



# Compatibility Regulations Analysis

9/6/2023

Findings and Recommendations

# Overview

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- Background
- Overview of Compatibility
- Methodology
- Key Findings
- Recommendations
- Next Steps



# Development Standards

- Height
- Building Coverage
- Setbacks
- Parking
- Impervious Cover
- Floor Area Ratio
- Compatibility
- Land Uses

## Regulations Impacting the Density of Multi-Family Housing





# Background

- City Council approved Ordinance No. 20221201-056 in December 2022, directing an analysis of compatibility regulations to help meet Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint (ASHB) goals:
  - 60,000 new low/moderate-income units in ten years
  - 75,000 new moderate/high-income units in ten years
  - 25% of affordable units in high opportunity areas
  - 25% within a ¼ mile of transit stops.
- On May 5, 2023, staff released a joint memo summarizing the methodology
- On June 8, 2023, City Council passed Resolution No. 20230608-045 initiated additional changes to Citywide Compatibility



# Overview of Current Compatibility Regulations

- Title 25, Chapter 2, Subchapter C, Article 10. - Compatibility Standards
- The City of Austin's compatibility standards generally apply to sites that are within 540 feet of the property line of an urban family residence (SF-5) or more restrictive zoning district.
- Compatibility standards also apply when a site is adjacent to a lot on which a use permitted in an SF-5 or more restrictive zoning district is located.



