 500 or \$100 voucher than it is to basically try to get them out of homelessness. And I've seen this firsthand. Please reinstate this budget. The next one is the community investment budget. The budget, the budget that we see now ignores the group's recommendation. It basically is a broad coalition across Austin, and they looked at the big picture and maybe the people you agree with, you have to look at each item. You can't just say, I don't agree with them. I understand that we need to look at each of those items and vote on each one of those and make sure what is included. And again, with our values and priorities. And then lastly, we have a no, not lastly, actually, it's a moderate increase in the police budget. Austin has said over and over we do not want to increase police budgets. I know it's not unpopular to that's unpopular with some, but you have to make sure you're doing the right thing. What austinites want, I know we have a different opinion from state government, but I did not elect a mayor to be my mayor, to be represented

[3:48:28 PM]

by my governor. I did not elect a city council person to be my governor. I want you to do it.

>> Thank you, speaker. Your time is expired. Next speaker is Heidi Sloan.

>> Hi, council. My name is Heidi Sloan. I'm a resident of district one and I organize with Austin dsa. I want to support the statements made previously regarding the community investment budget and in opposition to this proposed budget. In particular, I want to highlight the lack of investment in tenant support and homelessness prevention. This budget calls for a mere \$1.1 million investment in emergency rental assistance, eviction, defense tenant, legal and support services. We call for a \$16 million investment in these services to support our tenant majority city, where housing affordable Katy displacement and homelessness are constantly top of the list of community concerns. I served on the community development commission for the city of Austin for four

[3:49:29 PM]

years until I left in may. I worked in homeless services for nine years and my time on the CDC. I received the reports of thousands of austinites applying for rental assistance every single year. And while the city was able to help some, they were not able to help enough. Many more were unable to receive support. If you look into the makeup of folks experiencing homelessness right now in Austin , they are largely newly homeless and that number is spiking. Council the best way to decrease homelessness is to prevent it. Public safety looks like keeping austinites in their homes, not policing folks who have been evicted. This is the most humane, decent, unjust approach to preventing the harms of homelessness. But it is also the most fiscally responsible. Stop pouring more and more funding into sweeping encampments from one place to another and start funding their prevention. This is the will of people from all across Austin to prevent homelessness. And you have the decision before you

[3:50:29 PM]

today and how we allocate resources. Please reject item. Four

>> Next speaker is Brian Seward . Hello. Can you hear me? Yes, go ahead. Thank you.

>> My name is Brian Seward. I am a resident of district ten.

>> I'm speaking today in support of the community investment budget and to express my concern with the budget proposal to increase APD funding by \$32 million. Another speaker has already pointed out the settlements that the city has paid out to victims of police brutality, as well as the record police budget that this proposal would represent. But as we all know earlier this year, Austin voters decided over whelming to pass proposition a reject proposition B, so keeping police budgets at a minimum is in step with the tenor of the community . I'm of the opinion that public safety is not more policing.

[3:51:29 PM]

Rather it's money for emergency rental assistance. It's money for wage increases for paramedics and the rest of the workers that make our city run. I'd much rather see this funding go to places like the ems budget, the 9/11 call center budget, both of which have higher vacancy rates than the police department. I'd much rather see this funding go to places that are just our community issues at their source like homelessness, homelessness, prevent action for far too long we've deprioritized funding ems among many other public services more conducive to public safety than APD. We should be putting this money directly in the hands of our community members as much as possible and prioritizing the community investment budget. In my opinion, best reflects our community's needs. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Eleanor Riley Condit. Eight

>> Hi, can you hear me? Yes go ahead. Thank you so much. I'm

[3:52:31 PM]

here today to support the community investment budget and speak against the proposed budget of item number four. Like so many people that have just spoken, one of my main concerns is homelessness and our unhoused neighbors. I live in district one and just in the last year I have seen many, many more people on my street resorting to living in their cars because they do not have the ability to pay the exorbitant rents that continue to increase. In my neighborhood, on my street, and I want to speak specifically against increasing funding for the Austin police department when we could be using that funding for emergency rental assistance and using that funding for money that would support folks not becoming unhoused in the first place. I think as many folks that have spoken before me have

[3:53:33 PM]

said, we know that this is what our community wants and we are looking to the mayor and to the city council, to act in the way that our community desires. Thank you so much.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Juan Benitez.

>> Hi. My name is Juan Benitez and I'm the chief advancement officer for Texas health action .

>> And our program, the Ken clinic. We have an expertise in serving and providing health care to lgbtqia plus people and people impacted by HIV. We provided free testing for sexually transmitted infections or stis to over 11,000 austinites in 2022, and this was a 176% increase from 2021. The proposed budget does not account for the growth in demand and increasing rates of infections in Austin. There are currently no federal or state resources to combat rising rates of stis, so it's on local governments to fund this work and support community organizations on the

[3:54:33 PM]

front lines of this work to do beyond what city health departments have the capacity to do. Austin public health alone saw a 38% increase in sti testing last year and at Ken clinic we're seeing that 20% of our patients are testing positive for an sti. And most of these infections are in young black and Latino lgbt communities. The city of Houston just recently declared an outbreak of syphilis after a 128% increase in infection and organizations across the state are already closing their doors and shutting down their sti programs because of lack of funding and Austin runs the risk of running of a similar public health crises if

we don't invest in our public health infrastructure and community sti testing programs. Thank you. Next speaker is Anthony Pando.

>> Delfino good afternoon.

>> Council mayor. Today I'm speaking in support of the sib and against Garza's proposed budget. As others have mentioned

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, it would be a far more effective use of our city's budget to address the root causes of our city's issues, such as a lack of investment and working class neighborhoods, a lack of access to social services for the most vulnerable populations, a lack of affordable and supportive housing, and a lack of access to mental health services. The latter of which I'm going to speak to specifically the increase to the police budget in Garza's proposal is a maneuver that skirts around the recent police oversight bill that was passed by an overwhelming majority vote by our community. The sib is meant to be a reflection of our community values and allowing more jobs to be given to the police department would be a direct infringement of the decisions of our community. Rather, we should invest in police oversight and reallocate funds to other, more essential crisis service providers such as emts and integral care Escott, emts and cat are our trauma informed workers who respond to mental health crisis situations. More appropriately than police, who often traumatize these individuals in crisis and ensnare them into the prison industrial complex, further exacerbating their struggles and even grievously, physically harm

[3:56:36 PM]

individuals in crisis. Emts and workers. Immense value to our community should be prioritized, and the reallocation of funds in the proposed budget away from the police and to these frontline workers would be a step in the right direction and a real reflection of our community values. Thank you all .

>> Next speaker is grace laduca .

>> Good afternoon. My name is grace laduca. I am a resident of district three in Austin and I've been a teacher for the past two years and the interim city manager Jesus Garza. Back to basics budget turns back the clock on civil rights, equity and social justice and does not reflect the values of the community as a teacher, I know it is essential for there to be parent support specialists to help families navigate aid and which this council has funded every year but won't make permanent it. The budget should

[3:57:37 PM]

priority wise, investing in education and community support . Police have taken the lion's share of the budget for far too long and Austin instead needs to focus on long term solutions for public safety investing in solutions like the community investment budget and ensuring the right responders are sent to emergencies will help austinites achieve safety. Money should go to address community issues at their source, and this budget does not reflect community needs and values. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Nathan graves. Mr. Graves.

>> Nathan graves. And.

>> And can I be heard?

>> Yes, go ahead. Let's see.

>> My name is. My name is Nathan graves. I thank god that I'm in Austin dsa so that I can serve my neighbor. I'm speaking against item four. Every budget is a moral document. This budget basically says the poor can live

[3:58:37 PM]

on the street as long as we have enough armed guards to keep them out of wealthy neighborhoods in a city where people cannot afford to live, it's ridiculous that the city manager is proposing adding more money to enforcers who already violate civil rights and are cutting funding from the threadbare services we provide as a band. Aid to the city to the poorest in this city, we make the city run, but the but the workers who work in this city are not given are not given the slightest recognition from our city manager. Thank you.

>> Our next speaker is pat Valdez. Mayor mayor pro tem council members and city manager.

>> My name is pat Valdez. I have been an Austin resident since 1985 and I live in district three as all of you know, the Austin animal shelter is over overcrowded and staff are over

[3:59:39 PM]

spent, extended and stressed, trying to save the lives of the 95% of the animals as required by the no kill plan. The long term solution must include preventing so many unwanted animals from being born for the last three years, the spay neuter surgeries that were supposed to be performed by emancipate in their mobile van that serves low income residents fell far, far short due to covid closings and shortage shortages of veterinarians. Funds that you had allocated for spay neuter surgeries for low income people were returned to the general fund. Please increase the funding for spay neuter in fy 2324 to allow funding for a third party vendor to be to get a contract from the city of Austin to perform an additional 2000 surgeries. A quarter. In addition to those performed by city contract with emancipate.

[4:00:41 PM]

This is very important to help us catch up to the surgeries that were not performed in the last three years. And this is very much needed by the people of Austin who cannot afford the regular prices at veterinarian inns when there isn't a city funding for that service council member vela, thank you again for expressing your support for spay neuter at the last budget hearing. I thank you for asking a good question about spay neuter and expressing support. I received your recent newsletter that you are in favor of increasing funding and I would ask that your colleagues support you in that and that you fund the 8000 surgeries next year that are in addition to the next speaker is Isabella.

>> Call.

>> Hello, mayor Watson and esteemed council members. I'm Isabella Colle. I live in

[4:01:41 PM]

district one. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today. I like many other speakers on here, came today to support the community investment budget and to plead that you vote down the city manager's budget proposal, the one that would increase APD funding by \$32 million. The city of Austin has already paid around \$30 million in settlements to police brutality victims and I don't understand why we should give the APD 32 million more in the largest department funding in history. Austin voters, myself included, decided overwhelmingly to pass the Austin police oversight act and reject the Austin police association lies. So there's no reason to give them more money and no corporation or industry would someone who wrongfully hurt others on the job be rewarded with a raise. And I think that the Austin pd should be held to the same standard. At the very least, APD can't provide \$16 million for emergency rental assistance and it also can't

[4:02:43 PM]

provide \$18 million for wage increases for paramedics and the rest of the workers that make the city run. But there are organizations right now that can and I would much prefer that they have these funds. So I think it's time to allocate that money away from APD and towards those crucial community services that keep us educated, healthy and housed. Public safety is the full scope of the community investment budget and with a balanced budget, I, I think that could happen and be a much better choice. Please, please reject item four. Thank you very much for your time. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Christopher Hamilton.

>> Thank you, mayor Watson and council members. My name is Christopher Hamilton. I'm a resident of district ten and the chief executive officer of Texas health action and I'm asking for additional consideration regarding the initial budget proposal for Austin public health and health care in our city we operate. Klein clinic and other health programs in Texas. Klein clinic focuses on

[4:03:43 PM]

sexual health services like sexually transmitted infection testing treatment, HIV prevention through prep and pep and HIV medical care. And the largest number of patients we have are reside in Travis county . We are seeing growth and increased need for sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment. But this budget isn't keeping pace with the demand in the area. In our community health report detailing activities of our walk in testing center that provided over 11,000 sti testing visits last year, 20% 1 in 5 people tested positive for stis and we saw a 176% increase in the demand for sti testing from the prior year. We are reaching community that may traditionally have difficulty accessing health care and that are disproportionately impacted by stis and HIV. This budget's inadequate increase for the disease prevention and health promotion program of barely covers the increased cost of the current status and does not increase capacity funding is not

[4:04:46 PM]

coming from the state or the federal level. We have to take this up as a community to take care of ourselves. We need a sustained level of support and commitment to health of our community and continue to fund and invest in a basic health infrastructure future. We ask you to consider increasing funding for disease prevention and health promotion, focusing on sti testing and treatment that includes community partners. This will fall on us to take care of ourselves as a community. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Emily Klein. Pearl. Thanks.

>> My name is pearl. I'm a city employee and an engineer with Austin energy. I'm here to advocate. We reduce the two biggest slices of the budget.

>> We need to first APD.

>> We need to consider the APD budget as a cost per capita. We're already paying more than

[4:05:46 PM]

many of our peer cities. Are we really getting better response times and outcomes in exchange for those additional funds? I don't think so, and I'll defer to the previous speakers on redirecting APD funds

towards targets that actually have majority support in Austin. Second biggest slice group a retirement commitments. Full disclosure, I'm a former group B city employee. I quit originally in 2019 because my director declined teleworking any more than one day every other week. I'm now back with the city as a temp employee rather than an fte by choice because I want nothing to do with the great retirement system. It's a bad investment. It's getting worse. The gap in overall benefits between two. Otherwise equal employees of group a and group B is offensive. I group a colleague set to retire at 38 to 40 years of pension and group E colleagues of the exact same skill and experience set to

[4:06:46 PM]

retire at 62 to collect the worst rate for the years less than half the years. That discrepancy is the core of the growing vacancy problem. Private employers already pay 20% more and the weakening group B retirement terms are no longer enough to cover the difference. I don't know what options exist to reduce those commitments to group a, but one thing you absolutely cannot do unless you shoot yourself in the foot for decades is institute policies like Jesus Garza is absurd. Cip proposal that only exacerbates the gap between group a and group employees by introducing new unequal benefits that further favor long tenured employees and further penalize these new hires during the hiring crisis. That policy communicates either a fundamental misunderstanding of the problem or willful ignorance of it.

>> Thank you for your time. Has expired. Next speaker is Kellen Gildersleeve.

[4:07:48 PM]

>> Good afternoon, mayor Wesson and honored city council members. My name is Kellen Gildersleeve and sherry pronouns and I'm a registered nurse and a resident of district one. I want to note my support of the community investment budget while sharing my concerns about the proposed increase to funding by over \$30 million. Despite being refunded and having their budget increase over the past few years, the Austin police association was claiming on their social media this week that they have been defunded. This is concerning rhetoric from an organization that ensures us that they will be using this generous budget increase in good faith. My colleagues at Austin ems, who have been understaffed since before the pandemic, need these funds more than APD. Every week we see new posts on Austin message boards about critical 911 calls having, frankly horrifying delays and in a state that refuses medicaid expansion, we need a strong municipal response in favor of health care. As a nurse, I'm a big fan of evidence, and unfortunately, there is a glaring lack of

[4:08:49 PM]

evidence that increasing police funds actually makes our communities safer, and there is plenty of evidence to the contrary. Let's direct these funds towards material support for our community members avenues that have actually improved people's lives and help our city thrive in the face of oppressive rising costs. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is corby, jastrow.

>> Good afternoon, mayor and council. My name is corby. Jastrow I'm a resident of district ten, past president and executive board member of the greater Austin crime commission , the greater Austin crime commission strongly supports the funding increase for our public safety agencies, and the city manager's proposed budget at a time when our public safety departments face critical staffing issues. We have an opportunity with this budget to reset the conversation on public safety. City budget items such as the \$15,000 bonus for police

[4:09:51 PM]

cadets, new equipment for fire and ems fully funding the goodnight ranch station and giving APD much needed additional civilian support will make our city safer and illustrate this council's support for public safety. The crime commission encourages the council to make the necessary investments for public safety included in this city manager's proposed budget. The greater Austin crime commission has supported central Texas first responders for the past 25 years, and we will continue to do so. Please support the funding increase and thank you for your time.

>> Thank you, speaker. Mayor, that concludes all of the remote speakers at this time. So we're going to start calling in person. Speakers thank you.

>> Please, I'm going to call a few speakers at a time.

>> Once your name is called, please make your way to the podium. There are several seats up here as well. While you wait , our first speaker is Phyllis Everett, followed by robin rather. And trey Salinas is.

[4:10:57 PM]

Good evening.

>> My name is Phyllis Everett, CEO and founder of saffron trust women's foundation. Ann. We recognize the intersection of poverty and how these factors contribute to the systemic inequality experienced by the women we serve. Our programs are designed to address these issues head on, providing resources and support to help women break free of the cycle of poverty. The equity office, led by Kelly Coleman and her team, has helped hundreds of families to thrive in stitutional structural racism is a factor that keeps many of the women we serve in the work that we do in poverty. There is no denying that women's lives are impacted by racial practices resulting in food insecurity, homelessness, education and health disparities. As the equity office has been life changing for grassroots organizations like saffron

trust, after knocking on doors of many government agencies and institutions in Austin, they were the only ones that

[4:11:58 PM]

understood the barrier for the women we serve. The equity team was responsible for the first covid relief funding for families we serve, opening job opportunities and keeping families in their home. Over the last year, they've provided many of our families a year's worth of relief with the guaranteed income program. It is clear that they bring transparency to the public process for the families who are underserved. The city of Austin consistently makes a national list of cities with severe inequality. Austinites and lack of access to opportunities for people of color have marked the city with continued racial disparities. For austinites, this for austinites to know this is recorded publicly for the world to see and then to have the standalone office of equity to integrate with other departments is outrageous and we need the equity office to have autonomy and authority through racial lens. The equity office brings transparency so folks can continue to be helped and recognize in the public process the leadership of Kelly Coleman

[4:13:00 PM]

and her staff in the equity department and civil rights needs to remain in place. They will only be able to elevate situations as a standalone entity. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is robin rather. Good afternoon, mayor and council.

