

Joint Meeting of the Austin City Council and the Austin Planning Commission Transcript – 10/26/2023

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It's October 26th, 2023, and I will call to order the city council of Austin, Texas, for this special called meeting to be held jointly with the Austin planning commission. It is 2:00 pm. We are meeting in the Austin city council chambers that are located in Austin city hall at 301 west second street in Austin, Texas. A quorum of the Austin city council is present as I indicated, this is a joint meeting of the Austin city council and the Austin planning commission. So I'm pleased to now recognize the chair of the Austin planning commission. Chair Ann Shaw, to call to order the planning commission.

>> Thank you, mayor. Can you hear me? Yes. Okay yes. Time. Is 2:00. And. And I chair the planning commission. During the planning commission meeting to order. And I want to recognize we do have quorum. In fact, this is a very good turnout for the planning commission. Thank you all. Planning commission members .

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>> Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. And thank you to all of the planning commission that are participating in this. And I want to welcome everyone on behalf of the planning commission and the Austin city council. It's believed that this is the first time there's been a joint meeting of the Austin planning commission and the Austin city council. I'm sure that there will be an historian out there that will remind us if that's incorrect. But but it's unique in any event. And so we're happy to be doing this part of the reason we're doing this is an effort to allow for there to be robust public input and allow those that are recommending policy and those making the policy to have an opportunity to hear comments. At the same time, the planning commission will meet again on November 14th, 2023. At that time, there will be the chance for further public comment and input and if the planning commission is ready, it will be able to vote on recommendations to the mayor and city council.

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to the mayor and city council. At that time. The mayor and council are scheduled to meet at a special meeting on December 7th. We will be posted to vote at that time if we're ready prior to that, the city council will have a work session on this item. That will be Tuesday, November 28th. Not only will we as a council have a chance to discuss this and ask additional questions of staff, but I'm recommending that we use that date for the members of the council to lay out any proposed amendments that the members might have. It's like we did. People will remember when we were working on the budget, we had a day set aside in advance of the actual meeting where each member could lay out proposed amendments. It allowed for questions and discussion by the council and it provided greater transparency for the public. The planning commissioners are able for the public to know and for the and the planning

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the and the planning commissioners already know this, but the planning commissioners are able to ask questions and get answers from staff by contacting Andrew Rivera via email. The mayor and council are able to do the same by emailing questions to Katie powers in the agenda office. Responses to those questions will be shared with the council and the planning commission in as soon as they are finalized. Used for members of the public. You can access submitted questions, burns and staff responses as and I'm going to give you an address, a website, Wright public input, public like input or public input .com/ ldc updates so public input.com/ldc update dates that will help the members of the public to see

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members of the public to see what's being thought and considered. And we encourage you to do that. Additionally, there will be a public open house where austinites can meet with city staff and ask questions about proposals that public open house will be on Monday, November sixth, from 6 to 8 P.M. At the central library. That address is 7210710. West Cesar Chavez street in addition, we have professional staff out in the lobby area. If some people have questions, part of our effort to make sure this was a productive meeting where questions could also be answered. We have a professor staff that are there as well. So the run of show is this first we'll hear a presentation from city staff on the agenda item. If the commissioners or council have brief clarifying questions,

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have brief clarifying questions, they'll ask them afterwards. But out of respect for the large number of people wishing to be heard, any of our debate or discussion, or more than just clarifying questions with each other and with staff staff will be at the future meetings I just talked about or through the q&a process that I mentioned. We will then hear from those wishing to speak each person will have two minutes. People may donate time, time to someone Ann so that a single speaker can speak up to six minutes if you're donating time, please see the city clerk over here to my right, your left to complete a time donation form in advance. The donors must be physically present at the time the person to whom they're donating time is speaking in person and due to the large number of people that

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the large number of people that are speaking, the boards and commissions room, which is right across the anyway, here that will be used as an overflow room . Atkin will be streaming the meeting in the boards and commissions room so that the public can follow along. Speakers will be able to check on the order of upcoming speakers at the kiosks that are located outside of the city council chambers. But I encourage you to please be patient with the system due to the large volume of speakers, there may be some lag time in that technology. So please, we ask that you stay within the two minutes out of respect for those who are here wishing to speak and will be following you. They may be following you, maybe even much later tonight. We've tried to make things efficient and respectful. So where we can take we can be respectful of speakers

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we can be respectful of speakers in their time and one effort we have instead muted is we've put up two podiums for speakers to use. What I would request is that you please alternate the use of each podium so that when one speaker is finished, we can immediately move on to the next speaker. There are reserved seats up front. When you hear your name called, please go ahead and come up front. So once your name is called again and you'll be ready to move to one of the podiums, there will be no vote tonight. Wright this will be a public hearing only. Remember again that the planning commission will be meeting on November 14th. There will be another opportunity to be heard. And if ready, the planning commission will vote then and the city council meeting is scheduled. For December 7th. Let me just say that right now in

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me just say that right now in our country, with every level of government seems Singh to have as a backdrop of extreme partizanship and sort of the relentless pursuit of winning. I have been pleased to see that there seems to be in Austin, Texas, at least, a relentless pursuit of our common purpose as a

city, our unity of purpose, if you will. Everyone that's here today, the city council, the planning commissioners, the members of the public that are giving their point of view or watching on TV or writing us by email or otherwise, as we all have a common purpose or a unity of purpose. And that is that we love Austin, we love our home. We recognize it as an exceptional place. And that's why we're participating. We might disagree on how we achieve those goals as we may have goals or even fears that aren't fully shared. But I hope that's not

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shared. But I hope that's not what we focus on. I don't think it is what we should focus on. We ought to focus on that common purpose and that that unity of purpose. We love Austin and we want to make Austin a home we can pass on to our children, our grandchildren, and the people we love, love. I feel it in my heart that that is something that is squarely in our power. This unique gathering is a part of that. And I encourage all of us to please use it in that way. With that and without objection, I open the public hearing for this joint meeting of the Austin city council and the Austin planning commission, and I will now call upon Laura Lauren Middleton. Pratt the planning our planning director, for a presentation from staff.

>> Good afternoon, mayor, city council and members of the planning commission. Thank you

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planning commission. Thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. Proposed changes to housing regulations in our great city of Austin in the recent months, city council direct the city manager to analyze land development code amendments that could allow up to three housing units on a single family zoned property, revised regulations. For properties with two housing units and remove regulations on the number of unrelated adults living in a home. These proposed amendments are intended to enable housing affordability by increasing housing supply, as well as provide flexibility within our existing land development code. Today marks the beginning of a policy deliberation for you as a collective body and will continue with each of your respective bodies in subsequent meetings this afternoon we have

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meetings this afternoon we have staff in the atrium who are there to collect comments and questions from the members of public Mok share future meeting schedules as well as instructions on how to access our ldc updates website where you can find real time current information on the proposed amendments at this time. Andrea bates, assistant director of the planning department, will introduce

staff's proposal based on council's recent adopted resolutions. She'll also outline how these amendments could impact and shape the future of housing in Austin. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Good afternoon. Mayor city council and planning commissioners. I will be describing the proposed changes to residential uses and

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to residential uses and standards in the land development code. This proposal includes amendments in response to something called the home initiative, where home stands for home options for middle income empowerment. I'll begin with some of the reasons behind these code amendments. The proposed amendments respond to policy goals set by city council through plans and resolutions over the last several years. First, they are intended to expand housing opportunities by creating more Shaw housing options that are affordable to middle income earners. They are intended to give homeowners options to house a family member or a caregiver on their property or to earn a passive income. They are intended to increase housing supply. They can help create walkable neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, which is in line with our city's imagine Austin goals as they could help support project connects transit investment by allowing additional people to live near transit stations. And then finally, they could help

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then finally, they could help respond to climate change by reducing transportation emissions, slowing sprawl and creating incentives for smaller, more energy efficient homes. Many people know that the Austin metro area is the fastest growing large metro region in the country, and the city of Austin is a major driver of that growth. Austin is now the 10th largest us city. One factor driving that population growth is job growth. However, Austin's housing production is not keeping pace with job growth. We can see this in an indicator called the jobs housing balance since 2010, over 66,000 more jobs have been created in Austin than housing units produced. So the jobs housing balance has increased from 1.24 jobs for every housing unit in 2010 to 1.3 1 in 2022, when new jobs

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1.3 1 in 2022, when new jobs outpaced the housing supply a greater share of the population must drive in to Austin live outside and commute in for work. Research shows that higher cost metro areas generally have higher ratios or a larger jobs housing imbalance. So, for example, among cities with high job growth, expensive metro areas like New York, Boston, San Francisco and San Jose have ratios that are two or greater, less expensive metros like Houston and Raleigh have ratios that are close to one.

The new housing units that are being produced are frequently in large multifamily complexes. But one of the city's goals is to allow for variety of housing types, including low density residential housing. But the trend we see since 2010 is moving in the opposite direction. The percentage of two, three and four unit housing

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two, three and four unit housing types has actually decreased since 2010 from 9.3% to 6.6% of the total housing stock. And the actual number of duplexes, not just the percent, has also decreased since 2010. I mentioned before that council has provided policy direction to tackle these challenges and we are here today because of three recent council resolutions in this June council. I'll ask staff to work on code amendments that would eliminate something called the occupancy limits or a limit on the number of unrelated adults who can live together in a home in July, council asked staff to prepare code amendments that would allow for smaller, more diverse housing types and additional units on single family properties. This is the resolution called the home initiative and the direction in that resolution will actually be split into two phases. So some

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split into two phases. So some is under consideration today and some of the direction in the resolution will be taken up later as a phase two in September, council provided direction to prepare a code amendments that allow tiny homes and rv's to be used as dwelling units in addition to responding to these three recent resolutions, the proposal also incorporate direction from two prior resolutions. Burns in December 2021 and June 20th, 22 that were about expanding access to and increasing flexibility for accessory dwelling units or ads. That's the policy context and the council direction that brings us here today. Now I'm going to describe the regulations in the current code. I'm going to focus on the rules for three zoning districts called sf one, sf two and sf three, where the sf stands for single family in sf one and sf

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single family in sf one and sf two. You can generally build one single family home with a couple of very specific exceptions is you could build an entire rear apartment for someone who is disabled or over 60 years old, or you could build a separate home on the property for guests or for an on site worker. If the lot size is large enough. In addition to allowing for a specific number of units, a zoning district has rules for the size and location of development on a particular property. Building cover limits the size of a building's footprint compared to the property size overall, the building cover limits in sf one is 35% and in sf two is 40. Impervious cover applies not only to the building footprint, but to driveways and patios

and any other surface that prevents the infiltration of rainwater into the ground in sf. One the impervious cover limit is 40% and in sf two it's 45. Zoning districts also regulate the

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districts also regulate the height of structures on the property and the height limit in both districts is 35ft. You may notice the drawing on this slide and you will see drawings like this throughout the presentation . These are simple examples of the type of development that can occur under today's code or could occur under the proposal. The buildings and the drawings follow the existing or the proposed code requirements based on the zone and the hypothetical lot size the details for each drawing are in the gray text at so what can be built in sf three today the sf three zone includes the same uses allowed in sf one and two one single family home an interior apartment for someone who is disabled or over 60 separate home for guests or an on site worker. If it's large enough, lot or in sf three you have the opportunity to build something called an accessory dwelling unit or Adu. An Adu is

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dwelling unit or Adu. An Adu is a second home that is generally intended to be smaller and located to the back or to the side of the primary home on the lot or or in sf. Three you can build a duplex if you have a larger lot. The lot size for a duplex today is 7000ft !S and a duplex is to attached units. Building coverage limit is 40% impervious cover is 45% and the height limit is 35ft. In addition to the standards of the base Zones that I just described , some residential development is subject to something called the residence design and compatibility standards, which are much more frequently called the mcmansion standards as the mcmansion standards are additional limits on the size of residential development of homes that are built in a certain area of Austin. The area in brown on that map, which is generally the more central part of the city, the mcmansion standards limit

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the mcmansion standards limit something called the floor area ratio of a development which sets a maximum square footage that can be built on the lot. They also create a building envelope commonly called a tent, which creates some additional height limits and have some other design standards for new development with the intention of providing additional regulation of the scale. So that's what can be built today. The proposed amendments would do the following. They would allow up to three homes on property zoned sf one, sf two or sf three. They would simplify the current regulations for building two homes. They would remove of uses that are in the code today that wouldn't be necessary with the other changes. The accessory apartment, the guest house and the on site worker provisions, they would limit

the applicability of the mcmansion standards to lots with one home and they would allow tiny homes that meet certain standards to

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that meet certain standards to be considered a permanent dwelling unit. These drawings are examples of the housing types that would be allowed on lots that are at least 5750ft !S in the sf, one, sf two and sf three Zones under the proposal, the size of the homes that could be built depends on on the lot size and the underlying regulations of the zoning district. So one of the first changes in the proposal is the creation of a new three unit use . This is what would allow three homes to be built on sf, one, sf two and sf three zoned properties. The three homes could be attached and detached or a mix, but they would be exempt from the mcmansion standards if they were inside the area. They would have a building coverage limit of 40% impervious cover limit of 45% height limit of 35ft and a

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height limit of 35ft and a minimum lot size of 5750ft !S. They would also be exempt from mcmansion outside of the mcmansion area. Just for clarity . Here are examples of hyper theoretical three unit uses. There are three detached units on a 10,000 square foot lot on the left, there are three detached units on an 8000 square foot lot in the center, and there are three attached units on a 5750 square foot lot on the right. The proposed amendments would also change the existing standards for two unit uses. This is a use allowed in the code today it's allowed in the sf three Zones and today, as in the proposal is a two unit use is intended for detached units and so the proposal would allow two detached homes on sf one sf two and sf three zoned

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two and sf three zoned properties under the proposal. One of the two homes would be limited to 1100 square feet in size. They would be exempt from mcmansion. The building cover would be 40% impervious, cover 45in the height limit of 35, but the minimum lot size of 5750ft !S. Some of the existing restrictions on the two unit use would be removed from the code to allow for additional flexibility. For example, there would be no limit on the number of stories. There'd simply be the 35 foot height limit. There would be no restrictions on the amount of distance between the buildings in the zoning code itself. The fire code separation rules would still apply and there'd be no restrictions on the size of the second story. The proposed amendments also change the existing duplex use today, and under the proposal, duplex means two attached homes and duplexes would be allowed on sf, one, sf two and sf three. They would be exempt from

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They would be exempt from mcmansion building coverage of 40% impervious cover of 45 height limit of 35ft more minimum lot size of 5750ft !S. This is a change from the minimum lot size that applies to duplexes today, which is 7000ft !S. Other restrictions would also be removed. There would be no specific limit on gross floor area. There would be no limit on the number of stories just the height limit, and there would be no specific requirements for shared floors or ceilings or walls. The proposal would also allow tiny homes to be used and to count as housing units. Tiny homes are structures that are smaller than 400ft !S and meet very specific standards in the international residential code. So a tiny home that meets these standards could be used as a permanent dwelling unit in all residential Zones. Under the proposal. As I mentioned before, some of the

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mentioned before, some of the existing accessory uses would be removed from the code under the proposal because they're no longer necessary. The accessory apartment, the guest house and the house for on site worker uses could be accommodated by the additional flexible Katy for the two unit duplex and three unit uses under the proposal. One of the main takeaways about this proposal is that it changes the process to allow three units in these Zones today. Three units are generally not allowed on an sf, one, sf two or sf three zoned property to get to three units. The property would likely need to be re zoned site constraints or other limitations would potentially restrict the property. Even if re zoned. But rezoning would be required to get to three units. The proposed changes apply to the base zone. They would allow up to three units to be built in those Zones with no property specific zoning

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with no property specific zoning change. And of course those site constraints and other limitations like tree protections or other things like deed restrictions, may restrict the number of units that are actually able to be built on those properties. So three units would be allowed allowed in the Zones, but they would not be guaranteed because a property would need to meet other requirements and not have other restrictions in place. The those are the changes to the residential uses and standards that are the bulk of this proposal. But as I mentioned before, the proposal also responds to council direction to change the occupancy limits. The proposal would remove the existing limit on the number of unrelated adults who are allowed to live together for today. That limit is four unrelated adults who can live together within the mcmansion area and six who could do so outside of the mcmansion area. These specific limits in the zoning code are proposed to be removed and instead occupancy

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be removed and instead occupancy would be enforced through the provisions of the property maintenance code, which sets a minimum bedroom size tied to the number of occupants in that bedroom. This is a list of things that are not included in the proposal that were reviewing today. As I mentioned before, the code amendments called for in the home initiative are being split into phases. And so some of the direction in the resolution will come back at a later time. This includes direction to reduce the minimum lot size for single family zoned lots to allow for additional types of housing and single family neighborhoods to further adjust regulations to create incentives for smaller homes on single family lots to create innovative drainage and utility solution. Luz the resolutions also ask staff to evaluate criteria for allowing recreational vehicles on single family owned properties. Staff has begun looking into that, and

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has begun looking into that, and there are many challenges associated with that. Given how these vehicles are constructed and regulated. And so staff is in communication with council in whether that element of the proposal needs to move forward at all in phase. Two so this brings us back to where we are today. There will be three public hearings on on these proposed code amendments. The first is today's joint meeting of the planning commission and city council. As the mayor mentioned, this is a new opportunity. To our knowledge, we've never held a joint meeting of the planning commission and city council for code amendments , but today is focused on hearing from the public. Neither body will be taking action today . Next, the planning commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, November 14th, 6 P.M, right here in city hall. The planning commission could at that time vote vote to make a

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that time vote vote to make a recommendation to city council on this proposal. They would be posted for action, as we say. Finally, the city council will hold a special called meeting in a third public hearing on this proposal on Thursday December 7th at 10 A.M. Again, right here, the council could choose to vote on the proposal that day . But there are many opportunities for the public to learn more about the elements of this proposal. As mentioned previously, we are holding an open house on Monday, November sixth, from 6 to 8 P.M. At the central library. There is also a website with additional information about the proposal. Public. Input.com/ldc updates. You can submit a question or a comment via that website or you can email or call staff at the email and phone number available on the screen. We are responding

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on the screen. We are responding to questions submitted via email , phone and through the website. Although it may take us several days during the busiest times, so please have patience with us and see comments submitted through those methods will be collected and provided to planning commission and to city council for their consideration. That concludes our presentation on on the proposal. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you. I'll ask if there's any member of the commission, the planning commission or council that has some form of brief clarifying question or should we just go straight to hearing from the public? Councilmember Allison alter, thank you.