# Compatibility Regulations

Map Showing Extent of Compatibility Impacts

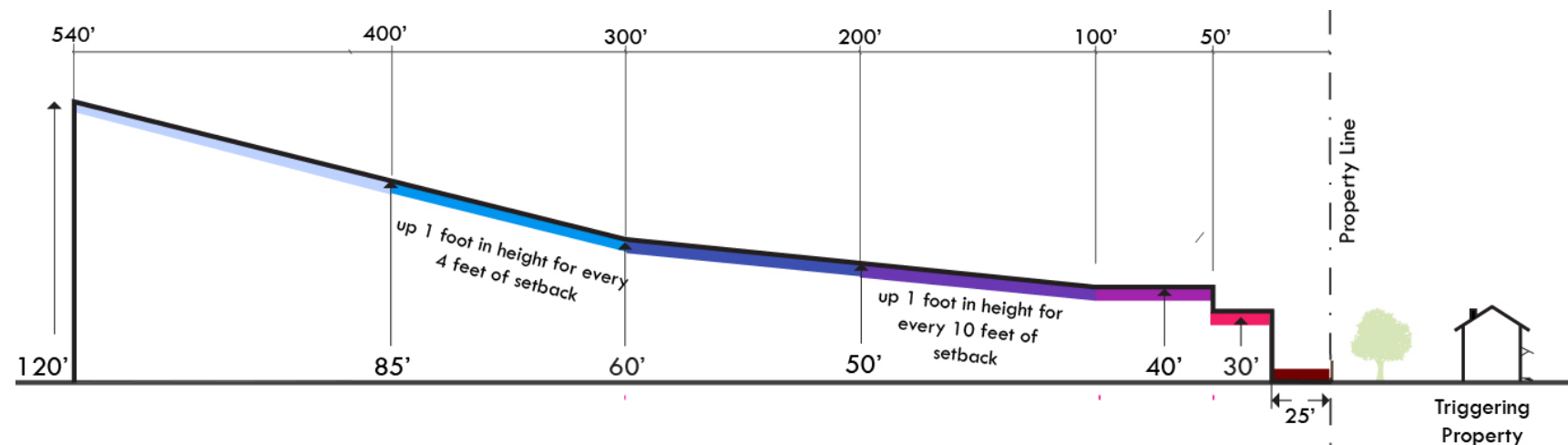


## Legend

Commercial and High-Density Residential Properties

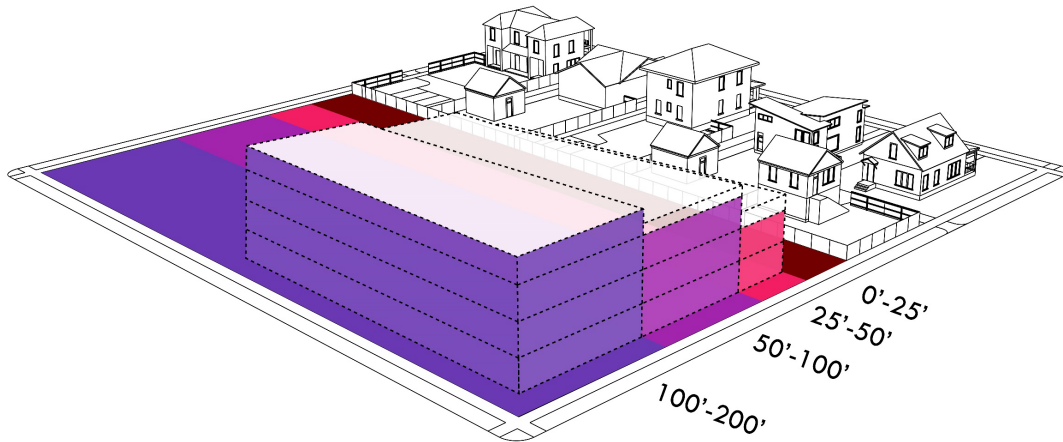
### Compatibility Buffer

- 0-25', No Structure Allowed
- 25-50', ~30' Max Height, 2 stories
- 50-100', ~40' Max Height, 3 stories
- 100-200', ~45' Avg Height, 3.5 stories
- 200-300', ~55' Avg Height, 5 stories
- 300-400', ~75' Avg Height, 6 stories
- 400-540', ~105' Avg Height, 8 stories
- Triggering Properties

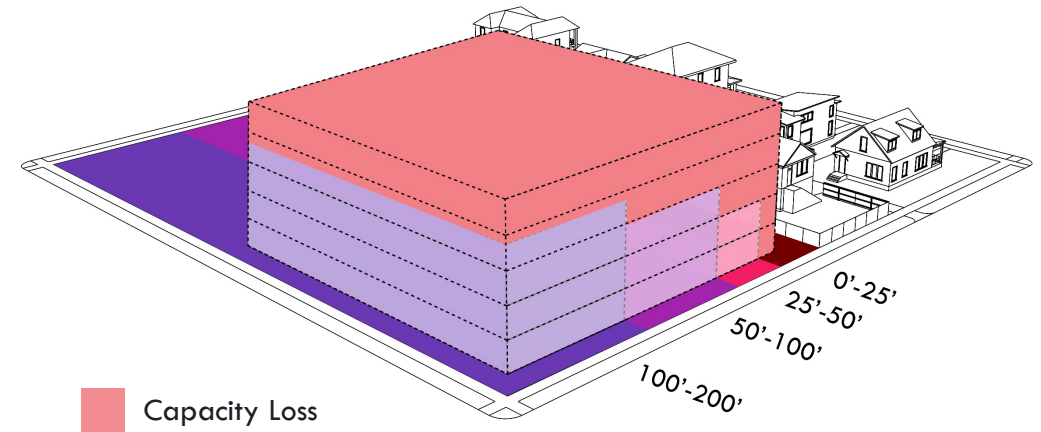


# Quantitative Analysis Methodology

Housing Capacity based  
on Compatibility Heights



Difference in Capacity between  
Zoning and Compatibility Heights




- Compared the heights permitted in the zoning district to heights allowed in the compatibility buffers to estimate the housing capacity lost.



# Qualitative Analysis Methodology

- Conducted a survey of applicants who've participated in the City's development review process to understand how compatibility regulations impact project timelines, residential unit yield, development costs, and affordability
- Survey sent to applicants that have submitted a Density Bonus Application, Multifamily Site Plan, or Multifamily Building Permit to the City within the last five years
- Staff received 111 survey responses from the housing development community



## City of Austin Compatibility & Housing Development Survey

In December of 2022, Austin City Council approved Ordinance No. 20221201-056, which changed compatibility standards and parking regulations along certain corridors. It also directed staff to complete an analysis of City Code LDC 25-2, Subchapter C, Article 10 Compatibility Standards to assess the impact and recommend potential changes to those standards, especially in high opportunity areas and to help meet Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint goals.