>> The zilker neighborhood association is here to strongly support the community investment budget and we support the full inclusion of that framework into the budget today. I want to thank city manager Garza. I appreciate his lived experience and I trust his integrity. I appreciate the frugality and the back to basics theme at the same time. We have no choice, no choice at all but to move forward. We have new realities around climate, social justice and the insane costs of living here. Climate change is intensifying. I'm concerned there's not nearly enough investment in this budget in keeping people ill, especially people of color who are most

[4:14:01 PM]

impacted, acted by the continuous array of apocalypses that we are having. There's not nearly enough investment in keeping those communities safe in our entire community, safe at this time. We need to invest in keeping people safe from heat, floods and cold. And I know that everyone in this room understands we need a police force that never engages in systemic racism. Literally we never at the same time, we need the right number of police and we need them to have the right training. It's really

important that we move past the definition of public safety as only police . Public safety is about keeping people secure. We need to invest way more in ems, paying their salaries and benefits and making sure their role in public safety is elevated way past where it is now. Where would we be without ems after covid? After everything that we've been through? They're the healers at a time when mental health issues

[4:15:02 PM]

homeless Ness and economic insecurity are skyrocketing, we also need to invest more in maintaining all of our parks. Part is tragically underfunded. We all understand that parks are havens for physical health. Mental health and climate. We need to spend any budget dollars we have for parks on all the parks and we need to prioritize parks in the most underserved parts of our city. Thank you all so much for including the community investment budget. Thank you. Thank you.

>> As Mr. Salinas makes his way up, I'm just going to call the next three speakers. Is Latasha black and Rudy Garza and Linda Gratton. You're up next. Good afternoon, mayor and council.

>> My name is trey Salinas and I'm here on behalf of the greater Austin crime commission . We want to thank the city manager and staff for proposing a central investments in public safety, restoring human resources to APD management, and

[4:16:03 PM]

authorize the 11 employees recommended by Kroll will improve departmental efficiencies and create more data transparency. Removing hr has caused payroll issues and created other significant inefficiencies. Officers forced to work overtime due to our staffing crisis went unpaid for weeks and any hr decision made by the department was forced to work its way up. The city's corporate ladder, significantly slowing the decision making process, funding these positions in no way impacts investigations by the office of police oversight and will only add more transparency to the department. This budget is an opportunity to improve each department's public safety outcomes, and it is a strong first step to signal that the city leadership support first responders and take their staffing and recruiting problems seriously. Please support the city manager's recommended budget. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Next speaker Latasha black.

[4:17:08 PM]

I'll tell you what are you miss black?

>> I'm miss black. Okay.

>> I was thinking it might be okay. Person in a wheelchair. I wanted to offer some assistance .

>> Please. My name is Latasha black. I'm an austinite. I stay here on behalf of my grandparents, Carolyn and James Norwood, who are also austinites . I come here basically. Last week I spoke about a history repeating itself. And I just what I do know in my short experience of living is that when history repeats itself is it's an opportunity for us to basically break the cycle and do something different so we can bring about change. And I think the route in which the city is going is definitely a setback. So if we really want to bring about change, we have to make sure that we do what we need to do necessary to do that. I'm not going to hold it up too long. I brought my friend today. She wanted to stand up. She wanted to speak. So I'm going to introduce her and use the rest of my time to help her stand because I think it's important as a community that we help each other stand. And I'm going to do

[4:18:09 PM]

that with her. But her name is Lynda Gratton. She is an elder of the community and she's an austinite, and she was also the previous the former secretary of former mayor pro tem, Charles Irby. So I'm going to help her stand, give us some patience. You want to you say you don't want to say, well, never mind. She don't want to stand good.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Linda gray Ann. And I'm a citizen of Austin. I've been here almost all my life. My brother Danny was a police officer and I had a brother that worked for the electric department. I'm here just to say I'm here. I support Foley's and what they do for us. It is

[4:19:13 PM]

strange when you get my age and ain't no help, but I experienced help and I know that they you know, like anybody else, they have their shortcomings, but yet they're there and they have to go home to their families. And that's a stress that the families, too. And so I believe that any changing, I think that's what they said the mayor has submitted. But the thing about taking a victim pardon of an making a thousand little ones is crazy to me. See, it's just to me, you know, if something is healthy, then you don't take

[4:20:13 PM]

away from it. You make it better for. And that's my admonition to you today. Thank you very much for my friend Tasha and for me being here. Thank you.

>> We're glad you're here. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Rudy Garza followed by Robert Lilly and Charlotte Davis. Yes. Good afternoon, mayor and council.

>> I'm Rudy Garza. I'm the chair elect for the greater Austin chamber of commerce. We represent 1800 companies that are 90% of them are approximately they're all small businesses in our community. We are here to fully support the city manager's proposed budget, specifically on the police department budget. Although this budget does not add any police officer positions, we do believe it's a step in the right direction. And we ask you to support the city manager's recommended budget. Thank you.

[4:21:14 PM]

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Robert Lilly, followed by Charlotte Davis and Mr. Ramos.

>> Good afternoon. Good evening , mayor Watson and the esteemed council members. My name is Robert Lilly. I'm here representing grassroots leadership and we work in district one and I'm a formerly incarcerated person. At 52 years of age, I've spent approximately 21 years of my life in prison. I'm not proud of that. I don't come before you with that as a boast. I come before you with that as a living testimony to my resiliency and my determination to be a part of this community. I have never felt safe with more policing in my community. It's impossible to be safe with more policing in my community. When the community when the police look at me not as an ally, but they look at me as an enemy. I'm here today to say I support more funding for community investment , support the community investment budget. I'm here today to say that communities are safer when communities are empowered. I'm here today to say that people like myself matter,

[4:22:15 PM]

that we have a role to play in this society, and if you truly want to use that \$32 million effectively, you would use it to support reentry programs and you will not tamper with the equity office because that office I testified to you myself was responsible for bringing the police and other stakeholders in the community into one room where we sat down and talked about white supremacy, a subject matter that I've never heard talked about in any public forum ever in my life before. But it happened in this city and it was supported by the city. I believe with all my heart that more and more programs like that need to be supported. And if you really want to help this community, support organizations like grassroots leadership that give people like me a second chance. Thank you very much. Thank you. Yeah.

>> Shalom Charlotte Davis followed by misa Ramos and Seneca Savoy.

>> Good afternoon, mayor. City council members. My name is Charlotte Davis and I live in district nine. I come to you

[4:23:16 PM]

today to ask that you invest in the community investment budget and listen to what your constituents have been telling you since the proposed budget was released. And today, specifically, I want to talk about why I think you should preserve the office, the autonomy of the office of sustainability. So sustainability is not just a buzzword. It is a responsibility that we owe to our children and to their children if we want to achieve the vision of making Austin a thriving, equitable and ecologically resilient community, we need focus and resource. It's not for sustainability to be relegated to a corner within another department. We need to fully fund the climate equity plan. We need policy decisions around housing, transportation, economic development and planning to consider their impacts to affordability, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and food justice. Take housing affordability. If people have to drive into town from 30 miles away to afford to live and work here, that's more emissions, more congestion, more

[4:24:17 PM]

pollution, poorer air quality, which disproportionately affects black and brown people. But it's bad for everyone. Sustainability is linked to and impacted by all of these areas, and it must be on equal footing with other city departments. This reorganization suggests that climate justice is nothing more than an afterthought. Take Francis ministry for ecological transition and they're going to train every public sector worker in the country on the principles behind the transition. All civil servants are going to learn about how the climate crisis is impacting biodiversity and causing strain on natural resources and how these phenomena relate to the public services that they deliver and how they, as public sector workers can use this knowledge to change the way they work. It's a model that Austin should look into. Please keep the office of sustainability independent and autonomous. And while you're at it, please also keep the equity office independent and do not irreversibly increase the budget by \$32 million. Thank you. Mr.

[4:25:19 PM]

Ramos, followed by Seneca Savoy .

>> Hey, how's it going, y'all? My name is messiah Ramos d1 and I'm against the current proposed budget, but for the community investment budget. So over the past few years, Austin has made strides because our leaders have learned that when you invest in community and provide resources, you create economic opportunities. We spend less to mitigate crisis and best of all, you lower crime. Even though the mentality right now is going back to basics, we need to recognize and acknowledge that the basics aren't the same for everyone. And the fact we're debating whether we should invest in our communities and divest from offices that provide so much needed support to the people, tells the citizens of this city that we're going backwards in regards to achieving a more equitable city. My ask today is for council and the mayor to support adding additional funds for direct financial assistance and to add funding for an emergency direct assistance safety net to support low income people and families,

[4:26:22 PM]

one that are one crisis away from being on the street of our expensive city. I ask that we also pour more funding into the carver library so that they can staff up and add additional programing. So that they can offer to the community. We fund workforce development so people can take advantage of the opportunities coming into our city and also fund resiliency hubs so that people are able to be connected to those resources . We need to also keep the equity, civil rights and resilience office independent so they can continue providing those resources to help people and to further the fight for Austin and making a more inclusive city for all of us. Austin has a long ways to go in regards to being Progressive and inclusive to black, brown and low income communities at this time. With the things happening in our state once again, I ask our city to double down on the institutions that provide for our communities and continue to progress them forward. Because in the end, who wants to be

[4:27:23 PM]

basic? Thank you.

>> Seneca Savoy.

>> Thank you. My name is Seneca Savoy. I am a homeowner in district four employee with equity action and somebody who's been coming to these meetings since about February of 2018. I believe during that period of time I have seen over and over again this council move in a more Progressive direction, making key investments that have saved thousands of lives. As I think I said last time, and I think it's important to stress how that it was at the same time linked towards a governing philosophy of co governance of meaningfully trying to get not just consultation, but cooperation and input from the community. In this year's budget, we have the opportunity to take the input from dozens of organizations who have engaged

[4:28:23 PM]

thousands of people Wright many more than the actual engagement from our own city offices about what needs there are in the community and the baseline budget ignores so many that could save so many lives during covid. One of the things that saved so many lives was the expansion and rental assistance that caused people who were on the verge of homelessness to avoid it. Right. The period in which a person can most easily be diverted from homelessness are in the weeks after they've been evicted or just before in stead trying to get somebody once they've lost their job, lost their home, lost their possessions back on their feet and stable, is ten times as great, right? And at that moment, right when we're seeing still an explosion in our unhoused population, we're seeing that critical assistance

which is much more effective than much later in the pipeline. Right. Once someone has become unhoused cut for me, it is my belief from the talks that we've had many of the council members that these calls from community actions have been answered. So I urge you to follow through on

[4:29:25 PM]

those amendments because there is flex in this budget, flex that could do things like preserve the rental assistance we have that could keep thousands of people in their homes. These needs are crucial. Well, they're part of the community itself, and they can save people's lives as choose to do the right thing. Thank you. Mayor.

>> I'm going to jump back to remote speakers. We have one speaker Zenobia Joseph.

>> Thank you, mayor. Council I'm Zenobia Joseph speaking in opposition to the proposed budget.

>> \$5.5 billion. I just want to call to your attention my request for you to look at the 22. \$9 million contract for Joyce James to rescind that contract.

>> It was supposed to be for police equity. And I want you to recognize that you already have funding in the budget for the

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Kroll report and the money that you would save from Joyce James's contract could be used for Austin public library to fund black literature, specifically those items that Mr. Weeks and others in the library system are unable to get because the vendors don't stock those items. I want you to recognize as well that there is a request for \$550,000. You heard from Dr. Valenzuela for academia, quality and I would ask you to recognize the need to make an equitable contribution for black students as well. If you're going to supplant Austin independent school district's budget as it relates to the \$1.1 million northeast item, I object to that as well and would ask you to go back to the November 3rd, 2022 item and actually look at item number one. And it gives you the history that dates back to 2011 and tell us the outcomes

[4:31:27 PM]

. If we're going back to basics, give us the outcomes of the funding that has already been invested in colony park as opposed to throwing money at the problem. I want you to recognize that district one does not stop at colony park, but it in fact extends Samsung all the way to the area at Howard lane. And I would ask you to recognize it's not far flung Samsung, but it's a 4425 acre development that will be there at east village and that we need to invest in transportation to get people to the jobs. And if they

can get to the jobs, then they won't need as much social services and lastly, I would just call to the city manager's attention that it is problematic. Thank you, speaker.

>> Your time is expired.

>> Where it is that concludes all of our remote speakers.

>> Going back to in-person speakers again, I'm going to call speakers in groups of three. If you can make your way to the podium as your name is called, Elizabeth Gonzalez chase Wright and Sam kirsch. And

[4:32:29 PM]

please state your name before you begin speaking.

>> I know you remember me. I know you do, mayor. I see you smiling at me. Mayor Watson and the members of the city council. My name is Elizabeth Gonzalez. I was born and raised in Austin, district one. I opposed the opposed to pre polls the budget that would increase the funding of 32 million, 30 to \$32 million. I am opposed because APD is actually resisting efforts to hold the department accountable for what they do. Okay. And you know what they did? They murdered my son. I'm not going to say no more than that. APD has shown disrespect for citizens on the oversight and disrespect the authority of the city council. The mayor and the city manager. In the early

[4:33:30 PM]

morning of January the fifth, 2021, my son, Alexander Gonzalez, was shot and killed, dead by two officers. After the investigation, the review, the community police review commission recommended that both officers be fired from APD. But did they know they didn't? Why other states do it? Why doesn't Austin do it? They murder our kids, colored kids. Okay, first of all. Second of all, the officer who murdered my son didn't even identify himself as an officer. Okay that's another thing. I will never be the same . And I'm here trying to read this because I can have so many different words and confused with me right now because of what I got to say here. But I'd rather say it from my mouth because this right here, I can't because it's just I can't stick

[4:34:31 PM]

to the script because I don't feel the way y'all should feel, the way I feel, what y'all did to my son. I am here because I. The APD does not deserve this money. They deserve people like me to help. Okay? To help people like me to get back to normal.

>> I'll never be normal. Do you understand that? I'll never be normal.

>> My family's here to support me also. I'll never be normal.

>> Never be normal. Thank you, ma'am.

>> Good afternoon, council. I'm glad that that just happened, because at this point, I'd like to take a chance to talk about being in alignment. My name is Chase Wright. I'm the executive director and founder of the Hungry Hill Foundation. We are a holistic workforce who believes that you should not put an individual into housing without sufficient continuum of care and without a job. First, we take

[4:35:32 PM]

the opportunity to make sure that our clients have jobs, give them work opportunities that are suitable for them. We realize that no one solution is going to work for a group of individuals. Everyone needs their individual progression plans. So that they are successful. We talk about communities being in alignment with these programs. We have built over the last year. We ask that our community members are contributing to our unhoused clients' success on their reentry journeys into society. We have a creative initiative that we've started called the Blessing Project. It will be before each council person or we would like to bring it before the council so that we have the option to continue to offer these individuals who are under-resourced in District One, who are trying to work their way out of homelessness. Our current demographics are 95% African-American. Is it only make we only make up 8% of Austin. So that in itself is a problem. 40% of our homeless population is African-American, in which we service. Right now, a total of 182. Out of those 182, we have over 50 individuals who have reentered into society.

[4:36:34 PM]

and now that are self-sufficient. They live in various places because of the violence like community first village, who offer our our clients who have jobs, houses and etcetera. I ask any organization that believes in collaboration, that believes in taking a holistic approach so that our unhoused neighbors are treated like human beings and offer a second chance in life. With that, that's my time. Thank you very much.

>> I'm going to call just the next round of speakers after Mister Kirsch just Robertson, Jen Ramos and Beverly Lazard.

>> My name is Sam Kirsch.

>> I'm a resident of District Five. In 2020, I was shot in the eye and face with a beanbag round by APD. Completely ruined my life. Despite the recent Kroll report showing police misconduct, it has cost the city \$73 million over the past ten years. Interim city manager Jesus Garza, who I have to point

[4:37:35 PM]

out was pushing for taking away work from home and is not on the dais, but, he has pushed for a proposed budget to increase APD funding by \$32 million, the largest in history. And it you know, I have to remind council and people here that every time y'all raise the police budget, you cannot ever lower it. And most of you supported prop a which voters passed overwhelmingly. But there's more money even than that being tied up where it shouldn't be aggressively increasing the general reserves from 14 to 17% in one year in a year where people are about to lose food stamps in a year with no eviction moratorium and in a year where Jesus Garza's former colleagues at the federal reserve are trying to induce a recession to drive down wages of working class people. Now this is money the people of Austin need for real public safety, real public safety is rental

[4:38:36 PM]

assistance is real. Public safety is direct cash payments. Real public safety is actually building and acquiring permanent supportive housing units. It's park shade structures. It's fully it's a fully funded, sobering center. It's city workers and paramedics having real living wages. You you all need to stand up to interim city manager Garza and his proposed budget. You all need to look at things under investigation by the auditor's office before approving them. And you all need to protect the equity office and ensure prop actually goes into effect. Support the community investment budget. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

>> Jessica Robertson, followed by Jen Ramos, Beverly Lazard in Guatemala. Foreign good afternoon.

>> I'm Jess Rodriguez. Robertson

>> I am a resident of district seven.

>> I wanted to start off by

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saying that moving the office of sustainability into an organization with business interests in the mind already feels like a total joke because if it weren't for business interests, we might not be in a climate crisis right now.

>> So already that's my first cynical take of what it seems to be a very itself, a very cynical white flag of a budget proposal . I want to return to what I was talking about last time. The severe obtuse cuts to spending, relief and stabilization for tenants from \$8 million to less than 250 K that's going to put a giant halt on creating intergenerational social mobility. I'm afraid for my friends who are losing access to their housing, which will not just condemn them in this generation, but their children in the next. Losing

losing one's home is seen as a moral failing. It follows you around. It is similar to being arrested when apartment complexes and slumlords are throwing their weight around behind illegal evictions, both legal and illegal. They are spiking people struggling to pay their bills are desperate for relief. You all know this. That's why y'all

[4:40:39 PM]

funded it. That's why y'all drafted it. But now it's being taken away. And I don't know. So what? We just don't know it anymore. Austin has a unique response ability of growing, of being a growing city while protecting its residents. I wish it didn't always seem like an either or question, but this austerity budget kind of is a major swing in the favor of the people who are not yet here yet . And that's kind of how I feel about increasing the reserve. I feel like we just don't need more investment into policing. The inequality, the people with everything. I feel increasingly like once again, I just go back to our options just seem like more jail, jail and jail. Whether it's not fully funding something like the sobering center, which is going to help divert people from our ending in jail or not providing relief to keep them in their homes as what my friend Seneca says before me at a really crucial juncture of keeping them out of out of incarceration. Ann thank you. Thank you. Beverly.

