

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

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[10:00:21 AM]

Good morning, everybody. It's 10:00 and I will call to order the work session. Ann of the Austin city council. While it's August 8th, 2023, as I said, at 10:00 in the morning, we are meeting in the city council chambers at Austin city hall, which is located at 301 west second street. And we have a quorum of the council members present. Members Luz a couple of items and for the public as well. Council member pool will be off the dais for most of the day to day. She's resting at home after not feeling well over the last several days. And of course we all are disappointed that she can't be with us right now, but we wish her the best and look forward to her connecting to our meeting later. Our council member, Ryan alter will also be off the dais this morning and he will be joining us later in the morning and he'll be joining us remotely. With that being said, the item

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on the agenda is a presentation and discussion of the fiscal year 2023, 2024, proposed budget. At the last meeting or work session, there was a question raised and by I believe it was councilmember Fuentes wanting for some direction or some discussion related to housing and the permanent supportive housing. So without objection, we will start with that and then what I think I'll do to try to manage this and as we've talked about for the public that may be watching what we've talked about is today this this work session is a question and answer opportunity for council members to ask questions of staff and get answers to questions and the way I'll try to manage that, that is when we have a broad general topic like housing and public Austin public health and permanent supportive housing. I'll ask council members to ask questions about that and then we'll move to another broad

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general topic that we know. We've had a lot of council questions with. For example, probably public safety will be the one after that. And I'll I'll try to work us through in a in a efficient way so that we can get all of your questions answered. But do it where we're we're not running all over the place and running staff up here from all over the place. So with that, unless there's questions of me city manager, I'll recognize, as you.

>> Thank you, mayor. I think we're going to call on Kerry. She's going to kick us off and I think she's going to be providing you the presentation today, as I undersnd it. And so Kerry, I'll turn it over to you and we're ready to answer your questions after the presentation.

>> Council members, while she is stepping up to the microphone, Ann, I know you all join me. I've now swung by a couple of town hall meetings that the council members have had and Kerry is at all of those. And Kerry is. She does a great job

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at interfacing with the public and providing answers to questions and so even though we've still got a ways to go in this budget process, I think it's only appropriate. We thank you for what you're doing for us . And with that. So with that, I'll set you up. We'll see how this goes.

>> Well, thank you so much, mayor. Thank you. Council Kerry Lang, budget officer with the financial services department and I say this all the time. Yes, I am the one up here talking up here, having the conversation. But it is the work of the entire staff that gets us to this point. And so this presentation wouldn't be possible without without my good friends behind me as well as the staff at the budget office. And the departmeso thank you. And with that, I'll go ahead and get started with our conversation today. This morning , we're going to start talking about permanent supportive housing or continuing that conversation. Ann. And so what we want to do is make sure we do an overview of the components of our homelessness response. We'll talk about permanent supportive housing, the overview of that as

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a whole, the housing or development pipeline that we're seeing as well as plan spending. And finally, arpa investment. For so. So we want to start with a conversation or a discussion about the larger homeless response efforts. As you know, in the budget document and as we've talked about homelessness response, we talk about the core areas that we're focusing on, whether it's crisis response, public space management, our reducing inflow and the biggest portion, almost over half of it, 51, is homeless housing stabilization, permanent supportive housing is 34% of our total spending plan.

When we look at fiscal year 24 and the proposed spending that we have, that's at \$27.6 million. When we think about that. And so when we say housing stabilization, permanent supportive housing includes site based rental as

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well as housing vouchers and tenant based rentals. This slide here just really talks through the spending as we've been talking about it over the last couple of weeks, based on capital spending. Cip dollars are operating dollars that you'll see. And then with psa in particular, there aren't any grant dollars that we're including in this spending plan because we're going to talk about our arpa funds, the state and local fiscal relief or self and home arpa. We'll talk about those a little bit later syoyou can understand the spending plan for those when you think about when you look at this capital spending, it is the fluctuation of what projects that we anticipate over the next year as this fiscal year estimate and fiscal year 24 planned. And so as those as those projects keep coming online, then we'll see those those ebbs and flow in the capital program. This change

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that you see here on the opening side is because of the nature of the contracts. These are multi contracts. And so if there are some savings that we anticipate for fiscal year 23, we will just move those spending plans over to fiscal year 24. So that's why you see that big bump in the planned spend for fiscal year 24 because of the savings that we've recognized in this fiscal year. So then we look at what a or permanent supportive housing is overall and we wanted to start the conversation by talking about the eligible population. Psa isn't for everyone. There is prioritized placement is for those who have chronic homelessness, those who need or have disabling condition and who need prioritized placement. So when you think about where we are and who we target, those are the target neighbors that we look for when we're looking at placing them in psa, as well as thinking about

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what our current gap is right now, about 3000 households are in need of psa and then thinking about the service model, how do we what hwe created as a service model for this program? In affordable housing, that means that, you know, the individual usually doesn't pay any more than 30% of their total income. And so it is really income based. They can pay up to about 300 or \$350 a month. It includes case management and other services such as mental health care and substance abuse. And then we try to reduce the screening barriers that people come across in this particular housing program so that we make sure that they have, as little a limited number of barriers as possible in getting them placed out. And then when you think about what the model looks like, permanent supportive housing is, we're

focusing on site based. Historically, we've done tenant based as well as site based. We're focusing on site based,

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dedicated development. There are tenant based, which are vouchers that are part of the program. But in 2010 we began looking at site based as an option and then Ed. In 2019, we opened up our first site based psa project. And as you can see, there's 50 units at terrace at oak springs , over over 90% of our current capacity is tenant based programs. But we are trying to transition to more site based program. And then as you see at the in the last bullet finding home, atx has set a goal of 1000 units of site based psa as part of their goals for that program . I'm. And so in order to do permanent supportive housing successfully, we have three three areas that must be must be completed or three elements. The first is capital development and

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permanent supportive housing cannot exist with all three of these elements in place. And the first is capital development and that is th funding to actually build the units themselves or to purchase the units themselves. It can be a variety of sources for the capital development. We have tax credit, equity, other federal or state programs as the government entities or other government entities such as Travis county. It's usually a collaborative effort of many of these funding options. And the city of Austin, our housing department, is usually a part of all most of the site based permanent supportive housing programs that are in development right now. The second element is the wraparound services, supportive services. This includes on site case management, which keeps the individuals connected to other services that they may need, such as basic health needs, public basic needs, basic health care. And then it also includes a variety of funding sources. So

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as you all know, our public health department has the contracted support services, as there are other municipalities. These are government entities across the region that supports wraparound services. And then our nonprofit partners also do ISIS as well. This is often considered the backbone of psa because these services allow for these individuals to stay in housing, get the support that they need so they do not return to homelessness. And then the final element is the rental subsidy or the operating subsidy that is provided through what many know as voucher programs. These voucher programs pay the difference between what the tenant pays us and what the market is for those units. And so we the voucher program consist of, again, several different funding. It could be the federal government. It could

be local funding to provide for these vouchers and their use to make sure that the facility stay operating. So you know, daily

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the maintenance that's needed, the grounds, upkeep, all the things that's needed to keep the facilities in space so that we can use it for years to come. So when we think about all of these elements and the things that what we've been talking about have been in the pipeline, you'll see that this slide here shows our anticipated pipeline, which includes the three elements that I just discussed. And so as you can see right now, we have 126 units that are site based units in operation today. We have 1444 tenant based units . And we anticipate ongoing units coming on site based units coming on through 2026. And so what you see here is our anticipated growth. When you look at and anticipated for 2023, we have 279 units that we anticipate coming on by the end of this fiscal year. That includes espero at Rutland balconies terrace and pecan

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gardens. Those are all funded with with 2018 bond dollars and those are that will get us to what we know is a successful or what we see as a successful pipeline when we look at the goals from finding home atx and continuing this work to reduce homelessness in the in the community. And then finally, I want to just talk through the opera spending. There were some questions about the opera spending plan and how some of the dollars have been reallocated. This 95.3 is a total opera spend for homelessness response. However, 14.1 million was the amount allocated for capital purchases . We reallocated 3 million of that for emergency shelter capital, which left 11.1 million available for ongoing capital development work. In June, we

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encumbered or spent. 10.5 million and we have \$600,000 balance for housing capital in permanent supportive housing and then home arpa that 11.4 million we have been approved by by the government for by the federal government on our spending plan. We are going to go back and make some recommended changes to that spending plan. But 1 million is currently in the rental housing development assistance program and the team will go back to adjust that spending plan with plans to fully or to begin expanding the remaining dollars in fiscal year 24. And that is our presentat happy to answer any questions.

>> Councilmember Fuentes thank you.

>> Thank you, miss Lang, for the presentation on. So is it correct, is it accurate to say that we in this proposed budget

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for fiscal year 24 that we have a reduction in in our capital dollars for permanent supportive housing based on previous year? I'm looking at slide four.

>> That is not a reduction in the budget. That is just the anticipate spending plan based on on the projects that are currently in place that that the team is working on in development, that that can fluctuate if the projects move along any faster. If we have savings of that 15 million that you see in this fiscal year, that spending plan can be updated for fiscal year 24. Okay

>> And because a lot of feedback we're hearing the concerns we're hearing from our community is that we are not continuing and in fact, we're not accelerating our investments in permanent supportive housing. And so with this, can you share a little bit more about the distinction between planned spend versus what we are projecting? Because you said we could allocate more , but based on last fiscal year, we spent 15 million on capital

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for this upcoming fiscal year. We're projecting to spend 10 million. So that is we're projecting to spend less on permanent supportive housing.

>> And I'm going to turn and look at Rosie to have her provide her insight.

>> I was just saying that I could answer that. So the estimate that you see there for fiscal year 24 is from April of this year. And that is what we were anticipating we might spend through our rental housing development assistance program. I'm recalling that those projects are projects that are applications that come to us. And so we're responding to fund the needs that come to us. If additional dollars or additional requests come in for psa and they score appropriately and it's the right time for us to invest in those projects, we will invest in those projects. You can also note on the home arp dollars while we currently have an approved spend plan with the federal government that has a million dedicated to capital through the rental housing development assistance program, we are looking to do a substantial amendment with the federal government to shift all

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of those dollars into our rental housing development assistance. So that will be an additional \$10 million that will go into Rota for us to spend on this coming fiscal year. We just have to go through the change in process with the federal government and when do you anticipate us finding out about that? I it's we have the dollars allocated. We have an approved spend plan. It's just changing it kind of from one line item to a different line item. And so those amendments Bartz have to go through hud and they are easier to do. I don't have a time frame on that, but I also don't foresee a problem with getting those funds awarded in fiscal year 24. Again, recognizing that when we make an award, when you guys as the governing body for Austin housing finance corporation make an award that's setting the money aside or processing the paperwork, the draws on that will will happen over time as the property actually goes into construction.

>> So is this the plan, the psa projected spending chart that we

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have, it is it does not include the arpa dollars.

>> That's correct. Okay because at this point, we only have about 600,000 left in arpa dollars.

>> Well, it's the when I say the arpa, there's arpa itself. I always get that acronym wrong. That's that's the funding that came through the homeless strategy office. The home arp, our dollars that were awarded to the city of Austin through the general hud entitlement grant formula during the pandemic. And we went through the process to plan for those dollars for expenditure. And so that's a different bucket of funds.

>> And what about the site based units? It also appears that we have a reduction in site based units.

>> Is that accurate?

>> You're looking at just to be so I can be clear, you're looking at slide seven. Slide. Those are the units that are coming online each year. So we

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currently have 126 site based, permanent supportive housing units in operation today, we anticipate 279 additional units coming online in calendar year 2023, including balconies terrace, espero at Rutland and pecan gardens. In 2024. We'll have an additional 235. In 2025 and beyond. An additional 425. So it keeps growing. And that's just what we know about today. I anticipate moving as we continue to spend, as we continue to see projects come online and requests come in, that that number will continue to grow as we get into 2026 and beyond. These are the projects that we know about today that the city has invested our rental housing development assistance dollars in. Okay

>> So just to clarify, the amount that we're projecting to spend in permanent supportive housing in capital costs right now has 10 million in included in the base budget. You have shared publicly that we anticipate getting a \$10 million

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federal home grant. Is that right? So that would put us at 20 million. So we would have an increase in permanent supportive housing capital funding?

>> That is correct. And again, that's just what we estimate because we can't forecast what projects are going to come to us and what will contain permanent supportive housing. So we're basing that \$10 million estimate on what we've seen over the last couple of years and what we've seen the trend to be. So if we get requests for additional and it and it's scores appropriately through our criteria and the evaluation and the underwriting and everything that we do associated with that program, we'll spend more than that. \$10 million. That's just what if we were trying to make an estimate for what we think is going to come through. It's 10 million. We don't separate when we fund our rental housing development assistance projects. We don't separate out whether we're funding a 50% unit or a 30% unit or a permanent supportive housing unit. We track that. But the funding isn't delineated by mfi level.

[10:20:50 AM]

>> Okay. Okay okay. And then what about the tenant base support? I have this chart on page seven, so shows zero anticipated for Shaw.

>> Right. So just to reiterate that this chart shows new sort of units or beds coming into service each year, not the cumulative portfolio. So the total column shows you where we would anticipate being at the end of 2025 or so. So it is plausible that there will be increased tenant based programming, but in fact, what we are trying to do is really lean into the site based because in our market that our providers are having so much difficulty finding available units in the rental market to place those tenant based resources. So while there could be some, I expect it to be modest not only the city but the continuum of care, the hud funding is being prioritized

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for site based psa rather than than tenant based. Okay

>> And miss gray, with this, I mean, to me, the way I see it is we are investing in injecting considerable amount of resources, not only here at the city, but the county is also dedicated a considerable amount also over 100 million. The state has come in to also provide additional support to me to see the amount



of site based units that come online. It doesn't look like it's at the scale that need to respond to the crisis that we have are these conservative estimates of how many site based units we can bring online. Like what are what some context here that we should be.