1. How many years have you worked in the housing development community in Austin?

The value must be a number

2. How many housing projects have you completed in Austin?

☐ 1-5 projects

☐ 5-20 projects

☐ 20+ projects



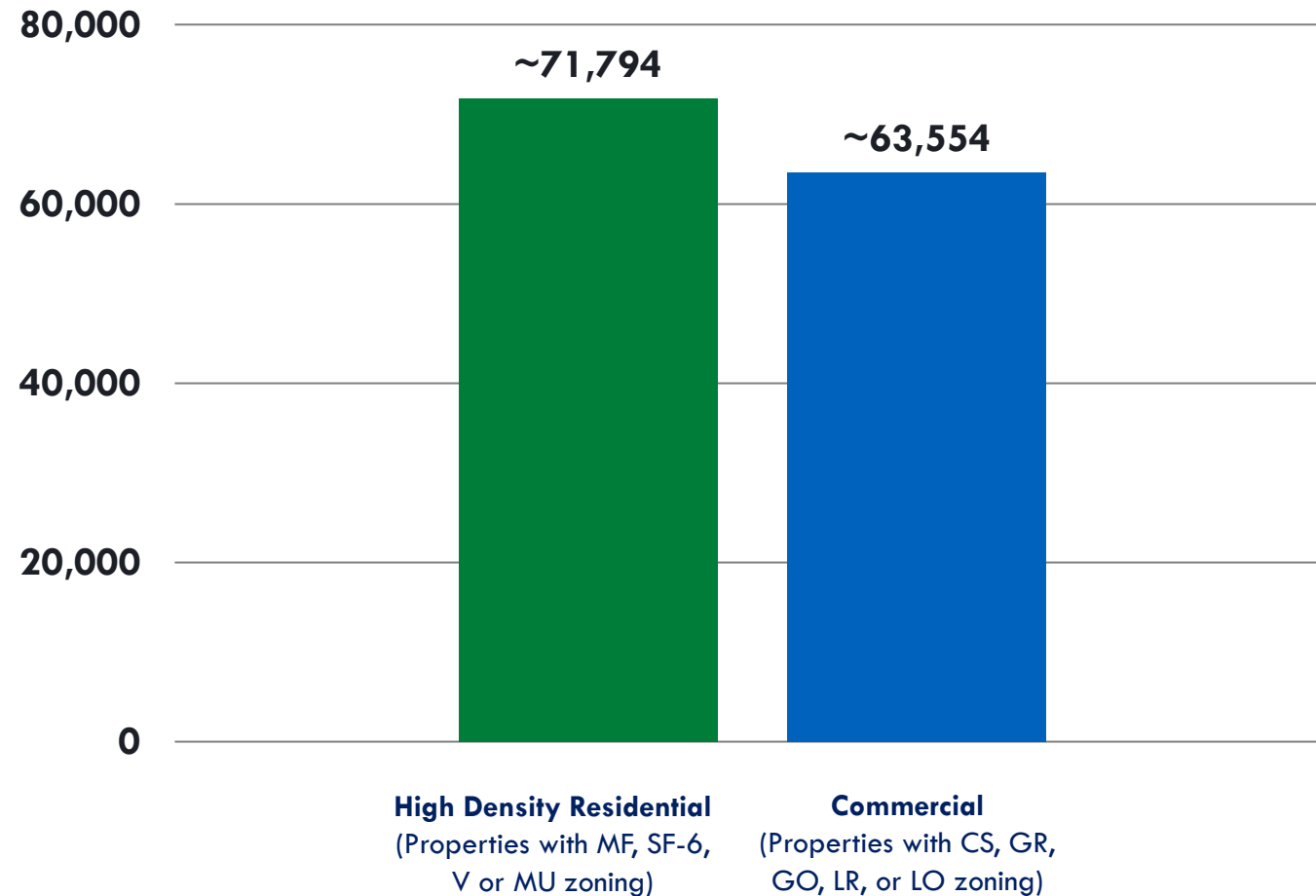


# Key Findings

- Most of the estimated housing capacity lost due to compatibility occurs within 100' of a triggering property
- Compatibility limits housing capacity unevenly by geographic area
- Approximately 58% of housing capacity lost due to compatibility is located in Displacement Risk Areas
- An overwhelming majority of housing unit capacity lost due to compatibility (82%) is located within a ¼ mile of existing transit stops
- Feedback from the developer survey showed that nearly all respondents (98%) said that compatibility standards caused them to abandon potential housing developments