>> Appreciate. First of all, everyone coming out today, can you hear me? Yes I appreciate everyone coming out and I want to thank staff for providing us with the models and the details of the affordability impact statement. It and if anyone in in the chambers hasn't seen if you go to the council agenda for

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you go to the council agenda for today, you can click and see those documents. I think I made it pretty clear that I think the original language for this initiative left a lot of opportunity for unintended consequences and would benefit from some attentiveness from our staff on how we should be thinking about these things. And I believe that staff have landed on a key concern I have, which is the impact of eliminating mcmansion standards and far limits and how that will not help us achieve our stated goals of wanting smaller housing units. So I have a couple of questions related to duplexes is in these models is that I want to ask ask. So first I want to ask some clarifying questions about page 14 on the modeling that was done for the duplex use . So so I want to know if this model is meant to represent a maximum build out of the

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maximum build out of the entitlements that we are granting or whether you've left development entitlements on the table.

>> Good afternoon, Erica leek with planning department. The models that are include in the presentation are not necessarily maximums, they are potential opportunities. So I would have to look carefully to see if this particular one is a max. But in general, these are just examples included in the presentation, not necessarily showing the maximum.

>> Thank you. I appreciate that clarification. And just want to flag what I see in this model at this point with what we know about the proposals. So when I read the model, it says each unit of the duplex would be about 1400 square feet. But this building, as you noted, doesn't seem to max out on the

impervious cover, nor does it build out to its maximum height. So by my math, a lot like this of 5750 could have a footprint between 2300 and 2500ft², which

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between 2300 and 2500ft², which when divided Ed between the two units, leads a footprint of 1200 square foot feet on each floor with a height limit of 35ft. They could have a three story unit with a rooftop deck and about 3000 for each unit or a 6000 square foot building. So that's a scenario that as we move forward, I'd like you to explore. You've indicated this doesn't represent the max. And I will just say that this is some of the more useful modeling that we've seen through this process. So I appreciate that. But I would like to see a model that maxes it out for duplex is my second question relates to some statements that were in the affordability impact statement. And again, I want to thank staff and the affordable impact statement for raising that. Having a far limit does indeed play an important role in helping us to achieve our stated goals of having smaller housing units. My question relates to the bottom of page three and the top of page four, where you write that without unit size

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write that without unit size restrictions, either by subchapter F, i.e. The McMansion standards or another floor area ratio limitation, the proposed amendments may result in units with similar size and price to current single family units, which would not achieve the resolutions goal of facilitating the availability of smaller, more diverse housing types for middle income households. I appreciate that staff are naming this and I appreciate my colleagues recognition on the message board that we need to include far limits in this proposal. My question is that the affordability impact statement specifies that the three unit typology would allow units to triple in size, and then it states that the two unit option is limited because you have a limit for one of the units to be 1100 square feet. And what I'm trying to understand is what happens to duplexes because there's nothing in the code that limits one of those units to 1100 square feet and the affordability impact statement doesn't address that issue with duplexes. So you can have these very, very large

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have these very, very large duplexes that I just mentioned could happen in the prior question. So can you can you talk a little bit about what happens with duplexes and whether duplexes have the same limit on size?

>> So Mandy Demayo from the housing department is on line and should be able to answer.

>> Councilmember one of the reasons that we wanted the q&a process to be used because these are important questions and they require thoughtful answers and to try to answer these questions with these assumptions that you've just articulated may give you wrong information verbally today, only to be corrected later. I would hate for the staff to step out and not first completely understand the question so that they know what your what what is being asked. And so that when we provide the information it's done in its

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information it's done in its most complete fashion that's why we wanted to use the q&a process so that we could have the several filters to look through that and I would appreciate the indulgence not just of you as a council member, but of the council members and the planning commission to allow us that time. Because what we would hate to do is to be verbally giving you an answer only to be later correcting it on the on the written record. So I would make that request.

>> That's fine if you're not able to answer it, but I will point out for those in the chambers and my colleagues and we can answer this in the Q and a that as I read the ordinance, there is no limit on size for the duplexes that matches the two unit so that the conclusions that are there for what happens on the size for two unit do not apply in the duplex case and again, if our goal is to have smaller housing units that are more affordable, the devil is in the details and we need to pay attention to that. And I think part of the reason we have these hearings is, is so people in the community can raise these issues and help us understand them with the modeling. And by raising this is not to mean to say that

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this is not to mean to say that that staff has done anything wrong, but it is one of the issues that we as a body need to address if we are going to get this right and actually accomplish Polish our stated goals. And I do think it is important as we're as we're as we're looking at these models and having the conversations today, that people understand that even what you see here is not maxed out. And so I think those are very important clarifying questions. And you can provide me more specific answers in the we'd ask that staff, please do that.

>> I just for clarity purposes, we have three people that have joined us virtually. We I'm assuming MD is Ms. Demayo can can the person that's since I can't see your faces, maybe I'd recognize you, maybe I wouldn't. But who who is and who is rc.

>> This is Rachel Tepper with the city of Austin housing department. Just here to support

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department. Just here to support on the questions around affordability impact.

>> I appreciate that. Who is. Oh one of our commissioners. There we go.

>> I'm free now. Candace hunter, Austin is in the great it great okay.

>> Just wanted to make sure because it's hard to know. So.

>> Yes your honor, thank you.

>> No problem. And I think that's the first time I've ever been called, your honor. That felt pretty good. We'll see if you're doing that by the end of the day. All right. Without further ado, let's go to those who wish to speak to us. I'm sorry. Yes, commissioner.

>> On. Thank you, sir. I did have some questions. I understand. And the format I just want to read them in. And those answers can come back through the proper q&a process. But I at least wanted to get

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But I at least wanted to get them on for consideration. Please do. Thank you. I would like for staff maybe to provide some information either at the public information sessions or through q&a to the public about how they're dividing up the property and creating additional units on the property will will affect at the property both for, for the existing property owner and for future tenants. There have been a lot of questions that have come up on whether or not these would fall under the condo requirements or regulations. Burns who's going to owe the own the land? Where do the taxes go and what are the rights? I'm particularly concerned about maybe some of our populations that are already being solicited to give up portions of their property for an initiative that has not even been passed by this council, and that that may be opportune mystic. And so I, I kind of want the public to proceed with caution and to have additional information available for people. Sorry, this is a lot of people. We received a lot of

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people. We received a lot of good information today. So that shortened my list of questions. Thank you. I think one of the questions that's coming up that people would like to understand better, perhaps through Austin water is what's going to happen with water, sewage and utility lines. Will separate permits be required for each of these dwellings? Luz will separate permit costs. I think they're at ten or 15 or \$16,000 or be required to establish these lines. Or will they be subservient to the main dwelling line? And then to that effect, I would like to understand the integrity of our existing infrastructure to be able to accommodate this. So if we take one line and split it out to three to accommodate three new family units, can those existing lines do that or if we say no, each one needs its own tap, can our main systems handle that as we grow that may. My other question is regarding traffic. I don't believe that any of this

[2:41:15 PM]

don't believe that any of this requires any kind of mta or traffic analysis as we create more use units. And so I'd like to know how we're looking at whether our roads can accommodate ingress and egress and at what point if each property has the inherent right to do this at what point does it trigger the requirements for a secondary ingress and egress and how will that work? I'm kind of concerned about safety and first responders getting in and getting out. So to that effect, I have a question about fire wise. We know that our city is woefully unprepared for a catastrophic wildfire. We have several very at risk areas of our city and in previous zoning hearings, AFD has already testified that our fire hydrants in some areas are tested and vetted and can put out a fire in a single dwelling structure, but not for larger structures. This is getting so bad that actually

[2:42:16 PM]

is getting so bad that actually some some of us might be speaking personally. We cannot get underwriting for homeowners insurance because of the fire risks. No home insurance means you can't carry a mortgage. So I'd like for staff and AFD to discuss our current infrastructure for putting out fires and to know whether our infrastructure can handle what we have existed and how that and then can it handle these additional units and what that looks like, excuse me, commissioner, much taller.

>> I'm just afraid that if we all take this much time, we're going to remove the very valuable time for the large number of speakers here. Can I please ask you to email these to staff? These are very complicated questions, ones that need to be worded very carefully . Yes yes, yes.

>> I have one last and I'll and I'll yield back.

>> I just really want to hear from the people in the audience. That's a goal.

[2:43:17 PM]

That's a goal.

>> I'll pose my last one. I'll yield back. Yes sir. I would like for watershed to describe our drainage systems and how they will be prepared to capture the additional runoff when we see these impervious cover changes as go throughout our city. Thank you. Sorry. Thank you, commissioner.

>> Folks, we have another commissioner who would like to be recognized, commissioner cox.

>> Yeah, I just I just have one clarifying question for staff related to the affordability impact statement. I really appreciate this and I hope the public has a chance to read it. You know, it begins by saying that the

proposed changes may have some positive impacts to housing costs, but then it goes into quite a lot of detail as to why why potentially it won't have a lot of positive impacts to housing costs. And the thing that kind of blew my mind was just this one sentence that said

[2:44:18 PM]

just this one sentence that said , comparing these results with the average size of single family homes permitted in 2023 shows that the proposed amendments could allow units in three unit projects that exceed the size of a single unit use being built today. And the affordability impact statement does quite a good analysis. S of how removing the mcmansion subchapter F requirements kind of blows out the idea of getting more affordable housing units from this proposal. So my question to staff is, is it safe to interpret that staff is recommending that we maintain the subchapter F mcmansion ordinance in conjunction with the home proposal or am I reading this wrong. >> Veronica yeah. Commissioners

[2:45:19 PM]

>> Veronica yeah. Commissioners and council members, you speak to this.

>> We have housing staff online that can answer that question.

>> Please identify yourself.

>> Sure. This is Rachel Tepper with the housing department. And I'm just going to quickly respond to that. But we can we can elaborate further in the q&a . Please do that. But housing staff is very much supportive of these amendments with the with the recognition Ann that they don't could go much further in reaching middle income buyers by converting ordering some kind of size, restrict, you know, some kind of size limitation. But we didn't the is not intended to be , for recommendations. It's intended to be an analysis tool to understand affordability impacts. So so we'll leave it to

[2:46:20 PM]

impacts. So so we'll leave it to the policy makers as well as planning staff to kind of work work through what the best limiter might be. However, we do recognize that a limiter is needed to reach, middle income homeowners. Thank you for that answer.

>> Members without objection, we're going to go to hearing from the public. It's my understanding that we have at least one person that is seeking translation. So we're going to begin the day with that person, and then we will go to those who are calling in and offering their point of view to over the

telephone. And then we will go to in person speakers. Speaking with a Spanish translator is Andrea Pena.

>> Andrea Pena, if you'll please come forward. >> Buenas tardes. Alcalde de las

[2:47:33 PM]

>> Buenas tardes. Alcalde de las personas estan aqui presents.

>> Good afternoon, mayor and all of the people here present today .

>> Hablar sobre Una propuesta Esta en MI vecindario es la. 2023 0000 si pueden por favor poner la foto. Gracias.

>> I've come to speak today regarding a proposal. There's a photograph that's been on the screen. It's it's proposed amendment. 14 to 20 to 3. 0100 can you please run the short videos now?

>> Batting for the ironpigs number one cold pool. It the dogs out.

>> Who who, who, who let the dogs out? Who who let the dogs out. Who let the dogs out. They can't. Hey, those are my. Don't

[2:48:33 PM]

can't. Hey, those are my. Don't they look great? Harvey, are you ready? Oh, they look great on me . They look. You look darker. Eddie. Tengo un Segundo video.

>> I have a second video.

>> Como pueden Ver en este video es un parque recreativo de muchos Ninos jugando familiares van a hacer deportes you can see in this video.

>> It's a recreation area. There are families, entire families here coming to play sports and str park Valdez de Ninos.

>> Muy pequenos de cuatro Anos de futbol. Soccer, football. Americano. Basketball lacrosse. Children as young as four years old come and play soccer here.

>> They play football. Basketball. They play lacrosse. >> Year in Estes park, la los

[2:49:35 PM]

>> Year in Estes park, la los vecinos incluyendo Yo VOY a cabinet Ya ejercicio muchas haciendo esto entonces estoy totalmente encontrar quieren construir in un parque recreativo donde se airport.

>> My neighbors, myself included, use this park also to exercise. We walk around the park and get our exercise poses in. I am opposed to any construct action happening on this property.

>> Impacto negative en las familiares. Ninos de Austin quieren construir un Lugar del port.

>> This would have a negative impact on the families in Austin, a negative impact for folks just wanting to use this space recreationally.

>> Opinion my son Marco will give his opinion now.

>> Good morning. Since since I can remember I have loved going

[2:50:36 PM]

can remember I have loved going to that park and not only me but many other people. All kids and adults go there to play and have fun. Other than that, they are dozens of animals living there like deer turtles, fish, many kinds of birds, skunks, raccoons , possums, coyotes and many more. And if you build there, you will be destroying their home and they in the wildlife. That's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

>> Gracias. Por favor. Agan algo para construir un Ann un parque deportivo.

>> Yo, thank you so much. I please I request that you do something to avoid building on this recreational space.

>> Thank you. Will you please communicate that out as you leave that this is a zoning case that is not on today's agenda. It will come at a future date. And that council member Kelly

[2:51:38 PM]

And that council member Kelly will have some people that will do the planning department that will visit with with her. Yes sir.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> We will now shift to remote, starting with Larry acres. Larry acres, please unmute. Mr. Acres. We will try calling back. Monica Bhatia. Miss Al Ramos. Hello. >> This is miss Ramos. This and

[2:52:42 PM]

>> This is miss Ramos. This and I am actually against this policy as it's currently written . This policy, it's a good idea, but bad on execution. Ann and when looking into the details, there's more that needs to be done to protect communities, especially those in east Austin. There is no affordability component built into the policy. So when we say housing will become cheaper once this policy is passed, we don't know if this is true in our country's history, government has been used to help people by passing policies with specific protections in place to ensure policy passed doesn't punish those they are trying to protect and the capitalist based economy, though, leaving the market to correct itself doesn't guarantee that the right thing will be done more often than not, it guarantees the people with the most money. Access and privilege will be the ones to benefit. The fact that there is no part of this policy that prohibits short term rentals gives way to this and is very discouraging. Our city has become extremely transient and unaffordable, and the data shows

[2:53:43 PM]

unaffordable, and the data shows short term rentals exacerbate these two problems. And on top of all this, who's going to be able to afford to build an additional unit on their house unless if there is policy to help people and families build housing on on their land with a forgivable and no interest loan. Then again, the people with the most money, access and privilege will benefit additional considering Ann should also be taken into account about the naturally occurring streams that live in our city as well. If these streams receive more damage, this could potentially have a negative impact on the water. We've already been losing. I applaud this council's willingness to get creative and try to add an assorted type of housing units in the attempt to add more to the city community. Discussions need to happen so that neighborhood, community leaders and citizens in Austin are able to raise concerns and have their voices heard. I urge this council to start the conversation with the community and start educating the people so that for once, the people with the most money, access and privilege aren't the only ones that benefit from this policy.

[2:54:45 PM]

that benefit from this policy. Thank you.

>> Thank you. James.

>> Texas.

>> Thank you, mayor Watson. And city council members. I'm also speaking against this zoning change. Three main reasons. One is the desire to effect to improve affordability will not happen by increasing housing density. Chris Herbert, the managing director of Harvard joint center for housing studies in the November 22nd, or November 2022, issue of the atlantic, stated that for every 10% increase in housing, it reduces cost by only 1, and that's only within 500ft where the housing occurs and it's not linear. So

20% doesn't give you 2. It gives you about 1.5. Considering there's 430,000 homes in Austin. And if you add 40,000 residences through this, this law change, there would still be no noticeable reduction of cost for housing. So we safety professor Abby Smith, the university of Chicago, she

[2:55:45 PM]

university of Chicago, she teaches a class on urban design that I was fortunate enough to attend and exposed to her landmark study on the effect of nature to improve societal harmony is widely followed around the world, and it's a reason why a picture of nature shows up on your computer when you start it up. This new zoning law will reduce exposure to nature, taking away valuable green space that provides harmony to cities, habitats, more population density, less nature, potential for squatters, transients, along with the undermanned police force, will create more safety issues for the taxpaying residents. And finally, the heart of Austin is really in its neighborhoods and the artist ai weiwei, the Chinese dissident for years criticized China for wiping out swaths of the Shanghai neighborhoods and beijing hutongs. And he said, what we want to preserve is our memory. And the city of Austin is changing. So fast that we're going to lose the inspiration that brings so many musicians and artists here. Thank you for your time. >> Larry acres again. Thank you,

[2:56:48 PM]

>> Larry acres again. Thank you, mayor and council.

>> All state law requires appraisal districts to appraise non-homestead land for highest and best use by steeply increasing that capacity, you will face steep increases in property taxes onto renters is the exact opposite of creating affordability. Whether redevelopment occurs or not, those increases will also trickle into homesteads because the appraisal district will use comps that are not homesteads as as for assessing homestead properties and their appraisals will accordingly rise. Moreover the city just convinced voters to pony up many billions of dollars and are forever taxing increase to fund mass transit when a necessary condition for that endeavor to succeed is to concentrate population along the transit corridors. Your single

[2:57:50 PM]

transit corridors. Your single family proposal runs exactly in the opposite direction. Ann dispersing density across core neighborhoods with only remote access to transit. It. I have to wonder to where are the clamor is from people living in these core neighborhoods to have their next door neighbors lots redeveloped it with towering multifamily townhouses who is exactly clamoring for this? Are they the lobbyists who the council majority is illegally failing to disclose? The one complaint I hear from the

public about the code is the difficulty in placing a tiny home in the backyard. That difficulty can be fixed, but in conjunction with the duplex requirements to have common walls and roof lines, those are outdated and unnecessary requirements. So just fix that and leave our neighborhoods alone. We're having a hard enough time as it is. Thank you very much. Monica Basha.

[2:58:55 PM]

Basha.

>> Hi.

>> Can you hear me? Yes I'm a phd candidate at UT Austin studying sustainability and affordability in cooperative housing. Housing cooperatives are some of the most affordable housing options available in Austin, and they are directly impacted by the city code. Housing cooperatives have made living in Austin affordable. For me at the housing cooperative where I live now, rent averages about \$700 a month. In contrast to a one bedroom unit at UT. S affordable graduate student housing costs a \$100 a month and housing cooperatives are able to keep prices down through collective housing, our resources and living more densely. So removing familial occupancy limits and allowing ads would give us more options to control our rent prices and keep housing affordable.