[4:41:41 PM]

>> Beverly Lazard followed by Guatemala mukhtaran and Terry Adams. The projected budget put forth by city manager Garza does not reflect spending on community investment budget priorities.

>> So we need to do something about it. This month, the city manager wants you to believe that there will be no money for any of our community priorities , but that is patently false, since our real priorities are higher wages for all our city workers, and especially at ems, where high vacancy rates threaten essential services and our safety, child care, youth programing, park park maintenance to ensure young people in our city have safe and healthy places to go.

>> Gun violence prevention services to prevent and address homelessness and workforce development. More than 40 organizations burns collaborated

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on a set of real priorities that address Austin's most urgent needs. I am a community activist and a senior who garnered about 100 signatures in 100 degree plus temperatures last summer in order to pass prop a and say no to prop B due to a snag in the system. These votes were not counted in time for a November election. In may. The Austin voters, 80% to 20% voted in, voted in prop a, we're still working

to untangle all the bureaucratic malfeasance if Garza's budget passes the hard working, the hard working citizens of Austin will wonder if our hopes and desires for Austin really matter. Thank you

[4:43:44 PM]

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>> Next speaker is cuauhtémoc Duran, followed by Terry Adams and Andrew Hairston.

>> Hi, my name is cuauhtémoc Duran.

>> I'm a member of district. I'm a resident of district two and a member of Austin dsa. I'm here to speak in support of the community investment budget, and I'm here to urge city council and the mayor to stand the post against the regressive budget of the city manager and amend it to reflect the needs of the community. I'd like to remind everybody what happened on the beginning of the year at the us house with reactionary right wingers. They cut budgets and then they strong arm the rest to accept their budget cuts or compromise on budget cuts. This turned on student payment payments for people like me, and this is what it's going to do to Austin residents with rental assistance. It's the same attempt just disguised a

[4:44:44 PM]

different way back to the basics . Additionally, you should keep the office of sustainability open and its own independent office alongside all the other offices. They do amazing work that they need the Independence to do so. I live in a rental house that has terrible insulation and I'm glad that our city has a strong community plan . But we need to expand the offices that implement those plans. There's no fast chargers for electric vehicles in the south. This is the kind of stuff that office of sustainability and other offices do, and they need expanded resources, not less as we need more assistance for families and less for the police. I've had a roommate who's had his car stolen. The police say they defunded it. That's why they got there late at night to take the report. That's bs. Okay. That's we need to cut their funding. They need to not have increased funding when they behave like that. That's all. Next speaker is

[4:45:45 PM]

Terry Adams followed by Andrew Harrison and Julia Von Alexander .

>> Hi, I'm Terry Adams. I'm one of the many city of Austin employees who lives outside the city limits. I'm here to ask for increased funding for parks Austin. I love our parks so much so that we often fall in love with them. We need to invest in nature and opportunity for recreation parks directly impact the

experience of affordable Katy in a city that increasingly feels inequitable. Green spaces and pools are crucial for survival. Brutal. Austin Summers . As a lifeguard, it's up to me to break it to patrons that the neighborhood pools will be closing in the middle of August . We need more robust funding to keep neighborhood pools fully open through September, along with increased park funding. I asked for new leadership. The current director is leading us in the wrong direction. If not enough money is allocated, that affects future budgets. That's

[4:46:47 PM]

especially alarming in light of the reduction in funding from the parkland dedication fee. This could lead this could lead to an overreliance on a trickle down economic model utilized Singh nonprofits. Please use rewilding techniques at zilker park and all city parks and please hire a director who is aligned with that perspective. Thank you.

>> Rey mayor excuse me, miss miss Adams.

>> I just wanted to thank you for making it here today to advocate for our parks. I know you were at my town hall last week, and I know you had to jump through some hoops to be able to speak during the time that we have available for speaking. So I just wanted to say thank you for going that extra mile so that we can hear from you as an employee. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Andrew Hairston followed by Julia Von Alexander and Maggie Bernsen.

>> Good evening. My name is Andrew Hairston.

>> I'm a district one resident,

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a civil rights attorney, a proud member of Austin dsa.

>> And I'm speaking against item four and for the community investment budget. So we've heard many recollections of the abuses of power inflicted upon the community by the Austin police department. I will turn your attention, Ann, to the Austin police oversight act, the real one that passed overwhelmingly with the support of Austin dsa this spring and the need to have budget items to ensure its implementation in the coming budget cycles. This \$32 million increase only stands to fortify the institution of policing the protectors of white people's private property. The union busters and the slave patrollers that they are. We heard from Liz Gonzalez, from Sam kirsch, the incredible abuse and harm that they inflict upon people in real time. And now, as you stand as a bastion against the powers of the state government, if you do enact this state, increase this increase of

[4:48:48 PM]

\$32 million, you cannot walk it back. This is something to really consider. Again, you cannot police yourself out of ecological collapse. The understanding that investing in the parks and recreation department is necessary to sustain children and families and the future generations that are to come and there are so many investments needed in our community Katy to ensure that people can actually thrive will make a point uplifted by dear comrade Sam Qureshi here that the interim city manager Garza used to manage ascension. The nurses struck, had a strike at ascension in June and it speaks to the idea that he is so poorly managed. The things that have been given to him for his control in the past that he should not be trusted, particularly because of the interim nature of his role to have such an influential position in our city. So vote

[4:49:48 PM]

against this budget. And next speaker is Julia Von Alexander followed by Maggie Burnside and she was Watson.

>> Hi.

>> Hi.

>> Mayor and city council. My name is Julia Von Alexander and I'm a resident of district nine and I'm urging you to vote no on this budget as it currently stands. I work in public health and really appreciate thinking through upstream approaches that actually address root causes. And I don't think this budget is doing this. I think we can do a lot better. And so the budget doesn't really it turns back the clock on civil rights, equity and social justice and doesn't reflect our community values. I'm a lifelong Austin I and this isn't what I want to see in this document of priorities. It defunds a decade of equity advancements and ignores community demands for what

[4:50:49 PM]

public city dollars should actually fund things like direct assistance for those most in need to prevent homelessness and displacement through programs like rental assistance, bill pay assistance, and other forms of direct to funding family funding, such as guaranteed basic income and unfortunately, it also doesn't include food. Things like inclement weather, weather response funds, which clearly we're seeing more and more of as climate change advances. Instead, this backward budget does include sidelining the city's equity office and civil rights office by placing them underneath the small and minority business department, which really gets rid of their autonomy to pursue equity and civil rights across our city, which is really important to austinities. And it increases the police budget, which can never be reduced

because of state law, which doesn't create safety for us all. We want safety for all, and not just for white, wealthy

[4:51:50 PM]

people. All safety comes from investing in solutions that prevent things like homelessness. As I mentioned before, Shaw and solutions in the community investment budget. It also comes from making sure that we send the right responders to emergency calls. And so I appreciate your time and have. Good evening.

>> Maggie Burnside, followed by Chivas Watson and Tonya Payne.

>> Hi, my name is Maggie Burnside. I live in district two and I'm speaking against item four for my first question.

>> When I saw some of the proposed changes to the budget was do the people who made this budget live in the same city that I do? Because I can't believe someone who lives here would casually toss another \$32 million towards the apt APD 32 million that can't be slashed in future years. I can't believe that someone who lives in this city would decide to slash the budget for our unhoused community and let's be honest,

[4:52:50 PM]

it hasn't been slashed. It's been eliminated.

>> I'm sure that folks in the community who work with our unhoused neighbors are able to stretch \$250,000 to help a lot of people.

>> But come on, Garza should be ashamed of himself for trying to rob the poor, to feed the rich in this case, the rich is the APD's budget of more than \$400 million is, after all, the hard work and organizing by so many groups in Austin working for a better, more cared for, equitable and just city. I can't believe that someone who lives in Austin would put a budget budget together like this. It's wild. It's obvious and insulting that almost all of the recommended actions from the community investment budget were ignored. So please stand on the side of equity. Racial justice and the community represent and vote against this proposed budget. You all can do better. Thank you.

>> Chivas Watson, followed by Tonya Payne and Eric Byrd.

>> The name is Chavis Watson. I'm back here in opposition, irritated as ever, Kirk, where do you go? You're loving the second term, huh? Have you ever

[4:53:51 PM]

in your white privilege ever read the 1969 supreme court ruling in Shapiro versus Thompson? What about the 1971 lower court ruling out of California in people versus Horton? Because your license plate readers are not only a violation of these rulings, but also causing Austin residents to feel and to be encumbered as they travel throughout this congested city. See, the fight never changes to eliminate oppression from city council and local governance. I remember advocating for what would become the city of Austin's equity office last decade. And remember when the sustainable city office was formed, these were true community achievements that have remained with the community members of east Austin, dove springs, montopolis colony park, govalle and Riverside. So you think I'm just one person, but I actually come representing 1010 people who couldn't be here today and we all think it's pretty incredible how this city continues to change in ways that don't reflect what communities want. Before the equity office, the city of Austin didn't have a clear definition of equity, and it still shows. And it still shows that it doesn't. It needs

[4:54:53 PM]

so much work. And many of the policies and processes the city keeps before the sustainability office, the city was completely clueless about food, insecurities and real hunger in the city. And before both offices we had a city manager in mark Ott that ran this place wicked. For those who never found sustainability and never knew equity, now we're adding 32 million to the police department. Tell me who told Jesus Garza is hands behind his back and made him and made him do this civics. Let every department have a civic engagement element within them overseen by the equity and civil rights office. We currently have business development hire leaders to two to operate a biz dev initiative for all in every community and every community center. How about that for innovation? You have the power to mitigate this decision, the power to negotiate with the people demand with any level of management. Natasha pool budget rider number four in the 2021 budget sessions and provided the equity office the opportunity to fund reentry services in my first seasons back after back in Austin after prison. That was equity found because of the equity office. Listen to the people.

[4:55:54 PM]

>> Next speaker is Tonya Payne, followed by Eric Byrd and Jen Ramos.

>> Hello. My name is Tonya Payne and I live in five Singh city council.

>> I'm here today to ask you to fully fund park maintenance and all districts in the city and to support the community budget.

>> I propose a vision for Austin where every neighborhood has access to a park with shade that's well maintained and a pool that stays open.

>> The entire Austin summer, which is no longer through mid-august.

>> First, I propose a vision for Austin, where the relationship between parks climate, Burt, physical health, mental health and community is valued and funded accordingly.

>> Me as a member of zilker neighborhood association and therefore part of the community investment budget coalition, I support the inclusion of its framework into the budget. Thank you for listening to the community today. Appreciate it.

[4:56:57 PM]

>> Eric Byrd, followed by Jen Ramos and Paul king. Honorable members of Austin city council.

>> If it's not broke, then don't fix it. I stand before you deeply concerned about the proposed consolidation of our civil rights and equity offices . These two offices each performing unique and invaluable roles, are critical to the fabric of our city. Our civil rights office serves as the steadfast defender against discrimination, handling a wide range of issues from housing to workplace bias, which necessitates a deep understanding of civil rights laws. The equity office is dedicated to fighting disparities and enhance Singh outcomes for our marginalized communities. This mission requires a nuanced understanding of the varied forms of inequity prevalent in Austin. Our equity office is not just another city department. It's nationally recognized and lauded for its

[4:57:58 PM]

innovative strategies and initiatives that not only impact our city, but serve as an example for others to follow. This claim is a testament to the importance and effectiveness of their work. The strength of our equity office lies in its deep connections with the community. It's intimately involved at a grassroots level, building relationships, understanding issues firsthand and driving systemic change from within. In this direct engagement with the community forms the foundation of its success. You can contrast this with other cities. I know we've heard about Dallas, fort Worth, Atlanta and the slew of cities and how their equity offices operate. But I would say have your staff take a deeper look, especially at San Antonio . They recently they had to revamp their entire staff at some point. Our model is the model that everyone looks to. And so I wouldn't take every bit of information on his face. Do your own research, trust your

[4:58:59 PM]

own information. So as you consider this, please remember that. Just remember the people that you serve on the top of your org chart to be the community. Thank you.

>> Jen Ramos, followed by Paul king, Lauren Bross and Bethany Carson.

>> Good afternoon, members of the Austin city council. My name is Jen Ramos.

>> I currently serve as the central region director for the Texas young Democrats and had the pleasure of serving as the first Latina president of the Austin young Democrats.

>> In last week's testimony, I mentioned how thanks to council member de la Garza making an amendment to an increase in health and human services and investment into our community, I was able to receive life saving care. But I want to share a little more on that story and the importance of why we need to invest in our community and

[5:00:00 PM]

invest in the residents that live here as opposed to investing into theoreticals such as an increase in law enforcement. In 2015, I went to the planned parenthood clinic on Chacon street for an annual visit. I had no insurance and was only making \$14,000 a year. The visit was covered thanks to funding from the city of Austin and the partnership towards providing affirming care as well as reproductive health care. I was informed several days after that visit that they had detected precancerous cells in my cervix. Thank to planned parenthood's partnership and the funding from the city of Boston. My care and the removal of those cells was highly subsidized and much to the dismay of certain elected officials who were annoyed when I yell at them all the time. I'm here to live and tell the tale. Thanks to the preemptive care of receiving that funding and receiving those services, and I am not the only austinite who has received this type of care. When we invest in our communities and when we really look to the people who make up our city, the people who serve us, our food, the people who drive our busses

[5:01:01 PM]

, the people who teach our children, the people who provide care for our elderly and those who really make this city great instead of the large corporations that receive cuts that we will never receive in our lives, we can truly make a difference in our city. I would like to urge the council to really look at the equity action budget. This came from a coalition of multiple groups from all different walks of life who understand and that when we invest in our communities we can truly make a difference. But in addition, I do want to provide the caveat that while providing these services is important to our city, it is more important for us to advertise it because you never know what are the lives you could save. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Paul king, followed by Lauren Ross and Bethany Carson. Paul king. Lauren Ross.

[5:02:01 PM]

>> My name is Lauren Ross, the first time I spoke at a city of Austin public hearing was 1984. That means that I remember mayor Watson's first term and I remember when a city interim city manager, Jesus Garza, was Austin's city manager. It means that I remember the meeting in which Austin's white environmental community and developers met in an armrest conference room and agreed to put a target on east Austin by designating the desired development zone. It means that I remember a meeting of 400 activists as that met at saint Edward's on a Sunday afternoon in the early 2000s, and somebody stood up and said, who in this room attended the protests of a police shooting of a young brown boy? This was a group of 400

[5:03:02 PM]

activists that had collectively spent thousands of hours protesting the city of Austin. Actions and exactly one person stood up. You could have cut our collective failure with a knife . If I like to think that we are a different city of Austin now that we are moving towards care and compassion for everyone. Ann. And if this city is moving towards compassion and justice, it is because of community leadership. It is because of the organizing by people like Kelly Coleman, Chris Harris, Janice Brooke out the organizing of Monica Guzman and Carmen Yanez. Our community has showed up for budget hearings for the last seven years as I hope that this

[5:04:02 PM]

council will follow the leadership of community and the leadership of the equity office and for and public safety, not the sham of increased police funding and dps patrolling our streets. Thank you very much.

>> Next speaker is Bethany Carson, followed by Savannah Lee and Tom downing.

>> Good evening.

>> My name is Bethany Carson and I'm a district four resident and part of the team at grassroots leadership. Today I'm speaking to uplift the community investment budget and to urge council to not throw out the fruits of years of community organizing for racial equity and safety beyond policing by eliminating the equity office and discarding the reimaged public safety work, this budget would irreversibly increase the already bloated police budget by

[5:05:04 PM]

\$32 million, which would make up 36% of the general fund at a time when we're discussing the racial disparities in arrests from APD directing dps president's press pres into people of color neighborhoods and while still refuses to leave, this isn't the time to be doubling down on policing by any agency as our strategy for achieving safety in our jobs. My coworkers and I watch in real time as arrests threatened to tear apart. In an instant, the small beginnings of stability, safety and hope for the future that people have spent decades building single moms are ripped from their young children's people are put at risk of being deported far from their families and back to the dangers from which they fled. This is still happening just as much as it was two years ago when the city invested significant time and resources into the reimagine public safety task force, which named this harm and recommended solutions that address root causes rather than criminalizing people for the symptoms of a long history of inequity and disinvestment. I see the symptoms of that disinvest daily to members who are homeless but

[5:06:04 PM]

don't qualify for any current services who are behind on the rent and phone bills with no avenue for relief. The lack of mental health and permanent supportive housing that leaves folks across the street from me living outside in 104 degree weather. The fact is, according to the pew research center, only 40% of violent crimes and a third of property crimes were reported to authorities. Of those, only about 45% of violent crimes and 71% of violent of property crimes are solved. If more than half of our people are not turning to police when they experience violence and even fewer find resolution that way, then we must find other solutions accordingly. Please invest in tenant stabilization, permanent supportive housing, immigrant legal defense for low income families, displacement prevention and reentry navigators. The guaranteed income pilot program instead of more harmful policing. Thank you .

>> Our next speaker is savanna Lee. Following is Tom downing and Susanna Carranza.

[5:07:05 PM]

>> Mayor Watson and council members. My name is savanna Lee. I am a resident of district one and I'm here today speaking in support of the community investment budget, as well as to share my concern regarding the increased APD funding and the lack of allocation for harm reduction services in the proposed budget. The overdose crisis is here. In 2022, we lost 100,000 Americans to overdose, 417 of them here in Austin. 89 of them had been recently incarcerated, contact with APD and the system of punishment did not prevent their deaths. Still, the approach proposed is to increase police funding and continue an attempt to incarcerate the unhoused and those who use drugs.