## Estimated Housing Unit Capacity Lost in High-Density Residential and Commercial Zoning Districts Due to Compatibility

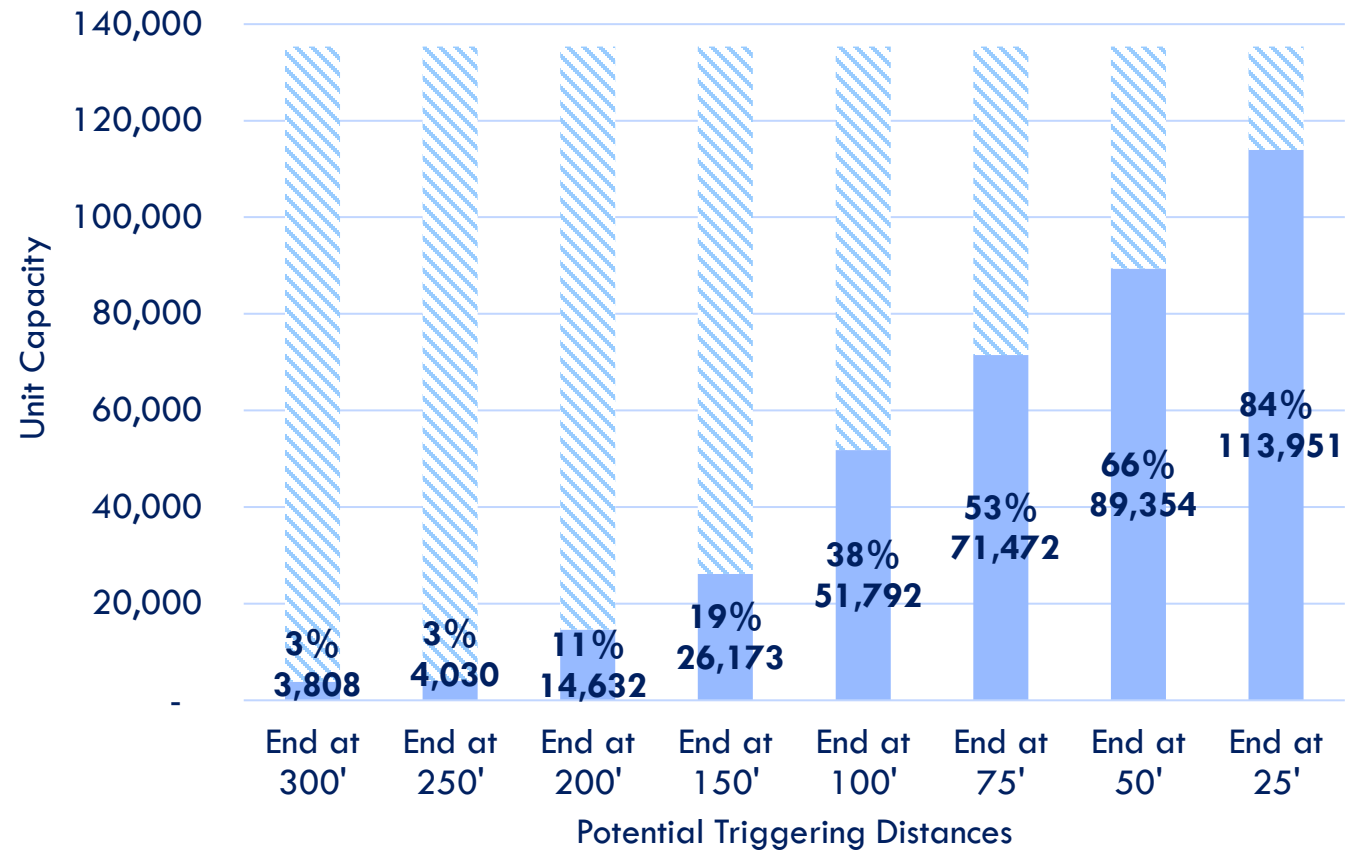




# Recommendations

1. End compatibility at 75 feet to increase housing capacity in support of