[2:59:56 PM]

keep housing affordable. Furthermore, an abundance of scientific research, including my own shows that group housing is more ecologically sustainable than single family housing. Having more people living in fewer units means that we will all consume less resource resources in terms of energy, appliances, transportation, building and land costs. And living together also means we create stronger social ties that make us more resilient and allow us to support each other in daily life, in times of crisis. Despite the opportunities that housing cooperatives provide for the city, current city policy means that we're constantly under threat because of occupancy limits. The first housing cooperative that I lived in in Austin was forced out of its tenure home because of the threat of code violations for violating familial occupancy limits and having auxiliary dwelling units removed, having occupancy limits based on

[3:00:57 PM]

occupancy limits based on familial status would not only alleviate pressures on existing housing cooperatives, but it would create opportunities to expand the number of available affordable housing cooperative units in the city. So I'm speaking in in favor of this code change.

>> Thank you, speaker. Your time has expired. Aiden Abraham. My name is Aiden Abraham.

>> I'm currently a resident of Austin in district nine. I'm urging the council to support the zoning changes in 2017, hurricane Harvey struck the Houston area and caused heavy flood and rain related damage to many people's homes. Me and my family's home in Katy was not spared. We had to move out and stay with my grandpa for several months while we spent several thousands of dollars on home repairs. According to some studies, hurricane Harvey could

[3:01:57 PM]

studies, hurricane Harvey could not have produced as much rainfall as it did without human induced climate change because of our greenhouse gas emissions. The exacerbated the effects of extreme weather events like hurricane Harvey. What does this have to do with the home resolution? Well, according to a recent ipcc report, the effective way of reducing transportation and residential greenhouse gas emissions is through the promotion of dense infill development by putting people closer to jobs, transit and other opportunities, we reduce the distance they travel by car and by putting them in smaller, more energy efficient homes, we lower their home emissions. The home resolution makes it easier to build denser development by allowing three homes on every lot, as well as accessory dwelling units and this will lower the city's greenhouse gas emissions. That is why I'm in favor of home so that we can protect people from the effects of climate change, such as hurricane Harvey. Thank

[3:02:58 PM]

such as hurricane Harvey. Thank you.

>> Bruce green. Our.

>> Good afternoon.

>> I'm a resident of northwest Austin district six, and here to express my opposition to any proposals which would eliminate sf one zoning and allow such properties to be subdivided. My wife and I purchased our home at spicewood estates over 30 years ago because it was our American dream. It was not part of the city but was subsequently annexed without any public referendum or input. We purchased here to enjoy a neighborhood with lawns, trees, uncongested streets, safe areas for our kids to play and ride bikes near public services. Neighborhood schools and houses of worship. If these rezoning proposals are approved, it would destroy the character of neighborhoods across the city. Given recent actions by council to eliminate requirements for on

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to eliminate requirements for on site parking. Our streets would become congested like those downtown. We purchased what we believed would always be a suburban neighborhood. If we wanted to live downtown in a high rise, we would have purchased their. We live in a diverse neighborhood of middle income, dual working households. Why would any mayor or council member want to destroy the kind of neighborhood we have today? Second, I have not seen any analysis by city staff that assesses how these higher density proposals would impact neighborhoods in terms of school capacity, infrastructure, traffic, public safety, biking and environmental concerns. I'm confident that if you ask any homeowner in an sf one subdivision, if they would like to see their neighbor's house demolished and replaced by three or more individual units, they would respond, heck, no. Here's a suggestion require all multimillion dollar penthouses to be subdivided before resale.

[3:04:58 PM]

to be subdivided before resale. So that many more people can enjoy penthouse views. 40 to 60 stories up. Sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? But it's the exact same rationale being used to rezone sf one neighborhoods. Thank you, sir.

>> Thank you.

>> Anastasia Anthony. Spencer mayor and council member.

>> My name is anastasia shabani. I'm an internal physician, internal medicine physician and the CEO of Austin regional clinic. We provide care to over 650,000 austinite and central Texans and employ over 2500. I appreciate that the city and the mayor and everyone on on the call and giving comment focus on this. I wanted to call to share some of our concern that this is really rising from a crisis to a catastrophe that we need to focus on solving affordable housing. One way or another. Our

[3:05:59 PM]

housing. One way or another. Our centralized clinic continues to struggle with staffing, and that's not because of necessarily a staffing shortage. It's mostly because of the cost of living. We have one of our clinic in central Austin that have have changed staff three times over the last two years. They didn't leave mark. They asked to be moved to main or Hutto or Kyle because of affordability. We have three mammography units in north central and south and we have struggled to staff the central one and we've had to shut it down because the staff could not afford living in that area. So I appreciate really the city council and the and the mayor and everyone trying to help us solve for this. The affordability crisis is starting to impact our ability to provide access to health care. Thank you very much.

>> Katherine Chamblee. >> Yes, my name is Katherine

[3:07:05 PM]

>> Yes, my name is Katherine Chamblee. I live in district seven here in Austin. I'm calling in to oppose the changes . For three housing units on a single lot. In particular, if one is intended, is to reduce minimum lot size by half to 2500ft !S, dividing a 2500 square foot lot by three leaves only 833 square foot per lot, including setbacks and is simply not enough. Space to allow for water runoff between between homes amongst other issues, including the strain on our outdated infrastructure. I live in crestview, where I stated earlier today a home homeowner is allowed to divide the lot into two and build a second. Adu which can be occupied by unrelated persons and what they call a condo regime. The lot is divided into two, but not three. Provide enough space for family residences, though there is very little yard for children or pets dividing lots further into three

[3:08:05 PM]

dividing lots further into three would leave no yard and or would have to alter impervious cover requirements which are crucial to maintaining flood control. I would suggest those listening here drive through crestview and look at the new build. These homes are being built on hills or concrete pillars, specifically due to water runoff issues. I'm very concerned about water runoff created by the encouraged concreting of lots when the homes next to 1952 built homes were maxed out to impervious coverage standards as they currently are. It required me to install \$7,000 worth of worth of drainage Paige to keep my low lying home from flooding, encouraging further concreting of lots will absolutely only exacerbate this problem. Commissioner Jennifer Ann, who spoke earlier today, was excellent, but I would ask that all council consider her points as they absolutely need to be addressed. And I also want to say I'm opposed to the consideration of a recreational

[3:09:06 PM]

consideration of a recreational thank you, speaker.

>> Your time is expired. Jen Grayson. I'm speaking against the zoning change.

>> Three meetings are not enough to effectively implement community input and feedback. And I'm ashamed you all tried to shut down Jennifer Taylor for voicing her concerns about this proposal as her concerns represent many of our voices in Austin. My most pressing questions are if lower fixed income homeowners currently struggle to afford their taxes, how can they afford to build additional units on their land? This will lead to a predatory lending environment and push vulnerable residents out of their home. If they have a home in the middle of my lot, how will I subdivide my property without demolishing my perfectly good home? What will happen to our urban canopy if 6 to 9 homes will be allowed on each currently zoned lot? What protection does this proposal have to preserve? Current canopy does this proposal limit short term rentals? Currently there are nearly 15 whole home short

[3:10:06 PM]

are nearly 15 whole home short term rentals in Austin that are occupied only 74 out of 365 days a year, meaning these homes sit vacant for most of the year. What prevents outside investors from purchasing these new properties as short term rentals and taking them off the market for long term rentals as can our sewage and water infrastructure for support. 6 to 9 homes on each lot. The presentation mentioned the goal was to come up with innovative drainage and sewage solutions. Burns. Yet I didn't hear anything about these solutions in the presentation. Every summer we have to comply with water restrictions. Will we have enough water to support 6 to 9 new homes on each lot? What's the affordability component to this plan? The citywide mfi isn't affordable for financially vulnerable people. We already have many vacant lots in Austin purchased by speculators. Why can't we force them to build on their vacant lots before subdividing properties where people currently live? And we bought our homes under the assumption that we bought this lot in this house and those factors would remain until we petition to

[3:11:07 PM]

remain until we petition to subdivide or sell. How can the city change my zoning without my input or agreement? Why are we only now being participants, being allowed to participate in the process? And why is city council trying to push this through around the holidays when people are less likely to pay?

>> Speaker time has expired.

>> Changes.

>> Jeremy Hendrix. Jeremy Hendrix. Yes, I'm here.

>> Thank you very much. Mayor and city council. Good afternoon everyone. I'm Jeremy Hendrix with the laborers international union, representing construction workers who build this booming city. I'm a resident of d4 and I'm also secretary of the Windsor hills neighborhood association here to speak in favor of the home act that will help create more housing opportunities for our members who are struggling terribly with rising rents and mortgages. I'm also a leader with the central Texas building trades and a member of the Austin central labor council, which have both endorsed this important measure excuse me, construction workers

[3:12:08 PM]

excuse me, construction workers are essential workers to the future of Austin and central Texas, but sadly our members are unable to afford to live in the city they proudly work to build and maintain this housing crisis is making it more and more difficult to find the skilled workers needed to keep our building boom going. So the need for passage of the home act is critical and urgent to address this

shortage of affordable housing. I hope you will join the labor council, the building and trades and voting for this important act. Thank you and have a great day.

>> David Fouts. Hello, my name is David Fouts.

>> I live in d2, which I have the honor of representing on the zoning and planning commission.

>> I'm speaking today in support of the home initiative Luz while earning my degree in urban planning, I learned that a healthy, sustainably developing community Katy evolves over time

[3:13:08 PM]

community Katy evolves over time through the kind of incremental development that used to be normal but has since been regulated into near extinction. We have replaced this development pattern with endless environmentally and socially destructive urban sprawl. I suppose I support the home initiative because it allows us to move further back towards that inclusive, sustainable and incremental development pattern by letting more people live closer to opportunity. Cities and amenities while utilizing existing infra structure instead of adding ever more roads, pipes and cables that we will have to maintain Ann on a more personal note, flexible land use policies like the home initiative are the reason why I am a homeowner here. I live in the good knight ranch community, which is a good that allows for housing typologies that are not allowed in the rest of the city. A

[3:14:11 PM]

in the rest of the city. A detached, single family home on a large lot was out of reach for my family and I. But the duplexes and townhomes homes that are very similar to what the home initiative would allow all over this or much of the city were within our reach. So I ask you, please give the rest of the city the opportunity I had to become a homeowner. Thank you very much, Richard Smith.

>> My name is Richard Smith. I oppose the home resolution for several reasons, including the following.

>> First, this resolution is based on the faulty premise. The housing density will lower housing costs. Credible studies have shown that increased density increases housing costs. Why because real estate does not follow the law of supply and demand like loaves of bread in a store. Second, only developers will benefit from the resolution . Why homeowners that struggle

[3:15:12 PM]

. Why homeowners that struggle financially such as those that want to age in place, will not be able to afford a high interest loan, increase property taxes and other expenses associated with building an Adu

or subdividing their lot. If you're not convinced, I encourage you to consider bastrop's recent adoption of similar zoning and the unmitigated disaster it has become. Bastrop city manager has spoken recently about this matter. Final me as an attorney, I believe that a resolution that encourages homeowners to violate their contractual deed restricts burns may well constitute tortious interference with contractual relations by the city of Austin. Result in exorbitant legal fees to be borne by Austin taxpayers. Thank you. Robert zakiya.

>> Hi, my name is Robert Czajka. I live in district seven and I'm

[3:16:15 PM]

I live in district seven and I'm speaking in favor of the item on today's agenda. So nine years ago tomorrow, upon graduating college, I moved to Austin and I instantly felt an air of endless possibility when I arrived here, I had a middle class job offer in hand. It was well paid enough to live in a triangle and a new apartment all by myself, and had many friends that were working class or middle class like me that lived in affordable apartments that were also in this area or even downtown. But because of central neighborhoods getting so expensive recently, most locals are new arrivals to this city can no longer have this experience that I had unless they're already having a high pay job offer in hand. I worked in land development engineering for the first seven years that I lived here and I saw firsthand how difficult it can be with the current zoning law to construct housing at an appropriate scale in this city. A small missing middle housing project which the city of Austin has professed the importance of during the entirety of this time frame, has been nearly impossible to construct due to such a large proportion of the city of Austin's lots being available only for single family housing construction. This has

[3:17:15 PM]

housing construction. This has created a large gap between the number of housing units needed and the amount constructed where people would like to live. So often, and that get only continues to increase as I believe that the home initiative can help reverse this sad trend. And by allowing three units per lot on single family lots, the city of Austin has a chance to increase the potential housing supply in all neighborhoods by a large factor, allowing the housing crisis we're in to gradually be mitigated. By allowing for this change, we continue to encourage what's made Austin special to so many over the years, and new arrivals to Austin can be blessed with the same experience that I and my friends were lucky enough to have upon arrival. Thanks so all I have to say, Tom Smith.

>> Thank you, mayor. Council and planning commission for the opportunity to speak. My name is Tom Smith and I live in the long canyon neighborhood in northwest Austin. I'm the president of the long canyon homeowners

[3:18:16 PM]

long canyon homeowners association, and I'm also the president of 20 to 22 coalition of neighborhood associations, burns, which includes over 5000 households and ten member neighborhoods and districts. Ten and six. I'm speaking in opposition to the July 20th home initiative resolution. This resolution is based on a 2020 housing market analysis report which used data no more recent than 2017. Much has changed in the past seven years here in Austin and more recent data shows that increasing home supply and density does not necessarily result in more affordable housing. As an example, a Google search for Austin housing market Mueller pulls up the Mueller or Miller district and shows that today, in one of Austin's densest and smallest lot size neighborhoods, the average home price is \$860,000 in the home initiative resolution has it exactly backwards subdivide lots and allowing more homes per lot is

[3:19:16 PM]

allowing more homes per lot is driving prices higher here. We need to find a way for developers and property owners to guarantee that affordable houses will be built before or unlocking the ability to subdivide wide existing lots. Also, affordable housing needs to be located in areas with surrounding infrastructure, such as public transportation. Ann sufficient utilities and pedestrian accessible services so that it attracts the intended demographic. Pick small area regulatory plans are one way for the community to help in this process of finding the right locations for success. I encourage using this planning tool. In closing, I support affordable housing. I just oppose implementing citywide density rezoning, which has already been proven by. Thank you, speaker. Under time has expired to work.

>> Autumn Brenner or autumn Brennan. Can you hear me? >> Yes. Okay

[3:20:17 PM]

>> Yes. Okay

>> So we worked very hard to get a house in 2020, in district seven.

>> I've been here since 1998. I've worked really hard to get a house, and now people are telling me that this neighborhood that established since 1985 will then be where there will be a townhouse houses or rvs or or duplexes. It's very upsetting that these things will happen when we have chosen this neighborhood because it is single family neighborhood. There are a lot of cars are already parked on the streets. Where are these people going to park? If you have three families to a lot, you already have the become the neighborhood is a parking lot. I also don't think that it you know, that any of these things should be happening in established neighborhoods in Austin. And if you want to expand affordable housing, it should be in areas where there

[3:21:17 PM]

should be in areas where there is actual public transportation. Ann I live very close to palmer. Palmer is a very busy street. There are a lot of people that get hit and killed in this this, not this area, but all of Austin . This is not an area where even if you have duplexes and several houses to a lot, you're going to have a walkable area where people can walk around, be able to have public transportation, be able to go to stores. It's just not possible here. And that's understandable. And also, no jobs created. I know there are a lot of jobs created, but it doesn't mean you have to live in Austin. A lot of those jobs could become remote instead so that these people that want to live in other place, they can still have a job in Austin, but they don't have to work like live in Austin. That's my time. Thank you. Louis Sommerfeld. >> Hello. My name is Louis

[3:22:20 PM]

>> Hello. My name is Louis Sommerfeld. I'm a resident of district seven and I'm speaking to urge the commission and the council to support the home initiative. I'm a recent homeowner having just purchased a few months ago in order to make that purchase. I had to be making six figures at my white collar job and put down half a year's salary in order to afford the mortgage on a two bedroom, 850 square foot condo. This is what it takes to get just a scrap of the housing market in central Austin today. This is not accessible to normal first time home buyers. For young people making a normal salary either home prices go down or people move out of Austin in order to become homeowners. The future I see for Austin is a richly diverse community of all income ranges with blue and white collar workers alike, with their families able to live,

[3:23:21 PM]

their families able to live, work and play right here in Austin. On the home initiative is an excellent way to make the city of Austin an accessible and reasonable choice for middle income prospective homeowners. Thank you.

>> Barbara Epstein. Hello

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes. Yes.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Hello, Barbara, please proceed.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> We can hear you.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes, we will call her back. Fair enough. Ruth Lauer.

>> Hi, this is Ruth Lauer. I'm a resident of what I used to

[3:24:21 PM]

resident of what I used to describe as beautiful south Austin.

>> But with all the development, I can't do that anymore. For codenext was voted down several years ago. Residents paid for that election and the staff time invested in doing the research. Now we're having the same thing presented to us again and we're paying for multiple postcards to go to every address. I got three and more staff time for this hearing. Mayor Watson, we are being patient with the system. I repeat what voters said years ago. We don't need this new proposal. The house prices are going down. It's still an affordable housing crisis. But city situation has changed a lot in the last year. Like other cities, we're facing an affordable housing crisis, and this proposal doesn't solve that. It will displace more longtime residents and benefit investors and str operators and result in increased wear and tear on the

[3:25:24 PM]

increased wear and tear on the already overstressed infrastructure and roads. I support building a long transit corridors leave the neighbors impervious cover and trees alone. Thank you very much and council member Allison alter. I especially appreciate your questions and those of the commissioner. Thank you.

>> We're going to try Barbara again. Barbara Epstein, can you hear me?

>> Hello.

>> Please proceed. Barbara. How do I unmute my phone?

>> We can hear you. Can you hear me?

>> Yes, please proceed. Can you hear me okay?

>> You can hear.

>> We will try her another time. James Daly. Hey >> Hello. My name is Jimmy Daly.

[3:26:26 PM]

>> Hello. My name is Jimmy Daly.