>> Years of this approach, coupled with ever increasing overdose rates, proves that this doesn't work with out divesting from this model and investing in harm reduction services and housing.

>> City leadership is not just complicit in violence against these communities. It causes it directly. Deaths due to overdose inside of prisons increased by 139% between 2018 and 2020 as

[5:08:06 PM]

their safety considered in this budget as much as these policies may not feel violent when you are writing them or signing them, they play out as violence in real life. A person who has been incarcerated is ten times more likely to overdose than someone who hasn't. I just want to sit with what an abject failure it is that not only is this model not helping, it causes unimaginable loss. This money is not just money. Words on a page is not just text. These decisions impact people every day. And without these funding services, the way they play out ends in harm. Those 417 residents. We did not keep them safe, but we could have. What if instead of punishing pushing people to the fringes, we imagined a city together that is safe, not because we incarcerate our community members or pushed people out of their homes, but because we chose prevention over punishment, because we chose each other. Thank you. Next speaker is Tom Downing on deck is Susana Carranza and Sandra Molinari.

[5:09:11 PM]

>> My name is Tom Downing. I'm a resident of district five and co-chair of the racial justice task force of university united methodist church. I'm here to ask you to vote no on the city budget presented in item four. Budgets are moral documents. They put our money where our values are. This budget does not. I would like to focus on three values in particular democracy, civil rights and public safety. First, a democracy represents all people. This budget doesn't. The community investment budget, however, was put together by 46 community organizations ranging from the Austin urban league to the zilker neighborhood association. As such, it represents renters as well as landlords homeless as well as homeowners and victims, as well as first responder tire for democracy's sake, council should implement the community investment budget's priorities as second civil rights are under attack by a supreme court who

[5:10:13 PM]

thinks racism no longer exists. And in Texas legislature who thinks diversity, equity and inclusion are some sort of evil conspiracy. See, this budget moves the city rights, civil rights office under minority owned business along with the equity office, with this limited overview, how will these office be able to ensure civil rights and equity across city departments? Finally, this budget is a danger to public safety in may, we voted for better civilian oversight of police. Now this budget attempts to move civilian hr positions into the police department. This will make police personnel, personnel records even harder to access. What is more, this is being proposed before proposition a has been fully implemented and before a new police contract has been negotiated. This will not make the public safer for I ask council to

send this buddy budget back to the city manager and demand a budget more in line with the values of democracy. Civil rights and public safety. Thank you.

[5:11:15 PM]

>> Next speaker is Susana Carranza on deck? Is Sandra Molinari and Gracie Pinkel.

>> Hi, my name is Susana Carranza. I live in district nine and I oppose the budget on agenda item four.

>> Last week, one of the speakers reminded us that while the city manager developed, the budget is on each one of you to choose to stand with what the city of Austin actually wants. And we all know if you heard that the budget as proposed is not what we want, there. One of the issues mentioned over and over again is that considering public safety as just the police, that is a mistake. That's not what Austin wants. What we want is investments that are community investments like the community investment budget that was developed by a large number of organizations that really invest where we can get the best

[5:12:18 PM]

bang for the buck, prevent Ann is much better than the cure or the medicine. That's it's an old saying, but it's true. It's much easier to keep a person from falling into homelessness. It's much easier to support a person with a fixed income or a guaranteed income so that they keep their children school or they can still go to work because they actually cost money to go to work. If you are really poor, you might not even have money for your car. So it's much easier to invest in people so than trying to provide some sort of a public safety fee by just funding Singh policing, just do the right thing. Listen to your constituents. You are the ones that have to answer to us. The city manager does not. Thank you. Thank you.

[5:13:20 PM]

>> Our next speaker is Sandra Molinari, followed by Gracie pang. Pang sorry if I mispronounced that and Doris Adams. Good afternoon.

>> I am a district three citizen of Austin.

>> I have lived here for 25 years.

>> Very proud to call Austin my home.

>> And I'm speaking out against item four of the proposed budget today.

>> I am in very strong opposition to this. Back to basics budget with which not only reverses significant progress that's been made on civil rights, equity and social justice, but completely ignores the will and the values of this community. Community requests for increased services and system capacity to address homelessness have been ignored in the proposal and baseline budget by defunding both the upstream prevention of homelessness, including tenant stabilization and the resources to address homelessness on the ground. We're moving towards a

[5:14:21 PM]

community where poverty is directly criminalized and where families are pushed into desperate and precarious conditions. As in one of the richest cities of the country. I must remind you where everybody wants to come to. Austin this is this is shameful. Having worked with survivors of domestic and sexual violence for over 20 years, I can tell you that one of the principal resources that stands between an individual or family and their safety and well-being is being able to stay off the streets and to access safe, affordable housing. How many times did I support survivors who were in our shelters or trying to get into our shelters that were full simply because they didn't have the means to get into affordable housing and therefore they were dependent on somebody who was abusing them? We need to address this. I urge you to support the proposed amendments to the baseline budget that would guarantee funding to address today's most pressing problems,

[5:15:23 PM]

including but certainly not limited to emergency rental assistance and permanent supportive housing. Thank you very much. Thank you. Next speaker is Gracie Pinkel, followed by Doris Adams and Scott Cobb.

>> Hi, my name is Gracie Pinkel and I'm here to against item four and to honestly beg y'all to really give a good look at the community investment budget and please put your full support behind it. In my I know I'm not an expert, but in my opinion we are at a state of emergency as far as our our crisis with people who are unhoused at this time and I know that I'm always just one paycheck away from losing my housing Singh I work two jobs here downtown and every single block when I get off the bus in the morning, there are

[5:16:23 PM]

always people sleeping on the sidewalks. That is shameful. Like that is we can I cannot believe we're just going about our lives. And that is shameful. It doesn't matter. The weather and people like we're about to go through probably another freeze. And how many people are going to die because we decided that

safety equals more police instead of safety equaling housing. So just please, please, please listen to your community members who support you and are rooting for you to support this budget. And know, too, that even those of us who are lucky enough at this point to still have housing, we are on the edge. We are on the precipice. Those of people who are making your coffees this morning know that there after they leave, they're going to their next shift to serve you your drinks because it is paycheck to paycheck, trying to pay these insane rent prices. And that's speaking as someone who is able bodied, does not have kids and has been lucky enough to not be incarcerated. I

[5:17:24 PM]

don't know how people are able to make rent here when any of those things are also stacked against them. So so just please, please, please support this budget and please vote against item four. Thank you. Next speaker is Doris Adams, followed by Scott Cobb, followed by Carla Parado.

>> Thank you. My name is Doris Adams and I'm a resident of district five. I'm I'm alarmed at the proposed budget and the message is sending to this community that equity is no longer a priority, that the people's need that people that have needs with life or death issues no longer matter, that community voices are not valued . The community advocated for years to develop an autonomous equity office. In seven years

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it's made a significant difference toward a more just government in the proposed reorganized mission, its power to make change will be drastically reduced in the last decade, the advocacy of the community has led to the reducing the amount of the budget that's devoted to police , and it's led to a real roadmap with real solutions that lead to public safety. Now, the city manager. Seeks to add \$32 million to the already huge 4444 plus million dollar budget, and that cannot be reduced boost in the future. The community invests Swint budget developed by a broad coalition of groups across the whole city. As you've already heard, prorra guided the

[5:19:24 PM]

city manager with a specific line item suggestions to impact significantly on social issues. These have largely been disregarded. We need a budget that restores the communities, trust that solving the issues facing them today really matters . Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Scott Cobb, followed by Carla Peredo and Lynn spring. Good afternoon.

>> I want to thank council member Kelly for bringing a couple of issues at the work session this afternoon. One being a possible budgetary impact of a path from lifeguarding to other public safety position that are understaffed, like ems 911 call taking and the fire department lifeguards are a natural fit. Having some background in saving lives and some already have done cpr and also the issue of

[5:20:26 PM]

holiday pay. If she asked about the budgetary impact, why do we have national holidays? What is the purpose? Who deserves them? Everyone deserves them. But the purpose is to pass on values from one generation to the next. Two years ago, we saw the capital of the United States stormed those people did not learn the values, the American values that would have prevented that from happening. Every single person who works on a holiday like juneteenth, July 4th, they need to be valued and taught those values that tie us together as a community. And so I ask you to fund holiday pay for all city employees, including temporaries. Speaking of people who have struggled to make our country better or to make our city and our in Barton springs better, I want to suggest that we rename the bathhouse at Barton springs after Jordan means Gabel. Two years ago, there was a day to celebrate her achievements to

[5:21:27 PM]

desegregate Barton springs. She led. She was the first African-American to jump into Barton springs in an act of civil disobedience. Her act, her act of courage led to the desegregation of Barton springs . All summer of 1960, people swam in there who were not allowed. The rule said stay out. But they said, let us in. And I think at the end of the 14 month renovation of the bathhouse is Joan means kabila's name.

>> Next speaker is Karla Peredo , followed by Lynn Sprague and Alicia Castillo.

>> Hello, my name is Carla Parado.

>> She her district one resident.

>> I am a working class tenant, immigrant, former office of police oversight employee here

[5:22:27 PM]

to speak against the proposed city budget and proposals to remove autonomy from the offices of civil rights equity, sustainability and resilience.

>> There are not nearly enough funds allocated for public transit, permanent public housing, utility and rental assistance. Language access, community engagement, land rematriation for indigenous and previously enslaved people of this land park development and dignified living wages for all city

employees, especially increased wages and resources for workers. I'm in strong support of the community investment budget led by equity action. Please adopt their proposed measures as they are community based and need driven.

>> Moreover, I ask all of you to set meetings with organizations like queer Topia and grassroots leadership that work day in and day out.

>> 24 over seven to uplift some of the most vulnerable ized not vulnerable. Austin residents. Queer Tapia cis, black, indigenous and unhoused.

>> Queer and transgender residents provide loving and safe shelter, emergency assistance and protect them from

[5:23:28 PM]

state violence at the hands of APD.

>> To conclude, I'd like to use my remaining time to express my overwhelming dissatisfaction Ann with the actions mayor Watson and interim city manager Garza made behind closed doors and enacting the partnership with dps. Many of your constituents will suffer the consequences of putting us in a terrifying police state for years to come.

>> Communities like mine were in perpetual states of fear.

>> They were arrested and jailed, some at risk for deportation. Listen to us.

>> We are saying not one penny more to police in the face of hb 1900.

>> It feels disturbingly reckless and out of touch to appropriate any additional funding to arguably the most ineffective, harmful, violent and wasteful city department. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Lynn spring, followed by Alicia Castillo and Erika Slaymaker. Lynn spring.

[5:24:38 PM]

Alicia Castillo. Erika Slaymaker . Courtney Perry. Rachel stone. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium. Followed by Rachel Shannon or Rochelle Shannon. Hi, my name is Rachel stone.

>> I live in district one and I just wanted to speak in support of the community investment budget. I work in affordable housing. We all know there is a housing crisis in Austin. It is in very, very difficult Wright to get new units on the ground that are going to go to people who are low income.

>> The median family income of a family of 4 in 2018 was 86,000 and it is now 122,000.

[5:25:39 PM]

>> And we are very behind on this on this fight to get more housing out and the idea that we would not support things like tenant relocation assistance, rental assistance, workforce development, project based supportive housing, early childhood development, resiliency hubs, the things that people need who are out there and are unable to stay in Austin to afford a place to live and instead we want to push money over into policing where nobody, you know, when you when someone can't find a home, you don't call the police. When someone can't pay their rent, you don't call the police like we need these services in our city to keep people housed and keep people safe. So that's I don't need the three minutes. That's all I need to say.

>> Thank you. I'm going to just call a few of the speakers again.

>> Just in case they made their way in. Alicia Castillo, Erica

[5:26:39 PM]

Slaymaker court. Annie Perry. Rachelle Shannon. Ann taniqua. Bruce. John. Paul Connolly. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium. Good afternoon, mayor and council here once again.

>> Ann.

>> And what I want to speak about today is primarily respect . When we talk about the reengineering of the city such that our equity office, our office of civil rights are demoted in status, given less power and less autonomy and less resources. And when we talk about that and we talk about doing that in such a casual, flippant way, sneaking that into the budget, getting everyone to approve of it, and when we

[5:27:40 PM]

ignore the lengthy year long conversations, the engaged Swint, the discussion and the labor that this council put into the original creation of those departments, when we do that, we show a lack of respect for the community. When you show up for this community, this community shows up for you. But when you ignore and brush aside the voice of this community, this community will not forget. And some of you will be coming back to this community very soon to ask for a vote to ask for reelection. Well, this community will not forget and I hope that you do not forget this community . We you know, there are folks that go with the flow that wait to see what direction the water is blowing and which direction the

wind is blowing. And then that's where they go. They go with the safe crowd. Those folks are forgotten. Real leaders stand up and respond when the community flags a need. Real leaders stand up when it's not

[5:28:41 PM]

the most popular thing. They stand up when their colleagues are moving in a different direction. They know how to buck the tide. They know what they're standing for and what this community is calling for today is real leadership. And so it may be that today we don't see the leadership that we are asking for, although I hope to god I'm wrong and I hope that that leadership emerges. But I promise you one thing from the seeds of every meeting where the community is ignored, some new leadership will be born in this city. Thank you. Thank you, sir .

>> Please state your name.

>> Taniqua Russell, district one. I was a recipient of the guaranteed income pilot program , and the program really assisted helped me and my family, not just me and my family, but also the community. And so the hope is that it can stay in budget for 2024. And the equity office was like ground down for getting that started and getting that

[5:29:41 PM]

into the community. Not only is it helping the community to ensure that families are stable, but it just helps us to feel secure in a city that's prices are rising, rent assistance is needed so many times, so many people are homeless. My entire community was dislocated due to not not being maintained by landlords that just did not care. And that was over 100 tenants, 100 units had to be relocated. And so it's important that those things are still there and in place for people like myself and like other families, because I'm not the only family that's dealing with these things. But there's an entire community of us and we're working together as a community and we need y'all who we voted in to do the same. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Mr. Mayor, if I may, I am fortunately can't be on camera, but I would like to say Shea to the last person who testified. Thank you, Beaber for coming to testify. I really appreciate that. Somebody from the mount

[5:30:44 PM]

Carmel community came and testified before me and my colleagues. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. Councilmember and mayor.

>> I just also wanted to thank the last resident who testified and shared that I will be bringing forward an amendment to reauthorize the funding.

>> So just wanted to also let you know that we'll be working on that program.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Michael coles. Coles followed by Ryan Pollack and Timothy Maxwell. If you're here, please make your way to the podium. Otherwise I'll just continue calling speakers. Janice Bookout. Followed by Lindsay bumann.

>> Janice Bookout d4 in 1997, I

[5:31:44 PM]

was a 25 year old mural artist falling in love with a musician and preparing to get married.

>> That same year. A local news article described a city council frustrated with city manager Garza to quote the article, council's demands were simple no more hiding information or springing on them at the last minute. No more deals presented without options, no more confusion about their roles as council makes policy, Watson emphasized and staff implements it. Now the article also commended Garza as a man committed to a government that takes action. And Mr. Garza, I heard you say that to our community leaders yesterday. Respectfully in a government that works for all those actions must also be aligned with the interests of our diverse community. The challenges of our time and the established best practices, resolutions and decade long invest movements in community involved research and planning and that council is your guidance to provide. When you look at the community energy

[5:32:45 PM]

spent on the community investment budget and supporting equity, civil rights, resilience and sustainability and the Pio, I hope you see the collective wisdom, knowledge and commitment to a city that works for everyone. Yes, we are a pain in your. We are also an extent of your capacity to serve. That article also quotes Garza as saying these are decisions I made in the office that are unpopular. What they meaning the critics, need to understand is that I've used every capacity to come at the right decision. Mr. Garza and council, if that's what you're thinking. Now, then I say from my heart, don't forget that you're not alone. You're connected to a community capacity that's greater than any of us can ever imagine. With the increasing stressors of climate change, we've been strengthening our local systems for the future , and it's working. Austin's low covid death rate had everything to do with partnerships between community, city and city offices . With supply chain strained heat increasing and tensions rising, we need each other now more than ever in coming decades . A government that stiffens itself against its own people

[5:33:47 PM]

will eventually crumble. But a flexible, inclusive and diverse government can thrive. I want to co-create that narrative. If you don't, we can do it without you. Please thank you.

>> Next speaker is Lindsay. Bumann followed by Rachel manning and quincy Dunlap.

>> Hi, my name is Lindsay and I'm a resident in district one speaking against item four. I worked on the opoa, which really means I talked to thousands of York constituents about their desire to implement very basic accountability for our government paid position. And big surprise, 80% of them understood, supported and then voted for oversight of the most harmful office in Austin. That vote all of that time and money was what you as a council all deemed necessary to be able to take action on it. So here we are. Who is our elected

[5:34:47 PM]

officials, have our power and have our money to create a different iteration of society. We gave you the blueprint. We aligned and voted yes and now it is your job to do it. You can implement the Apa right now and we will support you. You can vote no on adding \$32 million to the APD budget and we will support you. You can use community investment budget as another blueprint and we will support you. Or you can or you can uphold the status quo, create excuses and problems as to why you can't do what we know. You can and we will see you. Please show us with your action. If democracy is real. Thank you. I yield my time. Thank you, ma'am.

>> Rachel manning, followed by quincy Dunlap and Paula Sylvester.

>> Good evening. Council.

[5:35:48 PM]

>> My name is Rachel manning. I'm a resident of district one. I moved to district 1 in 2015 and when I moved there, I moved into a three bedroom house and the rent was 1200 bucks a month over the next six years that I lived in that house, the rent doubled to 2400 bucks.