Blueprint goals and to be more similar to peer cities.
2. Allow further reductions to compatibility for on-site affordable housing.

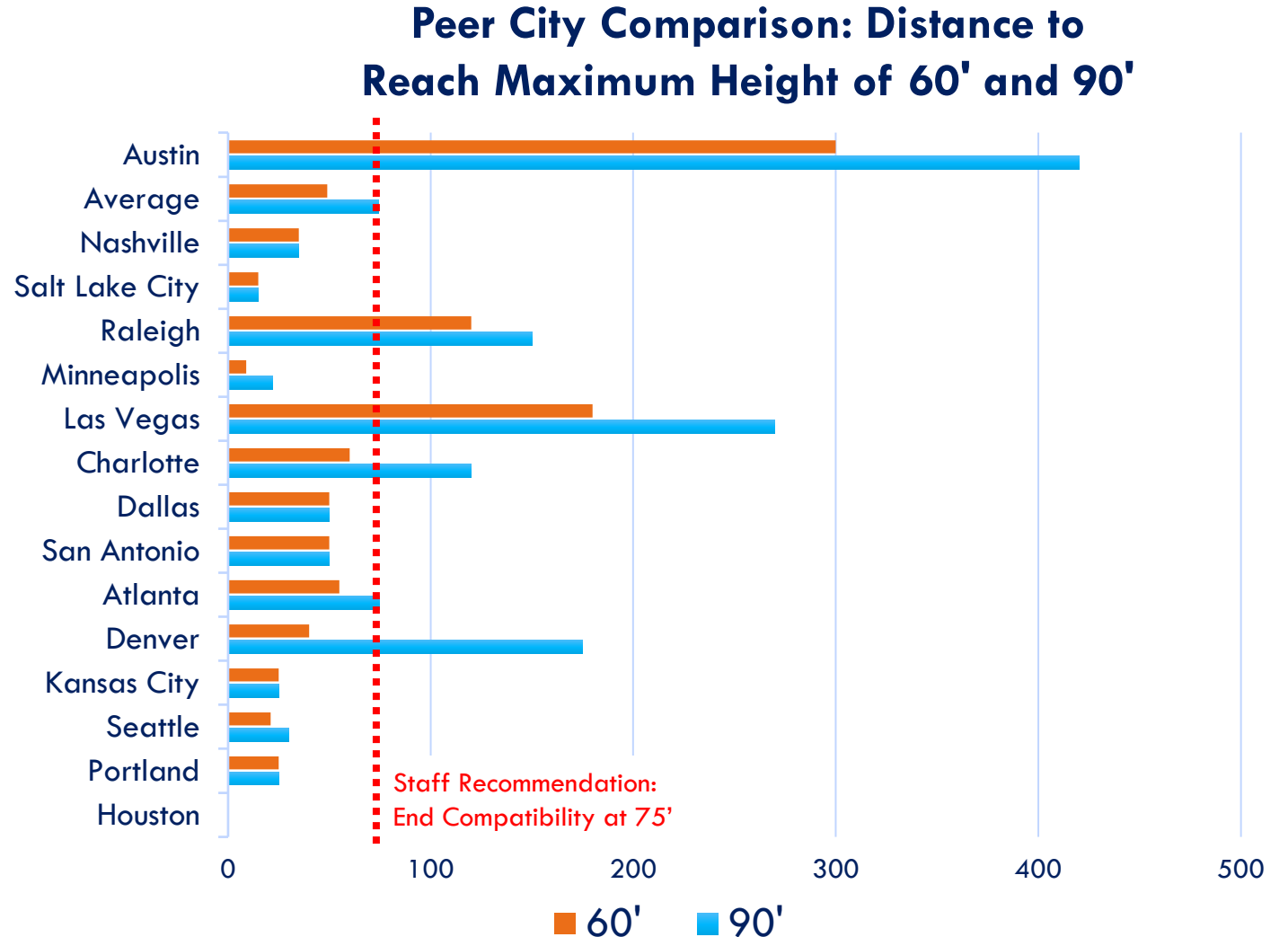
**Cumulative Gains in Unit Capacity if Compatibility Ended at Various Distances**