>> I would not describe it as conservative and so I mean, I think if we consider that right now today we have 126 site based units and we're projecting that by the end of 2025 or shortly thereafter, we'll be looking at over 1000. That is a dramatic increase in site based dsh,

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sparked in part by the finding home at effort, which really said we need to lean into this. We acknowledge there's a very substantial gap. And so while there will be a continued need, probably another 2000 households or so needing services at the end of that period, and this is the result of a very intentional effort on the part of not only the city but its partners. Travis county, the housing authority, the continuum of care to increase the number of site based dsh in a relatively short peri of time.

>> That's a good distinction.

>> These numbers are just city led, site based.

>> No, ma'am. So are almost all permanent supportive housing projects have have multiple funding sources? It's extreme. I can't think of a single project that happens with a single funder. Usually there's a

[10:23:56 AM]

partnership. Perhaps we provide some capital and the housing authority provides vouchers or or typically there will be 4 to 5 capital sources in a single project. So this is a global pipeline. Reality is the city is in most of these projects in one way or another. Okay

>> All right. Thank you. Appreciate it.

>> Councilmember Kelly, thank you.

>> I'm wondering if you could provide insight into whether the current budget allocation for permanent supportive housing is expected to remain consistent in future budgets for the city of Austin. You know, considering the dynamic nature of different priorities and changing circumstances, I want to know if we should anticipate any adjustments in the future and if you could elaborate on the types of decisions council may face in future budgets so that we can start thinking about that even now as we make decisions.

>> I think as we look at the anticipated spending, it's a it will be varied based on as Rosie

[10:24:57 AM]

stated, the amount of or the types of applications they receive. And so when the team looks at the proposed spending for the next fiscal year or the coming fiscal years, they're looking at all of those dynamics . I don't anticipate any changes from an operational perspective, but but I think it's an ongoing conversation that we can have. And Rosie and her team and Diana and her team can provide updates to let us know if there are changes that we will need to make and make in the coming fiscal years.

>> Okay.

>> Thank you. And then this may be more for Diana or Ms. Gray. Excuse me. Could you elaborate on the specific criteria and metrics used to evaluate the effectiveness of permanent supportive housing programing? I want to know how the budget allocation specifically will be tied to those outcomes and how frequently progress reports will be made to council related to that spending and those outcomes. Shea sure.

>> So I'll speak a little bit to the primary outcomes and then Adrian Sturup, director of abh, may want to speak to the

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reporting cadence on the service side. The primary measure around permanent supportive housing is housing stability. These are individuals that I think we demonstrably but for the rental support and the robust services would not remain housed. And so we primarily but certainly not only look at at key milestones are individuals still in their housing and doing well. And so just as an example on average our housing stability at a year or so is upwards of 90. And that's where we have historically done a little bit better than the national average . And that's what we continue to want to see. And that's a challenge given the complexities of the conditions and situations that people find themselves in. We also look at increases in

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income, whether that's earned income or income from benefits, changes to employment. As Ms. Lang mentioned, permanent supportive housing is targeted to people living with disabilities. That doesn't mean they don't work. It may not be full time work, but we do see increases in employment and then at the more granular level, we don't know necessarily do this with every program. But across the system we have done cost benefit studies previously with our partners that show so that public spending for inpatient stays for incarceration, Ann for emergency room utilization, for utilization of ems services, et cetera. All decrease significantly.

>> I absolutely agree that mitigation of the problem related to individuals experiencing homelessness is a much more cost effective way to spend those dollars. I think

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that's great. The people that I talked to in the community would like to see more transparency related to those outcomes. And if there is any way that we could create some sort of dashboard, maybe on a very high level or something where we could point our constituents to say, look, your investments are preventing homelessness. These are the outcomes. I think that that would be very helpful. So I don't know if my colleagues would be interested in something like that. But when we're spending these dollars, I want to make sure that the community knows the benefit that they're getting out of them and not just through these types of discussions, but somewhere where they can look directly. So thank you. Thank you.

>> Councilmember Ryan alter I'm sorry, do you have something you want to add? Please yeah, just briefly.

>> So the staff collect performance measures on an annual and quarterly and then report are posted annually to the open data portal. But I think because of the long term nature of permanent supportive housing, as Ms. Gray mentioned sorry, director truelove, we can work with council on an annual performing or reporting period

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if you would like. But just so you know that as a standard, it's quarterly and then results are posted annually to our open data portal. That's very helpful to know.

>> Thank you so much for following up on that. Thank you, mayor, for the time.

>> Thank you. Councilmember I'll go to council member Ryan alter, then councilmember harper-madison.

>> I retract that answer my question.

>> Okay, very good.

>> Thank you very much. I'm sorry to not be with you all today, but appreciate you being here. I just wanted to confirm, that these are global. So these include the collaborative projects, correct?

>> That's correct.

>> And do they include include the conversion of northbridge?

>> No, sir. As you you know, we have for the time being elected to continue to operating northbridge as a bridge shelter Shaw and so we have, of eliminated northbridge from the pipeline at this time and

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looking at kind of our global goals that were set out a couple years ago.

>> So it was 100 or 1000 units and then 300 units for the continuum of care are those separate 300? Those are not those are just like assume like 30% units that that's correct.

>> I'll I'll attempt to description and let director true love correct me. So what we call continuum of care or units are essentially units that are flexible. They're available to the system for referring clients . You'll remember that I spoke earlier about people with tenant based resources. So they have a portable voucher and a case manager assigned to them. But have had a very difficult time finding units. So in addition to our site based with dedicated rental subsidy and services, we've also incentivized the creation of units that are just set aside available for those individuals. And I believe at

[10:31:06 AM]

our last count we were also on track to meet that goal of 300 plus units and do we have any kind of study or estimate of what percent of the unhoused population Ann needs?

>> Psa needs that level of service cases or versus, you know, whether it's just a 30% unit or even all the way on the other end diversion. What's our what do we think the percent of the population Ann actually needs this level of housing.

>> So let me give you if it's okay, a gross number rather than a percentage in a 2020 analysis that looked at what our sort of right sized or system at equilibrium would include, the estimate at that time was for around 4500 units of permanent supportive housing that is the same analysis that we utilized when we did our recent study

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around our shelter portfolio. And we currently have. Of 1570. So based on that, approximately we're probably at around 3000 units short. And again, have about a thousand in the pipeline right now.

>> Right. And once someone goes into is it pretty much such that they will be there for quite some time? Is there much churn through or should we kind of count that bed as occupied for the long haul?

>> So there are no time limitations by program design in in permanent supportive housing . People can stay there, renew their lease so long as they're able they want to, and they're able to comply by the terms of their lease in practice, the average tenancy is around five years and there are a variety of things that happen. So people will sometimes will move on and

[10:33:07 AM]

determine, you know, I may need a rental subsidy, but that person no longer needs the intensive case management that comes along with the unit. And so they go elsewhere. We have a lot of folks who do go on to more, more intensive of settings, care settings. As you know, obviously living unsheltered has significant impacts on people's health over time. And we also have an aging population. So it's not uncommon for people to move into a nursing home eventually. And of course, we have some people who who pass away and then there is some attrition where people leave or or are unsuccessful in the setting. But again, our turnover is something like 15% total.

>> And my last question, the what's the expansion over at mobile loaves and fishes? Is that incorporated here? Is that

[10:34:08 AM]

a separate those aren't so let me I'll let me give an answer.

>> So 50 units are currently counted as permanent supportive housing and the reason for that is that via hud rfp that happened last year, there was an award to mobile loaves and fishes and partnership with family elder care that provided excuse me, not only the unit that that mobile loaves and fishes was prior providing there on site, but also the rental subsidy and services that that we spoke about being critical to this model. There is the possibility of more units at mobile loaves and fishes eventually being converted formally to. But right now there is not dedicated services, dedicated rental subsidy, as well as a commitment to take referrals through the coordinated entry system. So we see that as a very important

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potential source of new units, but it will be dependent on increased availability of services and rental subsidies, along with reaching an agreement with the coordinated entry system to accept those referrals as well.

>> I appreciate you all very much and, that's all I got.

>> Thank you, councilmember. Councilmember Allison alter. Thank you.

>> I had some questions on slide four. I just wanted to clarify. So you said something that there were savings from fiscal year 23 that were rolling over Shaw wasn't sure whether that was for the capital or operating or if that was just a possible ability. If there were savings, the savings that are anticipated in fiscal year 23 are in the operating.

>> Okay. Yeah.

>> Okay. And then so the 6 million, there may still be savings because they didn't come

[10:36:10 AM]

online as early as we thought. Is that what happened?

>> I'm sorry. Can you say that again?

>> So that so the psa, I'm assuming that the psa units didn't come on as early as we thought so that there's extra funding in there? That's correct. Okay. And so then that would roll into on top of the 17 or the 17 includes that projected savings.

>> The 17 includes that projection. Okay.

>> But it also increases because we have units online. So you have to have more in operating. So we have to build the units and then we have ongoing operating costs. So you would expect over time if we were had a goal that you would be increasing your operating and decreasing your capital over time unless you had a much larger goal at the end for the psa. Is that correct?

>> If I understand your question correctly, you're saying would the operating increase as the units come on line to provide those services and for fiscal year 24, the spending is based on the current the anticipated units that are coming on. And

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then, of course, as we look at the out years, if there are needs for increased, operating to support those and that's what we would do in the future budget cycles.

>> Yeah. And I was just pointing out that, that if by virtue of the way this works is once those units come online, your operating is going to increase faster than your capital because you have to address the services unless you were trying to build another thousand units, which you might try to do. But at this point, that's not it in this period. That's not not the goal .

>> Is that correct?

>> But I would also say that the capital dollars will typically be reflected first because we'll be deploying Singh funds for through our rental housing development assistance program before the as the properties are in pre-development almost.

>> And then we spend the dollars as they go into construction Ann and then the operating at and the services dollars come into play once those units are in

[10:38:14 AM]

production. So there's a spike in capital and then a couple of years later almost there's a spike in operating and services needs.

>> Thank you. I think that's what I was trying to, to get at in terms of the pattern that we would observe as we're trying to understand these numbers. Thank you. I think that was my question. Thank you.

>> Councilmember harper-madison Ann.

>> Thank you. I appreciate it. And it's actually sort of out of turn because the previous council member alter asked some questions that got me thinking. So you know, as some budget amendments were bringing a \$550,000 budget amendment to one of those aforementioned seven projects and I'm curious about why the particular facility I'm making reference to can't use bond dollars or other sources of funding and how that would contribute to our permanent supportive housing goals. And I don't think that question is for

[10:39:14 AM]

you. I think it's for sorry, miss Lang, I should have I should have prefaced it with that.

>> Thank you. Council member. I believe the project that you're referring to is one of seven projects that's part of the Travis county supportive housing collaborative. It is a little bit idiosyncratic in that it is not specifically permanent supportive housing. It is a facility that provides us both longer term shelter and substance use disorder treatment is not based on a lease, so it's not resident pool residential housing per se. And so because of that, because of the configure location of the units which don't conform to code or meet housing quality standards, which is a hud term of art, it is not really in the housing category and the money that the housing department is utilizing is explicitly for residential housing per se.

>> I would love to explore more moving forward, especially with the housing and planning committee, how we can

[10:40:18 AM]

reconfigure those regulations because, you know, rules are never necessarily set in stone. So I wonder if we could bust that open and do something different. So I'd like to covenants they are, but this is more I would want to bring our law department into that conversation.

>> That's part of how we've gotten the authority to use general obligation bonds because of the fact that it is housing, which is. So there's a legal component to that. And I'm sure there's some some prior legal opinions that we can share in advance to help you kind of understand how we got to the point where we're at.

>> Something tells me working through the city of Austin, nothing is going to go fast, nothing, nothing is going to go fast.

>> I just look forward to continue in the conversation.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. Councilmember our members, if that's all the questions we. Yep. Councilmember Fuentes, thank you.

>> I do have some more questions. This is to take it back to the county projects. I was wondering, do we have an update on on the status of those

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projects or if you could provide any anything new that we should know and be considering of?

>> I did have a meeting with the Travis county collaborative and I think they are still experiencing a gap in in financing that they're trying to work through. I was expecting to receive some applications for the most recent quarter of rental housing development assistance that the applications would have come in this past week. I would have to check to make sure that they did in fact come in. But they're still trying to cover a funding gap to ensure that they're able to have their capital stacks come together. I want to say that's around 12.5 million. I don't know, based on the applications that are going to I don't know. First of all, I don't know if we've received applications, as I assume we have. I don't know how those are going to score as we look at our first quarter awards, all of that would be way too preliminary for us to for us

[10:42:20 AM]

to give an opinion on. But we have approved recalling the three we fcs to move forward with the full property tax exemption.

>> Ann yes. And can you remind us how many units that intends to put online?



>> I don't have that in front of me. Maybe Mandy or Jamie are watching and they can text it and if they do, then I will share that as soon as I get it, because those permanent supportive housing units are not included. No, they are included in these. I mean, I could go through my documents and pull out the number and maybe Diana knows off the top of her head, but those are T T Travis county collaborative projects are absolutely part of the pipeline of numbers that you saw up on the screen earlier.

>> They are okay. And I guess why how what are your thoughts on how long it's taking us to build these site based, permanent supportive housing?