>> I was pretty lucky. I managed to change jobs and increase my capability of actually doing that in that period of time.

>> But most families don't have those sorts of options.

>> Most people can't deal with that sort of financial crisis. Many of my neighbors weren't able to. They moved away. The district one looks a lot different from how it used to look housing insecurity is a real

threat to families and the impact last generation, someone talked about this earlier in the evening. We know it's trauma.

>> It's real. This back to basics budget that posits that increased funding for the Austin police department is more fundamental than providing rental assistance to keep families in their homes.

[5:36:50 PM]

>> I'm not sure where the mayor and the city manager are getting their idea of what basics are, but that's not it. I really do. I urge you all to go back to the drawing board and relook at this horror show of an austerity budget. You've been given lots of templates. People have been coming to you for years and years now telling you what the community needs. There's a great document that, you know, the community investment budget, it gives you an outline of what the people are asking for and it's not more money for the cops. It's really it's not. They they're not what keep people safe. So that was as much as I had time to put together before and I yield the rest of my time, but I really do, I urge you to go back to the table on this one. And. Yeah, thank you. Thank you.

>> Quincy Dunlap, followed by Paola Sylvester and Sarah Gore.

>> Acknowledgments to the mayor and the city council and city

[5:37:50 PM]

manager, assistant city managers and the rest of the appointed officials from the city. My name is Quincy Dunlap. I'm the president and CEO of the Austin area urban league. I support the community investment budget and I oppose amendment four or the budget item four as it is written. The combination of the civil rights office sustainability and the equity office under SMB is a mistake. It's morally incorrect. This city does not have enough resources or opportunities for equity. So to marginalize and minimize the impact of that office under SMB is a mistake. That's not a knock against the leader of that division or unit. That's simply an understanding that in order to eliminate something, sometimes you put budget provisions in place to remove its authority or its impact or its ability to perform the service that it is needed to perform. What I am encouraging

[5:38:52 PM]

is that you take a look at this budget, but you more importantly, take a look at the impact of the offices of civil rights that is, and equity across the city and across the region. This office has done the equity office in the civil rights office has and will do great work. So I'm encouraging you to take a look at this. But more importantly, look at the community investment budget and what it represents. It's it is the

voice and the thinking of the people and to not consider it is a slap in the face to the people. So go back and take a look at these things, but also look at what we're investing in our inclement weather and housing response. There is no way that the most vulnerable among us deserve less. We should be investing double or triple what is there now so that we improve the quality of life for these brothers and sisters that live below the fringe or below the line. Thank you. Thank you, sir.

[5:39:52 PM]

>> Next speaker is Paula Sylvester, followed by Sarah Gore, then Michelle Edwards and Kayla Reese.

>> Good evening. My name is Alicia Castillo. I was called earlier. I didn't know if this is a good time to step in. Yeah, okay, great. Thank you so much. I was late because I had the immense privilege of picking up my twin sons from daycare that they waited a year and a half to get into. And we struggled for a year and a half to figure out what to do with them while while my partner and I were working so they got in last week. Finally, after a year and a half. So and that's mainly because child care workers cannot afford to live in the city anymore. And so when I see a budget like the one that's proposed today, it's really heartbreaking for even folks who are really privileged like me to have worries like, what am I going to do for child care rather than where am I going to

[5:40:53 PM]

sleep tonight? And, you know, it's disappointing because we know that today the Austin police department has the highest budget ever and that for far too long they've taken the lion's share of the community's budget. Overall we know that the staffing shortages in the police department will not be resolved by continually throwing money at the police department. But instead, while cadet classes have restarted, we know that the well-documented, oppressive, racist, sexist training that has been published to everyone that's the reason cadets who sign up to be police end up leaving. It's not because of you all. It's not because of me. It's not because of Chris Harris. It's because that training is really they won't fix it. Regardless of that, that's not even the solution for the true public safety that I think each and every one of you are really concerned about solutions like moving the 911 call center out of the failed police department and into its own department where they can actually respond to and resolve solve citizens concerns in a

[5:41:53 PM]

meaningful way in a timely fashion, and investing in solutions like those in our community investment budget, like non-congregate shelter, like true harm reduction, like the office of violence prevention. Did you all know we have an office of violence prevention that works on innovative preventive solutions to

keep austinites safe? Those are the types of things that we're really desperate to see invested in, in a meaningful way because it hasn't been invested in in a meaningful way just yet. Thank you so much. Thank you.

>> Sarah Gore, followed by Michelle Edwards and Kayla Reese. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium and state your name.

>> Hello. Thank you for allowing us to give comment and for listening to our comments.

>> My name is Michelle Edwards and I live in district five. I'm asking you to vote against the

[5:42:55 PM]

proposed budget item for Shaw.

>> I oppose how this budget increases Austin police department's share of our city funds. The department, which has as everybody also said, has and continues to not solve our city's social and environmental problems. I oppose the bearing of the city's much needed and important equity office underneath another department, and I especially oppose how this budget increases the size of the reserve fund. When there are so many people in our community who need help. Now a fellow twin mom myself, I asked my kids before the meeting what we should talk about and what they thought our city needed to spend money on, and they said money to support people's health and the environment, to help people pay for food, housing and their bills. They are so smart.

>> There are so there are so many people in our community.

>> I too like the last speaker. I'm also very fortunate. I'm a professor at Texas state. I feel

[5:43:56 PM]

like I'm drastically underpaid and barely survive living here. But I make so much more money than so many other people who live in the community and so many people are struggling right now and really need help to be able to survive. Let alone thrive here. I don't want Austin to just be a city for rich people. Like, that's crazy. We can't have that. We are the role models for our city's children. That's a theme, right? So we're the role models for our city's children. We're shaping their present, not just my kids, but all the kids here. We're shaping their present. We're shaping their future. And, you know, I know you guys are thinking about this, but please, please, like everybody else has asked you, please look at the community investment budget. So much time I've been I've been on the email chain. So much time has been invested in this and putting together so many minds, so many great minds to give you this information. So please vote no. On the proposed budget. And instead, look at this other one. Thank you all so much. Knell next speaker is Kayla Reese,

[5:44:59 PM]

followed by Tiffany Pagni and jj Ramirez.

>> Good afternoon, mayor and council.

>> I'm Kayla Reese.

>> I'm the advocacy manager with Austin parks foundation and I just wanted to speak today on the proposed budget and ask for you to support additional funding for the parks and recreation department.

>> Our asks this year focus on maintenance and land management. We are asking for a 3.3 million increase to parks budget to fund the continued level of maintenance of park services and expand the land management program. Given the large investment from 2018 bonds and parkland dedication fees such as the new colony park aquatic center or the bull creek district park restroom renovation and trailhead development park has more assets than ever before between 2022 and 2024. Park will have acquired and therefore be maintaining nearly 500 additional acres of parkland and easements, adequate staffing for our parks and recreational cultural centers and pools is the duty of the city of Austin on the lack of sufficient staff for mowing trash pickup and general care of our parks will be felt across the city.

[5:46:00 PM]

Austinites expect that the city will maintain facilities and programs. Additionally, maintenance equipment such as trucks, mowers, trailers are required for grounds maintenance. Additionally, we urge you to add full time staff positions to the land management program, which is crucial for wildfire mitigation and climate resiliency. Land management needs to be done by qualified professionals and temporary positions will not bring the expertise required as additional full time positions and land management will ensure safety to our natural areas. While preserving the benefit of natural space to our community in the budget proposed by the city manager's office, there is about 500,000 for land management. But that money is not really helpful without the staff members needed to execute it. Land management needs additional full time staff. Thank you for your time and dedication to our community. We thank you.

>> Next speaker I'm sorry, just one moment.

>> I really appreciate you coming and testifying today.

>> I've been fortunate to get to meet with you a couple of times as we discuss the budget rollout so I just wanted to flag for

[5:47:00 PM]

folks. We're thinking about those grounds and facilities fees as well as the land management planning, which I know Alison alter and I have spoken about in in some level of detail. So we appreciate your advocacy. Thanks for the work.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Tiffany Pagni , followed by jj Ramirez and Yasmine Smith.

>> My name is Tiffany and I live in district two. I'm in support of the community investment budget.

>> You can tell a lot about a city's future and ethics by looking at their budget. A city that gives 16 million in emergency rental assistance shows they care for their citizens. A city that gives 18 million to wage increases for paramedics and other workers that are vital in keeping this city running shows that you value their hard work. A city that values public safety. We would have mental health first

[5:48:01 PM]

responders that I can call on the next time a man walks up to me and asks me and asks me if I'm god because he has voices in his head telling him what to do . A city that gives \$32 million to police plans on being \$32 million less safe as city council, you should be asking yourselves, what did I do to make this city \$32 million less safe? Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker is jj Ramirez, followed by yasmeeen Smith and Justin green.

>> Hi. Council mayor jj Ramirez. I'm an organizer at the Texas harm reduction alliance and I'm in opposition of the budget as it currently is. I want to say that there is \$0 being spent on harm reduction and the proposed budget when we're in the opioid crisis, we've had double the opioid deaths and overdose since

[5:49:02 PM]

last year. We're not spending any money, zero on harm reduction. This is providing life saving services to this community that's desperately needed. I do want to take the time, mayor, to say thank you for advocating to the governor and the state and getting those arpa dollars to find Esperanza because congregate shelter is what's needed. But that's arpa money, temporary dollars that are going to run out right. We know that permanent supportive housing is what keeps people housed. It is what's the most effective thing when it comes to when it comes to getting people and keeping people off the street. And I've heard before that we don't want to put the city on the hook for a long term. You know, investment. But we're real quick without blinking an eye to put the city on the hook for an increase to \$32 million for policing, that's \$444 million. That's almost a half \$1 billion that that we're really totally fine with putting

city on the hook for paying indefinitely. Those things ain't what's helping it. Policing is not what's helping. They're not keeping people safe. It's not

[5:50:03 PM]

keeping people in their homes. When the dps came in, they're targeting people in the street. They're targeting people in camps, they're cutting, they're cutting tents. People telling me dps come through. Did a sweep cut my tent, didn't tell me nothing. Through all my stuff away. There's a person outside right now who had their last social security card thrown away during the sweep. And I don't know if you know this. I recently found out you only get nine for your lifetime and it's in the trash and they can't come in and speak because they've got a dog. But like these things happen. This is what policing does. This is what sweeps. Does this really reduces the ability to get employment, get housing, to get your identification Ann to get in somewhere. So when we're talking about having to worry about how we're going to pay for these things indefinitely, well then let's think about how we're going to pay for \$144 million indefinite leave. Let's let's have a more robust conversation. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello.

>> My name is Yasmin Smith. I'm a proud, born and raised austinite and I have the honor

[5:51:04 PM]

of serving as vice president of justice and advocacy of the Austin area urban league and respectfully, the budget as it is proposed, is a failure to address the concerns and the articulate wishes of this community. I'm speaking to you. I would appreciate if you look at me, number one, the. 7% by conservative numbers, the 7% allocated for the community investment budget, which is only 7% of the general fund and 7% of 7% being allocate for what your community and your constituents have actually asked for is laughable. Number two, the moving of H.R. And Pio into pd and the exorbitant costs that we're giving to pd are in direct opposition of what you're constituents have asked for. And while we're at it, talking about what should not be in pd considering black and brown folks are victimized themselves by pd, perhaps victim services should be an fps. Number three.

[5:52:07 PM]

Anyone? Someone please look into the 14% to 17% increase of the reserves and how much in tens of millions of dollars that will mean will not be allocated to our constituent base. Number four, I want to pull over on this. The unhoused, the inclement weather is the budget allocation for that deplorable? It is our people right now at this very moment in forces and woods at this very moment, making sure your constituents have clean water. It is our people. I received a call less than five hours ago of people

walking up to their campsites and someone being dead. There that is on you. The status quo is not working. Fix it. Last but not least, you've already heard about the consolidation of power, the consolidation of our offices. This specific strips the autonomy of those offices and changes their mission. Yes, they should consult on business ventures and things of that nature, but they shouldn't be tethered there. Do your jobs. We're watching and we're not

[5:53:08 PM]

pleased. And yes. Next speaker is Justin green, followed by Alicia torres and Michael ward.

>> Hello, my name is Justin green and I am a member of Austin unite professional organizers and a resident of district nine.

>> I am speaking today in support of the community investment budget and fervently against the interim city manager's proposal to increase Austin police department funding by \$32 million. I wonder why we are here continuing to have this same debate about what public safety looks like when austinites have continued to make it clear that we want a budget that supports our community, not APD and institution that people fully distrust. And for good reason. Look at how large a margin 2021 prop a police budget proposal was defeated or more recently, how people voted overwhelmingly for the legitimate police oversight act. This year and handily rejected the Austin police association fake ballot measure. Why are we continuing

[5:54:10 PM]

to raise the budget for APD, a fundamentally racist institution ? Ann especially after governor Abbott passed house bill 1900 that says that number can't go back down. The community is voice is clear. We want a budget that doesn't police away our problems, but actually benefits everybody up to the most vulnerable members of our city. Investing in housing assistance, funding permanent supportive housing, wage increases for city workers and paramedics, budget items that actually support the working class. Please help save lives, not destroy them, and pass a city budget that is compassionate to your fellow neighbors. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Next speaker is Alicia torres, followed by Michael ward and Hannah Mckinney .

>> Thank you, everyone continues to thank council, but I want to thank I want to thank you community for showing up and reminding each other that we are here in our voice is going to be heard.

>> Hi.

>> My name is Alicia torres and I'm a part of the grassroots leadership team. I'm also a

[5:55:11 PM]

member of ice for the Austin and a resident of district district three. I am here today, like the vast majority of this community has already expressed to ask, the council sent interim city manager Jesus Garza back to the drawing table to refigure the numbers for our proposed city budget. As it stands, the current proposed budget is one that increases police funding by 32 million, and yet somehow now is not able to fully fund services that have been named by the community as actual needs that that would increase our collective quality of life. This proposed budget seems to again be able to always find funds from a policing, but no funds for things like the guaranteed income program. The parent support specialist, emergency rental assistance funding funding for community health paramedics, immigration representation or even or even funding for the permanent supportive housing, a need that is consistently cited as the reason why more policing is needed. And if we are not addressing the root issues of

[5:56:12 PM]

systemic problems, then what is the purpose? As people, we deserve more. As austinites impacted by overpolicing rampant gentrifying location and targeted displacement, we deserve to do more than just survive. I'm tired just surviving. We deserve to sorry to thrive. The way that you play a role in this is not it? Speaking to council, it's not it. It's by not supporting this current proposed budget and sending interim city manager Jesus Garza back to the drawing table to bring back a proposed budget that fully reflects the community investment budget. A budget that puts us the people first. The current budget calls for reorganization of the city's offices of equity and civil rights and the office of sustainability and resilience. The current proposal to reorganize these offices sidelines all of the amazing, extremely hard day to day work these officers do.

>> Do not, nor reorganization.

>> We need a people's budget and we need a community investment budget. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Michael ward

[5:57:13 PM]

, followed by Hannah mckeating and Francine tattoo.

>> Hello, everybody. Can you share beautiful and can you go? Oh and there you go.

>> Fantastic mic. So I'll make sure to share this out with you all. But I'm Michael weir, junior. I'm the president and CEO of Austin urban technology movement. And this is my beautiful daughter, Antoinette ward. I'm here today to, of course, support everybody's comments to the community investment budget. But I really wanted to highlight on workforce development and technology and show you all the work we've been doing by being a fund, an award from the city of Austin. We received a gitops program

award several times. We're currently funded by the economic development office to do the work that you're seeing on screen. So for 2022 alone, we provided 560 services across Austin. Residents we had 243 people specifically come to us for a job placement. Hey, can you help me get a job next arrow, please? We had 201 people

[5:58:14 PM]

come to us for devices, for internet access, for digital literacy. They may want a job, but they're not even at the level to get a job based on the economy today. Next we had 160 people come to a specifically for training. They may or may not have a job but saying, hey, I need more skills to get a better job to increase my income so I can afford to live here in Austin. Next slide. We're doing the work that needs to be done here inside of Austin. Here inside the tech space. And we're predominantly focusing on those that are black and hispanic. So 79% of our audience, just for 2022 were black and hispanic. Next slide, you'll see that 49% of our audience make less than \$13,000 per year. Like we're solving the problem that the city of Austin said they wanted to solve for several years through the master workforce plan, through the hire local plan. We're doing it through the help of the city of Austin. However, I don't see that continuing support in the proposed 2024 budget. So there

[5:59:14 PM]

seems to be a disconnect. There seems to be a misalignment as a lot of our members have talked about. Next slide 60% of our audience do not have college degrees as another barrier. We're overcoming by providing people with pathways and then last but not least, we truly represent the audience. 26% of our audience are 18 to 25, 32, and 36 to 49, and 40% are between 25 and 36. So please continue to fund us and all these great organizations as the community investment budget. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Hannah McKinney, followed by Francine tattoo and holly read.

>> Hello city council. My name is Hannah mckeating and I'm here with auto hq. I would like to explain why I'm in favor of the community investment budget. I was born in Waco and grew up in Laredo.

>> I have lived in Gonzales, San Marcos, rockdale and Austin. I am a Texan through and through.