# Recommendations

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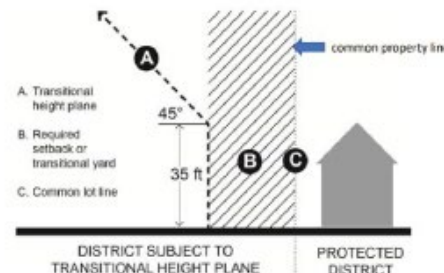


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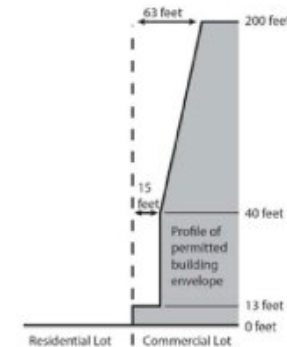
3. Remove compatibility requirements from SF-6, MF-1, MF-2, and MF-3.
4. Further refine heights in the compatibility buffer.
5. Conduct additional stakeholder engagement.



Atlanta



Seattle



Denver

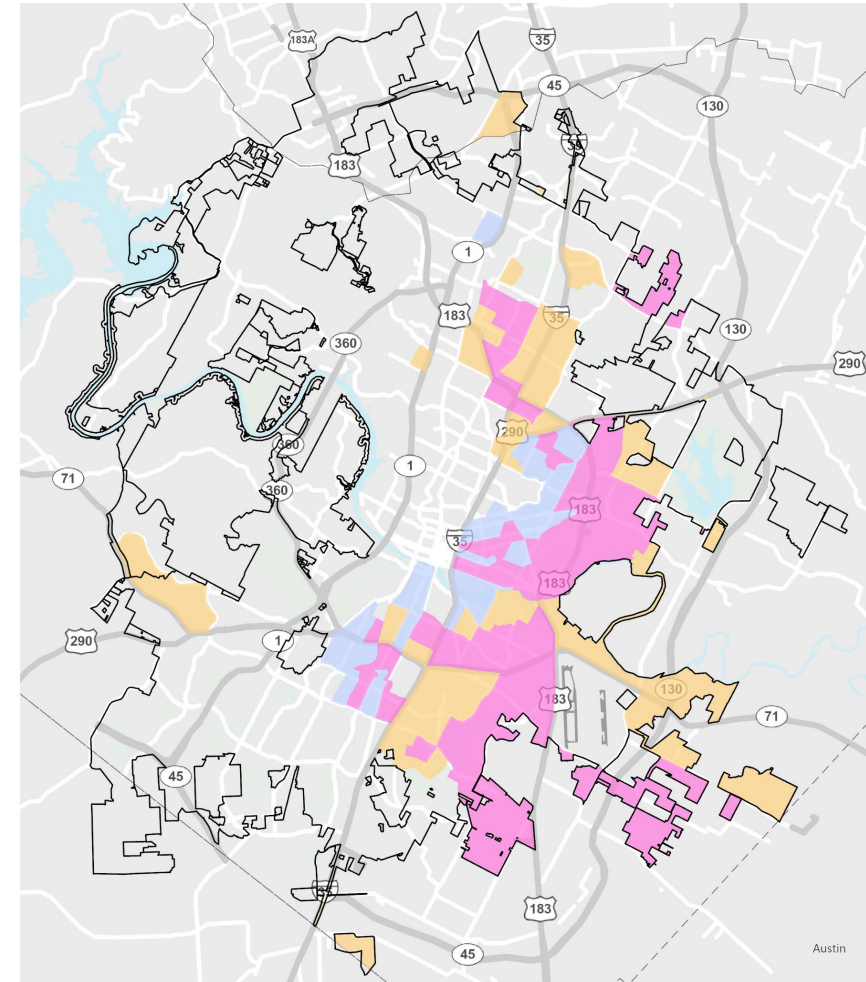




# Recommendations

6. Analyze potential impacts and preservation strategies for existing multi-family housing.