>> I feel like it's taking the amount of time, I guess, that I would expect it to. Most of these are have funding that is associated with tax credits they have very strict timelines on when they have to get their

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certificates of occupancy. That's why we fund them. We help them through the development process as they may need to, to ensure that they're able to construct within their time frames. It just takes several years for these properties to come online when we're talking about new construction, two of the properties that are coming online in in calendar year 2023 are in fact converted hotels. And that's why we're seeing them happen faster, one of which is balconies terrace, which is 50 units of permanent supportive housing. And the other being pecan gardens, which is 78 units of permanent supportive housing . And we anticipate those before the end of this calendar year. So it's having a balanced approach and we if you recall when we started the site specific approach or the site based approach for permanent supportive housing, you know, the first project that we had was terrace at oak springs in 2019, and that was 50 units and that was unheard of at the time. And it kind of established set a precedent that allowed us to pursue more and bigger projects.

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And that's why you see projects like espero at Rutland coming on , which has got 101 units of permanent supportive housing. So the projects that are in operation right now that make up that 126, the biggest chunk of that is the 50 units at terrace at oak springs. And then it's a smattering of units in a number of other projects. And that's smattering has grown over time. And you'll see more and more of those coming online as we spend the as we see the 2018 bond funded projects coming online. And then as we see how things will progress with the 2022 geo bonds, one of the I'm sorry, one of the things that we'll want to come back at a later date.

>> We've we're in the process of engaging an audit and that audit is going to explore how the housing how the ifc works, how the permanent supports, how the it works with the homeless division, so that we can kind of at least have a picture, a macro picture of what our objectives are, what our lane is, what's the lane for the city of Austin under our tools that we have? And then maybe perhaps identify

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the lanes for other jurisdictions to be able to take on. And then we need to get into the development process. We've had several meetings with with individuals that are trying to develop affordable housing and as you would know, our our development process is not easily navigated. And so they have they need assistance in getting through that process. And we need to find ways to streamline that because that is part of the that pipeline can only go as fast as our regulatory process allows it to go. So we need to go through that. And so all those things are going to get explored in two different phases and then we can bring the detail work. So that we know exactly what we're trying to get done year in and year out.

>> And when do you anticipate that audit?

>> Well, the audit, we should get it. We should engage it pretty quick and then list out the questions. We want them to go at it and then have them go to do the work. I don't have the timeline yet to negotiate the contract.

>> Okay, because that's what I'm getting at, is how can we scale up production of the permanent supportive housing units and certainly wouldn't want our own, you know, administration policies and regulations to be a barrier in that development.

[10:46:27 AM]

>> So the only the only worry and it's a worry that we're going to have to figure out later. Some of this is one time federal money that's being used to help us do this. And when that federal money is no longer there, we're going to have to scramble to figure out howre going to do the financing moving forward. And that's that's not something we won't be able to do. We just have to figure out what it's going to what it will take.

>> Right. It's a tremendous opportunity for our city to have this injection of federal dollars to support us in our effort on creating a better homelessness response system.

>> You know, now that president Biden has asked the staff to come back to the offices, I'm sure they're going to move a lot faster.

>> I'm not going to touch that one. Okay. Yeah director chulita, I do just want to punctuate what you mentioned about at the two hotels that the city purchased. That's balconies and pecan gardens. Those two hotels that the city purchased a few years ago. You anticipate those co online as permanent supportive housing units by the end of 2023, correct? That

[10:47:28 AM]

right. Yes

>> And there's a third hotel. It's bungalows at century park and it is following in 2024. They're all undergoing minor rehabilitation to have them be suitable for this type of housing. But they will be quickly delivering needed homes.

>> Great. That's I'm happy to hear. And I'm excited to hopefully be there when we when we celebrate the opening. The last question I have on this topic is around the north bridge shelter. So in the proposed budget, do we have it operating for the full year or is it only including are we including operating funds for six months.

>> My understanding is north bridge is six months of funding for fiscal year 24. Okay colleagues, I do want to highlight that because I think THAs been a need that we

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have as a city to provide that bridge shelter, especially as part of the real initiative, where we're connecting individuals to the emergency and temporary shelter opportunities.

>> And with this it comes with wraparound services. And so I want us to acknowledge that right now it's only funded to continue for six more months. And I do have some concerns around that.

>> I'd like to clarify. Yeah, go ahead. Go ahead. So there are six months of dedicated general funds for north bridge in the budget.

>> This year. Ap has indicated we believe we can find alternate funding sources for this fiscal year with the intent of operating for the entire year.

>> We're not going to stop funding this at six months so that we make sure that we operate for 12 months. And I'll ask the staff to make sure they figure a way to do that. Okay

>> We have it on record right here. Thank you.

>> Councilmember Ryan alter, then councilmember vela, then

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councilmember harper-madison.

>> Thank you. Councilmember Fuentes made me think about something. Rosie do you have or director of. I apologize a whether it's formal analysis or feeling about the both cost per unit and time it takes to come online for purchasing a hotel versus our ground up projects, what is one more cost effective than the other? And is one really faster than the other?

>> I have to think that purchasing a hotel would be faster, even if it requires some renovation because you're not building it from the ground up cost per unit, though I'm not sure I would want to do some analysis on that because it does know there are very few hotels that are positioned to be able to just turn the keys over and have it be able to operate as

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permanent supportive housing. And that's a little bit of a misnomer to think that we can make that change. Paige really quickly. Yeah yeah, we'll get that. We can get that. But I don't know that it just seems like looking at the timeline for some of these, it has taken quite some time.

>> You know, just almost as long as sparrow and in some instances. But there are other there are other factors involved there. So no, it's not.

>> But I'm just probably not as long as the full construction Ann.

>> And the other thing to note is that we are continuing to as we've as we've gone through the time since the pandemic, we've been continuing to kind of watch how the hotel pricing might what that looks like and it it the estimates and the sales price that we've been seeing for appropriate hotels has not been as cost effective as it would have been five, six years ago. So it's quickly not becoming as feasible as we would hope it to

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be. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Councilmember councilmember vela, then councilmember Harper Madison.

>> I did want to shift gears a little bit and talk about the tenant assistance, the rental assistance that we've provided I know that we have just signed Eid a contract with, with sammaritano for, I believe, \$7.8 million and, and can you when is that a contract supposed to be kicking in?

>> We anticipate that we'll start deploying funds as soon as it's executed, potentially even before the end of the month, or that we expect it to be executed this month.

>> So imminently. Imminently. Yes. And that contract is for the \$7.8 million council allocated in the last budget year, correct?

>> It was one time dollars. And cause we were coming off of

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the pandemic, we were no longer able to utilize the structure of the rent program. And in the exemptions that that was contracted under. And so we knew that we were going to have a delay in in deploying those funds so that we could establish a program and go through a competitive process. And you saw the result of that with the contract with I-1 samaritan zo in July.

>> Great. And so basically, during the pandemic, we had the, you know, arpa money and other sorts of federal funding. But I guess those were on an emergency basis. So that was kind of expedited to get it out the door and get it into people's hands.

>> And it was a very different program in back during the pandemic in that in that case, I mean, folks could literally apply for funds and get funded just directly with the current program. We're looking to help those that are really at the brink of eviction. They have to be referred into our our services. And it's not just

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calling and applying for funds. Yeah I completely understand.

>> And so prior to the \$7.8 million that that that about to start going out the door. When did the federal funding kind of run out or where are we in terms of our past efforts kind of dovetailing with our current efforts?

>> Yeah. Our the last federal dollars we got, I believe, were in were allocated in January of 2022, and that was through kind of a reshuffle of funds that hadn't been spent by other jurisdictions. And so they they redeployed those to us and that was about \$1 million or so. And we've been deploying those dollars since through Austin public health in their neighborhood centers because we did not have a contract in place and we did not have funding for a longer term program until we got into the fiscal year that we're in right now with the award that came in the budget that we're in right now.

>> Okay. And do we have any sense of what the drawdown is

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going to be on that \$7.8 million contract? In other words, how long will that money last?

>> Based on our work with I1, we anticipate a spend of or at least a need of about \$1 million month. And so that \$7.8 million contract really will probably only last us if we spent it to the need that we're being asked. It would last us through April of 2024.

>> So in this fiscal year, then we're drawing the 7.8 million from the last for the current fiscal year. But then looking forward, we should probably again, assuming that we want to try and kind of match the need or get that million dollar a month goal. We're looking at another, let's say 4 million, \$5 million to kind of get us through this fiscal year at a rate of about \$1 million in rental assistance per month,

roughly. Okay. Yeah have an amendment to that effect. And I think we're trying to kind of pin down exactly what we want to add on to that that that \$7.8

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million so that we are do have a consistent flow. And I know we were talking the other day and my preference would be, you know, I don't want to use up all I'd like to parcel that out over the 12 months so that there's money available and not have it kind of all go within the. I mean, I'm going to leave that to you all and the contracts and all that, but my sense would be to make sure we don't know what's going to happen down the road. You know, there could be a downturn in the economy. There could be, you know, natural disasters. There could be a lot of things that that might and I do completely agree that that this is really anti-homelessness funding. I mean, you know, in we're preventive, you know, we're we're we're trying to make sure that people don't have to relocate and go through all the lems and have their kids go through all the problems and all that kind of stuff like that. So , so and with the million dollars, how, how, how, what's the maximum amount per person in terms of the rental assistance that each household has a maximum amount of benefit of

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\$6,000 if they come through the program.

>> And that covers tenant stabilization. It covers perhaps some back rent. It might cover representation at eviction proceedings, maybe some funding to help with relocation that is not anticipated to be spent for projects that are coming up through the city's tenant relocation ordinance. That is a separate contract that we brought to council earlier this year, and it's got a funding, a funded amount of about 700,000 to help with folks that are coming up through the tenant, the tenant relocation ordinance .

>> And so the difference then the tenant relocation assistance funds are going to be for folks that are being displaced, you know, their apartment complex is being remodeled, is being torn down, whatever the case may be. And we're helping them get from point a to point B, whereas the emergency rental assistance is for people that their apartments fine, but their financial situation is not. And they need some help. And in terms of the

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legal assistance then is, is the texas-rio grande legal aid also involved in, in the mix in terms of or who is providing the legal assistance? Because a lot of these folks are on the verge of eviction, I would imagine, when they're contacting Lang sammaritano.

>> I believe trala is in Texas. Rio grande legal aid is part of the mix there.

>> Okay.

>> All right. I appreciate the answers to the questions both here and just in other conversations, I great early support adding to that \$7.8 million. So that we can really kind of adequately fund rental assistance. I know this is something that I don't think that we funded rental assistance at all in any substantive way up until, yoow, a handful of years ago. So but I really we think that we should do it in a steady fee and regular and ongoing way so that we can have

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these kinds of established contracts and established relationships and kind of perfect the process. And I would just note that the contract we just issued was for a three year contract. The two years would be pending, you know, funding availability. But I just I really would encourage us as a body and the city in general to just roll this into kind of our ongoing expenses and obligations. I don't know at what level 12 million might be a, you know, I don't know if we can continue to fund it at that level, but I think we have to continue to fund it at at some substantive level.

>> Let me I want to look into this because it it's hard for me to understand why we would have entered into a year contract that runsutut in six months. Eight months. That's got to be something is amiss in terms of our staff work on . And I intend to get to the bottom of it. We'll evaluate this and we'll we certainly don't want to leave anybody getting out of housing because that is the most effective way to keep to keep people in housing. But we need to evaluate those numbers to

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make sure they're realistic.

>> All right. Well, again, thank you all very much. I appreciate your efforts in this regard and the feedback that that we've gotten just anecdotally is that, you know, alwyn is doing a good job and that trolla is doing a good job. And you know, and again, just appreciate y'all's work on it.

>> Thank you. Thanks. Councilmember councilmember harper-madison Ann.

>> Thank you, mayor, for the recognition. Ann I am. I just wanted to revisit my previous question and I think this is maybe more part part staff, but part manager. Our question I just want to be clear that out of our seven collaborative projects, by nature of how the one that we all know that I'm making reference to, the fact that they won't be able to obtain funding through other services like bonds or tax credits. Et cetera. But what this council wants to be sure that this particular project is successful. Do we have to fund

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it through our general budget and I'm not sure who that question is for.

>> So I I'm looking at Keri to see. I know that the type of service that they're providing makes it not qualify for the program that we administer through the housing department. So how other funding sources that might be available for that? I think would be a question for finance and its other it's my understanding is it's a gap of about \$550,000 in and that's ultimately what I'm making reference to is the gap in funding.

>> And I think ultimately what I'm saying is if there is any other possible way that the city could help to fund that gap, I would like to know what we can commit to. And, you know, moving forward, I want to know, is there a way that I can be advised and it doesn't have to happen from the dais this

[11:01:44 AM]

morning, but is there a way I can be advised on how to amend our budget so that, you know, to councilman Fuentes's point earlier about preventative services and council councilwoman Kelly's comments about preventative services like this is essentially this kind of behavioral health programing is exactly what we're talking about. So that extension of being able to really get the full benefit from ps prevention is I can't remember my grandmother's quote, but I think y'all know what I'm talking about. I don't understand why we can't fill that gap and so, again, you don't have to answer that question this morning.

>> What I what I can commit to is looking into the details of the project at this moment, I'm not aware, but we will definitely look into the details and get back with you on what options are could be available for that project.

>> That'd be fantastic. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

>> Thank you. Councilmember

[11:02:45 AM]

members, unless there's any other questions for in the arena , if you will, of permanent supportive housing, homelessness and Austin public health without objection, I'll move to a public safety generally police and the order I thought I would go in is police and then ems. So let me ask first, are there any council members that would like for us to bring up people that can answer questions related to APD and the police budget? Councilmember alter, was that raising your hand or.