>> When I think of Texans, I think of the people that look out for their neighbors in times of crisis, like Houstonians, they give whatever they haven't

[6:00:15 PM]

lost after hurricanes. The people that have put their community as the highest priority, like the fine folks with the many organizations here today and the people that pick up the pieces. When the government seemed to not be able to like the community advocates and even H-E-B did during the winter storm as Texans froze in their homes, Texans have proven that they are capable of looking beyond themselves and working together to make sure that they can weather the suffering to see another day. I have also been given the gift of living outside of Texas, in Indonesia, Brazil and Washington, DC. The rest of the world does not see what I see in Texans. They see the suffering handed down to us through laws, bills and things like back to basics budgets, not the people that do what they can to make sure that the community survives it as the capital of the state, Austin has set the precedent for the rest of Texas to put the time, effort, money into making sure the community has at least some of the resources to survive. Having the offices of equity, civil rights, sustainability and resilience with the executive power to provide support and relief is imperative. This unacceptable restructuring contravenes city council actions and would eliminate the office's autonomy

[6:01:15 PM]

to pursue equity and civil rights across our city. We must allow austinites to look after austinites and you must listen to what the community tells you it needs. How beautiful would it be if Texans did not have to survive in spite of the Texas government? But were able to thrive with the support of it? It is not an idealistic dream. We have these offices already in place with people ready to run them. If I were to ask everyone in the room if they are dedicated to serving the community, stand up. Most, if not all, of us would be on our feet. We get emotional during our time to speak because we see humanity in this and we are watching that humanity be reduced to dollars and cents. It's painful because we've been working towards a common goal and the proposed budget severely undermines all the work that's been done to achieve that goal. Please include the community investment budget and the 2023, 2024 budget and let us get back to work. Thank you.

>> Thank you. The next speaker is Francine tattoo, followed by holly reed and Lisa Huffman from t2 district five speaking against item four.

>> Thank you for this time and I

[6:02:18 PM]

apologize in advance, if I may, and I may warn you that this is straight talk, so please, please forgive me. I love you all for taking the time to hear our concerns as I stand in solidarity with my community behind me and beyond these doors and my 12 immediate family members who reside in Austin. No question that our community will be egregiously and irrevocably harmed by the passing of this budget. I do street outreach with Austin mutual aid and set up pop up shelters during extreme weather emergencies. As even with so many good people working to alleviate our housing crisis, I can tell you the needs are dire. I know you know this. Today, though, I'm here as an aapi community member. I'm passing around a

magazine article just published about my family, the top right photo is one of my mother, Marion, and her baby sister, Nancy Hanada in Poston, Arizona, at the Japanese American detention center. They were and are American citizens and yet were held for three years. My grandfather was a small farmer who grew packed and transported his own fruit to

[6:03:19 PM]

major cities on market days. Yet as a direct result of white supremacist farmers who lobbied for executive order 9066 sent scores of families like mine uprooted from their homes with only days to pack to far flung internment camps. This is in my DNA and I have a visceral reaction to your folding the equity office into others that mistake will serve to minimize its import and purview. I urge council to consider the naked statistics speak for themselves. Reported a 6% rise in hate crimes from 2021 to 2022. This is 549 documented hate crimes. The majority targeted towards our LGBTQ and black communities, including Asian hate. Just a few months ago, a swastika tattooed killed a number of people in color and our own state of Allen, Texas. We can do better. The national wave against diversity, equity inclusion is real. You are a nonprofit. You can raise your own money for DEI programs. Thank you. I yield. Thank you.

[6:04:20 PM]

>> Next speaker is Holly Reed, followed by Lisa Huffman and Bennett Burke. If your name has been called, please make your way to the podium and just state your name for the record. Hi y'all.

>> I'm Bennett Burke. I'm a lifelong Texan and a proud member of Austin DSA. During the years I've lived in Austin, district nine, I've seen police brutalize protesters, they murder people of color and eat up public funds. Now that they have the largest budget in the department's history, their performance at their stated mission of keeping the city safe has been subpar at best. Do we really want to reward APD with more money manager Garza? Do you really think they've done anything to deserve of such a massive raise? I would much

[6:05:21 PM]

rather see that money go to higher wages for 911 dispatchers, keeping the sobering center in operation and creating more shade structures in our city's parks. I don't think I'm alone in the people testifying in this chamber have made that clear and the people of Austin told me as much when they passed the good opoa in May. The state of Texas has preempted cities, decreasing police budgets. But with that in mind, I want to register my opposition to ever, ever giving APD a single cent more than what they currently have. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Annie Fiano, followed by Jamie, Kim and Monica Guzman.

>> Good evening, mayor Watson and council members.

>> My name is Annie Fierro. I'm a resident of district seven and a community organizer with the sunrise movement. I'm speaking

[6:06:21 PM]

today in support of the community investment budget proposed by equity action, which truly reflects the needs of austinites. Today, the budget proposal by the city manager will result in the harming of our neighbors and community rather than providing the direct assistance a lot of us have been asking for years. I recently got selected to collaborate with the housing department as a displacement navigator, and if there is one thing me and the other navigators have in common is that none of us can afford to live in Austin anymore, or we're on our last year before moving out of the city. We care so deeply about it. We had the city's equity office come and speak during one of our workshops so we could have a clearer background on the wrongful, outdated, historical and racially discriminatory city planning and zoning policies. All it takes me two hours to get anywhere because I cannot afford a car. I'm just saying. And I find it alarming that the intention is to merge equity and civil rights into two businesses when the business is moving in.

[6:07:23 PM]

Have been the ones responsible for displacing us in the first place. As as a member of the Mexican American migrant community, I want my people to not feel fear every time we seek the help we need, whether that be rental assistance, emergency response, among others. We should get what we ask for and not I mean. So I ask. I ask y'all, our mayor and city council, to support the community investment budget since it would truly encapsulate the definition of public safety . In other words, you all know what's the right thing to do. So thank you all.

>> Next speaker is Jamie Kim, followed by Monica Guzman and Carmen Yanez. Mayor Watson and council members.

>> My name is Jamie Kim and I'm a resident of district seven.

>> I'm speaking today because this budget proposal does not

[6:08:23 PM]

reflect the city of Austin's values, and I'm particularly concerned with the proposal to increase APD funding by \$32 million as Austin police are some of the highest paid in Texas and currently has the

highest budget ever. The transfer of civilian positions into APD is very troubling as well for police oversight. The city of Austin has paid over \$18 million in settlements to victims of police brutality during the 2020 protests. Despite this, the proposed budget would give APD, the largest department funding in history. Please do not give them more funding. Instead, I urge the mayor and council to consider the budget priorities stated in the community investment budget endorsed by over 40 local organizations and supported by a resolution from this city's public safety commission, such as harm reduction services, street outreach services and reentry support for formerly incarcerated people. The public

[6:09:24 PM]

safety we need and want is in the community investment budget, not in this proposed budget. Thank you very much.

>> Next speaker is Monica Guzman , followed by Carmen Jones and Barry Jones.

>> Excuse me. Good afternoon. I guess. Shea. Good evening, mayor and council. I'm Monica Guzman. Policy director at Garza lugo Austin. Vamos Austin. We urge council to make the following critical investments in the fiscal year 2024 municipal budget to expand the successful guaranteed income program. Invest \$3 million to maintain service levels as currently served in fiscal 2023 for 135 households, invest \$500,000 in the tenant relocation assistance program to mitigate the harm to communities being displaced. Low income, working class and other vulnerable residents are being actively displaced by new development. They're often directed to look to the tenant relocation assistance for support that has no money or is not accessible. We implore city

[6:10:24 PM]

council to invest at least 4.5 million to address the funding transition from arpa funds to the cities based budget, plus an additional 1 million to budget for parks and recreation to make improvements to facilities. Resilience hubs. Austin public health to improve cold weather sheltering processes, economic development for workforce and childcare programs. Houston for disaster preparedness supplies and all departments and the office of resilience for outreach and education on resilience, we call on you to maintain and protect the current departmental structure of independent offices for equity, sustainability, resilience and civil rights. Other cities having combined offices does not mean they are best in class and a model for Austin to follow. San Antonio is an example of what not to do with an equity office after their restructuring in San Antonio, the chief equity officer resigned, as well as almost all of the staff. They lost all momentum and the equity efforts in San Antonio have stalled significant city manager Garza's analysis does not speak

[6:11:25 PM]

to the strength of equity initiatives in these cities that are combined with speaking as a d4 residents, my comments are mine alone. Austin can be a great leader, a leader that takes bold steps, brave steps versus doing what the other cities are doing. Invest in upstream preventative, proactive programs and services in the Garza fiscal 24 budget Rex and community investment budget. Not a downstream reactive police department.

>> Thank you.

>> Finally, despite what you think, believe or willing to admit everything is political.

>> Miss Janet, just give me a minute. I'm going to call just the next few after. Miss Jones is Barry Jones, followed by Garrett Neves and Shimon perskin .

>> Good evening, mayor and council. I'm here for the second time addressing you all on this dais and I was reminded by the gentleman with his baby girl that I got to come to city hall

[6:12:28 PM]

a lot. The old city hall first on my dad's back at many meetings like this.

>> And this is how you get an incredibly enriched community that cares.

>> So much.

>> I know sometimes we're the thorn in your side, but we really are an incredible resource.

>> As I'm Carmen Yanez. I'm with Austin. Vamos, Austin. I'm a district nine resident.

>> I spent ten years as a commissioner on various city of Austin commissions, including the Latino quality of life commission. I participated in three budget processes and many others along the way, and I had the opportunity as a young organizer to witness some of the decisions that were made, especially in police budgeting.

>> In your prior time as mayor, mayor Watson and we say your name because everybody else is on council. We remember many of them, but we really remember it under your administration and it was the years after those decisions burns that unfortunately, because of a guarantee, an increased police funding and a message that there

[6:13:28 PM]

was truly no accountability.

>> Katy we watched some of the most painful tragedies over the especially the mayoral term of will win. We saw the murders of Jesse Lee Owens of Sophia king, of Daniel Rocha, of countless others. Right. And we watched it continue to that heartbreak that we felt when that mother, who will never get to hug her son again, felt that is a tragedy that has divided our city and caused a distrust of this process and a lack of accountability. And we have the opportunity to do better. Let's not make a move that we can never take back unless our whole legislature changes and let's look at the evidence. Geva's neighborhoods had the most police when we started our work ten years ago. Dove springs and rundberg huge crime rates, lots of police policing didn't make us safer. Better parks, better lighting, better services. Did support the community investment budget. Thank you. Thank you.

>> The next speaker is Barry Jones. If you're here, please

[6:14:30 PM]

make your way to the podium and then we have Garrett Neves, followed by Shimon perskin.

>> Hello, council.

>> Thank you for being here.

>> And this can't be easy listening to all this testimony.

>> My name is Garrett Neves.

>> I live in district five.

>> I'd like to say that the people in power in APD, they repeated, stoke fears as one of their bad faith tools to increase the amount of public funds under their control.

>> My mayor, when you when the APD tried to use the street takeover back in February to gin up support, I was really impressed by the way you counteract that in real time and said this is this is this is not right. I'd like to see more of that kind of leadership.

>> APD attempted to pass a

[6:15:30 PM]

ballot measure to require the APD be funded at levels which would worsen underfunding of critical staff such as ems. And they used fraud to attempt to pass a ballot measure to prevent independent oversight.

>> Luckily, the voters defeated both of those and giving \$32 million more in public funds to control of those in power in APD fails to counteract their selfish, divisive behavior.

>> So that's my \$0.02 to this to this process.

>> Please do not vote for any increase in the budget for APD.

>> They they don't deserve it.

>> It's worse than they don't deserve it. Thank you.

>> Next speaker Sherman perskin , followed by Charles Moore and eight track X.

>> Hi, my name is shalom and I'm on leader with the Sra.

>> Thank you. Mayor Watson and city council for allowing me to

[6:16:32 PM]

speak. I am here to talk to you about pr housing, the permanent housing I've been using this voucher. I got about eight years ago now, and I got it at a time when I was, you know, I had cancer. I really needed a place to finish my treatment or I probably wouldn't be here. So I was allowed to. Someone gave me that the help that I needed to be able to get housing. And once I did fast forward eight years, I now have become become more of a productive member of society. I, you know, pay my taxes. The bills are paid by me. I pay. \$1,050 as paid by my voucher, and I pay the rest of the rent. And that's about 12,000. A little over 12,000 a year. And that's not that much. So when I

[6:17:32 PM]

see that money being allocated to the APD and not for housing and not used in the ways that it could be used to further helping out the people on the streets and in many other situations that we have here, because it's a mess. We got us a mess here. Really needs some help cleaning it up. And you're our leaders. You need us to help us clean this mess up, not make more. So please reconsider what you're doing because it really means a lot to me. I was born and raised here in Austin, and I don't like the direction it's going in. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Chaz Moore, followed by eight Shryock X and Paulette. Sol

[6:18:33 PM]

Tony, if you are here, please make your way to the podium.

>> Good afternoon.

>> Back here again. My name is a-trak. I'm a member of the Texas harm reduction alliance leadership team. I'm also a member of street forum and I've been unhoused on the beautiful streets of downtown

Austin since mid December. Kirk Watson, thank you for getting those funds from the government, from the federal government. They will and are going to be important. However however, it is only a piece of a very complex puzzle and I'm sure you recognize that because believe me, I watched it. Everything that you had to say about it, I do my homework as well. I'm going to tell you all a quick story. The reason I became unhoused was the result of an abusive relationship with my former partner and the only option I saw at that time as an exit was a suicide attempt. I

[6:19:35 PM]

worked my way through integral care. I worked my way through several different facilities until I ended up in a group home, but they put me in a group home by integral care. That was two buildings down from a blood run dope house blood as in the gangs. I was subsequently kicked out of that group home because I was not mentally ready to go back to work. I still have a lot of residual PTSD left over from that relationship and that is why I am here talking about permanent supportive housing. I would love nothing more than to go back to work, but only worry about having to work and be happy with my job instead of how many hours can I cram into this week so I can make rent? How many shifts do I need to pick up so I can decide whether I can buy groceries for the month or keep the lights on for the month

[6:20:36 PM]

? With those worries eliminated, I can actually live my life. Thank y'all.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Paulette Soltani, followed by Eli Cortez and Caitlin Maclin. Good afternoon. City council. My name is Paulette Soltani.

>> I'm the director of organizing at the Texas harm reduction alliance and a resident of district nine.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

>> I'm testifying against the proposed budget along with community organizing, to provide services to people who use drugs in June, our services saw a 700 unduplicated individuals come through our doors in need of harm reduction services as almost all of those participants are unhoused and have little to no hope of ever accessing permanent housing in our city.

>> Right now it's nearly impossible for my coworkers to do their job without access to

[6:21:37 PM]

permanent housing.

>> For the participants that walk through our doors every day, it's nearly impossible to keep people alive and keep people healthy with our harm reduction services. Without that reality, we in may, one of our leaders of our organizing project, Addie manchaca, spoke to all of you at a city council meeting about investments we needed to end overdoses and how the community must be involved in deciding opiate dollars. Addie passed away days after she testified in front of all of you , due in part to the failures of our city to provide the funding and supports necessary for harm reduction and housing.

>> Addie is no longer with us today.

>> We come back here week after week, not because we love coming here and telling you what our community needs, but it's because our friends and our neighbors are dying on the streets and we witness the suffering every day. I wanted to add some color to what you are

[6:22:39 PM]

contemplating today by sharing the reality of what's happening in Austin. Last week, mayor Watson announced that the state awarded \$65 million to address homelessness in Austin. That is an important piece of the puzzle, but that is not the solution to our homelessness crisis, and that is not an excuse for the city to forgo funding to end homelessness in this year's budget, we need harm reduction. We need housing, and we need you to consider this as you're deciding the next budget . Thank you. Please, please look at the proposals in the community investment budget. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Eli Cortez, followed by Caitlin Maclin and Miriam Dorantes. Good

>> Good evening. Council.

>> My name is Eli Cortez.

>> I'm a resident of district one and I work at Texas harm reduction alliance as a community organizer, as a member of the community investment budget.

>> We were disappointed to see it was mostly ignored and even more upset that the only noticeable increase was a \$32.30 \$2 million allocation to Austin police department. No

[6:23:40 PM]

significant investments towards ending homelessness through housing or shelters or towards ending our overdose crisis. We need permanent supportive housing. We need diverse and unique shelters that are scattered across the city for our unhoused community to access. And we need harm reduction services. Meanwhile the police budget is sitting at \$444 million and is proposed to be increased to \$476 million. I heard the like two people that supported that speak today say that that's a step in the right direction.

Ann to our community. That's a step towards more lives lost. That's a step towards more officer involved shootings, more overdose deaths, more people living in the street and a step towards living in a city where the police force is guaranteed half \$1 billion every year, every year. And we can't take that down. I did the math. \$32 million is enough to fund 26,666 monthly housing vouchers at \$1,200 each. Or in other words, enough funding to ensure 2222 people have a full year paid in

[6:24:41 PM]

housing. And that makes me think how many families could be offered a guaranteed basic income with \$32 million? How many people could be supported through reentry coming back into our community? How many people could access abortions? How many peer outreach positions could be funded to support people using drugs? APD has \$444 million right now, and they need to figure out how to spend it. I don't want to see a single additional cent go towards them . Why do they have 35% of the general operating fund budget and we're over here fighting for 5% allocation that are going through life saving services and housing for our community to survive. That's not right. Stop throwing money at an agency that is evading transparency and accountability. We don't need a \$500 million funded police force .

>> Thank you. Next speaker is next speaker is Caitlin Maclin, followed by Miriam Dorantes and Sasha rose. Hello council and

[6:25:45 PM]

mayor. My name is Caitlin Maclin. I'm a resident of district one. Since 2005. I'm an organizer at the Blackshear neighborhood garden and many of our founding gardeners who have gone on to leave the world.

>> We're long time residents of the east side, and I got the opportunity to hear their stories about their struggles and for example, my neighbor, miss Julia Mitchell, would talk about how her kids integrated Zavala, about how she fought to get the streets paved on the east side.