7. Explore programs and partnerships that bring back displaced communities.
8. Minimize potential displacement impacts on vulnerable populations.

## Displacement Risk Areas



Displacement Risk Areas

- Active
- Chronic
- Vulnerable



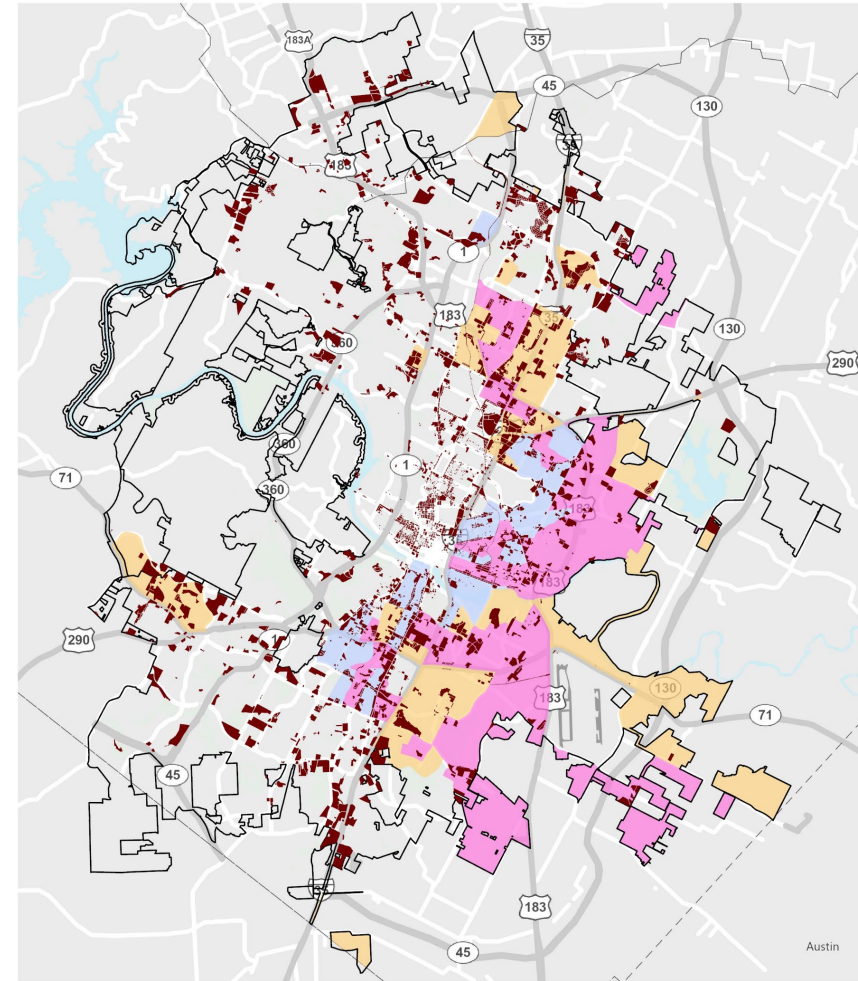


# Recommendations

9. Balance the impact of other regulations on housing capacity.

66% of all properties zoned for **High-Density Residential** uses are found in Displacement Risk Areas