>> I live in district nine. I'm speaking in favor of this proposal. Today is my birthday and what I'd really like for my birthday is more housing in Austin. One reason why like that is because of the neighbors I live in a house with two lots and the woman in the other lot is very excited. She's throwing a party and inviting us. I think more neighbors is a good thing. And it's also the kind of neighbors you have neighbors who live in your same property. I haven't had as much contact with my other neighbors who live outside and back in Georgia. I used to live near Atlanta, near university, similar to my situation now, and I lived in a four plex and got to know those neighbors in the four plex really well. The current proposal is modest in comparison. They're only expanding up to three units. Anyway, I think it's a little bit of a numbers game. The more people who live around you, the better chances you have of getting to know some of them that could help with the

[3:27:27 PM]

that could help with the loneliness epidemic. Build community. An additional reason of course, is rents having more housing will help lower prices. Rent has risen 25% around here in the last couple of years and it's distressing my finances. I worry for others who don't have maybe a stable income. The missing middle is direly needed and it would help with migration to help keep students from leaving after they graduate and also making it easier for others to come. And it would help with liberty too, letting people build what they want on their own land. Please legalize housing. One of the previous speakers said that the heart of Austin is in its neighborhoods. And with all due respect, I disagree. I think the heart of Austin is in its people. Thank you. Anthony Lozada.

>> Thank you, council, for being thank you, council for being here.

>> And for putting forward the home proposal. My name is Anthony and I'm a resident of district three. Mr. Velasquez's

[3:28:27 PM]

district three. Mr. Velasquez's district, and I'm absolutely, unequivocally in support of this wonderful proposal.

>> But this proposal is not without its detractors.

>> For all those listening to the testimony today, you will hear arguments that home will increase property taxes when it won't. This proposal increases housing supply. More supply means housing costs go down and property taxes will go down as taxes are only assessed against comparable homes. The same thing just happens in Austin rentals more supply, cheaper rents. It's down 5% on average over the past year.

>> Conversely, if we continue to restrict building homes as we do today, then housing costs and taxes will continue to go up.

>> We're simply asking to fix the expensive and unsustainable conditions that highly restricted zoning has created an inequity. It continues to create. You will hear questions about affordability. No measure encompasses all solutions. Affordability has been addressed in another wonderful measure that is already in existence. It is called affordable unlocked, and it stands head and shoulders among the best of affordability initiatives across the us. Go look it up. You will hear rhetorical questions about the water or the electricity or the schools or the roads.

>> How will we get around? Questions like this are designed

[3:29:29 PM]

Questions like this are designed to imply that nothing can be done and this is not true.

>> The answer is that nothing happens in a vacuum. The additional housing proposal is more environmentally cooling water, energy and commuting efficient across the board than all of the endlessly sprawling alternatives. This proposal will be one important piece of solving this puzzle by building more resource efficient housing. Lastly, you may hear outlandish claims about things that are not yet hashed out, things that are not in the measure being considered today, such as the rv provision or changes to impervious cover. These are distractions intended to embroil emotions and hardened hearts against what is ultimately good and overwhelmingly popular, providing more homes that current and future austinites need. I want to thank the council for your time and ask that you all vote for what is good, right? Just and neighborly support housing that is affordable for teachers, emergency responders in the middle and working class Watson stable affordable housing from a dream into reality. Thank you.

>> Rich green.

>> Yes, my name is rich green.

>> Thank you, mayor and city council for the opportunity. >> I'm a long time a long term

[3:30:30 PM]

>> I'm a long time a long term Austin resident and I'm going to go with an analogy real quick. Let's say I want to open a new restaurant here in Austin. Okay. I find my location. I check my zoning. It's for

restaurants. I construct a building, I hire employees, and it's a runaway success. Have a lot of customers. But there are other restaurants out there that aren't doing so well. They have only a few customers. The city council doesn't like this. They want to help these restaurants, despite lacking any particular experience in that area. How are they going to do that? Well they couldn't pass a new tax that would never pass the voters. And they can't completely rezone me because if they did that, they'd have to pay me in compensation for taking my property or my livelihood. So they come up with a very great idea, very clever, even. They're going to tweak the zoning code and change it to limit the number of customers that a restaurant can have. So this new tweak takes my customers and sends them to other restaurants. That's pretty clever. Don't you think? It is.

[3:31:31 PM]

clever. Don't you think? It is. They're not taking my property. They're just taking the value of my property. And that's exactly what's happening here. This this idea punishes those who reasonably relied on zoning categories that have been placed in place for a long, long, long time. And in my view, this is a decision that evidence is bad faith and it certainly destroys any credibility in whatever zoning classification options will exist after this. This housing change is more than just the change. It's a radical departure, not just from Austin zoning. It's a radical departure from thousands of years of property ownership. Erp and in light of these thousands of years of history about owning property, private property, freedom to use your property, I urge the council to reconsider this and I urge them to withdraw the zoning changes. Thank you very much.

>> Trenton Hendrickson. >> Hello, my name is Trina

[3:32:35 PM]

>> Hello, my name is Trina Hendrickson.

>> I'm a leader with central Texas interfaith through saint ignatius catholic church in south Austin. Seated has helped raise \$250 million in affordable housing bond.

>> Let efforts to raise 217 million to address homelessness and 40 million for rental assistance also pushes for supportive policies for mobile home residents. We are here to raise some concerns about initiative number one. Our primary concern is residents could be displaced. We question whether the homes initiative would truly improve affordability or just make developers richer with the potential of rising property taxes and values. Homeowners who have the money and the knowhow will take advantage of this initiative. But people struggling to pay their bills will be unable to reap these rewards.

>> Number two, we have pushed for density bonuses and proposed that the permitted size of accessory dwelling units not exceed the national average of 800ft !S.

>> Anything above that should have provisions for affordable housing. These provisions are

[3:33:36 PM]

housing. These provisions are important to guarantee affordability.

>> What measures are in place to make sure the home initiative ensures affordability number three, this is being packaged and sold as benefiting teachers, ems workers and medical professionals. If these are truly the beneficiaries, why not focus instead on subsidized housing for teacher families? And these professional families are co-op housing, prioritizing affordability.

>> We fear this initiative could turn into short term rentals without community benefit. We believe in multifamily and multi-gen housing should be available throughout the city, but affordability needs to be at the forefront in short, how can we be sure that the homes initiative will help community members live better lives and not just the rich, those who are already doing well? Thank you.

>> Susan pentel. My name is Susan pentel.

[3:34:39 PM]

Susan pentel.

>> I'm in district four. I have for a long time advocate for increased density and I support the proposals to allow three units on a single family zoning. However, I am disappointed that there is no mention or consideration of the needs needs of renters in this proposal or other proposal by city council.

>> Renters make up half the population in Austin and a higher percentage of renters need help remaining to live here . I'm a lifetime renter. I have lived in three ads a house in front of an Adu, a duplex, a fourplex, a large old house converted to apartments and a small house. And now I live in a large apartment complex. It's because there are so few options for people who rent in Austin. I

[3:35:40 PM]

for people who rent in Austin. I want to live on a quiet residential street in a small house or a duplex. I strongly encourage you to add to this proposal all some type of incentive for developers to sell property to management companies that can make it available for renters. We need a lot more options for renters in this city and people rent for a lot of different reasons. One reason is, is the cost. But there's also reasons like they're disabled or they're senior and they can't manage a house. They move frequently. They're saving for other things in their life or they live alone. They don't need a large house. Renting is just as valid a way of living as as owning a home. Thank you. Linda Bailey. >> Hi. A new analysis finds that

[3:36:43 PM]

>> Hi. A new analysis finds that liberalizing zoning rules and building more won't solve the urban affordability crisis and could exacerbate it. That's a quote by Richard Florida, who's the world's leading urbanist. We hear if you add more supply, housing prices will fall, making housing more affordable for people. But academics find a weak and nonexistent relationship between housing supply and prices. They agree that housing is part of the problem, but they say employment, wages and skills are the main driver of home price. As they say and I quote up zoning is far from the Progressive policy tool it's been sold to be. It mainly leads to building high end housing in desirable locations. Burns this means mass up zoning. Of the three units per lot has no basis that it will produce affordable housing. The housing department's October. 2023 affordable impact statement

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affordable impact statement study said its market forces that drive prices plus I can't find where the detailed impact on specific infrastructure like fire mitigation, sewer or road traffic access has been assessed . But if the goal is really affordable housing, put denser housing on the corridors or upzone the commercial areas and make affordability requirements, don't do this. Thank you.

>> Doug Wilson hello.

>> Yes indeed. City council members of the commission, Batman, everyone that's there, by god.

>> Hey, listen, guys, I've been living here. I'm I moved to Austin. Well, actually, I decided to live here. I hitchhiked around the country for a year and found Austin to be just a beautiful city. This

[3:38:44 PM]

be just a beautiful city. This was in 1975, and. And went home for a brief period. Came back, lived in my car for a week, and gosh, I know, mayor. I know I ran into you at the at the raw deal at least once or twice back in the day and some of you folks, I'm not going to give you my age, but I've been here a long time. Make it a long story short, I, like a lot of people came to this city because they enjoy Ed the people that they met, the people that either made the music or the people that they worked with, the people they love, the people they married and it's just discuss Singh this. And I know that there's there must be discussion about how our future is going to be planned here, you know, whether it's going to be through expanding homes or making a shuttle to the moon. I mean, that's always a possibility. I

[3:39:44 PM]

that's always a possibility. I was thinking about that back when I was young. I would just work all day and sleep and, you know, gosh, with with, you know, with these new ideas and enjoy cities going to the moon and space, etcetera. Perhaps we could just send folks to the moon during their working hours and bring them back and let them live a nice colonized skyscrapers. That would be nice. Now, then again, when we're going to get married and settle down, that's a different thing, right? We could all live in our little apartments, our little one house, a little tiny home, whatever the heck you got you, speaker.

>> Your time has expired. This doesn't make any sense. We. Wish I could give everybody.

>> I wish I could give everybody right now a raw deal. Pork chop. We think we've got Barbara

[3:40:45 PM]

We think we've got Barbara Epstein on the line.

>> Barbara Epstein on.

>> Thank you. I'm speaking today personally, not not on behalf of my neighborhood association. And somebody already made a good point about creating affordability, not by just building more. So I'll skip that part of my presentation. Until now, ordinances have made it illegal for homeowners to convert a detached single story garage or a guest cottage on a 10,000 square foot lot into ads , though that would have rapidly densified neighbor denser, ified neighborhoods without displacing anyone created affordable units, created a positive intergenerational housing, create an increased use of nearby public transit, and given homeowners money to pay their taxes. Under your proposed plan, no middle class homeowner is going to be building three units on 2500ft !S. Only private equity groups have the money for that. And they will be scraping and

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And they will be scraping and redeveloping the entire lot and either renting or selling condos. I suspect that upzoning and ending occupancy limits in my neighborhood code will only result in more people being crammed into housing. More overflow ING garbage and more rats, not lower rents, while code enforcement can't even keep up with the problems we have now in the Hancock neighborhood. What we need is, is upgrading our infrastructure, water, sewer, roads, sidewalks before burdening it with with increased density. And we need to plan carefully to avoid increased flooding. But in fact, my neighborhood is already what's considered the cutting edge of urban design. The 15 minute city and attractive walk able neighborhood that has mixed use and commercial use and trees. So it's hard to understand why you want to scrape every remaining

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want to scrape every remaining underdeveloped lot, removing every protected tree as current projects are doing. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and drew qadri.

>> Hello. Thank you for taking this public input session. My name is Andrew qadri. I own a home in the old Enfield neighborhood in district ten, and I'm strongly in favor of this home initiative. When compared to other cities in Texas. I think the best part about Austin is the ability for people in certain neighborhoods like mine to get to where they need to be without a car. I am privileged enough to live close enough to downtown such that I rarely ever have to use my car to get downtown. Ann let me just say that this experience has many benefits. I don't need to wait in traffic. I get outside and get exercise on my bike almost every single day and I get to enjoy the walkability and community around me. The homes initiative, especially phase two, will allow more people to

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two, will allow more people to enjoy this healthy, healthy lifestyle by increasing density, allowing mixed use development and keeping the cost of housing reasonable around Austin. Thank you.

>> And Adelia Obregon. I'm in Obregon.

>> I have lived in council district ten for 36 years and I support the home act initiative. There are correlations between the decline in Austin school district enrollment and the increase in housing development and housing. Now these families are moving to the affordable housing communities in suburban areas, adding to the traffic congestion that Austin's constantly complain about. Now, a city cannot thrive without children, and there parents, the teachers, nurses, firefighters,

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teachers, nurses, firefighters, police officers and construction workers. Some people oppose this proposal to protect property values, but no one's being forced to make any changes, any changes to the property. Who are we protecting those values for? If a young families can't afford to buy these homes, when we kick the bucket, a neighbor of mine with three children in elementary and one in middle school can't afford to buy her house, even on two incomes. She's a teacher. When we bought our house, nothing cost more than \$150,000. Today we couldn't afford to buy our house. Our adult children can't afford to be homeowners, but it would be great if we could build a tiny house in the back in one of them could move into our house. We can't become a city of millionaires who are already building their own houses and the old people who can't find buyers among young families.

[3:45:47 PM]

buyers among young families. That's unsustainable. Thank you for listening to me and please pass this on. Jesse mica, Lehman . Hi

>> Thank you, mayor. Council and members of the planning commission. My name is Jessica Lemmon. I am the senior associate state director of outreach and advocacy for aarp. Texas and I am speaking today in support of the changes to the city of Austin land development code. As we believe these changes are key to legalizing missing middle housing in Austin in the 2021 aarp, home and community preference survey of adults ages 18 and older shows that most Americans, including the 50 plus, prefer to live in walkable neighborhoods that offer a mix of housing and transportation options that are close to jobs, schools, shopping, entertainment and green spaces. Aarp believes that missing middle housing development can meet these needs

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development can meet these needs as a population of older austinites grow the importance of creating a variety of housing options will only increase as older homeowners who want to sell their residents and move into something nearby that's more affordable, compact and accessible routine. Discover such housing doesn't exist, especially for those who want to remain in their community. Close to friends and family. By allowing more housing types like duplexes. Triplexes tiny homes as adus folks do not have to choose between a large, detached home or a large apartment complex or worse, leave their community all together with people living longer. More and more older adults will be increasingly reliant on family caregivers, middle housing and housing for middle income earners can ensure their family members can also live in Austin. The average nursing home in Texas costs \$100,000 annually, and family caregivers are critical to keeping older adults in their home and community. So we believe these adjustments to zoning laws is an important and vital step in making this

[3:47:48 PM]

vital step in making this housing a reality in Austin. Thank you so much, Deborah Femat .

>> Hello. My name is Deborah Femat. I live in the seventh district. I am concerned about impervious coverage. FEMA will not ensure the entire city if the city engages in procedures that allow risk for additional flooding. So until we have done until the city has done studies bridge, we are all at risk of losing flood coverage, flood insurance coverage. And I have the data on that. Also I'm an 70 year old woman who has retired and property taxes increasing would be a serious problem to me

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would be a serious problem to me and other elderly people. If the land around us suddenly starts increasing in value due to three story units that developers are making a lot of money on and they will make money because they have to buy the land at current land rates and they have to build it. Current construction prices. So building more is not decrease cost. I'm an architect. I've worked for developers. I know that. Thank you. Bruce Garnier. Bruce Garnier. Jaime Olvera as hi, my name is Jamie Alvarez.

>> I sit on the historic landmark commission for district

[3:49:51 PM]

landmark commission for district seven and I'm a district four resident. I'm also an architect who has had the opportunity to work on a few Austin landmarks, which I'm committed to preserving. I'm here to speak in favor of the proposed changes because even as a professional with many years of experience and decently paid, I found it extremely challenging to become a homeowner, for I almost gave up but was able to do it by buying a home that needed work. An ugly duckling that I, as an architect, saw the potential in and of course had to pay a significant amount more than I thought. I would sitting on the commission, I see demolition permit requests regularly, sometimes for duplex duplexes or the older single family lot with three dwelling units on it. Typically typically being replaced by less units. One large home for one household wealthy enough to afford it will most likely not be a teacher, first responder, musician. An UT grad student, city worker, or many other occupations that are not the highest paid. They now have to commute for over an hour from places like bastrop, Kyle Elgin and eventually move away.

[3:50:52 PM]

Elgin and eventually move away. I think it's time to make it easier to build more housing, not just the most expensive housing. I also encourage the inclusion of language to help existing homeowners stay in their homes, preserve them, make it easier for them to add additional dwelling units for family members, rental or retirement income. Austin is an attractive city, which has always been growing to really keep Austin. Austin we need to make room for the people that have given the city its identity and make it vibrant not just for those that can buy their way in now. Thank you. Corey Toland and . Hi, my name is Corey Toland and I'm currently a master's student at UT Arlington school of social work and a constituent in council district four.

>> I want to voice my approval for the home initiative resolution, specifically the provision to remove restrictions on the number of unrelated

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on the number of unrelated adults living in a housing unit in the city's pursuit of equitable housing for all. We must address the unique challenges faced by individuals with a disability wanting to live in group homes instead of state run institutions. Exclusionary zoning policies have historically limited or prevented the establishment of group homes by restricting the number of unrelated persons in a unit. We know that community settings are more cost effective than institutions because of the fixed costs related to maintaining a large facility. Studies have also found that individuals with disability living in a group home report acquiring new skills, developing existing skills, gaining a feeling of competence and daily living activities, better health and having a larger social network. I think the proposed amendments to the city zoning code help create improved life conditions and opportunities for people with disabilities. I urge the city council to approve these amendments to increase occupancy

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amendments to increase occupancy rates so that we can reduce barriers to housing for everyone. Let us work together to make a more inclusive and supporting environment for all. Austinites, I appreciate you all for sitting and listening. Thank you for your time.

>> Joyce bassiano. Good afternoon.