>> And that was just eye opening for me. And it's just crazy to me that we're looking at this budget that is going back in time. To those same struggles are still happening. And so, yeah, I'm just here to speak against item four and just to add my voice to all the more eloquent speakers demanding the funding for public health, for affordable housing, child care, education, libraries, parks, all

[6:26:46 PM]

of the good things that make our citizens feel safe in ways on the front end that avoid avoid the crises on the back end in the community. Investment budget, we need you to fund real solutions for a stable

and thriving Austin. We demand a safe just city for all. Austinites especially those who've been ignored and marginalized like my neighbors.

>> Yeah.

>> And we need to center what people really need and want to be safe to alleviate poverty and the effects of the racial disparities that haunt our city in real ways. We need to think differently about what actually makes a difference in the lives of people. And we need to move beyond seeing punishment and jail as a solution to embrace the wisdom of those who have been impacted by those systems, as there are so many folks speaking. So eloquently about their experiences. We need to listen and center those voices. It just makes me sick that we've ignored the re-envision public safety process. Thank you for

[6:27:47 PM]

your time. Please fund community investment.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Miriam Dorantes, followed by Sasha rose and Joaquin Rodriguez . Please make your way to the podium and state your name.

>> Hi, my name is Sasha rose.

>> I'm one of the organizers with Austin mutual aid. I'm just going to be very, very upfront. I don't feel represented here.

>> I don't the city budget proposal doesn't represent the needs of our community.

>> And I have a lot of questions .

>> As an org, we prioritize the most marginalized community members.

>> We have a community research Paige of over 11,000 members did you know that 201.

>> A city funded service sends people to our Paige they send people to our page, which is cool and all, but like, where's our check?

>> But why is this? It's because adequate city services are not available to address the needs of our community.

>> We did. You know that within 24 hours, 2022 rent relief ran out 24 hours.

>> Okay.

>> We are in a housing crisis crisis right now.

>> Every day we see more and

[6:28:49 PM]

more people, majority bipoc parents, disabled, struggling to pay for their basic needs.

>> A housing crisis. I echo the sentiments of many of the organizers that have shared. I'm also slowly but surely being priced out of Austin. Is that the whole point here?

>> Is that the goal?

>> Because I just want to say that it it really seems like it it smells like it looks like white supremacy happening here right now. How can we be reducing funding to homelessness services and prevention? Watson zo Kelly you all are all with me . Wright that Rainey night where we went out and we counted people on the streets, y'all were there, right? We know that this is an increasing problem in Austin. How can we be reducing the amount of funding that we're putting to that we need permanent supportive housing, we need mental health, we need harm reduction? How can we only be investing such a small amount towards this? We see this every day. Do you know that we're actually experiencing rolling energy outages? We are. No way prepared for another uri. And how in the world can you all

[6:29:51 PM]

decide to not increase funding to address inclement weather and safety? Our community members living unsheltered. We found this out last year when we once again stepped in to put people into hotels. You cannot continue to rely on mutual aid organizations, nonprofits and volunteers to address the inequities and the inefficiencies of your current programing.

>> I'm sorry, it's just not okay . Thank you. That's not okay.

>> Thank you. The next speaker is Joaquin Rodriguez, followed by Araceli Garcia and sayuri Yamamoto Yamanaka.

>> Good evening. Council and mayor. My name is Joaquin Rodriguez. I'm a resident of district three, the criticism of the proposed small and minority business resource department is not about questioning anyone's moral compass or ethics or questioning anyone's lived experience, though we know that can vary from person to person. When terms like boiling the ocean are used, it suggests a management construct that is

[6:30:51 PM]

part of a framework of a system that we who work within equity issues see as a red flag. When comments like back to basics are used, whose basics are we talking about? Equity issues are more pervasive than ever, especially in light of an intransigent legislature who apparently cares little about

health equity or any equity for that matter. Please note their recent bill writer to withhold funding from Austin public health if they continue to educate and promote covid 19 vaccinations as the state continues to attack the city. And I'm concerned that the city is starting to attack itself. I'm concerned that a person in an interim position is suggesting systematic changes that they will not be around to witness the consequences of initiatives of this magnitude should be shepherded by someone that is invested in the long term rather than perhaps their couch time. Any streamlining

[6:31:52 PM]

cannot be equitably done without engaging directly with those who would be the most affected and the staff of these departments that are threatened to be assimilated. The recent citywide telework policy implementation update from the interim city manager's office is a prime example of what happens when decisions are made absent of initially consult those most affected as from a historical perspective, the council. This council should not be remembered as one who neutered equity initiatives in the form of not supporting these departments that we're talking about. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Araceli Garcia followed by Sarah Yamanaka and Sylvia Hansel. If you're here, please make your way to the podium and state your name.

>> Good afternoon. Council members. Mayor Watson. Mr. Garza . Senora Vanessa. My name is

[6:32:52 PM]

sayuri Yamanaka and I'm a district nine resident and staff at sustainable food center. Sfc I have been with sfc for seven years working on transforming the food system to nourish our health, land and livelihood. As fc stands in solidarity with the community investment budget, collaborate and we urge you to consider its recommendations. I'm here today to voice our concern about the restructuring of the office of sustainability as a person of color and indigenous woman, I can only see progress in our work to protect the most vulnerable populations with the total support of the autonomy of the office of sustainability, the office of sustainability is fundamental to sustainable food center mission of transforming the food system here in Austin and also across Texas as we help to increase sales for local farmers, our programs are an entry point for constituents to access fresh local seasonal produce. The office of sustainability creates

[6:33:52 PM]

place a place for meaningful conversations where organizations like us and institutions can have a dialog with individuals and families regarding food access. I personally have participated with the office of sustainability as a community ambassador to elevate the voices of people who have been historically

left out, misrepresented or ignored during conversation and city planning. I come to you today in partnership with docents of organizations by overlook asking the value and autonomy of these offices. We limit their ability to address our human needs effectively. Ali, please reconci for your decision and keep the office of sustainability autonomous. Thank you so much. Muchisimas gracias.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Sylvia Hansel, followed by Catherine Chiodo. To Taylor

[6:34:55 PM]

Trevino. If you're here, please make your way to the podium. Shelby Bohanon. Please state your name for the record.

>> Hi, my name is Taylor Trevino . I live in district three and I'm here in opposition to the proposed budget and in favor of the community investment budget between nonprofits, mutual aid organizations and governmental offices and services.

>> We spend countless hours and resources treating issues that can be mitigated and prevented by investment. Things like direct assistance for low and middle income families, funding for parent support specialists and community resources like parks and libraries, and many of the other things outlined in the community investment budget. We know that investment is what makes communities safer, not policing. There's no better depiction of how a city defines itself, its morals and its goals than its budget. It's a list of priorities, essentially. And so for me, this is a question of what kind of city we want to be.

[6:35:57 PM]

I am a former educator and in lesson planning you always start with the end goal and work backwards from there. So what? I urge this council to consider is what kind of city do we want to be? What is our vision and how can we get there? I was born and raised here in Austin and I've always known that this is a place I wanted to call home for the rest of my life because while no city is perfect, Austin is great and we have the potential to be so much better. But it's heart wrenching, saddening and infuriating when I drive to work in the mornings from oltorf to montopolis, you look one way down Riverside across the highway and you can see the high rises downtown and you look the other way and there is a homeless encampment being wiped out again, not to mention the overwhelming and at times suffocating presence of city and state police. When are we going to do better for our most vulnerable neighbors? There is nothing wrong with development and growth, but as has been said earlier today, it shouldn't feel like an either or situation. We need to address the needs of community members, especially those who have been historically disenfranchized and instead of increasing funding to APD, an entity that tends to make

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certain demographics feel safer and those in my community feel threatened, it's also crucial that we protect the autonomy of the offices of equity and civil rights, sustainability and resilience so that they can carry out their full missions without interference by other interests. Thus, I urge this council to lead with equity, listen to community members and support the community investment budget. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker Shelby Bohanon, followed by Mandy block and robin Schneider .

>> Hi, I'm Shelby Bohanon. I'm a d-9 resident and a proud member . I'm opposed to the city budget proposed by interim city manager Garza, whose austerity and mismanaged government of ascension medical led to the historic nurses strike this summer.

>> Or is this really the guy that we want writing our budget today? Community impact reported that police misconduct has cost the city of Austin \$73 million in the last decade.

>> This is on top of our already bloated police budget, permanently increasing the

[6:37:58 PM]

police budget by 32 million before implementing any meaningful oversight is ridiculous.

>> APD struggles to hire despite offering high paid officers in 15,000, signing bonuses. This is an issue with police department's leadership and their culture of violence. Who would want to join a department that continues to employ officers that have committed atrocities against the citizens? They supposedly serve? Three owing an additional 32 million at them will not fix APD with that money, we could keep APD, APD from getting involved in people's lives by providing housing support, parental support, sobering centers and more. We could adopt, adapt to climate change by building shade structures at all of our parks and investing in sustainability . I urge you all to vote against any increase in the police budget and vote against moving any additional city positions into the police department, which would reduce trans agency. Thank you very much.

>> Next speaker is Mandy Blau,

[6:38:59 PM]

followed by robin Schneider and David Jenkinson. My name is Mandy blot.

>> I live in district one and I'm asking council to revise the proposed budget to invest more in the priorities in the community investment budget, which was an amazing gift to council from the community, saving you countless hours by consolidating the priorities of dozens of community groups into one document which as many others have pointed out, does not support more money for policing

in particular, I ask council to support the measures that provide direct assistance to prevent homelessness and displacement, such as rental assistance and bill pay assistance. As you know, the Austin community is very concerned about homelessness and while we do need short term resources like emergency shelters, those short term solutions are not enough.

>> We need preventive measures to help people before they end up in a crisis. Please don't ignore this and other priorities in the community.

>> Investment budget, which would not only make a huge impact on our city, but also send a powerful message to the community that you care about representing our needs and

[6:40:00 PM]

priorities.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is robin Schneider, followed by David Jenkinson and Solis Watson.

>> Good evening, folks. My name is robin Schneider, executive director of Texas campaign for the environment. I used to live in district nine. Now I am in district three on my way to work every morning I go by saint David's church and there are lines of people circling the block waiting for a meal, mostly unsheltered people. All this budget does not do enough for these folks who have to suffer in so many ways without food, without shelter, without shout out in the elements, the extreme heat or the bone chilling cold. And we need a budget that does for these people and many others. I regret being part of the environmental community that ignored the people on the east side when we adopted the smart growth plan. That was a mistake.

[6:41:01 PM]

We are on our way building bridges across communities to not make the same mistakes. The undoing racism workshops that the equity office has championed and the work of the Austin justice coalition. Communities of color united undoing white supremacy. Austin and so many others have created a community where we are in much stronger solidarity. We have built the reimagining public safety, the real budget, the community investment budget, the climate plan became the climate equity plan. These are measures to show the growth and strength in our community. Katy unfortunately, this budget, instead of moving us forward, it moves us back. This let's move towards the 2030. Let's not move back to the 1990s that was not at a good model back then. We need better policies now. Thank you.

[6:42:02 PM]

>> Our next speaker is David Kincannon. Followed by Solis Watson and Connor Kenney.

>> Hello, mayor.

>> Mayor pro tem, council members. My name is David Concannon.

>> I am the policy director with workers defense and I am here to express support on behalf of workers defense for the community investment budget and to thank all of our community partners for all the work, the thoughtfulness, the engagement they've done with the community to come up with this proposal that invest in the communities that really need our support the most, that folks have already articulated some of the needs that that are highlighted in that community investment budget much better than I could. But we would want the conversation to be about what we can be doing, on harm reduction, what we can be doing on violence prevention , what we could be doing for rental housing assistance, and to do something about the rising evictions that we have in the city. But instead it feels like we're spinning our wheels because I'm also here to talk

[6:43:03 PM]

about how this proposal all to merge and in effect, dismantle and disempower the civil rights office, the equity office, the sustainability office and others is it's really harmful and it just completely ignores us. A decade or more, multiple decades of conversation, of work, of progress, of thought and labor, that this community has put into moving our city into a better direction and to pushing us into supporting programs and services that actually value the life, the dignity and respect every single one of our residents in Austin. This really is a step in the wrong direction. We are asking you to reject this proposal to restructure and as some speakers have said in the past, if you are going to consider doing this and consider moving forward, then at least think about doing Singh the kind of work that was done to create

[6:44:04 PM]

these offices in the first place. The community engagement, the input, the meetings, the work that went into building this up. If you're thinking of dismantling them at least the least you can do is try to follow that example. Thanks. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Solis Watson , followed by Connor Kenney and Rylan Maxwell.

>> And good evening, mayor Watson and council.

>> My name is Solis Watson. I am the executive director at a new entry, a new entry is a nonprofit, a black owned nonprofit that's been servicing our unhoused, unsheltered brothers and sisters for almost 20 years. We provide food, residential treatment services, as well as mental health stabilization,

stabilization and transitional housing. Right now, we're in a great position with the Travis county supportive housing collaboration in order to help house more individuals

[6:45:06 PM]

and create more supportive services for our homeless population, especially the ones that's exiting out of institutions like the judicial system and mental health institutions. One of the greatest things that I can see about this is not reducing any services, increasing the services that we currently see is really vital for our homeless population right now. A new entry have gone through several episodes where we've had to move and relocate, and with this Travis county collaboration that we're in, the county is willing to do a 7 to 1 match, which is a blessing to us, but it still leaves a substantial gap for our program. So I'm asking for you to consider multiple things. One of them is reallocation of some of the funds the city funds. Our program does not. We're not we're not eligible for some of the affordable housing that a lot of the and rapid rehousing

[6:46:08 PM]

communities are eligible for. So we're in a bit of a bind. But it's not nothing that we can't handle. We're blessed to be moving forward with these funds. The one of the hardest parts of this right now is that the deadline for those funds is at the end of the year. But the deadline for our program is September. Yes next speaker is Connor.

>> Kenny followed by Rylan maksoud and Sarah Cheatham.

>> Good evening, council and mayor Connor Kenny, capital housing. We work with a new entry and our acquiring and building for them a facility that builds that has 90 treatment breads, beds for indigent austinities coming out of places like the sobering center for integral care and central health. We're here because we have a time limited opportunity to permanently secure their facility for way below market value. The county

[6:47:10 PM]

is putting up \$3.5 million.

>> It's 85% of the funding. They're are \$500,000 short.

>> A new entry can't it use any of the affordable housing funds , the bond dollars, because they don't provide affordable housing, they provide treatment beds.

>> So this is the stuff that everybody says, you know, they support.

>> It's not supportive housing. It's not congregate shelter.

>> This is the stuff that we all agree on. They need 14% of their funding, \$550,000.

>> It's a cost to the city of \$6,100 per bed for a permanent facility. And we have a contract that expires in about six weeks. And the county says that if the city council approves funds, that they will go ahead and close on their funding and award the \$3.5 million and allow them to acquire the facility. So various staff at the city, including the homelessness office, have more information about this.

>> We have information about this. We had been looking to a philanthropic source to close this funding gap. They came up

[6:48:11 PM]

short. So we now have a ticking clock and are able to provide 90 beds of residential support, residential substance abuse treatment. This provides stabilization transition, transitional housing for people coming out of the jail, coming out of the sobering center, coming out of integral care before they move into permanent supportive housing or affordable housing. So we're still looking for a sponsor for \$550,000, 14. The county will match it 7 to 1. So if anybody is interested in sponsoring, we've sent information out to offices. So Lisa, myself are happy to give more information. Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker is Rylan maksoud, followed by Sarah Cheatham and Daryl Spivey.

>> Hello, all.

>> I'm my name is Sarah Cheatham .

>> I live in district three.

>> I'm sure you guys are tired and ready to get on just like myself.

>> But I do want to tell you that I think our perspective of Austin is a little bit different. I spent my morning in

[6:49:11 PM]

the unhoused community trying to figure out how to wire a solar panel to a little fridge to keep his insulin. I don't know anything about solar panels, insulin, any of that, but we had a group of very smart unhoused people trying to figure it out. This is an Austin that I come from. This budget is not one that supports a healthy, educated and housed community, adding 32 million for more police is ridiculous. We know more police is a political strategy and not a community safety strategy. Consider investing in the helpers instead of the punishers. A community health strategy is putting our 3 million back into permanent supportive housing, safe and healthy communities need stable housing, affordable child care, street outreach services, reentry housing support and renters assistance all noted in the

community investment budget. You should take another look. You can judge a community by how they treat their most vulnerable . It is a travesty. This budget ignores our children and neighbors who have suffered overdose deaths and are directly impacted by the housing crisis. Having substance use issues or

[6:50:12 PM]

living unhoused or needing insulin should not be a death sentence. Please consider a million for harm reduction. 3 million for project based permanent supportive housing vouchers. 3 million for serving for service funding for permanent supportive housing, 3 million for street outreach services, case managers and peer support. Special what you can do better. Please do better. Thank you.

>> Let's see. Daryl Spivey followed by Charlie Oquendo and Chris Harris. If you're here, please make your way to the podium after Chris Harris is Ivana Neri. Jasmine Wilson, John McMahon, Mahan McMahon. Please make your way to the podium.

>> Hi, everyone.