>> I think I need to talk to staff and legal first before we do that.



>> Okay, fair enough. That's what this is supposed to be about is being able to get your questions answered all right. How about ems? Is there anybody would like for me to call up somebody from from. Oh, I thought you were pointing at me . I was second. Look, I kind of know what I want, but. Yeah I got it. It's Ryan. The. The

[11:03:47 AM]

wizard of oz up above here. Right now. Okay. Somebody from ems come down so that what?

>> APD?

>> Oh, I'm sorry. APD. It doesn't hurt my feelings if you cry out. If I'm not recognizing you.

>> No problem. I'm

>> Why don't you ask your question and we'll see if somebody. Yeah, sure.

>> So I just have one question. It's about our asset forfeiture rules. I'm just trying to understand when we have asset forfeiture funds, Luz do those do expenditures from those funds have to receive council approval same, you know, whatever budget thresholds, when we approve a purchase or are those funds somehow different rules apply where where they can just be spent by the department. And mayor, I just want to clarify.

>> I have questions for a-p-h

[11:04:48 AM]

not on homelessness.

>> Okay. Well, that's why I ask. So. All right, we'll call them back up if I could.

>> The chief is on his way down, but to answer your question, councilmember. Yes, that that is a separate funding process, both state and federal seized funds, the budgets presented to council for budget approval, but the actual the actual purchases are done through purchasing without out or after the approval of the budget. Then they then they can make their purchases without council interaction.

>> And is that by policy or by both?

>> Both the federal statute and the state statute for seized funds has to be kept in a it can't be co-mingled with city funds, has to be separate bank accounts for both of those accounts. Thank thank you.

>> Any other questions with regard to APD, ems? Okay okay. It's my understanding that councilmember Allison alter has an additional question for

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Austin public health. So I hope they didn't leave. I just texted director Sturup.

>> I also have a question on councilmember Taylor's question regarding magistration, but I'm not sure. Okay. That's public safety.

>> So okay. That's why just flagging that for whatever you get there. Yes. Thank you. Yes.

Councilmember I have a question that that for honestly budget, it's a broader question doesn't quite fit in a category language access has been a real priority for myself and my staff and I think we do a decent job of the language access.

>> That said, with the budget document, there is no let me rephrase that. Is there a Spanish version of the budget document? No there isn't a Spanish version of the document , and I understand it's a huge

[11:06:50 AM]

document and I understand that that translating the entire document is going to be a big effort. That said, I would really love to see at least the summary where y'all are hitting all the kind of those main points and those kind of like first 60, 70 pages, the city manager's message, those kinds of things like that. If we could have at the very least kind of a Spanish version, potentially other languages, again, I would let the cpo and the city figure out which are the best. But obviously Spanish is a is a huge language here in Austin. It would really help and I think it would really for those folks. Who are you know, monolingual Spanish speakers, just having that kind of summary document is one place to go where yocacan just kind of flip through and see the major kind of headlines and where the emphasis and the focus is. So I just wanted to put that out there. Obviously, it's kind of late in this budget process, but moving down the

[11:07:50 AM]

road, it would be great to as much as we possibly can provide you know, Spanish language documents as part of the budget process.

>> Thank you. Council member. That's definitely something we can look into for our even as we prepare the approved budget, there may be portions that we can look at translating and in future budget development cycles . Thank you.

>> Thank you. All right. Councilmember Kelly has a question related to homeland security and emergency management. Do we have somebody that can well, why don't you ask your question and L see how we get that answered.

>> Yeah. So there's a lot of interest in my community specifically. Hi director snipes and thank you so much for attending the first day of the class that I taught last week. But we taught 18 students successfully community emergency preparedness training and my question number 36 was specifically about the preparedness efforts of hsm and

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what I'd like to know is if you could explain to the community what investment that's in our budget are related to community preparedness. I got some of those questions while I was training the class over the last three days, and thank you to all the other public safety units that came out to help successfully teach that. I really appreciated it.

>> So councilmember, thank you for that question. Ken snipes, director, homeland security and emergency management. There are quite a few items that will be moving forward for helping the community prepare and become more resilient as it relates to programs like cert training. We're certainly looking at that program and already exploring opportunities to add that to some of the upcoming work that we're going to be doing. And we've talked quite a bit about some of the things that we're doing with the for example, our drop ins and our other work that we're doing with our communities where we're bringing that information to the communities and helping them understand what's available and what they can take advantage of.

[11:09:51 AM]

>> I did see in your response to the budget question that you are developing a 1 to 2 hour condensed emergency preparedness training class and I noticed that as a city as a whole, we kind of lack like senior access to emergency preparedness. I think that's a really unique niche. But there are a lot of elderly individuals in the community. And so I'm wondering if that might be something possibly in the future you might be able to work on?

>> Yes, councilmember absolutely . And all of our vulnerable populations will will kind of work on some plans for them as well. But we have some things already in the hopper and those will be coming out.

>> Fantastic. Thank you so much for explaining that so that we can get it out to the community. As you know, community resilience and preparedness is near and dear to my heart, so I appreciate your answer today. Sorry to put you on the spot. Sorry. Thanks thank you, mayor.

>> Thank you. Is councilmember Fuentes you have a question on this?

>> Yes. Director snipes. Actually, I just wanted you. I saw that there was an interactive map with cooling centers located, and I just wanted to see if you wanted to speak to that because I thought that that was a really cool value add for us to offer our

[11:10:53 AM]

communities, right?

>> So councilmember, thank you for that. So the interactive map for cooling systems and cooling centers is another one of those products that we're creating to make sure that people have an understanding of what may be available to them in their communities. And we're trying to make it easier for people to understand where they can take advantage of those types of activities. It's been really important with the onset of the heat wave that we're dealing with right now to make it more widely known where people can go to cool off.

>> Yes, and I appreciate your leadership. I mean, that's the type of innovative, creative ways that I would like to see our city government engage in more of. And so I'm really pleased to see that out for our community. Thank you.

>> Thank you, councilmember. Thank you, director. We thought I saw a come back in the room. Did I? All right, why don't you come forward and I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter.

>> Thank you. And I may also have one for ems that I didn't see before. Thank you all right. Good morning. Thank you for

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being here. So. So in questions one and six that I submitted, they were asking kind of what grant funding would would be disappearing by the end of this year. And there's millions and millions of dollars of grant funding that is ending in quarter three and quarter four for of fiscal year 24 is outlined in the answers to those questions. And I think in answer to a question that councilmember Fuentes had as well, can you speak to how many staff will be impacted? I mean, some of this is covid money and it might just be like we're moving on from the pandemic. But I'm trying to understand the potential impact to the public health services from those gaps.

>> Oh, good morning, kymberley Maddox, assistant director for Austin public health. So for some of those grants that are ending throughout fiscal 24, the staffing for many of those, we are going to continue with our arpa allocation. So those staff

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would be continued through December of 24. So it's not a it's just a few months, but it does get us through the end of the fiscal year. I would have I can go back and get you a more detailed answer on any of the programing that's going to end off the top of my head. I can't answer that, but I can go get those answers for you and bring them back to you in just a few moments. Okay that would be helpful.

>> And then on a specific area that just recently came to my attention as we were trying to think about gaps in our sti response since and I'm a co sponsor on an amendment of council member Velasquez was that the dhhs recently announced some state cuts to public health that are going to impact our sti and disease response work. Can you speak to what happened and what concerns Paige may have about our capacity as the public health. I guess I don't know if you call authority, you know, to respond.

>> So I know of and here she may

[11:13:56 AM]

be able to give more. I know that the dis funding was supplemental funding. That was during the pandemic that is coming to an end. And that does currently fund three staff persons that works in the sti. And I can let Kasey give you more programmatic detail.

>> Good morning, Kasey de Leon Austin public health. To answer the question, we did get a notification from the department of state health services. There are federal pass through funds that we received for disease intervention specialist supplemental and what we are aware of is that come December 31st, there are three positions within Austin public health that are going to be affected by those funds ceasing to be allocated to Austin public health. And so we are looking to see what what do we have within our department to shore those up and have made some some adjustments to make sure that we don't see a change in service or

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capacity for this fiscal year.

>> Okay. So you you have resolved that issue and figured out a way forward or is that something that we need to do for this next fiscal year?

>> We do have a capacity with arpa to be able to extend those those positions for the for the remaining months within the fiscal year. Great

>> Thank you. And when you do have the answers to the other question, I just want to understand if you know, we're going to be laying a bunch of people off or we have lots of vacancies all over and just making sure that we have the public health needs so at the appropriate time, when you have an answer that would be appreciated. And mayor, I'm sorry I didn't have my notes organized exactly how you were doing it, but I do have a question for ems. And related to magistration, our public safety when appropriate.

>> Mayor pro tem, I had a quick one about public health and I apologize for my voice today.

>> Fair enough. Public health, you'd come back up. We'll try to get all this completed before we

[11:15:57 AM]

go to the next item.

>> I can tell you're working very hard to try to keep us on the same topic, but we put in a Q and a about the workforce first program. Do you know if that line item is being sustained or increased this year , or is that one we should just wait on? I know that's run through a public health contract , but workforce first, first sorry.

>> Assistant director Laura Lafuente will have those details for you.

>> Yes, that is a collaborative grant. So there is 295,000 from Austin public health. We are working to confirm the amount from the other departments that contribute toward the larger contract.

>> Okay, fantastic. We'll wait for that answer in the Q and a thank you.

>> Thank you, mayor pro tem. Anything else on public health? All right, ems, if you'd make your way down. And while they're coming down, I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter.

>> Thank you. Good morning, chief Luckritz. As you know,

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we've been working to try and improve the revenue process and the billing system for ems. I noticed that in the budget it says that there's been a it projects a revenue increase of about 4 million or a 9.3% from the budgeted level in the prior year. It attributes that to an increased number of transports, which we may very well have an increased number of transport. But how are you doing on those revenue management efforts, which we're supposed to bring us more revenue?

>> Yes, we're prepared to come to speak to you at the September audit and finance committee to give you a full breakdown of all of the efforts that we've done. But at this point, we have not completed the full backlog that we've had last count a couple of weeks ago, we looked at as less than 5000 transports that were remaining to be billed. And so we do anticipate that that backlog should be completed within the next several months. And we continue to work through some of the other processes in terms of

[11:17:58 AM]

improving documentation and billing compliance, implementing some of those procedures in terms of real time evaluation of completeness of documentation or real time insurance, we are getting our

documents done in a timely manner and timely filings and all of those various things that we've spoken about at length. Happy to present you with more in depth presentation.

>> Thank you. I look forward to the more in depth presentation, but is that money going to get is that getting credited in fiscal year 23 and then just washed into the general fund? We had as a council determine that we wanted that funding to go back into ems for retention and recruitment. But it seems to be a little bit of a black box where that money is. If this 4 million increase is attributed to the transport fees as opposed to the increase in revenue, we've been very successful this year in our revenue cycle management.

>> We have seen a dramatic increase. We are coming in over budget for our projected revenue

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for fiscal year 23 and that is why we are projecting a higher revenue for next year as the specifics as to how that was allocated, I would defer to my colleagues in finance.

>> Hi. Yeah that's \$4 million budget to budget. It's about what they're expected to work through the \$4 million backlog. So when we look at the estimate, I think it's only about \$2 million growth. So we're expecting to see that full backlog worked off in fy 23. So the actual transport impact is only about \$2 million. Okay

>> So the estimate is going to be even higher than what was in the estimate in the budget reflects working off the backlog entirely in fy 23, resulting in \$4 million in revenue, some of which was anticipated in the budget, but not all.

>> Probably about an extra \$2 million above the budgeted estimate for that component of their revenue.

>> Okay, but that's already in

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the budget.

>> That's already reflected in the estimate and flows through to the reserve calculation for fy 24. Yes okay.

>> Thank you. I look forward to the presentation and thank you for councilmembers.

>> What I'm going to do is I'm not sure who the question will be for, but I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter. She has a question related to magistration and so I want to put that in the public safety category. What I anticipate we will do is go. I'll ask if anybody has any questions about fire or after this after magistration question, fire. Then I'm going to go to pard and then we'll go to general fund

departments and I'll kind of read those out. So as you want to prepare your notes. So why don't you ask your question and we'll figure out who we need to get.

>> Thank you. And I'll just say I do have some questions broadly about vacancies that may be, you know, all departments. So just flagging that. Okay. So in question I'm sorry, there was a

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question from council member Vella for 90 item 97 that asked about additional magistration costs for counsel at first appearance program and the answer just says that there's \$600,000 in one time funding included to support additional magistration costs. I wanted to understand what that 600,000 was for.

>> That's a contract at Benigno chief financial officer.

>> That's an anticipated increase in the contract that we have with the county for those services.

>> Okay. So the county's presented us with a bill that's a bit more than what we have in the in the in this budget.

>> And we're in the process of negotiating that number.

>> That's correct.

>> Okay. Thank you. And I'll just add, I know we had public health before and it may be in here. I'm still waiting for an answer and it may be in here. And I haven't seen it yet. There was a big reduction in what the county was paying us for our

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public health, which I'm still waiting to understand, is they charge us more and we charge them less concerns me. I'm going to get on that.

>> Okay. Anybody have any questions related to fire? All right. Then we'll go to parks and recreation department. Does anybody have any questions related to parks and recreation department? Yes. Councilmember Vella. I just wanted to.