>> Mayor Watson I'm Joyce bassiano and I'm opposed to the home resolution in both phases. It is a gross overreach by city government. The process implemented for this resolution is seriously flawed and even worse than that that was used by codenext when it was passed by city council July 20th of this year. Council member pool told us quote, this is the beginning of the conversation on these ideas and there will be multiple opportunities for public input in the coming months. I am

[3:53:54 PM]

in the coming months. I am insisting on frequent and regular public updates on the progress of home as we move forward, end quote. Genuine public input did not happen and because of that, many people are just now beginning to find out what the resolution proposes and they are angry. The city has done a poor job of informing the public through the local media. Recent updates show the resolution is a moving target, which makes it confusing to the public. The home resolution process fails to explore the unintended consequences that are many and impactful. We talked about flooding reduction of urban tree canopy, the aging infrastructure, monetizing residential properties, etcetera . The home resolution is a citywide upzoning of all single family zoned properties by Wright to multifamily use without any details as to how it will affect the quality of life of Austin residents. It will not be gentle density, rather it

[3:54:55 PM]

be gentle density, rather it will lead to wholesale displacement in many of our neighborhoods. As this isn't planning, it's plundering. Young people tend to support what they help create as a fix for the flawed planning process the city has been using since codenext. I recommend that the city adopt a collaborative process as a transparent process. Bring us all the environmentalists, the neighborhoods, the development community to the table to create a plan has expired work and that will. Soul proxies.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Sylvia Rosa. I grew up all over Austin and my family was displaced by rising rents many times and I currently live in district three where I've seen my rent increase \$350 over the past two years. I'm in community with many people who are unhoused, undocumented and low income bipoc renters facing rising rent and displaced Swint. It unfortunately doesn't surprise me that council has gotten to this point because

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gotten to this point because those who are most impacted by the housing crisis have the least time and energy to speak up and advocate, while those who promote false solutions like upzoning have \$1 trillion industry on their side. But now we're mobilizing to stop this because we have to. So I hope that council and anyone listening who is open to considering that they may not have the full picture of the housing affordability crisis will truly hear us. Low and even middle income homeowners can't afford to build even adus, let alone multiple units. So we know that this is investor driven redevelopment. The units produced won't be affordable to middle class families because investors will sell even smaller units to the wealthiest buyers and the rich will just keep being attracted to Austin in a vicious cycle. The uprooted report demonstrates that high growth, affluent, demand driven housing markets like Austin developers produce primarily high end housing and demolish existing affordable housing. The upzoning of single family homes will have a ripple effect of displacement on low income bipoc homeowners and renters throughout the eastern crescent, which will be targeted for

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which will be targeted for redevelopment because that's where profit margins for investors are the highest. If home was truly about affordability, it would require it. It is incredible to me that the home initiative would upzone Austin without even the low bar of affordability required by city incentive programs. Isn't it strange to you that Austin needs more housing is exactly what representative does for developers say when they're justifying the demolition of existing affordable housing and displacement of communities caused further loss of affordable housing supply? The affordability level of the housing Austin needs more of matters. We should be saying Austin needs more truly affordable housing. Home

is based on a simplistic supply side argument to deregulate or unleash the market and ignores that the kind of housing we need.

>> Speaker your time has expired, which would. Carol Phillipson. Hello, my name is Carol Phillips and I'm a district ten.

>> The new zoning proposal has many complex and confusing components, but one that is

[3:57:57 PM]

components, but one that is plain as day is that it's cutting the size of a building lot. Basically in half from. 5750 to 2500 square foot plus allowing 45% of that lot to be covered with. Housing will dramatically cut the amount of water needed to refill our ever shrinking aquifer. Maybe all decision makers for this proposal should learn about how Austin gets its water. Besides the highland highland lake system, which is at 40% full and lake Travis at only 34.4% full, even after a few days of rain, the Edwards aquifer supporting a 20 mean excuse me, 2.5 million Texans is an underground layer of porous rock sand dirt that stores our water. Austin's land is made up of an eroded honeycombed passageways for precious water to flow to the aquifer. This is completely different than other cities who support high density. This summer, the Edwards aquifer dropped to its lowest level in nearly a decade. At the end of July, the Edwards aquifer authority entered stage four restrict options. According to

[3:58:58 PM]

restrict options. According to the EPA, 60% of all Texas water is groundwater plus 45% impervious cover on a 2005 foot square foot lot will also cause flooding when rain as when it rains, as the water has nowhere to go. I've read it's proposed to keep trees. Well, how will that work with three times the structures on half the size lot? Yes. This plan will give us an affordable housing by contributing to the Edwards aquifer and our Lakes to go dry with the unpredictability of climate change and the uncontrolled development developers with no regards to how much water will be needed for each project. As a meteorologist said at a recent Icra meeting I attended, we're hoping for el Nino terrain to bring rain. We cannot make decisions on hope. We must make decisions on the facts we have at hand. We must control development to save the water for all of us. Austinites and yourself.

>> Speaker time is expired.

>> This zoning proposal. Nora desert. >> Good afternoon. City council.

[3:59:59 PM]

>> Good afternoon. City council. Mayor and planning commission.

>> My name is Nora desert and I currently live in district nine and I'm enrolled at UT Austin as a government major.

>> I'm speaking to you today in hopes that you'll vote in favor of the home initiative. My dad is currently putting me and my twin sister through college simultaneously. That means that we are obviously financially strained and the price of housing in medicine is only exacerbating this issue. Furthermore, my little brother, who's a senior in high school, wants to have the same opportunities that my sister and I have. But with the prices we're facing, especially because of housing, it's looking unlikely. Another example is my best friend, Katelyn.

>> Her parents are dealing with a lot of medical debt.

>> So she has to pay for housing on her own to hopefully alleviate her parents financial struggles.

>> The issues that her studies come first so she can only work part time. This means that when searching for housing in her price range, we only found that there may be two housing complexes near campus that she can afford.

>> Simply put, Austin is not a city that students on a budget can afford to live in. Understand that despite these

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Understand that despite these being isolated examples, our experience is are not exceptions but the norm. Currently, all UT Austin dorms collectively can't even house half of the freshman body outsourcing.

>> Excuse me outside sourcing housing to the private sector means that there are around 40,000 undergrads students that are relying on legislation such as this one to survive.

>> That's 40,000 students worrying about having a roof over their head that they can afford rather than their studies. I'm urging you to listen to those who are inheriting the city. Students like me. I think I can speak for every college student in a similar position that we love this city, but it's not making an effort to keep us here voting yes for the home initiative enables more affordable homes to be built because the amount of land required per unit will be smaller. It will put Austin on the right track to have a vibrant community of young students who aren't spending over half their income on rent every month. I'm asking you on behalf of all UT Austin students and the broader Austin population to vote in favor of the home initiative such that we can continue to call this city

[4:02:00 PM]

can continue to call this city home. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you all. Thank you for listening to me.

>> Karen Fernandez. Hello.

>> Council members. My name is Karen Fernandez and I'm the current president of the Matthews lane neighborhood association.

>> I am speaking in opposition Ann our major concerns include the increase in impervious cover and the flooding that will follow as well as the strain on our inadequate roads, water, our electrical and sewage systems. The city is well aware of our issues, but continue to tell us that there is no money in the budget. How is this proposal going to make a difference? I find it interesting that in the presentation, deed restrictions were mentioned as a possible limiting factor. Will the city set up a new system to address those issues? A number of us are currently involved in taking legal action to enforce our restrictions due to the fact that the city has recently allowed developers to subdivide two lots in our neighborhood

[4:03:01 PM]

two lots in our neighborhood beyond the unit number restriction. Despite multiple emails and phone calls, reports citing the violation and highlighting our deeds, city staff just repeated their mantra that they do not enforce deed restrictions, that it is up to homeowners to legally enforce them if something isn't done to address this issue. Isn't this proposal just encouraging more violations? We do not have a housing crisis in Austin. We have an affordability crisis. If city really cared about affordability issue, they would stop upzoning the mobile home lots that are just south of us. In my neighborhood, they could waive the fees and help homeowners secure financing to build the guest homes which are already allowed in the current code. Instead, you're trying to sell these code changes as meeting our need for affordable housing, when in fact it will lead to more displacement but more money for the city coffers and developers. We are not for that and we would like the city to include the neighborhoods and long time residents in trying to address this issue. Thank you for your time.

[4:04:01 PM]

for your time.

>> Bruce Grenier. Bruce Grenier. Cesar Acosta. Hello.

>> Hear me?

>> Yes. Please proceed. Hello

>> Thank you. My name is Acosta. I live in district four. I have the honor of serving our community in fighting condition. And I'm calling putting in my voice. I think this is an important measure that will help

bring additional housing into our community and I know much of the conversation has focused on how this will not help improve the situation for our low income or unhoused community. And I believe that to be the case as well. But I also think that doesn't mean this isn't an

[4:05:01 PM]

doesn't mean this isn't an important measure. Our housing policy and the crisis we face is multiple faceted and will take many different policies to support it. This rule, above all else, increase the housing supply, which will in the long term create the conditions that will allow for more housing and more people to live in our city. And most importantly, it will do it across the board. Part of what causes the displaced in this gentrification that we've seen in Austin is because that is where development was allowed to expand and the density was focused. This will allow for better housing of all types for all members of our community across the board. Now things like improving land grant, supporting more state funded housing will help our low income community and support more housing for those in the affordable need. And I guarantee all the people here supporting the home initiative would support that as well. But this is about trying to create the conditions for more housing for all. Austinites in the long term , across many generations beyond what we are today. We have a responsibility for all those who

[4:06:02 PM]

responsibility for all those who are going to be living here after us and the way to make sure that there is housing in ballpark diversity, not just in those communities that don't have resources to keep their communities as they want them forever. I really hope that you support this initiative and thank you for taking the time and courage to put this forward. Take care. Danny keshet speak.

>> Hello, this is Daniel keshet from district six.

>> I'm calling asking you to pass this truthfully, now is not the time to pass this legislation.

>> The time to pass. It was ten years ago. 15 years ago, before we had the massive growth in prices that has driven out a lot of people from Austin. My best friend moved to Houston to move into a into a townhouse, the kind of housing that we need here in Austin, the sort of density that would allow ordinary people who work middle

[4:07:03 PM]

ordinary people who work middle class jobs, who works for the state to buy a house eventually. So many of my friends have realized they will never be able to afford a house in Austin. Austin is sort of no

longer a part of the American dream and action is like like the legislation you have here will allow opportunities for more people to be part of that. Thank you.

>> Brian Poteet. Brian Poteet.

>> Hi.

>> My name is Brian Fauci and I live in the north loop neighborhood. I love living in this neighborhood, but I fear what it might look like in ten years if city council doesn't do something to modernize our zoning code. Million dollar homes are being built all the time and older homes are

[4:08:03 PM]

time and older homes are skyrocketing in value too. It's no surprise that large lots and large homes on large lots in a desirable neighborhood are becoming so expensive. We need more housing options, which is why I support the home initiative allowing more units on single family lots will address our housing shortage while adding family friendly housing types. Additionally, more housing in our central neighborhoods will reduce sprawl, which reduces strain on our infrastructure and limits carbon emissions. Please pass the home initiative. Thank you for your time.

>> That concludes our remote speakers. We will move to in-person.

>> All right. Thank you. What will happen now is the clerk's office will call all a few names and when she calls your name, please go ahead and make your way to the front. Even if you're not the next speaker. But if you're on deck or in the circle, whatever it might be, the right

[4:09:06 PM]

whatever it might be, the right sporting analogy here, make your way down and find a place to sit and then please Luz utilize the fact that we have two podiums and alternate on the podiums so that we will be more efficient and have respect for those people who may be speaking after you. So with that, thank you. And I'll turn it back to the clerk's office.

>> Emily lindmeier. Chris Gannon, Lisa gray and Arlington, Helbing. Please make your way down to the podiums and state your name before you speak for the record.

>> I'm Arlington, Helbing good afternoon. I'm here not in support of the current proposal. The joint center for housing studies at Harvard university said, quote, merely eliminating single family Zones, history suggest is unlikely to increase

[4:10:08 PM]

suggest is unlikely to increase housing stock significantly. You have to roll back environmental controls. I moved to Austin because it was green and I would recommend we keep our city values in place. I really applaud god that I saw in the current proposal. You don't want to roll back impervious cover requirements, but that can happen and you get any significant increase peace in housing which is the goal. I've lived in duplex and triplex neighborhoods in my life. If everyone. 100% has more impervious cover off street parking to accommodate the added residents, it's unavoidable. For a very practical matter. Let's talk about trash day with a triplex on a single family lot. You now have triple the trash

[4:11:08 PM]

You now have triple the trash cans you have now I have three. So that's nine. And you have more residents. So parked there. Parked on the streets, how will you fit all of that on a trash day and how will it be picked up ? You have to have more impervious cover on site parking to pull off this kind of thing. This is an investor land grab I've read a lot about about this. More income is to be made for multiple units. So more investor owned versus owner occupied real estate will occur, including gentrification. This is what happened in Decatur, Georgia. In modest neighborhoods and it moved people out. It moved homeowners out. What about this idea. To okay, thank you.

>> Hi, I'm Lisa gray. I don't love doing this. So and I can't believe you all have to sit here

[4:12:09 PM]

believe you all have to sit here for I don't know how long you're going to be here.

>> I get to go home.

>> Anyways. I'm Lisa gray. I'm in support of the home initiative. I've lived in Austin for almost 20 years now, staying after I graduate from UT, like a lot of us, I've always liked Austin. It has a community feel with a core still being downtown and has not sprawled into Houston or dfw that feels more fractured. But in the past 15 years, at least since I've been paying attention, Austin code has not supported density in central areas. It actually went the other way and encouraged one single family home on one lot. And second homes were capped at 1100 square feet, which can barely fit two bedrooms and two baths. So the missing middle is just not out there right now. It's not getting built because it can't. The proposed code will allow more varied growth in central Austin and more options for buyers. People keep moving here and the city keeps growing. We're overdue for code changes to allow the city to catch up with that growth. Anyway, thank the city council members and planning commission to sit through all this and who are taking a stand in addressing

[4:13:09 PM]

taking a stand in addressing housing. Please vote for this. So my nephew's daughter and new people coming to the city can still have a chance to live in the city and so we can all grow together.

>> Hey, y'all, I'm Chris Gannon. I'm a local architect. I'm here in support of this measure, the Austin Georgetown corridor has been the fastest growing in the nation for the last 12 years. And we just don't have enough homes. There's just no way around that. Currently, the land code is out of date. In 1931, the minimum lot size was 3000ft². It changed to the current 5750 in 1948, same year that they removed the or that they made racially restrictive covenants illegal. That's not a legacy that I want to hang my hat on. And there's a lot of precedent for how do cities grow

[4:14:12 PM]

precedent for how do cities grow equity equitably. So I look at historic or older cities like Boston and Buffalo, and they're filled with wonderful little three plexes or the Boston triple decker. That's the typology that helped build out Boston small apartment buildings are mixed in with single family homes and duplexes and triplexes these make for really nice neighborhoods. I want to applaud you guys and the city council for doing this in a really piece by piece way. I think that this is the right way to do it. Let's make sure we get each piece right as we build upon it. There's a few key things that we need to get right, like we need to incentivize building smaller and more affordable units, and we need to incentivize keeping the homes that are already there. This is something that's going on right now is that lots of our existing building stock

[4:15:12 PM]

of our existing building stock is being torn down in favor of much bigger or larger single family homes. That's not a trend that we want to do. And I think that this has a real chance at getting that right. I'm for neighbors. I like people. And I think this is going to bring more people. So thank you. Our next speaker is Susan Spataro, and she had two minutes donated by Sharon Blythe.

>> Sharon Blythe, are you here? Can you raise your hand? She she's stepped out a minute for the restroom, but she's here. She has to be present.

>> Miss Spataro. She has to be here for you to take that four minutes.

>> Let me wait then for her to come back. Are you okay with that?

>> Is there somebody already been called?

>> I'll call the next batch of people. Darla Evans, Robin Sanders, Aaron Schmelzer, Sean McCarthy, and Bill Mccamley. Please make your way to the

[4:16:12 PM]

Please make your way to the front.

>> If your name has been called. If your name has been called, please make your way to the microphone, please state your name. Somebody start talking. Yeah, go ahead. Okay. State your name, please.

>> Hello, this is Sean McCarthy. Thank you, mayor. Council and planning. Members of the planning commission for your time today. Please do not eliminate single family housing. These changes will increase Austin's cost of living. Eliminate the possibility of home ownership for working and middle class earners, drive density of a permanent renter population that Austin does not currently have. The infrastructure to support exacerbate the str market erosion of neighborhoods and schools and drive out existing and especially diverse communities and families, ultimately benefiting only real

[4:17:13 PM]

ultimately benefiting only real estate interests. These changes only advantage the wealthy, private equity and corporate real estate interests that have the capital and wherewithal to acquire existing single family homes and redevelop them into multi unit full and short term rental properties. At ever increasing levels of rent. This will displace existing families who do not have the luxury of moving somewhere else and financing to rebuild their current home simply to afford the house they live in. This pushes Austin into a totalitarian renter state, increasing home values and property taxes whereby single individuals Ralls and dual income families are unable to finance or afford home ownership of their own reducing equity diversity and quality of life for all residents that value community Spencer specifically allowing for up to three units with the intention of further subdividing lots and phase two while avoiding the discussion of infra structure, including electricity, water waste, emergency services is a dereliction. Eliminating str and occupancy restrictions is

[4:18:17 PM]

occupancy restrictions is willfully irresponsible. And to what end? If Mueller's redevelopment is a template for success, please explain how today's Mueller median home value of 860,000 at the highest interest rate in decades is a path to affordable home ownership density does not equal affordability solutions for affordable housing should be pursued. However they should not be as rushed and shortsighted as this. There should be adequate due diligence. Please listen to voters as if this is a will of the people. Please put this to a vote. Thank you for your time today.

>> Good afternoon and thank you for allowing this input. My name is robin Sanders. I'm a 42 year resident of Austin and a 32 year resident of my current home. It is an historic home. I love it. I have given it a lot more energy and money than a piece of real estate might ordinarily

[4:19:17 PM]

real estate might ordinarily deserve. But I love it. It was built in 1891, and at this point my property taxes for my home are a factor of seven of what they were when I first owned this home. I am a retired city of Austin lawyer. I have a great struggle to maintain my home and to make this a livable neighborhood. Even though I've been there so long. I love the benefit of the value that out of the neighborhood that I live in. But my property taxes prorated the total number divided by 12 is more than twice what my mortgage ever was. So if that gives you a sense of how we are impacted, I don't see how this proposal cannot increase property taxes. I don't think that's a hate issue or a stoking fear issue. Our property taxes

[4:20:18 PM]

fear issue. Our property taxes increase dramatically anyway, and now we're looking at really a developer driven. I think it has to be proposal. People aren't going to build tiny houses. They're going to be the build the biggest houses they can get away with and sell them for the most money they can. That's just how it works. And so now we're going to be comparable to these houses that are going to really deeply affect the infrastructure. I so appreciate the commissioners questions about fire safety and runoff, and I want to know how historic homes are going to be protected under this because the best environmental use we can make is using what we already have heritage trees as well. Thank you for your time.

>> Miss Blythe is here.

>> Mayor, thank you very much. Miss pitaro, please state your

[4:21:19 PM]

Miss pitaro, please state your name for the record. That's right.

>> Susan Spataro and I live in eight.