[6:51:12 PM]

>> On 7 P.M, I'm sure you're as tired as I am waiting for hours. I'm just like, I could have gone with the Spanish speakers, but I'm here right now. So I'm a resident and homeowner of district four. I'm Ivana Andy. I work at up together. Previously family Independence initiative, or I am here joining. The more than 67 organizations and 200 residents who are expressing disagreement to the proposed idea of combining the equity civil rights offices into one department as an immigrant Latina, I advocate for those offices to stay independent. I know some of you are wondering, right now what have those offices done for a specific communities? The answers is that offices were created to serve those who are hard to reach as the people that you saw early today as a diversity of lived experiences, voices and backgrounds, those offices were not created to just serve a few. I actually have some pronouns that I want to give you so that you learn what those offices

[6:52:13 PM]

have done for the community. They represented the Latino community, immigrants, refugees, lgbtq, indigenous communities, black Asian neighbors, goods. As the people who've spoken to you today, why is, why is Austin doing things differently than other cities in Texas and the us and where they have merged different offices, including equity into one department? This is not about how other cities do it. This is about leading by example and setting the stage of what's possible. While many offices have reached out to the equity office from Austin because they want to follow that standard, if you don't believe that, you can call city of Chicago, you can call city of Atlanta, you can call city of DC and you can

learn how they are following the model that we have here in Austin. I would also like to request that you incorporate the priorities of the community investment budget, which includes funding for inclement weather response, rental assistance, legal, legal assistance for immigrants, and specific funding to continue the guaranteed income pilot. And I

[6:53:14 PM]

have some printouts for you here with some of the learnings. Thank you. I don't know who I can give it to if you'll if you'll take it over there, she'll get it for you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next speaker is Jasmine Wilson. John McMahon, Stephen brown.

>> Hi. Good evening, city council members and esteemed mayor Watson. Thank you for granting me the opportunity to address you today. I stand before you with a mixture of nerves, yet determined to get my point across. I am fully aware that this moment goes far beyond just me speaking my truth. I am here not only to represent myself, but I'm also here to lend a voice for those who lack the privilege to do so. My name is Jasmine Wilson, a proud

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austinite born and raised. I was from seven eight, 75278723. Also known as saint John's northeast . But you know it as district one. I wear many hats in this community. Business owner, community leader, worker, mother of four, partner. Friend. Sister. The list goes on. I am the face of Austin. Take a moment. Look at me with your heart, not with your bias, not with your judgment. I am the face of Austin. My passion for community activism and leadership was instilled in me by my mother, Etta Smith, who worked at the railroad commission for 13 years. She taught me at a very young age the value of serving others, which has become the guiding force to many of my actions. As

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I can stand here before you today, because of my mother, but also because of that community, I come from. They supported me to succeed as I review Austin's community investment budget, I can't help but to reflect on the opening statement. The city's budget is a reflection of our values. This budget is a declaration of our priorities and the equity office guides and enforces those values and priorities in short, I'm going to sum it up.

>> Please do do not vote against this community investment budget.

>> Vote against item four. We need this support in our community so you can have more people like me to come out of a community where everything was against them. Thank you. And they succeeded. Thank you. Thank you for your time. Next speaker is John McMahon.

>> Stephen brown, Christian Ciampi, and Robert Corbin.

>> Good evening. Council mayor.

[6:56:20 PM]

My name is John McMahon. I stand here, oppose to proposition four and in favor of the community plan. My question is what problem do you hope to solve with this budget today marks my second year since moving here and in the entire two years that I've lived in Austin, I have not seen one one single problem that can be solved by a police officer. I have not encountered it. Maybe I'm fortunate, but it doesn't sound like I'm the only one here now. When I look into my neighborhood, I see other workers like me who are struggling to pay rent. And when I look at my students and I'm a teacher, by the way, when I look at my students, I see them struggling with mental illnesses, struggling with stress, and some of the older

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ones going through the mind boggling idea that there might not even be an Earth for them to inherit if we continue treating it the way we are. And then when I walk down our streets, I see throngs of homeless people who seem so separated from us. But any one of us could easily become one of them. We are one panic pandemic away from becoming one of them. We are one economic downturn away from becoming one of them. We are one interest rate hike away from becoming one of them. They are part of our community. If the problem you are trying to solve with the current proposed budget, if the community is that problem that is great. But if you are actually trying to solve real problems, then I suggest

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you look at the community budget we've proposed for you. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. We have a few more speakers left. Stephen brown, followed by Christian chicopee, Robert Corbin, Andy coco and Claire Morrell.

>> Thank you.

>> My name is Stephen brown. I'm a fourth generation austinite and a longtime resident of district one.

>> So as we work through this budget, I just want to remind you this dais of the neglect and suffering that was caused to east austinites by bad decisions of the past or the lack of diversity hires with the fire department, ems, police department and the lack of underfunding our libraries and parks and recreation departments like givens recreation center are just to name a few of the poor decisions of the past. The city has acknowledged this

[6:59:23 PM]

history and we have an opportunity to not repeat it. We can invest in things that matter to this community, and I ask that y'all listen to the will of the people as we move towards a more just and inclusive and equitable Austin. We need to make sure we implement a budget that reflects that a moderate budget, a Progressive budget, but a pragmatic budget that I encourage this dais to not be distracted by the far left or the far right organizations are agendas that are that that have their own ulterior motive. But I ask that they listen to the will of the everyday people, the everyday taxpaying citizen that's struggling and don't have the voice of some organization's ears or council member ears. I ask that y'all do your own homework and that y'all reach out to community members that have something to say and to contribute. Passing a budget

[7:00:25 PM]

that will serve all of us and make our lives efficient is what we are asking you guys to do. The city of Austin is tired of being the community. Members of the city of Austin are tired of being taxed twice. We ask that you do your job. Thank you.

>> Thank you for being here.

>> Next speaker is Christian Shelby, followed by Robert Corbin and Andy coco. And last speaker is Claire Morrell. If you are here, please make your way to the podium. Otherwise, that concludes all the speakers .

>> Yeah, I see two gentlemen that had been previously called.

>> Hang on, let her do that.

>> Please. Make your way to the podium and state your name. Yes . My name is Andy.

[7:01:27 PM]

>> Coco. I spoke with you all last Wednesday.

>> I'm in district one and a homeowner for you've heard a lot of the same points today.

>> Y'all. Policing doesn't make us safer.

>> Early childhood supports equity offices, sustainability, civil rights, reentry programs upstream and downstream services save lives in a housing crisis.

>> Harm reduction, reduce harm. Wait days for EMS actually saves people a climate change. Responsiveness also saves people. There's a lot of theme about people staying alive in Austin.

>> I've had the extraordinary gift of being sucked into justice and care for a lot of issues for the last 20 years.

>> I.

>> I want to close our day together and note that the coalition's you've heard from today actually, there's multiple there kind of unicorns y'all. It

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is unheard of for 40 plus organizations and then actually more coalition than that to come together and say this is what the community needs. This is what people need to survive. These are the people we're working with. This is what we're seeing here is a roadmap.

>> Do you have any idea what it takes for this many people to agree on something?

>> So I hope when you think about it, the sort of mass of people you've heard from today and some really similar thoughts coming your way, I hope that you remember that part of why you're hearing a lot of the same is because we spent the time, and these folks have worked together for some of them decades to come to the table and agree on something together. I want you to think about housing and rental assistance well beyond the reach of the \$65 million early childhood supports shade

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for people and upstream supportive services. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Any other speakers that haven't spoken? Your name was likely already called, so just make your way to the podium. Hi my name is Claire Morrell.

>> I am a non resident, but I still decided to come today because mostly because I almost worked with the equity office when it was first created.

>> And ultimately decided that wasn't a good move for me. But I've been thinking about equity and equity in Austin for all my life and most of my career.

>> So I just wanted to come and ask you urge you to consider the real economics of this decision.

>> And when I say real economics, I mean in the real world, where Texas exists entirely in relation to the rest

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of the world, and decisions about equity locally that doesn't exist to make a decision that that impacts equity.

>> So, so massively.

>> It's right now we're thinking about it in terms of here and here, the different Austin's, but it's masturbating the inequity between here and here creates less inequity between here, all of us. Austin and Texas, with the rest of the world. And I think that the current climate and just the way that things are shifting, we're at a level of distrust in public institutions is social trust, where we really, we really can't afford to send the message to the world that Austin, Texas doesn't understand land equity

[7:05:31 PM]

and by extension, basic economics and how trust impacts economic growth, stability, resilience, everything on this level.

>> That's all. Thank you.

>> Thank you. If you signed up and your name has been called, but you haven't had a chance to speak, please make your way to the podium and state your name for the record. >>. Chaz Moore district three.

>> Yeah. Just got back from the African American resource advisory commission meeting that was 30 minutes away.

>> For whatever reason, city budgets are the backbone of a community's development, and they play a critical role in addressing equity, which is the foundation of a just and inclusive society. Imagine a city such as Austin as a tapestry woven of threads of diverse communities, each unique needs and challenges equity demands that we ensure everyone has a fair shot at a prosperous life regardless of their background, race or socioeconomic status. City budgets are the tools that can

[7:06:33 PM]

either that can either mend or exacerbate the inequality within our society. City budgets determine where our resources are allocated by prioritizing initiatives aimed at uplifting, marginalized communities. We can break down the barriers hindering the progress, increase funding for affordable housing, public transportation and education where we can, as a city can significantly improve the quality of life for the less fortunate. Bridging the gap between the haves and have nots. Furthermore, well-designed budget can foster economic development and historically disadvantage areas by investing in businesses, infrastructure and community programs and underserved neighborhoods. We create opportunities for job growth and prosperity, allowing individuals to escape the cycle of poverty. A city budgets also reflect the values of our society. When we allocate funds to programs that promote, that promote diversity, inclusion and social justice, we send a powerful message about our commitment to a fairer future. Conversely, neglecting these issues and budgetary decisions perpetuates systemic disparities, perpetuating the vibe between the privileged and the marginalized. Moreover our city budgets have the potential to reshape public safety strategies rather than merely

[7:07:34 PM]

pouring funds into into traditional law enforcement and equitable budget, allocates resources to community based alternatives that focus on prevention, rehab and mental health support. This shift reduces the likelihood of discriminatory practices and fosters trust between law enforcement and the community that they serve. Equity is not just a buzzword, but a moral imperative. The decisions made in the city budgets can either cement the status quo of inequality or serve as a catalyst for positive change. I hope you all do the right thing. Stop doing what we've been doing. Let's make sure Austin continues to be a leader in Progressive budgets. Support the community investment budget. Thank you.

>> Good afternoon. Good evening.

>> I guess now. Thank you all. My name is Chris Harris.

>> I'm live in district nine and I'm the policy director with the Austin justice coalition.

>> I'm here speaking against the proposed budget and for the community investment budget.

[7:08:34 PM]

>> This budget is an austerity budget. The budget that's been proposed to us is an austerity budget. We're in a city that's got crises with, with, with housing, both for those that are unhoused as well as with housing costs. We have a crisis, as many cities do, as it relates to substance use overdose. We have a we have crises as it relates to our preparedness for climate change, as we've seen with with disaster striking us both in the summer and in the winter. And now is not the time for austerity. Now is the time to support those that need the most support in our community to ensure that they have the resources they need to get by to protect their safety and to reduce desperation in our community, to ensure that people are in our community, are not desperate because that decreases the public safety for all of us. I

want to thank the council members that have already started to lead on some amendments.
Councilmember vela of the rental assistance, as well as on Shea, as well as on

[7:09:36 PM]

potentially moving out some of these air and Pio positions. I think it's important for us to see that there is another opportunity for there's a couple of big opportunities for funding the initiatives put forward in the community investment budget, not only in the \$39 million that's been set aside for the reserves to sit inside the city's own bank account. And was this money the reason that we weren't served when we were freezing inside of our homes? Was this the reason that we weren't served when trees were falling all over the community and the power went out? No, that's not what we were told. We were told that nonprofit fits that community groups should take the lead. That's exactly what our city manager said. So this is the mentality that we have in our city. It's not that we don't have the resources and that we need to put more in the city's bank account so that we have been willing to put them to use for the good of our people. And so I want to thank you, Mr. Ensure that we do this. Thank you so much. Thank you, Robert Corbin, bill Wallace, born and raised, austinite district one.

>> I had a pleasure of working

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in district one, currently at and. The youth that I serve are 998% of them are on some type of government assistance or free lunch. And you guys have a very hard job right now because everybody wants something right ? And politics is, you know, who gets what and how much. And that that's difficult. I'll get that to you guys. But I was asked a question here earlier today, and I ask it to you rhetorically, why are people poor? Why are people poor? And if the answer is something around that, because there's inequities, because there has been advantages that people are not all playing on the same playing field. If the answer resonates somewhere off in there, then I

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ask you to strongly, strongly consider investing in the community budget right? Right. Because if we don't invest in the marginalized amongst us, then what job have you done in answering the question of like where resources go? Do they go back and create even stronger infrastructures for inequality and create bigger gaps in the city that's already struggling with huge gaps depending on what side of a highway that you live on and so this is something that you got to wrestle out, right? And it's hard because everybody's asking you, it's not just us, it's other people asking you as well. So what you do with

these resources, do you give 40% of the budget to the police department? But when the city has voted resoundingly over and over again that they don't want to be over. Police.

>> Thank you, sir. Thank you.

>> The final speaker is Robert

[7:12:43 PM]

Corbin.

>> Robert Corbin from district five, sensing all people know that without sufficient policing, you don't have civilization Ann.

>> So please increase our police budget by a large amount.

>> Animal services is one a 12% budget boost like every year, the highest percent raise of all departments.

>> Instead, their entire budget should be cut by half or more easy to do once you get rid of that hypocritical idiocy known as no kill, which over the years by dumping 100,000 dogs on our city, has led to mass murder very evident in city animal shelter, food warehouses, full of murdered salmon, chicken, pigs and cows and after every adoption, most every dog food purchase sends a command down the line for another murder to be committed on behalf of every saved dog. Some of the worst implicated ones are virgin

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rainforest, raised to pasture animals to be murdered for dogs. Thus indigenous peoples are displaced directly or indirectly, and habitat critical for endangered animals and biodiversity is no more. Ways our area has been affected by dog culture. Are dogs have legally seized as off leash special spots like redbud isle in civility and lawlessness by dog owners are epidemic in our parks. People are afraid to go to some parks or to bring their children people bitten or injured by dogs in our parks as epidemic wild life is stressed, deer are often chased out riparian areas along our creeks become eroded. Polluting Zones, waters and lands are being polluted. Tax money is spent to remediate damage like the 1.5 million foolish being thrown away for poison algae control in our lake. Dogs posing as service dogs are violating our health codes and civil codes. And most stunning, 2 or 3 full time

[7:14:45 PM]

police officers, plus the staff at APD, investigate dog abandonment at a cost of at least a half \$1 million a year. So please kill no kill. It's ridiculous policy.

>> That concludes all the speakers.

>> Thank you, madam clerk, and want to say thank you on behalf of the entire council. To all the speakers who participated today, as we've said several times before, Shaw, we will not actually vote on the budget today. The vote on the adoption of the fiscal year 20 2324 budget. That is scheduled for August 16th, 2023 or the and the 17th and 18th if necessary. We it it'll be here in city hall at 301 west second street, Austin, Texas, and will begin at 10 A.M. The council as I indicated, the council budget discussions and voting is, if necessary, will continue to August 17th and

[7:15:46 PM]

18th. Without objection, the public hearing is now closed, but the public will be allowed to speak when we take action on the budget on August 16th and or or as I indicated on the 17th and 18th, if we need that discussion. The chair recognizes council member Kelly.

>> Thank you. And I would like to also close this out, but I do have three questions for the city manager.

>> Based on some of what we heard today, there were three resolutions that I passed and one was related to narkan on April 13th of 2023, we got a lot of questions about harm reduction today.

>> And there was a follow up that was supposed to happen.

>> And part of the executed resolution set for July 28th, 2023, part of that was so that we could understand as a council if we had funding available for that, where it was coming from, etcetera. So if you could get back to us on that before we vote on the budget, that would be great. And I think it would provide clarity to the community. Another one that I brought forward in September of 2022 was related to human

[7:16:47 PM]

trafficking.

>> Lang I would like an update on where we are with implementing those policy related changes so that if we need to put funding towards that, that's something we can also discuss and then finally, the cold weather shelter resolution that I brought forward in February of 2022.

>> We have also not gotten an update on and I'm concerned that if we don't get it before November 15th, then we won't have time to get an rfp in place when the cold weather is here. Okay. Thank you very much.

>> We'll get you that. Thank you. Council member. Member for us and the public. Let me point out Thursday, while it was posted as a council meeting, work session on Thursday, we will not be meeting. That will be a work day for the council members and for staff to work on answering questions. Friday August 4th is at 6:00. Is the goal for us to have all of our budget questions in to staff so that they'll be in a position to

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try to answer those. Monday August 7th, that is at 6:00 pm. That's the goal of having propose budget amendments. And if X file and I'll put on the message board. But as you know, you can file your amendments with the budget office and your ifcs with the agenda office. But I also would request that we put those on the message board for ease of the public to be have the chance to see those Tuesday , Shea August 8th will be what we're calling a question and answer work session on where we'll have the opportunity to have our professional staff here and work through questions and follow ups to those questions or make sure that people understood what the questions were. And if desired, we will also have an opportunity to talk about amendments that we've seen that have been filed prior to that that time. Third day, August

[7:18:49 PM]

10th, will be an amendment. Ifc day, where members will lay out their amendments, proposed amendments and proposed ifcs so that the council can work through questions, make comments and have discussion about those proposed ifc amendments and ifc , and hopefully there will be enough time for staff to have been able to provide us some fiscal notes. If those amendments have have fiscal notes, then of course the 16th is set for when we will vote on the budget. That would be the next time that the public will be heard. And if we need the days is because we need to pass it on. All three readings, we will have the 17th and Friday, the 18th available. All with that. If there is no objection, we are adjourned and it is 7:19

[7:19:53 PM]

P.M. Council member harper-madison are you wishing to be recognized.

>> Absolutely not. Mr. Mayor. That was the peace sign. Oh, well, I'll say goodnight in the legislature.

>> That's a no vote. And I thought maybe you were voting no on adjournment. So without objection, we are adjourned at 7:20 P.M. Thanks, everybody, and thanks everybody that participated in this day is a good work session