>> I'll wait for the director to get up here and actually, before that, I just wanted to also congratulate state parks and say thank you for the pool situation. It could not have come at a better time in terms of we have all the pools open, all hours. I think just about all parts of the pools too, because I mean, I've seen like, for example, Bartholomew, sometimes they'll have the

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slides won't be open, this part won't be open or whatever the casey be. But I think all of the pools have been open critically needed during, you know, one of the if not the hottest Summers W we've ever had. And anyway, I just wanted to say that I know it's hard to stop those up and get them open. And I know we've struggled in the past, but the I think the \$20 an hour minimum wage has helped tremendously as did the addition of, you know, some full time permanent lifeguards. And I just wanted to follow up with with you, director Mcnealy, about that. Just about, you know, I know last year you had mentioned that it in discussions surrounding moving some of the lifeguards they were before. Just to do a little bit of background for the folks that were not here last year. There were all lifeguards were temporary employees, even the ones that worked year round. But now we've created, I believe, 13 permanent full time lifeguard positions that essentially staff

[11:24:01 AM]

at the Barton springs, Shea, a handful of other pools that are open I'm sorry, not shy. Stacy big Stacey and a handful of other pools that are open year round. And I know you had previously mentioned that you wanted to get to about, you know, 25 or 30 kind of full time permanent lifeguards. And I just wanted to ask you, you know, how are you feeling about the lifeguard situation where are we at with with the lifeguards.

>> So kymberley Mcnealy serving as the director for parks and recreation so that conversation occurred last year. I believe, when we were having conversations about the parks and recreation, about the swimming pool and the aquatic facilities. So 13 lifeguards have certainly been very helpful in making sure that we have our year round pools staffed, appropriately, opening on time without delay, and all parts of the swimming pools open, increased number of full time

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lifeguards certainly helps help with the reliability of our operation. However, we have been successful, obviously this year . We've been very successful in opening our swimming pools with the living wage and the and the bonus structure that we've had. And we intend to build upon that that success next year. So I say all that to say that of course our previous estimates still stands, but we have obviously been able to, as we've tested this year with our with our new structure of \$20 living wage and 2080 next year, we've proved that it's very possible to continue to operate effectively and efficiently even with temporary employees.

>> So your you feel pretty comfortable moving forward. Eid let me rephrase that. Do you feel comfortable moving forward that the \$20 soon to be 2080 is enough to fill the lifeguard positions that you need, you

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know, looking to next year?

>> We feel fairly confident that so yes, we feel fairly confident.

>> And I know in conversation burns I know my staff has been talking to you and we've been talking as well. But you really kind of prioritized actually security and maintenance. It seems to be, you know, the greatest need or kind of, you know, a priority from from your perspective, how are you feeling about that? You know, in terms of in terms of, you know, not just the pools, but, you know, the general park system moving forward?

>> Yeah.

>> So the reason why safety and security is the two top priorities, which, by the way, you council and the proposed budget there is already funding for both of those things. But the reason why those are the most important is because when you take a look at our performance measures and when you take a look at data that comes in through our 311 calls and data that comes in through our caf system and also just the gel number of complaints that come into the office. The those are the places that we are

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receiving the most concerns from our constituency. And our performance measure went from in the mid 70s for people feeling as though the great, the grounds of the park system or that the park system, it's how well it looked esthetically pleasing it was it went from the mid 70s down to the upper 60s. And so it's obvious that we need to do a little bit better job there. So that's therefore those are the two. And I think that sometimes safety and security and the way that the grounds look, those two things go together for when individuals see trash and those sorts of things, they automatically think, oh, they're impression is that perhaps this isn't a safe place as I thought it was. So they go hand in hand.

>> Well, I appreciate that. And I that's a high concern for the public as well. Just, you know, cleanliness, safety of the parks, clean bathrooms, you know, trash cans that are emptied and maintained. You know, I I'm glad to see that the

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base budget, I think, had some some funding for that. And you know, and that's hopefully that will will help the parks with with maintenance our parks get a lot of love and a lot of use that's all I had. I just wanted to touch base about that. Thank you very much, director councilmember Kelly.

>> I think she has a question about parks. Yes.

>> Thank you. So as you're aware, we have a very great cemetery advocate in my district, and I wanted to thank you for being at that meeting and for helping facilitate it. But I think on a broader spectrum out of that came to me the idea that not a lot of people know what the city does with cemeteries. And so I was wondering if you might be able to explain in this public setting, are there any new positions for cemetery maintenance in the budget?

>> There are no new positions for cemetery maintenance in this particular budget. However, last year we did reclassify internally within our budget. We reclassified four positions to for cemetery maintenance to help

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bolster our ability to take care of the cemetery. Thank you.

>> And it's my understanding that we do have multiple contractors that go out to the cemeteries to do the work. I'm wondering if in future budgets we might be able to consider bringing on employees to take over those positions as a possible way to save money. Do you think that's something that we might be able to look into more that absolutely a longer term goal.

>> It actually, if anyone was here several years ago, you'll remember that the parks and recreation department had set in motion that exact that exact idea of being able to bring that interments in house. And so we have right now we are interning for children and Ed and infants. However we still need a little more time to become perfect, become better equipped and better able to do interments for adults. And so therefore, over time, as we learn how to do that, we'll be able to consider bringing those positions in-house and eliminating the need for a contract, which would mean that that contractual dollars would then be spent

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directly on city of Austin employees. But it'll just take us a little more time to get there.

>> Do you do you have any idea how long that might take?

>> We're looking for the next about a year, year and a half.

>> Okay. That's not too bad of a timeline. I was thinking initially, maybe like five years down the road, how might we be able to expedite this? Because long term, if we're able to do those types of interments and bring on staff, I think investing in the staff of the city would be a much better use of those dollars fiscally. And then I was just wondering, finally, thank you so much for being up here. I'm sorry to blindside you on it, but what kind of maintenance staffing needs are still something that you see needed in the budget, or what do you have that you might need? Eid further, do you have any unmet needs with maintenance? I guess is a better way to say it. Yeah

>> So in the proposed budget we have some temporary employees that we're going to be able to staff up as needed to be. And we also have some money for additional equipment or

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transportation for those individuals that will help us get through this year. And then we will continue to evaluate what the needs are and perhaps in future budgets come back with additional additions. Asks in years past. So if you look in historically at our at our asks, have traditionally asked for an upwards of six positions per year for maintenance. So those are those are still positions that would be utilized should we ever receive them. But right now, we are prepared to work within the temporary system that we have. Okay.

>> And I just have one follow up question that I forgot to ask earlier related to cemeteries. How many cemeteries does the city operate and how many in, I guess interments would you say you do yearly?

>> I'll have to get back to you on the interments that we do yearly, and I'm counting on my fingers. We have Austin memorial, oakwood, oakwood annex, evergreen plumbers and I feel like there's one more that

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I'm missing, so I believe we have six. I just can't think of the sixth one. Okay.

>> Thank you so much. And thank you, mayor. Thank you.

>> Any other questions with councilmember Allison alter? Well I would and this is maybe a conversation for later, but you have a lot of priorities that you have to grapple with during the budget process.

>> But I would say that when you think about some of the kind of the base work that we do, that's fundamental for recreation and libraries are key. And at least in my past experience as those departments, it's because of the funding pressures and it's the funding pressures from a whole lot of areas. Those get limited and so you get the you get the concept of your facility rich but cash poor. In other words, you've got a lot of stuff to take care of. And not simply not enough resources to take care of the things we built, the parks we've acquired, the libraries, we've acquired, the branches that we have. So I do think at some point through our building services and through our grounds, maintenance that we do, we do owe council a

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comprehensive report about all those needs so that when you weigh budget priorities for next year, you understand that the demands that are being placed on our system, on our facilities by our citizens that use these services, and what kind of funding we may need to be thinking about in the long term basis.

>> Thank you. Councilmember Allison alter.

>> Thank you. I want to join council member Vella and congratulating you and your staff again on the lifeguards and, you know, looking to other cities and the struggles they're having not being able to have the pools open and how much those pools are meeting for our community. Proud of the work that that we did together last year to really change the dynamic and make the investments that we needed. So congratulations on that. Can you repeat the performance measures related to maintenance and where we were and where we were in the mid 70s?

>> I blinked. I think the number was specifically was 74 and we are now down to the upper 60s, the number being 68, which just means that 68% of the people are responding to the surveys. Felt as though the grounds and the

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park system appeared to be appropriately cared for.

>> Okay. And I know that I think many of us are hearing more and more complaints about security and maintenance in our parks, particularly in our parking lots and in terms of security. And then just the maintenance issues. So if you could share those performance measures with us, I would appreciate that. But I want to go back to a question that I raised. When we had the discussion about about I think it was the capital budget or when we did the general funds, which is we've added almost 500 acres of park land in this last fiscal year. And we are adding zero ftes to maintenance. So I appreciate that. For the first time I'm seeing, you know, very specific that we're adding staffing for givens and the mexican-american cultural center. But we have to understand that these land

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spaces are part of our parks system and they require maintenance. And some of those have playground and other things that need to be maintained. Others are just, you know, open spaces at this point in time. So, you know, it was something like \$395,000 that was added for the o&m for your capital expenditures in the past. Yet we have 500 acres. So that seems like a really small amount for 500 acres. I know there's something like 200,000 for additional maintenance. Yes, but how is it that we are handling the o&m related to land purchases? Is there a formula for that?

>> So the parks and recreation department puts together a formula and prioritizes its needs and then brings that information forward. And it is considered against all the other really important needs of the city. So yes, there is a formula. Yes it is given its due

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consideration. Ann but there is only a finite amount of money which then is determined to be distal débuted among all the many needs of the department. So I understand that.

>> But from our and this is not, you know, this is a more of a question of what how budget has to approach things. And the city manager, you know, we ought to be saying, you know, we're bringing on this land. There's this much money per acre that has to go in to maintenance this moving forward. And we may need to go back and do some backlog work to fix that because we haven't been appropriately investing in the o&m to maintain the lands that we are putting forward every other department because they're bricks and mortar. They get the people to be in the bricks and mortar want that bricks and mortar opens. But our community is vastly used using our parks more than they're using these other spaces. And yet we are not doing the most basic maintenance. So I don't have a fix for this in

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this budget. But city manager, as you're thinking about coming back to help us understand how we're shortchanging parks or libraries, you know, this is part of the problem for both parks and libraries is the o&m for the O and M formulas that go with that capital budget and for colleagues who are interested, I'm thinking of bringing in an item from council sometime in the fall and will not have it together for next week. That really pushes this forward because we cannot continue to at this pace. Unfortunately our land purchases are going to go down because we're going to lose the parkland dedication flow of funds, but we still have to make up this backlog and figure out how we are going to fund the parks that are being loved to death as we grow and as we are more urban and we have less, you know, spaces, those parks are going to become that much more important and they're going to be that much more love. And we have to make sure that they are maintained. So I want to thank council member Ellis for putting forward an amendment that

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provides some additional maintenance this year. I hope our colleagues will consider joining me in co-sponsoring that. I think that's very important. I think we could do more than that. But but we're trying to be reasonable in in in the ask and the scheme of things. But I think it's very, very important. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember council mayor pro tem and then councilmember Harper Madison.

>> Thank you, mayor. Yes. I will add on to the congratulations about having all the pools open this year. I know three of us are former lifeguards and so we always like to make sure we we've shared that information for folks who have an interest in public service at any level. But we're really happy over the

years since covid, when the pools had to shut down, that we were able to rebuild that pipeline of lifeguards and other people that works in our work, in our parks and recreation facilities. I do have Ellis amendment two has been posted and it is about those fte positions you know, temporary full time positions as we know that a lot of departments have struggled with vacancies and

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trying to understand the right level of budgeting for full time staff and balancing what is one time funds versus ongoing funds . Can you talk a little bit about the need for security through our park system? I know I think it was last budget cycle we had done some work, mostly about who was managing kind of the assessment of security needs for some of the buildings, making sure we had a person who had all the keys and knew exactly if something needed to be open or shut or locked or unlocked, that we had that these personnel needs, that that you might need this year, or are these more of fencing, lighting locks and other things that are more like capital funds rather than the personnel that go with those they are both.

>> And we will make good use of any amount of funding that we have been in that has been provided to us in the proposed budget. So we have seen an uptick of just bad decision making and poor behaviors

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throughout the park system. This year we have placed we've through our vacancy savings this year we placed ten cameras in ten different locations and T are mobile. So we have been able to move some of them in in other areas to be able to monitor what is happening. We've been working very directly with our friends in APD who have helped us to monitor those and be able to identify individuals who are making bad choices and then have corrective action for that. I don't know what that corrective action is, but it's in the law enforcement area. So that's why I can't speak exactly to what happens. But I know that they are addressing that. We have hired overtime officers to be in certain locations within our park system where we know that bad behaviors or people are violating ordinances is on a regular basis. You know, in your own district, you had some bad choices where individuals physically moved Boulders so that they could get onto the soccer field so that individual

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that we had hired last year for safety and security was working on an assessment of the entire park system to talk about Gates. We're starting with Gates. What would it cost for electronic Gates? How might we be able to secure some of our park system? We're supplement ING that with cameras and then giving that information to APD. We are, in some cases, hiring off duty officers and or we're hiring

overtime officers, I'm sorry, and or security guards in certain areas where we believe that it's most appropriate. So that people will still continue and want to access the space. And there's more of that to be done. We did have a basic security assessment of our buildings, and so we know what those costs associated with those costs and how we would phase those over time to be able to make sure that our buildings are more secure and any additional funding that we receive would go to any of those things, either equipment or personnel based upon. What we're assessing is the need in that particular area. We're also working with a not for profit partner who is considering refunding an actual overall park system assessment that will gi

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us even more information about how to make our spaces more appear and be perceived as more safe. So not only be safe in real, in the real time, but also being perceived that way. So we're hoping that we gather all of that information along with the preliminary information, and we'll be able to create some real make some real good decisions that are permanent and temporary. Some things might have to be temporary as we learn more so that everybody will feel safe coming to the park system. And we're doing that now with vacancy savings. And then next year with the proposed budget, there will be some specific money infused into safety and security that will be able to use to for implementation.