>> I wish to express my very strong opposition to the elimination of single family zoning and the destruction of neighborhoods in the name of affordability. If affordability is your true motive, the increased cost of infra structure must be factored in. And I thank you, miss Moschella, for asking those questions. That is a very significant question. Ann so what you need to know is what new infrastructure

is going to be, what it's going to cost, and who's going to pay for it. That's a plan. And you can't just just eliminate or change zoning without a plan for infrastructure and that's the hard infrastructure we also have a soft, what I would call a soft infrastructure problem here, and that is we don't have enough police emergency workers to serve the people we have now. And you need to look at that to explain this this plan to me

[4:22:19 PM]

explain this this plan to me looks in values. The people that are moving into Austin at the expense of people who live here. In other words, new people want to move in. So you if you've owned a home for 30 years or worked to get home, we need to move you out or we need to change everything because they want to come in. And I object to that out. If you look at the pictures that your planners put up there and ask yourself when you were a child, is that how you lived? Or did you maybe have a little house with a yard where the child could be raised and go to school and turning those those descriptions into Austin is really a very sad situation when a developer comes in to develop an area, what they do is they have to have a plan for sewer water, drainage, impervious cover, paving, electrical demand and the developer is required to provide that. And furthermore, they are required to pay for it. But now what you're saying is we will

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what you're saying is we will increase that by three times. And if you cut the lots in half, six times, and who's going to pay for that? Is that going to be a general tax increase? Will just part of the people in the subdivision need it. And I'm not talking about infrastructure coming from the street. I'm calling calling, looking at the street, for example, if you look at a 50 home subdivision, you just look at sewage for one, you know, example, all usually that would take 10,000 gallons of sewage a day. A developer would have to provide that when building plus a 20% overage. So that's 12,000 gallons of sewage flow for those 50 houses with now three times as many. You've got 36,000 gallons of sewage. Those lines are not going to take care of it. And so you have to figure out what are you going to do and how is it going to be paid for the fiscal aspect of

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paid for the fiscal aspect of this proposal and the reality of what I believe to be wholly inadequate infrastructure, there need to be clearly understood. And when a neighborhood of 50 grows to 60, 70, 90, 120 or 150 existing infrastructure that taxpayers didn't have to be paid before and now will be replacing all over the city. Who's going to pay for it? This does not help affordability in Austin, Texas, the other thing you know that you hear when you come to these hearings is that density be increase or

decrease increases, affordability. How many apartments do we have in Austin, Texas, today as opposed to five years ago? Are they cheaper? I haven't seen that. So I think that that is a fallacy and gentrification. Let's look at that. We went into east Austin, small homes, Rainey streets and other example, small homes. Many people of color own that and they were forced to

[4:25:23 PM]

that and they were forced to leave. Thank you.

>> Please go ahead. Hi my name is Aaron Schmelzer.

>> I support this measure with the very strong and specific caveat individuals who can afford to build and rent it out will be the ones to gain the equity from this. They get the financial boon. Currently, I don't see any protection clarified. Protection for renters or a way to ensure low and middle income earners actually can buy or rent these new homes. I think council needs to add and enforce a clarification for the serious problem home is a small but important step, and I hope this initiative eventually leads us to, as a city, to create middle density mixed use neighborhoods. You've also heard some complaints about neighborhood character for these are not serious arguments. The neighborhood character is what we make it. Your neighborhood

[4:26:24 PM]

we make it. Your neighborhood doesn't look the way it does now or likely doesn't. Ultimately. What's more important? Giving people a place to live or pushing low and middle income earners to the periphery of our communities and making it harder for them to find opportunity as I've also heard, complaints about Mueller, there's a reason that those costs I don't actually know if the numbers that they're giving are real. The average home prices I haven't checked myself, but the reason that ostensibly it costs so much is that people want to live there. And it's not the urbanist utopia. Maybe they like to pretend it's still a very car driven environment. Yes, the homes are close together, but we're not actually providing all basic essential needs within a 5 minute or 15 minute walk slash bike ride. Okay, so these are these complaints about Mueller being a grand experiment. They kind of fall flat because as a

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kind of fall flat because as a city, as a whole, we're still not doing that at a broad level. People like that, we see that people vacation in places that have that. So why can't we have that here? Thank you.

>> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Mr. Chair, my name is bill mccamley. I'm a resident of district one and I rise to support this both professionally and personally.

>> Professionally. I'm the executive director of transit forward.

>> We're an Austin 500 and 1c3 with a mission to educate, meet and engage our friends and neighbors about project connect.

>> We all know that public transit systems do better when you have more people living near transit corridors.

>> And we believe strongly that this act, along with reducing parking minimums, reducing compatibility requirements and hopefully some further zoning issues, can actually allow more people to live near zoning corridors and ride the trains and busses.

>> That project connect will build out. That's not only good policy generally, but the federal government is going to

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federal government is going to ask for those increases when the Austin transit partnership goes for their grant application. So the more we can do here, the more ammunition we give them to get as much money as possible to build this great new transit system. Personally, I, I spent two and a half years as a state secretary of labor, and when you do that, you learn that workers need three things to be near their jobs. They need affordable housing, transportation, be able to get there and childcare without those three things, people can't go to work. You heard from the aarp where folks are having trouble finding caregivers. You heard from the unions saying their folks can't find work. You heard from a medical provider saying they can't hire nurses or nursing assistants or folks to run their medical operations here. If we want our workers to live near us and give us the services that we need, they should have the ability to live in Austin just like the rest of us. Thank you all very much for the work that you're doing. Appreciate it. And we support this issue. Thank you . Right. >> Next batch of folks, Irene

[4:29:26 PM]

>> Next batch of folks, Irene Pickard, Edgar Handel, a new Susan and Susan folic and a friend, Roseanne, please come forward if your name has been called and if there's nobody at the podium, step up there and start talking.

>> But tell us your name first. What are they up? Yes, miss Picard. Okay

>> Thank you. Thank you very much for being here. My name is Irene Picard. I have slides, and I also have a handout. The slides should be up on the screen right now, and I will be begin when they go up.

>> They're up. They're up.

>> Oh, thank you. I just can't see them myself. Okay. To quote someone who I really admire and appreciate, we don't want to hurt something Singh that we love. And in this case, it's our trees in our city. Our trees that provide for our health. And we know that our trees are

[4:30:28 PM]

we know that our trees are crucial for provide Singh runoff protection, absorption of water. They provide emotional support. They absorb sulfur dioxide, nox, nitrogen dioxides. We know that the heart congestive heart failure rates go up in places where they don't have trees. As well as heart attacks. However, we can say we have a great audio dense tree protection ordinance in Austin. We do. But I found out I looked at a Texas A&M. Survey and found out in Austin in 2014. Do you know what percentage of the trees were protected by our great ordinance . Is 3.44% of the trees. 3.4. And now now we are looking at at

[4:31:31 PM]

And now now we are looking at at if you could go on to the next slide. Thanks and the next one. And now we are looking at the removal of almost all the trees in our city. And if. I'm sorry, ma'am, but your time, it takes trees five years to die after their roots have been destroyed. And so we can all have good consciences. Thank you. All right.

>> Here. Sorry. Hi

>> Hi.

>> I'm Edgar Handel. I'm a resident of the go valley neighborhood in district three, and I've come here to speak in favor of the home initiative. About five years ago. Now my wife and I were able to buy a home in the go valley neighborhood. And part of what enabled that was that there were that it was allowed on on that

[4:32:31 PM]

that it was allowed on on that lot, that there would be two homes on that property that really helped us get a leg up and be able to buy a home and start a family. Sorry. I think that the issue now though, is that if you look in my neighborhood and you see even the lots that are split into ab units, the prices are now probably doubled in what we had paid back when we bought our home. And even worse, the lots that are now developed as single family homes are. I've seen listings as high as one and a half, \$2 million. So it is very, very crazy out there. I think then that the next natural step as it makes sense to me would be to move to three units per lot or even more or as maybe possible in the future because as I'm

really hoping that we can at least get back to a place where families like mine can afford to live in this neighborhood, but even really go

[4:33:31 PM]

neighborhood, but even really go further beyond and achieve levels of affordability that are greater than what was available even when my me and my wife bought five years ago, I would really like to see in the future a neighborhood where more families can afford to live and more households in general can afford to live in our neighborhood and a future where our kids can afford to live. In Austin, in and near us. I'd like to thank everyone who has supported this. I'd like to thank council member Leslie pool and everyone on council and planning commission who has helped move this forward. I hope that we can pass this and see even more reforms in the future. Thank you. Thank you. Hi my name is anusha Zion.

>> I live in the gold valley in district three. I'm here in support of the home initiative. When I was younger, my family and I lived with my grandmother

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and I lived with my grandmother for some time. During that time, she sold her detached home and used that money towards building a fourplex. She downsized into one of the homes within the four plex and she shared the rest with my aunts and uncles and their families. This was also an opportunity for her family to have some rental income. Where I grew up, this was not only allowed but also not uncommon. Austin should allow families to have the benefits of this kind of multi-generational housing and living close in a community. The home initiative will make it possible to build diverse housing all across Austin, including housing that can be used for multigenerational households. I hope council approves these changes as a step towards a diverse and healthy Austin. Thank you. Thank you. Hello. My name is Fran rezaian. I'm here in the support of the home initiative. I was fortunate enough to purchase a townhouse in district one over ten years ago, and I would really like to give that kind of opportunity to people now in Austin as well.

[4:35:32 PM]

people now in Austin as well. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Next batch is Benjamin Chen, Brennan, griffin, Kai gray, Tommy vineyard and Nicole Nosek.

>> Please come forward. If your name has been called and if no one's at the microphone, go ahead and take it. State your name and please give us your thoughts. If there is an open podium, please make your way to that podium and begin your two minutes.

>> Yeah, make state your name for the record.

>> You can begin.

>> My name is Kai gray. I'm the vice president of the Austin info coalition and I want to talk about why I'm in support of the home initiative. About ten years when I started this working building adus you go to the city and you'd have a lot and you'd say, what can I do with this? And they're like, well, you can build a big house on a big lot. And I'm like, well, I don't want to do that. I want to build like multiple

[4:36:32 PM]

want to build like multiple small houses. That kind of makes more sense. And they're like, well, that's, that's illegal. We don't allow this, which is confusing because I didn't know if we had a shortage of like 2 or \$3 million houses, which is what we're seeing now with, with a single family zoning and this is another thing too, people always talk about developers and I want to be clear, developers are going to make money either way. If developers can only build single family homes, they're going to build 2 or \$3 million homes and make money like that's not going to stop developers. The question is what kind of city do we want? I think is what we should focus on and the thing I've seen where most of what we'll do is we'll take a lot and we'll keep the house and build an Adu and the reason why I personally find that impactful is there's a lot of numbers about, you know, the amount of people and everything. But if we just have of the populations growing and we don't build the amount of housing to support that, what's going to happen is we're going to force more and more people outside the city and Ed, and that has real consequences for people. It impacts their quality of life. It means people are spending more time in traffic, having to drive back and forth from the outskirts into the city where

[4:37:33 PM]

outskirts into the city where they're spending less time with their families and with their kids and with their loved ones. That means people are less likely to be able to see their kids first steps or their first words because they're spending time in traffic. That just doesn't make any sense. It also, while they're spending this time going back and forth, they're making climate change worse because we're forcing them to drive more and more. I don't know why we would want to take people who want to live centrally and have a more low carbon lifestyle and force them to live farther and farther away . It just it just hasn't made any sense. And the other thing I've enjoyed is when we do this, when we take the existing house in the back house, those are a lot of times the most affordable market rate.

>> Sorry. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

>> Council members and mayor Watson for your time on this very important issue. My name is Nicole Nosek and I'm the chair of Texans for reasonable solutions. We're an organization focused on making the American dream of home ownership attainable for Americans and

[4:38:33 PM]

attainable for Americans and Texans. I'm also the chair of Austin, habitat for humanity policy advocacy committee as well. And this is braxy over here. We are strongly in support of the home proposal. Anyone who supports having a community with emts, teachers and nurses within our community will support the home proposal. I would love to discuss the strong relationship between home and taming housing prices for our middle class. Critical workers, young professionals and seniors in public policy. As you all know, one of the strongest pieces of evidence to look at is history. Did similar policies work in other cities in the past? They answer. Here is a clear and resounding yes in Houston, when looking at when looking at how much home townhomes cost, newly built compared to non townhome regular homes. You'll notice that it's \$345,000. Median home price for a newly constructed townhome. When you take a look at a non townhome, an a median home, it ends up being \$540,000.

[4:39:34 PM]

home, it ends up being \$540,000. This is according to research by pew in 2019. Despite many apolis growing in population after passing a very similar proposal as the one before you today, the rents stabilized. When you adjust for inflation far more than its comparable midwestern cities. Despite other midwestern cities losing population, most other cities rents increased by over 30, while Minneapolis rent held steady relative to other midwestern metros. This is very significant. We have tried this policy and it has worked in other cities like Minneapolis and Houston, home served as one of the key policies to tame housing prices in Minneapolis. And if history tells any story, it will contribute greatly in taming housing prices here as well. A vote against home is a vote against the middle class. Shaw in Austin home. Thank you. Thank you. >> The next batch is Jeffrey

[4:40:35 PM]

>> The next batch is Jeffrey Bowen. Oh. Oh.

>> If your name has been called, please come forward. Be ready to testify and I want to cut off anybody's enthusiasm. But there's a lot of people signed up to speak, and if we add time, then somebody's going to be speaking at 1:00 in the morning when you're home in bed, having clapped. So

>> Hi, city council. My name is Benjamin Chen and I've been a native austinite for 26 years and I currently reside in district one. I'm here to express support towards upzoning. The three units as well as other zoning changes. I think others have brought up great points on up zoning, leading to density and affordability. But I want to focus more on the home initiative towards allowing tiny homes and rvs. I bought my home in central east Austin four years ago. I put an rv in the front yard and I hooked it up to

electricity and water, and I thought this was a great idea. In fact, I talked to my direct adjacent neighbors and they had no issue with it at all. I it's a guest space for visiting

[4:41:38 PM]

a guest space for visiting friends and family. It's I've inspired my adjacent neighbor to put an art studio in her front yard I'm sorry, her backyard and I've even used my rv to provide shelter for the unhoused. But let me elaborate on this. Last year in December, council members, I know you all remember this in 22, there was a week of freezing temperatures in Austin in nearby my home, there is a camp of about 10 or 20 individuals. It's the boggy creek greenbelt that I don't visit. It too much. I just I see. I see guys coming in and out of there. And this one day I talked to Jason Ann. I just make small talk with him from time to time and I offered Jason Ann just to stay in my rv for a week. No questions asked. He stayed there for a week without issue. I wish I could have helped out more under the current zoning this rv in my lot is not allowed. Code compliance came by the first time to tell me the rv needs to be screened with a fence. So I did that code. Compliance came by a second time to tell me the rv

[4:42:39 PM]

second time to tell me the rv was considered a dwelling unit. I told them the story about Jason and how it was illegal code compliance came by the third time to tell me I cannot use my rv as an office and the art studio is also not in code. I'm going to wrap up soon, but I'm not going to talk about the encroachment of property rights. That is instead council. I just want you to consider how tiny homes and rvs can be part of a diverse housing solution. Thank you. Please go ahead.

>> Hello.

>> My name is Tommy vineyard.

>> I'm a resident of district five and I'm here to voice my support.

>> Part of the home initiative being taken up by council. Thank you.

>> Council member pool for your sponsorship of this item and thank you.

>> Council member Ryan alter for your service to our district. Keep Austin weird, right? That's a phrase that has become emblematic of our city lately. This phrase has been co-opted by housing opposition groups to say

[4:43:40 PM]

housing opposition groups to say bluntly, those who are moving here are ruining our city. I want to remind everyone that what originally made Austin weird was its ability to allow a diverse population, a cheap place to stay and to call home. Our city is changing, and if we do not embrace that change, Austin will continue to become less and less affordable and less and less diverse, as shown in places like Minneapolis and Houston, building more housing stabilizes, rent prices, spreads the city's tax burden among more people, and crucially, creates a more diverse housing stock that can be more affordable to those that need it. Our teachers, our firefighters, our musicians, our social workers, our artists, our elderly, the folks around us who are struggling to stay in the city that they grew up in. They all deserve an opportunity to own or rent a home in Austin, Texas, and specifically in the communities that they grew up in. And or are serving. Let's stop digging in our heels on housing and let's start opening up our arms to the people who want to move here. After all, it

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want to move here. After all, it is the people of Austin who make this city great and we need to do whatever we can to make this city affordable for its residents. Please use this item as a stepping stone to embrace the change that is occurring around us and make our city better for generations to come. Thank you.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Jeffrey Bowen. I'm a in district eight. I'm here representing myself. There's been a lot of this that we've gone back and forth on, and I was here for the first time when we started talking about this. And I'd like to thank Allison alter and also council member Kelly for their stand on listening to the rest of us there. We have a whole generation that has lived here and they want to stay here. My kids are no longer live here because they can't afford it. But I also understand that. But I'm here also in support of the fact of those that are being driven out. I'm now 67, but I'm at that point of I'm somewhere

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at that point of I'm somewhere depending upon what year it is in the 50 to 60% mfi and I'm still working only because I want to, but I hate to see long time residents being driven out because of the high taxes and the extraordinary cost. I'm also a property rights advocate. You should have the right to do this, but we're also talking about the reduction in our canopy, our tree canopy, which recently was reported at 30. So what's more important, our trees are putting in a 400 square foot tiny home. So I'm glad to see that at least the impervious cover is still part of the discussion. So how many are really going to be affected when it comes down to this? There may be some houses mine probably will not. On my 6000 square foot lot with my house and those issues there are some good things in here, but we need to make sure we're involving the community in bastrop as we all know, is now going and getting rid of what they currently

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rid of what they currently started out with their codenext from three years ago and starting the whole process over because of the amount of tons on the consequences that have been involved with this whole process. When they changed over to they're having a meeting next month to where they're involving the public again, I urge you to involve the neighborhoods and those that are involved. Thank you, sir.

>> Thank you. All so much for hearing those that are involved and live in your community today .