## Displacement Risk Areas & Properties Zoned for High-Density Residential Uses



Displacement Risk Areas

Active

Chronic

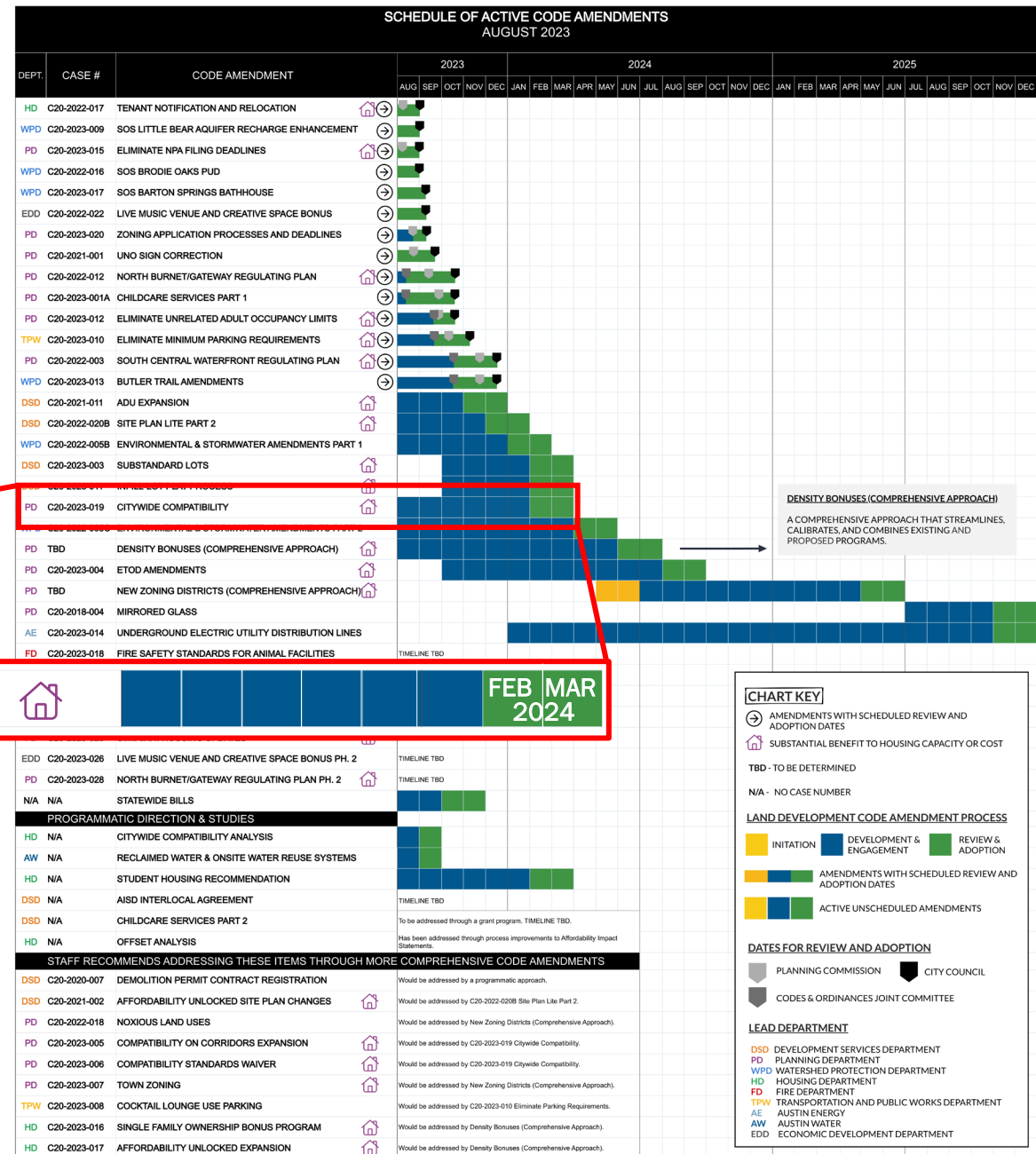
Vulnerable

High Density Residential Properties



# Schedule

Goal to bring to PC/Council by February/March 2024



PD C20-2023-019 CITYWIDE COMPATIBILITY

See schedule on LDC Amendments website:

<https://publicinput.com/ldcupdates>





# Thank you

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