>> I appreciate that and I appreciate your coordination with us on the situation we had in district eight. I am bringing a budget amendment out specifically to address the needs of the safety and access and the circle C metro park, mostly because I wasn't familiar with the needs of all parks and didn't want to make it a big umbrella statement about what that process should look like. But we have had individuals

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multiple times enter those fields and essentially destroy all or parts of the soccer fields, which is unfortunate when you think about how much time and energy we put into making sure those spaces are accessible for everyone, and then to have people make those fields unusable for folks was really unfortunate, to say the least. So one of the amendments does address that particular issue. And I know we've had issues with the veloway and things like that just over the years that we've been trying to address. So I know it's on your radar and we want to do what we can as a council to help with that. So if there's anything that other folks know or situations I'd be happy to look into it and help, but wanted to keep this amendment Ver specific to just one problem we're trying to solve. Of my last question for you is just going to be about, you know, during the winter storm of this February part had a lot of detrimental impacts with debris and tree branches and clean up have you all been reimbursed through FEMA dollars for the

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work that you do or how does that work when you put so much time and energy into trying to mitigate the debris damage?

>> So we participate in the same process that the rest of the city does to put together the estimates of what the recovery costs are and then we submit that to FEMA and actually our homeless services emergency management department leads those efforts to get the application and the information to FEMA and it is a long term process.

>> So any any costs that we've incurred this year, it will probably be I think we are anticipating maybe 20, 25, seeing some of those dollars back and they'll go back into the general fund reserves.

>> So if I could just add to what Carrie said, it's usually a 75% reimbursed rate and because it's so it takes that am of time for FEMA to reimburse you and it's in the next fiscal

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year, it's historically you can't reimburse for the year that you've already spent. So it ends up that money ends up being part of the general fund collection of revenue that we've received that particular year.

>> Okay. And interesting, I'm I guess that mas sense procedurally just because you can't go back and put money into a budget from years ago, but it is unfortunate that, you know, resource recovery and part and all of the other departments that work in debris mitigation after these storms essentially we just have to restrategize what the budget for the year will actually be able to cover is that kind of how this works with that that many years of gap in between the money spent and the money being recouped?

>> Well, you may recall for rr, we did a transfer from the general fund emergency reserve to cover some of their extraordinary, extraordinary expenses, \$15.3 million. So we tried to absorb a lot of that impact by using the reserves for

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covid. We did the same thing often when we had hundreds of millions of dollars of unanticipated expenses with respect to pas. They had a few million of expenses. We looked at that versus their anticipated estimated spend for the year and found that they were going to be able to absorb it and so there was no need to transfer those expenses to the reserves. So it's being funded out of ongoing savings this year. And then when we ultimately get a reimbursement, it will be posted to the to the general fund reserves.

>> And we work closely with the departments if they anticipate that those charges will result in them going over budget, then we'll start looking at whether or not we need to transfer from the reserves. But

as the charges are occurring, of course, the department takes on those expenses and we work closely with them throughout the year to see where they land. And so in some cases, like in parks case, this year, we thought that they would be able to manage it because of the amount of savings they were generating. And in future years, we'll just make sure we work closely to see how

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that plays out for each department.

>> Yeah. So in the past, the parks and recreation department has relied upon the budget office to help us find money in reserves. And we've we've not ever been in a situation where they have not been able to help us maintain our budget for that given year.

>> Okay. I really appreciate that level of depth on how the transfer of money and over the years actually plays out in real time manage. Is this part of why the reserve process is something you're wanting to adjust this year?

>> Yeah, absolutely. When you think of in 21 we had Yuri and 23, you had Maura, both of those. And I think the people that are in this prognosticate on that, that's going to be those are going to events that are going to happen with more frequency. And that's why those reserves are so critical so that we can be flexible enough and resilient enough to be able to address those. I think the bigger question that that you and maybe the council members might be interested in is when you respond to a storm like that, that means your your routine work program that you

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have to do maintenance of parkland, the maintenance of playscapes, etcetera, may suffer because what you've got to do is deploy resources to deal with that emergency. And so we get behind and we get behind as a result of those things. And so I think what we owe to the mayor and council is a really a report that that details all the infrastructure, the asset management. You know, in my five months now, almost six months here, the those kinds of basic core issues have been crowded out by homelessness, by affordability, by transportation, by public safety. And really what we owe is to try to put this issue before the whole council so those get the airplay along with these other important priorities. Just to understand what you're trying to balance here so that when you are doing the budget, you understand how those resources can be used to try to achieve some outcome.

>> I know that when we talk about reserves, it seems like we stow away our acorns for a rainy day. But the truth is with climate change and potential wildfires and storms and

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flooding, it just seemshe need to make sure we've got a strong reserve system is something that we need to focus on very carefully.

>> Again, to keep looking, I mean, to keep emphasizing. We dohave a cap that that we suffer, that we have as a governmental agency, as does the county and other other jurisdictions. And that's something that is at some point, once Ed Ed has talked about, once the sales tax begins to moderate itself and slow down, that pinch is going to get felt, may not be in the next year, but it's going to get felt eventually. And then we'll have to be prepared for how we deal with those events.

>> Thank you, councilmember. I've been requested by a couple of council members, so that they could be at an event at noon. So would it be okay? I've got councilmember harper-madison. I've got councilmember Allison alter wishing to speak. Would it be okay if we recess so that we can have a lunch break and come back? Let's say, at one Ann, and then take this topic back up? Or do you want to go ahead and now?

>> I'll be really, really quick.

[11:50:27 AM]

I can. Councilmember then councilmember harper-madison it will lose the train.

>> Councilmember harper-madison and then councilmember Allison alter and I'll be brief as well.

>> I'll pose it as statements as opposed to questions. But I just wanted to say specifically along the lines of this topic of conversation, I really appreciate councilmember alter's commitment to parks and rec centers and spaces that, you know, are super critical to our community. So I would absolutely love to work with you and mayor pro tem Ellis on any of those efforts moving forward. But my statement is more alonghe lines of just watching how spaces like the carver library, for example, it largely serves as after school care for the kids in my district and the oh two, they go straight to the carver after school and miss Doreen shout out to miss Doreen ends up being in an after school care provider because the kids don't have anywhere else to go. So I'd like to bring that up and just, you know, moving

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forward, I'll ask the question when we have more time about how we can shed some light on the dilemma that places like the carver face without programmatic efforts that really help folks like Mr. Rainey. And then lastly , I'd like to say in light of the Mac being temporarily closed for renovations, I think the carver could be a great space for them to be able to relocate temporarily. And I'd like to move forward with some Q and a around how we can do that and sorry and then lastly, spaces like the millennium youth entertainment complex, I would love to know, you know, oftentimes, especially with this inclement condition, these kids are hanging out in 104 degree weather because they don't have

anywhere to go. But we have all this space that's wide open and air conditioned. I just want to make sure that we're putting some effort towards, you know,

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how we can invest in those spaces. I'd also like to say director Mcnealy. Mcnealy, one of the hardest working ladies in show business. I really appreciate all your continued efforts and your commitment. Thank you, councilmember Allison alter, thank you.

>> I just want to point out, when we're talking about the storm damage from the trees in our parks, we have a 65 year wait before you actually trim a tree, which is why we had a lot of damage when we had the ice. And so doing the maintenance earlier is really important when you have the disasters because you have less damage from them. And so, you know, we really have to be looking holistically at these issues and understanding the backlog is there and their consequence is for that. And, you know, I you know, next time I hope we can reimburse part from the reserves and let them spend on the maintenance and do the other things that they need to get done rather than making

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them have to figure out how to do it in their budget. And it should be more even across departments. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Without objection, the city council is recessed and it is 1153. We are recessed until 1:00 P M

[1:00:45 PM]

I can order the Austin cit council for this budget work session. It is 1:00 pm on August 8th, 2023, and we continue to meet in the city council chambers located at Austin city hall, which is located at 301 west second street in Austin, Texas. We have a quorum of the city council present and what we will do is what I tried to do earlier today is go through those items that had received the most questions. And I think we've gone through all of those. So what I'll do now is, is ask council members if they have a specific area, they want to ask questions about. And then what I'll hopefully we'll be able to do is if a council member says, I want to talk about X, we get folks down, they can answer questions and we all stay on X until we've exhausted that kind

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of like what we attempted to do this morning. So with that that I'll council member Fuentes thank you mayor.

>> I have questions regarding our cip program within Austin transportation and public works department. I also have questions to our planning department.

>> Well, hang on, hang on. What I'm going to try to do is get the one question. Yeah. That that way what we can do is get people down, get everybody questions answered, and then we'll go to the next item. Is that okay? That works for me. Good deal. So public works and transportation. Why don't you ask your question and we'll see if we can get that answered.

>> Okay. So my question is in continuation of the conversation that we had last time with director Mendoza, we had in the presentation in our budget proposal, we have about a little under 300 million in the cip spending plan and so my

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questions are focused on how many ftes do we have that are focused on the implement station side of things within the department and have we considered adding additional ftes if that means that we're able to scale the rate in which we can expand our cip dollars? I tried to drag that out as long as I could.

>> Miss Mendoza, if you'd come down.

>> Mr. Mendoza or whoever your. Thank you.

>> And I'll repeat the question. It is focused on. We are projected to spend a little under 300,000,000 in our cip spending plan for this proposed budget. And my question is, if you could talk us through our fte capacity when it comes to implementation staff and any considerations that were made by the division for increasing Lang internal fte so that we can accelerate our pace. Yes.

[1:03:46 PM]

>> Thank you. Council members. Richard Mendoza, interim director for the transportation and public works department. Yes every year we go through a workload analysis to see to ensure that we have the appropriate resources in terms of project managers, construction inspectors, construction managers working in close partnership with the capital delivery services department, our annual cip around that \$300 million consists of a variety of programs that are delivered through different work groups within the transportation public works department itself. We have an in-house capital delivery division that focuses on the portfolio of primarily the local mobility and active mobility projects. So these are the new sidewalks, the new urban trails , the new safe routes to school programs, the intersection

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safety and programs that support vision zero so that spanned for this upcoming budget year. It's maybe 25% of that total, 300 million. I can get you the exact number. Yeah. And so within that team we have our own project managers and also consider section managers to ensure those programs are being implemented, started on time and on budget.

>> My question is more in perhaps our finance team can jump in here. How much did we how much was our cip spending plan last fiscal year for within these two?

>> Last fiscal year was slightly higher. It was on the order of around 320 \$350 million. Now that is a combination of both the local programs that the transportation public works department self manages and also the larger cip programs, namely from the 2016 corridor program

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that capital delivery services has now been consolidated and uniform in one department to focus on expediting that delivery. They're working very aggressively this year to complete that. We also have a significant project, Bartz from 2018 and 2020, the longhorn dam is one of those that are going to be going into final design. Redbud trail bridge. Barton springs bridge. We have some substandard streets knuckles crossing that are moving forward. And so what we do there is we enlist the services of the capital delivery services department, Swint, and they have their own own complement of project managers, some in-house design and construction managers. I'm very familiar with them. I used to be over that, over that division Ann and I know on an annual basis they perform services for more than just mobility. They also support watershed protection. Austin water parks and rec. And every year they go through an exercise in forecasting what the next

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year's cip is for two reasons to ensure that we're resourced and we have the positions in-house or a combination of in-house and staff augmentation to fully deliver those projects on time and on schedule, but then also to recalculate, she has a specific question.

>> Yeah, what I'm trying to get a sense of if last fiscal year we had spent 320 million in our cip spending plan, we know that we still have about 700 in mobility bonds that have not been spent yet. We have more than a billion dollars worth of new sidewalk needs. You know, new corridor needs, new, you know, transportation infrastructure needs. I'm trying to see with this new the manager propose the capital services delivery division with this new division that was done with the intention of expediting deliver Kerri. How come our cip spending plan for this year is not greater?

>> Councilmember let me let me make an attempt on that. I think maybe James can add some

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additional detail here that just got that just got stood up. So it's in its infancy. One is the rate of spend depends on how fast we've engineered things or are used architectural services of appropriate architectural companies and so that's in the process of being worked through. And so the capital requirement is dependent. It depends on the work that's been done and that's ready to roll. The projects are ready to go. That's what's that's what drives that number. And so I think as we get more and more experience with respect to the capital delivery, we'll be able to give you a more a definite estimate of how those but those estimates are based on what's ready to go. And it isn't we can't spend faster than we design and get ready to build, acquire property, things of that nature. Those are the drivers on this. And either James or Robert can add two additional detail to that.

>> And I guess and thank you for that clarification. City manager I'm trying to think through this from a what if we had more

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implementation staff within the department with that allow us to increase the rate of delivery?

>> Robert sure.

>> Robert good interim assistant city manager. Appreciate your question because you're doing the same thing we're trying to do is how can we accelerate it? And we looked at your question from a staffing standpoint, from the transportation Ann user fee, there are sponsor department that wouldn't help any and the capital delivery services side, that's the implementer and those folks aren't there, funded by the capital projects themselves. So we don't need more staff there. As the manager said, we just need to increase our efficiency. So we think we're appropriately staffed at in this budget to make those improvements, to start accelerating the program. You might not see it this year, but the year's coming will increase dramatically. Okay so thank you for that.