>> My name is Katrina Miller. I'm a resident of district eight and I work for farm and city. We're a nonprofit think tank dedicated to high quality urban and rural habitat for Texans in perpetuity. So what part of what that means is ensuring that both the urban landscape and the rural landscape can remain intact and kind of maintain the character that people are thinking of when they think of that. So part of the issue in

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that. So part of the issue in Austin today is that people are imagining a rural habitat, but they live in a city they live in an urban area and that isn't that isn't compatible with reality. So what we're saying here today is that we need density in part because it does actually improve affordability and improving the availability of housing stock simply does improve affordability, but also that current landowners, if they're tax burdened, they can build a couple of ads and rent out that land and potentially be able to stay in a way that they wouldn't have been able to before. That's an option that will be opened up by this bill and for that reason, I'm very much in support of it. I'm glad to see that transit forward and I are very aligned because a lot of what he had to say about density is what I was going to say as well. It facilitates transit ridership. The current cycle, even in my neighborhood of mostly apartments, is pretty low. And the frequency of the only bus line that comes by me is 36 minutes on average. So that's kind of tough. It requires that people think ahead a lot, and that is an embedded privilege, allowing for

[4:48:47 PM]

privilege, allowing for additional density means additional transit riders who are not polluting, using their vehicles to get wherever they need to go. And overall, like building a more sustainable future. We're all we're all living here now and more people are coming. We expect that there will be 50 million Texans by 2050. And the question now is whether we can build in a way that is sustainable and smart to create enough habitat for everyone that's going to be here. Thank you so much. I the next batch of folks is Deborah Sistrunk, Ryan pesci, Logan Shugart, Alex Choi, Cara wolf, please make your way to the open podium and state your name for the record, please come forward.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Mayor. Council and commissioners. My name is Ryan pieszecki and I am a single family homeowner in district one. I strongly support this measure since the passage of the home resolution in July, many folks have been doing thoughtful work to explain what these reforms will and won't do and why they are so necessary for

[4:49:47 PM]

why they are so necessary for Austin. Yet the amount of misinformation we've all heard on social media, on nextdoor in our inboxes has been stunning. We have heard that these reforms will cause gentrification and displacement. Well, folks, gentrification and displacement are already happening and they've been happening under the current code for decades. We have heard that we need thoughtful, planned growth. Well, we can all see what the past 40 years of thoughtful plan growth has done for affordability. Can Austin sustain 40 more years of such thoughtfulness? We have heard that these reforms are a violation of homeowner property rights. And while these resolutions expand, homeowner property rights, giving them more options to provide for their families, what opponents actually mean is that these reforms will slightly diminish their power to dictate what their neighbors can do with their own properties. We have heard that these reforms will change neighborhood character. Opponents have screamed bloody murder about tiny homes as if they're a nightmare on elm street. Well I think we could take a lesson from sesame street. Everything changes. Change is a part of life. It's essential to the lifeblood of our cities. We can either adapt sensibly to change, or we can

[4:50:49 PM]

sensibly to change, or we can continue on an untenable path that leaves our most vulnerable neighbors short changed. I get it. Change is scary, but the fear mongering about these changes is totally out of proportion to what they represent, which is simply more attainable options for austinites to continue to live in Austin. To those who have used misinformation and fear to kill or to try to kill modest measures to address Austin's housing affordability crisis, I ask where is the sense of neighborliness? Where is that unity of purpose? Where is the all in your? I applaud you all for taking on these measures today and I thank you very much. Thank you.

>> I think I should have just given that dude my two minutes. But I'll try my best.

>> I'm Logan shughart. I live in district four and I don't really have a bunch more to add to what you've heard today. I guess the two takeaways would be we have a lot of opponents saying something like, we don't have a housing crisis.

>> We have an affordable housing crisis and like it kind of is very difficult to take that statement seriously when it's

[4:51:50 PM]

statement seriously when it's espoused by the same people who use a 540 foot compatibility buffer to make sure that apartments can't get built near their single family homes. So so the data is there. Staff has worked extremely diligently to show that this will help affordability hard stop the second thing I would like to take away from this is the complaints about traffic and to be really all Austin drivers are crazy. There's not really a loss there. I don't really have much more to add. I think as someone who doesn't own a car, if a little bit more traffic keeps you all from going like 40 miles an hour in a residential street, that's kind of a win win, win for me. So thank you.

>> Good evening. My name is Deborah Sistrunk and before I start, I want to thank miss Jennifer from the bottom of my heart for asking those questions that everybody in my community is asking.

>> I live in the Coronado hills, creekside neighborhood association. That's 183 to 90. Cameron road. We have 235 single

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Cameron road. We have 235 single family homes, two condo complex leases, two apartment complexes and a group of 88 homes. We have a one senior housing community, one housing authority community, one high school, one Nelson field, one Clifton career center . We have four plexes and duplexes. We have it all. We have some of everything going for everybody in that neighborhood. We don't need no more. I can build three of these additional homes on my property. I would have to cut down my three trees that I planted for my grandchildren. Each one of them have a name. I'd have to cut them down. I have to go to the bank and get a loan to get all of these small houses, complexes built. And I can go to story. But one of my neighbors

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story. But one of my neighbors have daughters, is my next neighbor has two granddaughters. My other neighbor have daughters do two of them got swimming pools, do you think I ran out to somebody? And for this loan, I'm going to have to pay. I'm not going to I hate to say it, but I'm not going to charge no \$900 rent. I'm going to charge \$9,900. I'm going to charge 2000 and \$900. If I can't to pay for the loan and put some money in my pocket. And I wouldn't do that to my neighbors because I rent to somebody that just crossed. Thank you, ma'am. Thank you. I won't do it to my neighbor. Haley Cole.

>> Srikar nalluri parker seawall Christian Fogerty and Anthony V, please make your way up.

[4:54:56 PM]

please make your way up.

>> Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for being here and for your presence for this powerful, powerful topic at hand. I would like to support brought this home resolution on. I have personally been impacted by a lack of affordable housing in Austin, and I was unhoused last year for almost a year. I'm an artist and I've seen a lot of my most valued friends and collaborators be driven out of the city due to housing prices and lack of innovative ideas. I think my main concern here today is just to ask everyone to please lean into innovation and into change. Please lean away from fear of change. I know that there's some concerns and I'm all for the trees. I'm all for the water. I definitely think that there are some things that we need to discuss there, but I think first and foremost, the most important thing we can do is keep Austin weird. Like people have said before, keep our artists, keep our musicians, and keep the city thriving. Thank you. If I could. >> Hello, my name is parker

[4:55:57 PM]

>> Hello, my name is parker sewell.

>> I live in district one and I am the advocacy director for habitat for humanity, for young professionals and I came to Austin. I'm testifying today in support of Leslie pools home resolution because it will make Austin more affordable, accessible and inclusive for everyone. And I'd be hard pressed to find anyone on this council who doesn't want to make Austin more affordable, accessible and inclusive. So I came to Austin to go to UT and I stayed. I couldn't leave because it's a great city, but it's an expensive city. It's an increasingly unaffordable city. We hear about this issue too, constantly from friends, colleagues, members of our organization. Asian people are concerned about the price of rent and the price of owning a home. But this isn't just an issue that affects young people. This affects our retirees working in middle class. Austinites students, people who were born and raised here and who are at risk of being displaced in their own city because of the high cost of housing. This legislation,

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housing. This legislation, though, will take us in the right direction. It's a common sense, very reasonable proposal to give us more affordable housing options and to give us more options generally that have not existed previously in most parts of the city. It's the right thing to do. We believe that housing is a human right, and I fully acknowledge that this legislation is not going to solve all of our housing problems and it's not going to do so overnight. Right. But it's an important and necessary step to achieving housing abundance and affordability for everyone. This is what great cities do. This is what great leaders do. We need your leadership today to do the right thing and vote yes on home. Thank you. Hello

>> My name is Christian Fogerty. I am a resident of d-9 here in support of the home initiative. Since moving to Austin a few years ago, I, like many others, have slowly grown to love this city more and more, and the community I have built within it. However also, like many

[4:58:01 PM]

it. However also, like many others, housing affordability remains the biggest hurdle to making the firm decision Ann to put down roots and call Austin my permanent home. For me, it is not just because of my partner and I's issues with affording rent despite still having experienced the slow squeeze of consistently steep rent hikes year after year for me, it is also about family. My mother and sister are both disabled and live on fixed incomes in a mobile home unit in a cheaper location out of town. If, as is entirely possible, I will end up having to care for either of them, then I will have to make a hard choice. I will have to choose between moving away from the community I've built here or not taking care of the ones I love. Since we put it would be incredibly difficult to house them under current home prices in Austin and current city policies. If passed, the home ordinances could have enormous concrete implications. For me, it could not only provide for a broader supply of missing middle housing that I and my partner could actually afford, but it

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could actually afford, but it could also provide more affordable housing options like tiny homes and rvs on single family. Lots that are crucial for those that might need to care for aging parents or disabled relatives. Please support the home ordinances so that I and likely many other young adults of my generation do not have to eventually choose between caring for their loved ones or being in the communities that they have worked so hard and long to build. Thank you for the chance to speak on this.

>> Hello, my name is Anthony.

>> I'm here to speak.

>> You say?

>> Could you state your full name, please?

>> Anthony vargas.

>> Thank you.

>> I'm here to speak on behalf. I'm for this. I'm a lifetime Austin resident, born and raised here. Can't afford to live here. I'm here with my grandmother. She was able to buy a lot in east Austin. What was this? 30, 40 years ago at? And we're just looking to put a tiny home in the backyard and it's an sf2 now, I do sympathize with the people who don't want it in

[5:00:02 PM]

people who don't want it in their neighborhood because I've seen my neighborhood go from a community to a airbnb. So I'm not for or against it, but I just want you guys to look at options for people who don't want to leave Austin, because believe it or not, not everybody wants to sell their home in Austin. I know it might come to a shock to everyone here, but not for us. So that was my two minutes and thank you for your time.

>> Thank you all right.

>> Hi, everyone. I'm Alex Choi, currently residing in district one. I'm here to speak today to encourage the council and the commission to support the home initiative. I'm a civil engineer by trade, specializing in transportation, engineering and traffic safety. With that said, it's my personal and professional opinion that in creasing density and the availability of homes and different types of housing options to the Austin residents is crucial to the city of Austin's future. Increasing density excuse me, will allow

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density excuse me, will allow the city to be more environmentally friendly, both by reducing sprawl directly as well as reducing reliance on driving as a mode of transportation. It would also increase the safety for Austin residents by again reducing reliance on driving or at the least reducing the time that people spend driving on a more personal note, having resided in Austin for over a decade now, I find myself labeled a long term resident of Austin by other people more, more than anything. But it is a increasingly difficult to envision a long term future in Austin given the current housing situation. I believe the home initiative is a huge step forward for me and others who have come to call Austin home. That future. Thank you to councilmembers pool and everyone else who has supported advancing the resolution as well as all other supporters. That's

[5:02:03 PM]

as all other supporters. That's it.

>> J.C. Dwyer. Cyrus. Tasha. Corey. David Ottinger. Liza Wimberley and Tina Barrett. Please make your way down to an open podium.

>> Good afternoon, y'all. I'm J.C. Dwyer. I'm a district eight homeowner and father of two small children. I'm a citizen who cares about the environment, and I'm professionally and advocate for low income families needs. For all these reasons, I am extremely supportive of these proposals as a homeowner, I admit it would be annoying if someone tore down the home next to me and put up a bunch of duplexes.

But it would be worse if my kids grew up and couldn't find a place to live in the city near me. As an environmentalist, it would make me feel sick to see some of the old trees in my neighborhood and greenery go away. But if I knew that defending those trees meant that there were acres of trees being

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there were acres of trees being raised just outside of town. For new developments and miles of new concrete being poured, I couldn't live with that. And finally, as an advocate for low income families, as it is true that watching your neighbors get displaced and your local culture get gentrified is really hard. It's also really hard to not be able to afford enough to eat because the rent goes up year after year after year, because tons of families are trying to come into your neighborhood and they're trying to bid on the same properties as so. So, you know, these are hard choices, but I think they are clear choices and they all point towards more housing and denser housing in Austin. Just real quick, on a process note, I'm noticing a real generational divide in the opinions in the room. I think we need to listen to everyone here today, and I'm glad you're here to do that. These decisions are going to fall hardest on the younger people in this audience. And so I think they deserve special consideration. Thank you. >> Hi, everyone. My name is

[5:04:10 PM]

>> Hi, everyone. My name is David Ottinger.

>> There are no compelling reasons to believe that these proposed rezoning plans are in the best interests of the people.

>> It appears that the primary motivation and focus for of these plans are aimed at increasing cash flow per lot for the mega corporations that own many properties.

>> And this objective cannot be achieved without the rezoning. These changes carry adverse economic and social impacts. Their effects can disrupt communities and do stress on infrastructure and potentially accelerate failure rates. Furthermore, overcrowding can worsen crime rates. These plans are being marketed to us as affordable, which manipulates perceptions to suggest that costs will be lower.

>> However, there is little reason to believe this will be the case.

>> Consider a scenario where the city changes parking laws to designate parking spots exclusively for motorcycles. They take all existing parking spots and reduce their size by half, while only decreasing the price by 20% per spot. They claim this makes parking more affordable. However, you still

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affordable. However, you still need to occupy two spots for your car and consider Bentley. You'd be charged for two spots since that's their current value. Is it generally more affordable if you are currently a single family home owner or aspire to become one, you will face higher property expenses due to the increase in property taxes. This this essentially penalizes individuals for owning single family homes. Ultimately it is the bottom line of both corporations and the government that stands to benefit the most from this rezoning, not the people. Thank you.

>> Hello. My name is Lisa Wimberley. I live in rosedale in district seven. I'm here to speak in favor of the proposed at home initiative.

>> We have been trying to modernize our code for years now while enduring baseless opposition and fear mongering at every turn. All kinds of conspiracy theories get thrown around lawsuits, accusations. And meanwhile, we get no closer to solving our housing problems

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to solving our housing problems after all these years, I've come to realize that perhaps one of the problems that the housing opposition is having with understanding these proposals is math, which isn't that surprising.

>> Math is hard for many. I come from a family of mathematicians. I love math, and so I have a hard time relating to this problem. So with math in mind, let me just say plainly, 2500 square foot lot will be a lot cheaper than a 5700 square foot lot, a smaller house on a smaller lot will be a lot cheaper than a big house on a big lot. It's just math. The smaller homes probably won't be subsidized level affordable. However, relative affordability is just as important as deep subsidized affordability. We absolutely need to serve people who fall between the high end earners and the low income earners. We must serve those who are priced out today but will never qualify for subsidized housing. There's really no other way to do it than to provide many, many, many housing options

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many, many, many housing options than what we provide today. Thank you.

>> Thank you, mayor and council.

>> My name is Tina Barrett.

>> I've lived in district seven for 24 years and in Austin for 30 years.

>> I'm in favor of the home initiative.

>> I'd like to paraphrase paraphrase, a strong towns article, starting with a quote from shelterforce quote, so, oh, no, the problem is not greed. The development industry behaving exactly the way we would expect any industry to respond to an artificial cap on their production volume. The same thing would happen in the auto industry if we limited Toyota to only 100,000 cars per year. They might well choose to keep the Lexus and scrap the Camry, even though volume from the Camry is more profitable. End quote. There are different ways developers keep costs low. One is by buying marginal, cheap land far outside the city center in the Greenfield or buying expensive urban land, but distributing its cost over a large number of homes. If land costs could be kept low,

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costs could be kept low, developers might find it profitable to build middle income. Quote, Toyota Camry housing at scale. The first option expansion on the suburban fringe is ruinous for our communities. Our traffic patterns and most of all, our planet. But the second option, building more smaller and by default, cheaper homes on the same amount of land can't happen because current zoning makes it illegal. So what do developers build? Huge single family homes that don't add any net housing to the city are often the most profitable thing. Developers are allowed to build on their lots missing middle housing duplexes triplexes small homes can be a sweet spot when it comes to construction costs. It's no accident that a disproportionate share of Americans existing naturally occurring that is without subsidy, affordable housing takes missing middle forms. Neighborhoods composed of single family housing like rosdale, my neighborhood are declared almost entirely off limits to development in excuse me and the remaining areas. We thus make sure that intense pent up market demand is concentrated

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up market demand is concentrated like a fire hose, destroying the Greenfield and gentrifying neighborhoods. No wonder people vilify developers for only building luxury housing. We've made it pretty hard to afford to do anything else. Please pass council members pools home initiative and let's make Austin a city for all. Thank you.

>> Grace Rivera. Daniel Yanez, David Sullivan, shiv Mistry and Brad parsons. Please make your way down. If there's an open podium, begin your time.

>> Good evening. Council members, commissioners. My name is shiv Mistry. I reside in district nine. I am a UT student and I'm here to speak in support of the home initiative. I'll be honest, I should be studying for my midterms right now, but I am here to support the wonderful home initiative. Also, to be honest, my midterms are a lost cause. This however, the home initiative I believe, is a

[5:10:15 PM]

initiative I believe, is a shining opportunity for the city of Austin. The home initiative is more than just the home initiative for myself and thousands of other austinites. It is the hope initiative. It is the hope that our friends and neighbors won't have to leave Austin in search of affordability. It is the hope that dreams won't have to be sacrificed in order to put a roof over our heads. It is the hope that the American dream is still alive. They say everything is bigger in Texas, and as a native Texans, I am sure as hell proud of that. But it's time to remember that bigger isn't always better. Young professionals, couples, small families don't need a massive home on some gigantic 5700 square foot lot. What we need are practical and affordable options such as townhomes and cottages. It's time to build homeownership a reality for the missing middle income, not just a distant dream. Let's not

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a distant dream. Let's not forget our existing homeowners and our neighbors who have shaped the city by allowing three units per single family lot. We're giving them options for multi-generational living and the opportunity to monetize their property, all while helping them pay the bills. It's a win for property rights and it's a win for the city of Austin in the face of skyrocketing housing costs. The home initiative is a lifeline for those of us who call us at home. It's a chance for students like me to stay here and contribute to this vibrant city. It's an opportunity for families to thrive without the burden of unaffordable housing. So council members, commissioners, I urge you to support the home initiative. Let's make our city more affordable, more inclusive and more hopeful. So as a young austinite, I'm investing my future in this city. I believe that with your support, we can do that.

>> And I want to I want to wish you good luck, but I'm not sure.

>> Mayor my name is Dave Sullivan. There are at least two other people who are called

[5:12:15 PM]

other people who are called before me, but I don't see them. Okay, so start talking.

>> Say again.

>> Just start talking.

>> Well, I will. All right.

>> So thank you very much, councilmember pool, for putting this proposal forward.