>> That's helpful. And I would just as you as the department, as your internal analysis and you're able have those forecasts or estimates of how we're able to accelerate rate, you know, I think I would certainly be interested in a mid-year budget amendment,

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whatever is necessary. So and we have planned to come back to audit and finance and start setting that stage for here's the new schedule and then report progress on that.

>> So we would absolutely do that if we need more staffing or resources to implementing faster, we'll come back and ask you. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember anybody else have questions with regard to transportation and public works? All right, councilmember Fuentes, you indicated you were ready with something else. Yes

>> This is for the planning department. My question. Thank you. Yes. Director Pratt, I wanted to ask about the imagine Austin plan, if there was consideration to an update. I think there's 3 million allocated for the imagine Austin update if you can provide some context around that allocation and well, I guess I'll start there. Some context please.

>> Good afternoon mayor and council. I'm Lauren Middleton

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Pratt, director of planning. So the 3 million will be slated for staff augmentation in communityengagement related expenses as and looking at our current zoning Lang looking at potentially new zoning. If you recall on the Gantt chart, we have a large body of work that will require comprehensive planning. So compatibility we again town zoning, that was one that was brought up that we've heard from the planning commission that they'd really like for us to look into. And so anything that we've identified as comprehensive, the need for comprehensive planning, we'll do that within that. Imagine Austin update and the \$3 million would be allocated towards those efforts.

>> Okay. So that sounds like th sounds more in line with the 3 million is to help help us achieve the goals that are already outlined within the imagine Austin plan, not

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necessarily to do a revision Ann of the imagine Austin plan itself to do a comprehensive update to the plan.

>> Yes. So what we've identified in the Gantt chart, those are also items that we will that we will put towards a comprehensive plan update again across the board, we will be looking at our current imagine Austin comprehensive plan and look to do a holistic update to it. Sorry if that is or is not answering your question.

>> No, it makes sense. But with the prioritization of the items listed on the Gantt chart. Okay. Thank you.

>> Councilmember Vila.



>> To follow up on that, a question, I imagine Austin, is, what, 11 years old now, 12 years old. I think I understand that it is time to update our comprehensive plan. That said, I sure would like to. I see that, you know, the money allocated

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for that. And my sense would be to not take out the pending items that, you know, your parking, your you know, the small item from councilmember pool, the various others that are out there before kind of delving into the into the full rewrite. In other words, we've got so much on our plate right now in terms of what we're doing. Would it make sense to, you know, maybe pause a little bit and redirect those resources for the time being to knocking out the items that that that we've put on your plate, thoughts about that tension

>> What's nice Abo it is we can create the timeline that we need and that meets council's needs. I did forget to mention that the update will include a future land use map, which a lot of us like to call a Flum. So that will also be in the conversation. What's nice about and thank you for committing those funds is we want to comeback to council to say where are

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your priorities? Have a workshop with you to hear where you see this comprehensive plan update going so that we have your input. Again, having Lang extensive community engagement effort. And so the outline Ann and the timeline is not set in stone yet. So we welcome the whatever process you'd like to see us follow. County council member councilmember this is not intended to be kind of it's intended to be additive.

>> It's intended to fit into a larger framework. And it's not intended to delay us. But I do think we need to understand all the attendant consequences of the individual code amendments in the context of an overall plan. That's all this is intended to do. So you're able to see the whole picture. And I think that's that's the objective that we want to achieve so that we understand how these pieces fit together.

>> Great. And in terms of the sufficient resources to, again, going back to the conversation that we've had since I think the first day that he started Wright you feel good about the sufficient resources is to be able to execute on all of the

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like I said, the numerous items that we've been putting on your plate with regard to the timelines that you've laid out on that chart.

>> Yes, sir. Great

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Yes. Mayor pro tem, just programmatically, I'm interested in the conversation around a citywide flow.

>> I'm sure there's probably some ears perking up about what does that mean? And what would public input look like? So I'm curious about what you might see the future of that being. And then I also want to flag for you in some of our discussions around land development and zoning along the way. I know that the current imagine Austin has the centers kind of drawn in a very blobby way, for lack of a better policy term. And I'm curious if there's any intent to try to shore up some of the exact boundaries of where some of those centers should be, especially since there's going to be things like tod planning that we know is in the works. Can you talk a little bit about public engagement strategies very specifically and how how folks should look to that

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information? Ann coming down the pipeline?

>> I wish I could today we are in the process of continuing to grow out. Our staff and one significant piece is our communications staff. As soon as we bring on that manager, we will kick start how we will do our community engagement as it relates to comprehensive planning and community engagement as it relates to code amendments in all of the other required parts of our department. So I'm sorry that I'm not able to give you a full plan today, but we do have it queued up for our new staff.

>> That's all right. I completely understand where we are in that phase. And so I am a little curious about since we've had conversations around itod planning in the future, how to kind of understand who's in what lane and which groups will be reaching out to which, you know, organized actions and neighborhoods to kind of understand that better. So I don't know that there would be an answer today on that, but just kind of a general flagging of process questions. Okay and

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then we do still have one question on that, that if I have my screen open right and refreshed, we had one about the itod type of work and cip. So 'S number 189. That one is still pending. So we'll wait on an answer for that. But it was about the 500 K in the cip plan for the tod planning efforts. So I think that answers my questions on those, but maybe those were just more of helping flag where some of the conversations I've seen land Ed as we move forward through the process. Okay, thanks.

>> Thank you. Mayor pro tem, any other questions of the planning department? Councilmember vela. Going back to again, the timeline excuse me. The timing, I know, right?

>> I just want to catch you before you left. Would would additional resources in terms of expediting the code amendments. Is there anything that we can do, you know, to help you get

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those back to us quicker.

>> I love the question. I will be completely honest. It additional funding will always help up. Right now we currently have approximately \$500,000 in our fy 24 budget for our consultant augmentation Ann. Outside of tod planning and all of the other commitments, right now we have a solicitation Ann out for zoning case application for the backlog that we currently have code amendment as well as the density bonus consulting Burt augmentation. And once we start, once we embark on those projects, there might be an additional need. I can throw out the number \$500,000. I'm sure that we will find a way to utilize those funds. But until we can bring on

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those consultants here, there with their with their fees are we don't have finite numbers for you today, but at the end of this week, we should hear from all of the consultants and have better have a better idea of how much we'll need. Oh, yes.

>> And I appreciate that that response.

>> Councilmember Veronica Briseno, assistant city manager I just wanted to add to that. Lauren is also doing a great job of addressing the vacancy needs in the department. As we're doing that, we will readdress and she has our commitment that we're looking to that workload. And what is in front of us in this in this next fiscal year.

>> I appreciate and I know there's a lot of resources going in and hiring happening and consultants being brought on board again, I guess just as we go down the road, if you do decide, you know, the city manager that, hey, you know what , we need ABC happy to revisit this at a later date.

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>> All right. Anything else on the planning department? Okay. Is there another department that somebody wants to bring up? Councilmember Allison alter.

>> Thank you. I wanted to bringup Eid. Have some of a question on the cultural arts funding. Good afternoon. So I noticed in the budget we fortunately had a very large increase in our hot funding above what we were anticipating. We made grants last year. I think that were two year grants. So it seems like

those might have been premised on a lower estimated amount of hot coming in. So I wanted to understand how those additional hot dollars that are going to

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the cultural arts are going to be spent.

>> Good afternoon. Sylnovia holt-rabb, director of economic development department. As we entered into budget season in fy 23, we committed to only spend actuals , so the amount that will be spent in 24 will be adjusted between the three programs that we have approved thrive, elevate and nexus. And so we will make adjustments to those program based on actuals.

>> So does that mean that a existing grantees will get additional money or will you do additional grants?

>> So the thrive program will get the same amount that they did this year, and then we will adjust, elevate and nexus and possibly increase the number that we are able to fund.

>> Okay. So you adjust, you're going to adjust the amounts and potentially add additional recipients.

>> Potentially.

>> Okay. And how is that decision going to be made once we evaluate the final numbers, we are still in the first pilot

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year.

>> Our nexus grants will go out in September and then we will reevaluate to come back to start the next cycle at the beginning of fy 24.

>> Okay. So we're using actuals, but the actual from this past from fiscal year 23 are much higher. Do you know about how much the difference is?

>> I can get back with you. I don't have that number right in front of me.

>> Okay. I think it's several million.

>> Yeah, it is definitely several potentially.

>> Yes. You know, a large a large increase in resources that we can use to fund cultural arts.

>> You are correct. Okay.

>> Is there any discussion of using any of that to address some of the organizations that didn't get funding in the first round who were legacy organizations?

>> Again, they will have the opportunity to reapply and elevate and nexus at fy 24. But the ones that were approved in the first cohort for the two year cycle. So they will

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continue into next year. Thank you.

>> So I have a question for other departments.

>> Anybody else have anything on cultural arts or economic?

>> 10 million we estimate to spend next year.

>> And how much is that above what you had projected originally.

>> Probably around, I believe, 2 million. I'm not mistaken. Yes, about 2 million more than we spent this year. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Anyone else have questions on economic economic development?

>> All right, councilmember alter, thank you.

>> So I wanted to spend a little time talking about about vacancy rates. So in question on 83 on vacancy rates, there's a lot of I just call my colleagues attention to that answer. I wanted to begin by asking why

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why the management services is vacancy level is so high. It's went from a year ago. It was at 30.4% and now it's at 32.2. I know there's been some changes of what was in management services, but, you know, where are we seeing those vacancies? I think in my conversations with Mr. Veneno for the financial stuff, it sounded like they'd made a lot of progress on filling their vacancies. So where where are we seeing those vacancies and where are they? Concentra because they probably are in certain departments or certain groups within management services. Yeah

>> So the management services bu described in the budget document is comprised of a number of the smaller offices you'll find in management services. So in particular homeland security and emergency management. There were positions added in the budget last year that they're still working to get filled. Civil rights is another office that has just off the cuff, I know has quite a few

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vacancies and so we could provide additional information if you'd like to see exactly where those vacancies are across the management services group. Yeah I would.

>> I would like to see that. And I'm, I'm sad to hear that we're still experiencing those vacancies and some we had conversations last year or at some point during this year. You know I think, you know, we expect them to do all this work. We gave them positions in the last budget and those not being filled yet suggests that there's not the priority that I think this council has on the emergency planning. So I really want to see us kind of filling those vacancies there. You know, there are some other departments that have high vacancies or at least in the comparison for this chart when there are vacancies went up. And so I kind of wanted to just broadly ask, you know, more about the strategies for filling

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the vacancies citywide. And we've had a lot of conversations about 911, I don't know that we yet have closure for on the plan for 911. But sort of just broadly, how are we thinking about the strategy? I know it's been a priority of the city manager, but as we go into this final week of the budget deliberations, burns, I know for me that recruitment, retention, set of issues is really paramount. I want to understand what we're doing.

>> Councilmember we need to get certainly get you more detail. But here's the over just the brief summary. Yes, there's been a focus on this. For instance, the heesom that was mentioned just a minute ago, we've made there's been some changes in that department. Mr. Snipes is just stepped into that role on a permanent basis, and he knows and recognizes that we have to focus some attention on hiring positions that we've been authorized other departments have not been as that's why we instituted the if you hadn't filled it within 24 months, we

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swept them. I think that was an effort to try to get departments to focus on opening those requisitions to fill those slots. And there's just going to be some continued focus attention. I know there's a couple of ideas that we've got on 911 where we think that we can do some shoring up of the 59 vacancies that are available for call takers. And we've got to figure out when we can go live with that with those concepts that have been shared with us and what we can do is just stay all we can ask all we can ask, all we will do is asking the departments that if you have those vacancies, you need to open the requisitions so that they can be hired. A lot of them requisite burns haven't even been made and so we're asking departments, if you have the vacancies sitting in your in your position control number, you should submit the requisitions when you need to fill those slots. We had a discussion with parks here earlier today. We know that we can move slots, move positions out of certain areas of parks into areas that are more important to departments, can do that. And so part of it is for us to kind of focus on where we put the human resources to work

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at the at the highest priority. But we owe you a more complete answer than that. We realize that. Thank you. >>Nd you obviously evaluate your directors. How is fixing their vacancy rate part of their evaluation?

>> Well, I mean, we've made personnel changes, as I said. So that's one part of the evaluation we've asked them to take a look at it. I will certainly work with the assistant managers as those individuals that report to them to make sure this is focused attention. This is but one element of a whole host of things we've got to do in terms of evaluating people. But but I will say just for a moment that we have a very decentralized hr function, very different than what it was when I was here 21 years ago. And so we we've delegated a lot of that hr function in inside those departments. And I must say that those departments sometimes have not been diligent as diligent as they should have been. And opening the requisitions, doing the recruitment and hiring. Some have tried to lay this off on

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the municipal, the civil service and certainly civil service may slow us down a little bit, but that's not the reason for this. It's one that we just haven't paid enough attention to. It another is that we're and I don't know, don't try to do this to be to be to be a flip. But having a lot of people working from home is a been a problem. And because those some of those departments 4 or 5 days a week, they're working from home, it's hard to get that team spirit and camaraderie that needs to go that to get this done. So part of this is we need to change that, that culture so that people have that sense of urgency, that the council has. And that's something we commit to. You

>> Yes. Council councilmember Fuentes thank you.

>> I just wanted to add my comment on this topic in particular. It sounds like, you know, 911 staffing is an issue of great importance to all of us. And we know at least two of our colleagues or three of our colleagues have amendments around 911 call center councilmember Allison alter, councilmember Kelly I think councilmember Bella may also have an amendment on the 911

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call center. So manager, I wanted to flag on Thursday when we go through our our amendments that might be a good time for staff to highlight or surface the ideas that you have on strategies to staff up.

>> Thank you. We're happy to do that.

>> Good idea.

>> I just want to clarify, I don't have an amendment this year. I have had them multiple times. And I'm hoping that the this time around will be the charm for 911.

>> Mayor, one other thing. I just and I know this has to do with positions and some times that that's kind of the, I guess the impetus is to add positions to do some work. And I must say that sometimes that is not the most effective way, especially if we have a system that just we can't have the throughput to be able to get that done. And that's why you do staff augmentation. The things that Richard talked about here a minute ago, you can use consultants to get some of this work done. So that you don't have to have a full time employee to get it done. But we've got to bring back the

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entire discussion on that item and we can do that on Thursday.

>> Do you have any more? Okay. Before since we're it looks like we're about to wind up, I want to recognize the city manager. Heor council.

>> Many of you have expressed concerns, echoing what others in the community have shared regarding the creation of the community and business equity department, plus other aspects of our reorganizations. Funding mentally, there have been issues that have been raised that touched the history of how the equity office in particular was established and its critical, critically important that you be able to focus your attention on the resource allocations for all these departments as you adopt the budget for 24. And as a result, I want to take a step back. We're going to reassess the concerns that have been expressed about the creation of these organizational changes. And once the budgets approved, there are some senior leadership positions that I'm considering establishing, as well as restructuring that will further

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improve our visibility and alignment for this organization . And I look forward to sharing with you those that analysis at the appropriate time. Thank you.

>> Councilmember Fuentes thank you.

>> Thank you, manager. I appreciate your comments on hoining off on any organizational changes on the equity office, civil rights office, sustainability and resiliency office. I know through a series of conversations that I've had with you alongside councilmembers vela Velasquez, qadri and Ryan alter, we've all shared Eid concerns that we've heard from our community. And so giving us the time and space to have these more public conversations with our community from a process that's not coupled with the budget is appreciated. So I appreciate your leadership on that.



>> Thank you. Manager thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember vela for again, I just want to thank the city manager.

>> Appreciate it. His comments. And I have a question about sales taxes. I believe for our cfo, Mr. Benigno, you have a

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question about sales taxes?

>> Councilmember vela we see capital metro released its budget estimate recently.

>> They are looking at a 4.5% sales tax growth. Their budgeting for a 4.5% sales tax growth. The city is budgeting for, I believe, 3.5% sales tax growth. So I just wanted to ask you, you know, how are you feeling about that? What do you think about the differences you know, just kind of get your thoughts and impressions. Sure.

>> And I have not compared notes yet with the cap metro cfo. That cfo is fairly new. But in the past we have compared notes. We're usually within 1% plus or minus. We're very we're very close their service territory, their sales tax area is not exactly the same as ours. So that's going to be part of the reason for when we look at numbers, having the variance is also what I don't know is if they're looking at things on more of an annual basis. If you

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just looked at a full 12 months of data, you could certainly maybe see a trend that would warrant higher than the three and one half percent we're projecting. But if you look at the last four months, if you look at the very recent history, we're around 3 or 4% is what we've been trending in the last 3 or 4 months. We will get another sales tax data point, I believe, next week. And so that oh, we're getting it tomorrow. I was told. So. So we'll have that additional data point. I will reach out and see what they were thinking. Another thing is, with sales tax, the way you're projected is it's growth off of the current year. So in the current year, I believe we're projecting three and one half or 6.5% for fiscal year 23, and that is a projection because we haven't concluded 23 yet. There's a two month lag on sales tax collections, but we're assuming a three and one half percent growth next year on top of a and one half percent growth this year. What I don't know is, you know, cap metro might be assuming 5.5% in the current year and then 4.5% growth next year. And it maybe kind of comes out to the same.

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So a lot of it depends upon what you're projecting this year versus next year, that service territory and how long of a time frame are you looking at to base your projections on. But we'll compare notes with them. I appreciate it.

>> And I know that I'm trying to keep one eye on the economic indicators which have been strong. You know, we had good inflation news, which I know can be kind of not, you know, kind of a contra indicator for sales tax growth. Obviously, if there's a lot of inflation Ann, then you know, your sales tax will will grow with that. But, you know, just in general, I think we've had strong economic growth. You know, the economy looks decent, inflation is starting to abate a little bit. And you know, again, I hope we continue in this kind of goldilocks, you know, economy. Any I guess you're comfortable with the three and one half percent. That's not you know, regardless of what you're seeing

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outside in the macro economic world, y'all are sticking with the three and a half. That's our recommendation.

>> That's that's our most volatile revenue source. You know, when it when it decides that it's time for a recession and it levels out, it's generally not going to be a nice slow linear growth path. Right? It goes up very fast and it comes down very fast. So if we do hit a recession, we're likely to see a 5 to 10 decline and we'll have to deal with that. So we always advise council to be conservative on that number. Of course, we have that budget stabilization reserve fund getting back to the reserve level conversations that that helps stabilize us during those economic fluctuations. But certainly the more aggressive we are on sales tax, the more risk we put ourselves at. You know, of not hitting that number. We would always like to be a little bit above our estimates than the alternative, right? It's not a problem for us to come in 1 million or 2 above our estimates if we come in 1 million or 2 below them. We got to figure that out.

>> Yeah. And I completely agree. I mean, better to be

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conservative with your revenue projections than excessively optimistic and then be in a world of hurt, you know, down the road. And I just wanted to, you know, to touch base about that. It would be great. I mean, from a revenue perspective, if we could boost that up. Let's see what I guess tomorrow brings and see what the numbers are. We're all hoping for a good solid number.

>> Thank you. Council member members. I think. Sorry, mayor, you still got something? Go.

>> Rr Austin resource recovery. A quick question for them shouldn't take but a ce minutes. Richard we'll turn it over to you.

>> Members. I'm going to need to excuse myself, so I'm going to turn over the meeting to the mayor pro tem. I just want to remind everybody we meet again in two days on the 10th. That'll be our amendment

day as wean ifc day as we've talked about where the council members will lay out their amendments and propose amendments proposed ifcs. And we'll be able to have

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a discussion. And if we need staff, we'll obviously have them available as well. And then of course the 16th is post boasted as the day that we will have the first opportunity to vote on the budget. There will also be the opportunity for public comment on that day and if needed, we will use the 17th and the 18th. And with that mayor pro tem, I apologize, but I'm going to turn it over to you. Thank you.

>> Just I wanted to drill down just a little bit more on the transfer center. I actually I have an amendment which just put it, drafted it just in case. But the, the there was some planning that I think is scheduled to be done. Some studies on the transfer center. Do you have any details on how much the department is anticipating the to spend on the study. Any idea of a timeline, anything like that?

>> Sure. Good afternoon. Richard

[1:39:26 PM]

Mchale, interim director for Austin resource recovery. We had a presentation earlier last week about the northeast service center. I had mentioned that that project had some remaining funds left over from the feasibility study that was done on that property. So we intend to use those funds to do a similar studies for the transfer station, the feasibility study for the northeast transfer station or excuse me, the northeast service center was about \$120,000 for that study. We've also we were able to take some of that money to do some feasibility study on our fm 812 property for some projects that we're looking at doing out there that feasibility study is going to be about 80,000. So we're projecting about \$100,000 for a feasibility study for the property. Now this all depends also as far as what property we're looking at. So we're looking at city properties right now. If we are able to identify a city property, the project can move along a little bit quicker for the northeast service center will be one of the first projects to go through the public facility corporation. So

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and I think it was mentioned at the last meeting that that from rfp to move in was about 48 months. So we're hopeful. My goal is to have a transfer station operating prior to our landfill contract expiring, which will be about may of 2029. So about about five years from now that contract will expire. So we would hope to have something in place by then. But it really depends on the property that's picked. If we're able to identify that property quickly, the feasibility study itself will probably take about six months. So I think the money we have right now should get us through the early planning stagesnd the

feasibility study. So I think possibly in fy 25 we may be coming back and looking for some additional monies to actually move that project through.

>> Excellent. I just wanted to, you know, just to get that on the record and then a public comment. And again, just to reiterate, I think it's a great project. I really appreciate that you all are planning and moving forward on it and look forward to reading the study when it's done and ready to go.

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>> I appreciate that. I appreciate the support as well. Thank you.

>> Thanks for that. And I've got one question as well. Does anyone else have questions for resource recovery? First, I'll just jump right in. We have a question and answer that's not yet responded to yet, and it is specific about the litter abatement and creek study that you all did. It suggested that there should be a full time trash coordinator or what I want to call the trash guru of just keeping track of all the projects. Can you tell me if that position is baked into this budget already or if we need to allocate some dollars toward that position?

>> So that project was actually done by watershed protection department, not rr. So the rr and I don't believe watershed have any funding in there for that position. But our rr does have staff that basically do thour litter abatement division manager basically has that role. So we kind of see that as a task that we already have in house. So we wouldn't want to add any additional funding for another personnel when I think we have existing

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staff that can do that work, we've actually done a lot of that work. But I think there are some gaps as far as the community groups that we've reached out to. We haven't encompassed everyone that is involved in that. In fact, today I just saw an article about UT doing a project along west campus there where they're going to be doing some litter stuff. And that was the first we had heard about that. So that's an example of how we need to have a better awareness of everything that's going on in the community. But I think we can do that, that work existing in-house.

>> Okay, sounds good. Does anyone else have further questions for staff?

>> Allison alter thank you. I have a question for Mr. Mchale. First of all, just wanted to say thank you for launching the hazardous waste pilot in district ten and district four. My constituents have really loved that and I was glad in our conversations to confirm that that would be continuing. What would it take to expand that to another northern district?

>> So we will be maintaining that pilot even though we haven't added any additional funds to expand it citywide. We

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think we're going to be able to expand it. Some other other districts in north Austin, those are areas that are typically we see less participation at our facility in the southeast and our Todd lane household hazardous waste facility. So I think we can expand that ever so slowly in those areas. We don't want to get too much ahead because we're not sure the demand. We actually expect that a lot more folks to come down from the northern areas. But in talking with the community members, we find a lot of them actually like going to the facility because they're able to pick up materials from our reuse store and bring things that are current curbside collection system doesn't collect such as electronics and stuff. So as we move forward, I think we'd rather like phase this in instead of going full citywide and I think we can we're able to do that in this upcoming budget year with the existing resources that we have because we've seen a not as large of an increase as we had expected.

>> Yeah, I think what we're hearing from folks is they have a lot of stuff at the beginning and then they're maybe not, you know, kind of stored it up for a

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while and it needs to get out. But I'm glad to hear that it will be able to phase out phase in more. I didn't expect it would go citywide any way. I just wanted to make sure that we were moving in the right direction of making it available, because I know my constituents are really happy with having that opportunity.

>> So I think at some point we would want to be citywide just because there are a lot of folks that aren't able to make it to the facility be they don't have a vehicle or or there's some other means of obstacles for them to get there. So our goal is to, from an equity standpoint, is to make it available to all the citizens.

>> Thank you. I just meant with the phasing since it it seems to come in waves. So you would have to phase it or it wouldn't work anyway. But thank you.

>> Thank you. And then I saw director morales had come down. I don't want to skip over you. If you made the effort to come on down. Do you feel that the needs for that litter abatement study, for the creeks is sufficiently met with this year's budget? Do you need any

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extra position to assist?

>> Well, good afternoon, George morales, director of watershed. I would say ditto to what Richard just said. And we did prepare the answer. You should be getting it shortly, but we don't think we need it for fy 24. We need more coordination Ann before we can come back with what that might be looking like. Okay.

>> Thank you. Great thank you. Are there any additional questions for staff? We need to cover? Council member Alison alter so I don't have a question for staff, but I know there were seral answers that came up today that related to some colleagues amendments.

>> So I'm just wondering if you feel like you have amendments that are no longer pertinent. If you could let us know so that we can keep that in mind. I was glad to hear several of the concerns were addressed, but it just would be helpful for those of us who are not singled in on those amendments to understand and whether whether folks who are proposing those feel like those need to continue to be part of the discussion.

>> I wholeheartedly agree. I had a few that I had put in as placeholders hoping that when the questions and answers were coming in that they would not be

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necessary because they were addressed in one way or another . Does does staff know when the rest of the unanswered questions may come in? Should we expect those before Thursday so we could make amendments if we if we need to, with some of those numbers?

>> Yes, we are really pushing to get them done by tomorrow and so I think we're down to the under 40. I believe that's in they may tell me something differently in a minute, but I think we're under 40 questions that we're still trying to respond to. We're trying to get them pushed out by tomorrow. Okay

>> And then tomorrow we'll be getting the sales tax final assessments as well.

>> Yes.

>> We'll we'll receive those numbers. We receive that report tomorrow and then, Eric, who does all the revenue calculations, will be working on distributing that information after he finishes his analysis. Okay

>> Okay. Last call for questions for today. I don't see any hands up, so I will just as a friendly

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reminder to my colleagues, make sure you've gone through and if there's any last amendments that need to be made or any other proposals that people want to bring forward, it's best to daylight them as as soon as humanly possible. I think at this point, as we develop our spreadsheet and finalize the last few dollars and locations that some of the funding might be coming from for these amendments, that

we'll want to know exactly what dollars we're looking at. And we'll also want to make sure that we've pulled down anything that's unnecessary at this point or are aware of any amendments that might potentially be coming. I know I had one last year. We had to switch at the last minute, but by then we had so many days of discussion about whittling through those last few dollars that it just didn't make sense to try to put in an additional ask at the last minute. So let's make sure you've got everything daylighted on the message board , and I think that covers us for today. I will go ahead and adjourn the meeting at 1:48 P.M. And thank you, everybody, for all of the discussion today