>> I'm on the board of directors for the congress for new urbanism. We forwarded you a letter showing our support. I just want to go over some of the points in that Austin faces a housing crunch for lower priced lots. Research conducted by housing works and the Austin board of realtors, among others, show

that high property values are hurting homeowners and paying property taxes and renters with leases. And by increasing the housing stock and allowing more small houses, we can hope to see housing costs escalation slow down. And with luck, level off the imagine. Austin comprehensive plan states that to accommodate the increased diversity of Austin area households, more housing options will be needed to address our demographic changes. The there's evidence put forward by the university of California

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by the university of California at Berkeley their cool climate group shows that higher density housing reduces greenhouse gas emissions per household. And this is in part because households that share walls conserve heat and cold during, you know, for utilities destinations such as schools, shopping jobs, etcetera tend to be closer when you have denser neighborhoods. And they're very likely a greater likelihood that nearby mass transit stops will all be available. These same factors should lead to reduced green that lead to reduce greenhouse emissions also should lead to lower costs for the residents. Increased housing density will be needed. You already heard this from bill Mckinley about supporting the federal grant for project connect. And then finally, it's a very important point. When I was on the planning commission, chairman Shaw twice, we had to come and explain how housing appraisals are done. They do

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appraisals are done. They do comparables a lot with one house on. It is not comparable to a lot with a duplex or with three houses and even if my own property is zoned mf three but my value is the same as across the street. So that's all I have to say.

>> Thank you so much.

>> Thank you. Robert crump, Brian Miller, Cyrus Tehrani.

>> Edwin Bautista. Paul Smith. Please find your way to an open podium. I'm hello.

>> My name is Robert crump. I'm a fifth generation austinite currently residing in. One want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who's worked so hard for so many years to get us to this point today where we can finally have the chance to revise our terribly outdated land use development code. In that same moment of reflection, I want to acknowledge all the people who have been made to suffer needlessly because of our

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suffer needlessly because of our exclusionary zoning laws. How many people have been forced to the brink of destitution and beyond?

>> How many lifelong austinites like my parents, have been forced out of the city simply because we could not muster the compassion, common sense and political will to change some words on a page. Consider for a moment when you pull together all the increased rents and mortgage prices over the last 40 years in this town, how much wealth has been siphoned off the poor and working classes of Austin to serve the narrow interests of the property class.

>> It baffles me to no end to hear my fellow austinites deluded by the conviction Ann that the administrative boundaries of the city create a magical barrier within which the laws of supply and demand are suspended in their favor today and over the next few weeks, we can expose that absurdity for what it is I want to express a deep felt gratitude to the council for taking the perhaps politically difficult decision to write words on a page that serve the people of Austin.

[5:16:18 PM]

serve the people of Austin.

>> Thank you.

>> Good afternoon, Ann. My name is Cyrus Rainey. I'm a resident of district nine. I'd like to voice my support for home phase one, and I want to thank council member pool for initiating it along with the co sponsors. How's Singh? Affordability is about one thing competition. If we don't allow new housing to be built, that increases the competition of our existing housing stock. We need to focus on how we can maintain and improve the affordability of homes. Built in 1970 1980, 2010 and stop focusing on the cost of every new home. If we don't build more housing, that increases the competition on existing homes. The result is what we see in the bay area. 50 year old homes historically known as starter homes, are now selling for \$2 million because they don't build any new housing . The result is the middle class is left competing with rich folks and the result is displacing the middle class will always lose. We don't need to guess what will happen if we don't change our zoning. We already know if this isn't clear, I like using the iPhone analogy whenever a new iPhone

[5:17:19 PM]

analogy whenever a new iPhone comes out, such as the iPhone 15, the iPhone 14, 13 and 12 get cheaper if apple stops making new iPhones, the cost of the older iPhone versions would remain expensive because everyone's left competing for the old iPhones. Building more housing works is working right now in Austin, despite having one of the top two markets in apartment demand in the us. According to realpage, data rents are going down and housing costs are decreasing. But according to zillow, they're still up 43% since 2020. There's more work to be done, like home as a liberal city, we have a duty to do what we can to make Austin a welcoming place for all. We can't say we're welcoming to

refugees or those in need if they have no place they can afford to live. We can't say that we take homelessness seriously if we are more concerned with the esthetics of a neighborhood than the people who live in them. The choice today isn't between keeping things the same or changing them. Change is going to happen no matter what. The change that I want is to make Austin a more welcoming, affordable place for everyone. And I hope you do too. By supporting home. Thank you. >> I'm Brian Miller.

[5:18:20 PM]

>> I'm Brian Miller.

>> The Texas triangle is Dallas. San Antonio and Houston.

>> Everyone here has been to all of those. We know what they're like. I ask chatgpt is density correlated with crime? Chatgpt said yes, density is criminogenic. This year, Austin's mayor and Austin pd requested state troopers. I asked chatgpt is density correlate with STDs? Chatgpt said yes. Right now Houston has an official outbreak. Not the 20th century. Incurable stuff. I'm talking 19th century. Hit it with penicillin in Houston. Can't medicate fast enough to tame it. One more. I asked chatgpt is density correlated with public urination? And chatgpt said yes. Density causes smelly puddles as well. Who knows? Now now fentanyl has xylazine is xylazine a deodorant

[5:19:22 PM]

xylazine is xylazine a deodorant . 70% of xylazine is passed in urine. Still as xylazine I. Good afternoon council members and planning commissioners.

>> My name is Edwin. I'm a resident of district seven and I'm here to express my skeptical support for the home initiative initiative. I superficially support this initiative not because I think it will solve the affordable housing crisis. Our cities experiencing, but because I believe it's a step in the right direction, but only if it's coupled with innovative local policy. And I firmly believe that we as austinians are more than capable of crafting and enacting effective local policy. The ongoing conversation around the around comprehensive land use reform has been static for more than a decade. More than a decade. It's time to move forward and uphold our city's legacy of taking bold action. However, I implore that we keep social equity in mind. I'm concerned that the home initiative has the potential to inadvertently increase and displace vulnerable low income

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displace vulnerable low income communities if if an inappropriate local policies are not enacted in tandem. I believe it's incredibly important to focus on crafting local policies to counteract the anticipated effects of home of the home initiatives such as speculation and gentrification. Ann. And especially since it does not supersede homeowner homeowner associations and or deed restrictions in my neighborhood of allendale is littered with restrictive covenants that vary widely but can ultimately restrict how many homes someone can build on their land. How tall buildings can be, and the minimum amount of land needed to build. Austinites need to look no further than 3000 Funston street in district ten to see how this will play out. Writ large. Nonetheless, I will sum it up shortly. A wealthy homeowners will be protected and low income communities will continue to struggle to find an affordable home. I strongly urge the council and commission to consider all municipal tools to mitigate the displacement pressures that are inevitable with urban upzoning to that end, the council should revisit the idea of establishing a homestead preservation district or multiple in priority areas such as the eastern crescent.

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as the eastern crescent. Additionally, both bodies should consider creative local policies that mitigate pressure on existing housing stock in communities at risk of displacement. Lastly, let us remember that change is inevitable. Our city is growing and with this growth we must adapt to meet the needs of our diverse and dynamic population. As we consider this policy, let us also remind ourselves that our city is a living organism and we have a responsibility to nurture its growth in a manner that is not only reasonable, but also sustainable. Thank you. Good afternoon.

>> Mayor Watson and council members and members of the planning commission. My name is Paul Kevin Smith and I've lived in Austin for three years. I live in district seven. I'd like to thank my representative, Leslie pool for bringing forward the home initiative. We all know that housing is becoming unaffordable here through the laws of supply and demand. If we increase the number of housing units, at the very least, it should reduce the rate of increase. Also, if we have more dense housing within the central city, that's going to make for neighborhoods that are more pedestrian bicycle and mass transit friendly, which in my

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transit friendly, which in my opinion is more livable. And that's also going to be better for the environment. And reducing the average carbon emission of a typical austinite. So I encourage you to pass this initiative. Thank you.

>> Henrik tucker, William bunch, holly reed, Catherine vinery, Roya Johnson. Please make your way down to an open podium.

>> Please come forward and just step up to a microphone. If it's open.

>> Roya Johnson yes, do you mind? Do you have my.

>> I have lived in Austin 52 years. I came from city that had about 3 million population in at that time. And Austin was a little town. So I've seen it grow. I'm very familiar. I could basically look at my hand and know every street in Austin and how it looks like what it is, where it is, how long it takes

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where it is, how long it takes me to get there. I've been realtor property owner and also broker for 40 years. I said over here and listen to all of you and I listen to all the people who want to make the change and rezone and do all that stuff. I think we need to redraw everything Lang and start over. I honestly do. I feel like we have it wrong. We need to leave the neighborhoods is a lot of neighborhoods alone and go to other neighborhoods that we are not doing anything about. I own a lot in Dell valley. That's Dell valley. Look at it. That's how it looks like. That's Austin, Texas. There's four trailers for 18 cars, 20 family, 20 family members living in it. And city is not doing a thing about it. City zone that the city adopted that property or annexed that property in 1998, I

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annexed that property in 1998, I believe. And they haven't done anything. Why? Why don't we develop that area, make it so people could afford to live rather than talking about downtown Austin? Why why? Why are we not doing things like that? And we're just focusing, cutting down at same time. I own a duplex down on Marshall lane in middle of infield road. If I sold my house today and developer bought it is zoned as if for how many units do you think they could put on it for but how much the price each unit will be a million and a half.

>> Thank you miss Johnson.

>> Good afternoon.

>> Bill bunch, executive director with save our springs alliance.

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alliance.

>> I'm also a homeowner mortgage owner and environmental neighborhood officer at zilker neighborhood association, where we have embraced and invited massive increase in residential density and a whole bunch of affordable housing and subsidy public housing.

>> And we'll be doing a lot more of that. I want to and I think this is completely dishonest by chopping it into two pieces because the vast majority of the lots we're talking about here are the sf two and three

small lots. There's no way this makes any sense unless you decimate our urban tree canopy. We can further our already weak protection for heritage trees and increase impervious cover. So trying to have that conversation later here and pretend like we're just getting a little bit pregnant right now is just dishonest. But I want to go back to the original question of who is asking for this and who benefits because it's being

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who benefits because it's being dressed up as hitting all the Progressive hot button issues of affordability, addressing systemic racism and protecting the environment and it does none of those. In fact, it makes all three of those problems worse. So who are the people here asking for it? Miss Nosek, smoke spoke to you because she cares about affordable housing. And I don't doubt that. But her husband, Luke Nosek, is a billionaire, a tech billionaire who's one of the major owners of airbnb, who's going to benefit from this? The short term rentals and the airbnb industry. That's forcing our housing costs through the roof. Other investors also know who else wants this out of town. Investors. If the property records are correct, the no sex to live in Westlake hills, they don't even live in Austin. If we see the trends and I don't know the exact numbers, but tens of

[5:27:31 PM]

the exact numbers, but tens of thousands of our residential homes are being targeted by institutional investors who will benefit from this.

>> Thank you, Mr. Bunch thank you, Mr. Bunch. I will not be benefited our taxes will go through.

>> Mr. Bunch, you're now out of order and you know better.

>> You've been doing this for 30 years. You know better. Please show respect. Please show respect. To only first micro-grid saw read the air by him. I'll ask everybody, please as as we started this today everyone try to have respect for the people that are speaking. Try not to get personal at. And what I would also ask is that you you have respect for the people that might even be on your side, that will be speaking after you by not going over time

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after you by not going over time when you know better. For mayor.

>> Does that mean I'm on bill bunch's side? In your opinion?

>> Good evening on what you do.

>> My name is holly reed. I live in district ten and I'm speaking on behalf of the west Austin neighborhood group and our neighbors who live in the central west Austin combined neighborhood planning area.

>> We have provided you with a statement on this resolution, and I ask that you please read it. It's too long for me to read out loud. Thank you. The draft ordinance on two and three units and occupancy limits, which is being considered in phase one of the resolution, needs to be handled in a much more deliberative manner if it is going to promote affordable housing options. The three unit residential use and single family zoning would likely not result in more affordable housing without retaining the limitations from the mansion

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limitations from the mansion ordinance. The current record measurements from the mcmansion standard should be maintained in light of what council member Allison alter has brought up. You know that builders build whatever yields the most profit. I'll say that again. Builders will build whatever yields the most profit in every situation. I have a lot of friends who are builders and developers and not one of them is building affordable housing out of the goodness of their heart. Given this fact that all of your modeling should be based on this is the only way to add more affordable housing on single family zone properties is through careful regulation of what gets built and preservation of existing affordable housing. Otherwise you will be incentivizing the opposite of what you are trying to create. We are also alarmed by the instructions to the city manager

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instructions to the city manager to develop amendments in a piecemeal fashion without allowing for consideration of this approach as a whole. Directing the city manager to bring forward amendments as they are ready to adjust the setbacks . Height impervious cover and far.

>> Thank thank you, miss reed. We'll lead to unintended. Jason Haskins is an Boudreaux Jim Donahue.

>> Robert Nash. Arif panju. Please make your way to an open podium. My good.

>> Hello, my name is Jason John Paul Haskins and I'm an architect with extensive experience in creating diverse solutions to affordable housing. In the course of that work, I have had to endure the hateful and misinformation, misinformed opposition like you were hearing today. And it breaks my heart. I'm here to help, to support and

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I'm here to help, to support and to help improve these initiatives. You will have more detailed, data driven research from me and my colleagues in the near future. But as of today, I want to speak to the heart and the soul of Austin. I am sure only a few of those self identified as homeowners and opposition intend the bigotry they expose before you fear borne of understandable ignorance feeds, in-group bias and outgroup discrimination. But do not let yourself be guided by fear. And so perpetuate the institutional prejudices that have created the current policies and affordability crises. The development of our city is indeed rife with exploitation and depravity, and we need to carefully craft the ordinance language to limit the ability to create larger, more expensive homes while genuinely retaining genuine opportunity is to increase the diversity of affordable housing options, protect existing residences and the environment. But opposing home does not harm developers. It destroys my clients and friends and neighbors who are called undesirable and incompatible with neighborhood

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incompatible with neighborhood character. Indeed those who are out of the goodness of their heart, developing affordable housing. People like renters who have heard in this chamber described as not real neighbors, multi generational, extended households who tend to be predominantly bipoc students, young families, medically vulnerable, the aging family members, those with permanent temporary impairments, victims of abuse and trafficking immigrants of all kinds who simply have a different cultural conception of home. We need tools like this to welcome and to support these people who are different and live differently, whether by choice or necessity. My prayer for the city quoting pope Francis is that which you have the opportunity to progress towards today. Is this how beautiful those cities which overcome the paralyzing mistrust, integrate those who are different and make this very integration a new factor of development? Aren't how attractive are those cities which, even in their architectural design, are full of spaces which connect roulette and favor the recognition of thank you. >> Hi, my name is Ann badran. I

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>> Hi, my name is Ann badran. I live in northwest Austin in an older neighborhood that has small houses but deep lots. We are very concerned about this proposal because adding three housing units to my neighborhood of 150 houses, the lots are deep, but narrow. So in order to build anything in my backyard, I have to bulldoze part of my house to get into my backyard. Because right now there's only a gate. So our whole development off of jollyville road, which is a high transit district, is expecting us to voluntarily build three homes in our backyard. And like I said, I'm not up for developing my bulldozed Singh my house to accomplish this. If I was growing up and could come to my city and say, I can't afford to live here, and being offered up as a single family home owner solution in the single family

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solution in the single family homeowners in this policy are supposed to be the solution, but the requirements don't include affordable housing. They just said three houses and this could be anything. So so, you know, I'm not in a position where I can afford to do this, and neither are the rest of my neighbors. So I don't know where that leaves us. It leaves us with phase two and increasing the parcel sizes in our land. So my backyard would then become bundles of 5000 square foot parcels and then change to 2500 square foot parcels. Yeah so I'll be displaced by this. And so most of my neighborhood at and so therefore I'm voting against it. I know we need affordable housing. I am not against it. I'm just not for this plan. I just don't think this is going to guarantee me affordable housing that we want. Anyway. That's all I have really to say. But I'm with Alison alter. I think this is the phase

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alter. I think this is the phase two forcibly reduces lot sizes. My name is Arif panju.

>> I live in district nine and I'm here on behalf of myself and the institute for justice, the nation's leading nonprofit civil liberties law center. I want to know more about our work.

>> Tune in to the United States supreme court this winter.

>> They've taken two cases, taken on qualified immunity and also we're taking on the state of Texas abuse of property rights by taking farmers land. We're here today to support home . Americans and Texans have been living in small homes for generations. People choose to live in small homes for a variety of reasons, from environmental concerns. We've heard them today and simplicity to cost and affordability. But in Austin, restrictions on how people can use their property are denying people the ability to even make that choice.

>> This, despite demand for small and modest homes in Austin old, antiquated zoning restrictions have made it illegal to own a small piece of

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illegal to own a small piece of land to live on, or to provide small homes on a single piece of land to live in mandatory minimums on lot sizes and restrictions on dwelling units need to change.

>> We support your efforts at doing that. When the government restricts property ownership and the ability to house one or more family members or others on one's property, those restrictions must fully comply with the Texas constitution. There is no reason to ban smaller homes, nor is there any reason to impose mandatory minimums on lot sizes that serve to make property ownership inaccessible to large swaths of our fellow citizens. The only reason to ban smaller homes is to impose or impose mandatory minimums is to exclude and exclude who the so called undesirable people who, sadly, in the eyes of so many, thankfully so few now, in 2023, if I'm hearing the applause right, think that we don't fit in the

character of the neighborhood. It took me a long time to afford a house in district nine, a modest home in

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district nine, a modest home in Travis heights, and I would love to see more people move in. Our coaches strive for neighborhoods that respect everyone's individual rights, including property rights. Zoning has been used to stifle that for too many generations. It's time for that to end. We support your efforts to see home through. Thank you. Chair. Chair Shaw. Hello, I'm Robert Nash from district ten, live in Westover hills, which is the north end of northwest hills.

>> It's so great to see all of all these young people.

>> So eager to be homeowners. I was a homeowner.

>> I was 27 years old, and my neighbor, Joe Cutbirth, asked me to have a coffee to meet a feisty young lawyer who was going to be our next mayor.

>> And I've been watching him ever since, and he's been someone who's been able to get things done and reach across divides and find solutions is my partner and I, Joe, are strongly against these proposals.

>> But rather than recite what other people have already

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other people have already eloquently said, I'll tell you what, we're why we're against it .

>> I'll say what we're for.

>> We're for what? Kirk Watson article related in his campaign and that was that the way forward at the land development code should be tailored on a district basis because the facts on the ground are different from one part of town to the other.

>> Some are flat, some are hilly, some have a deep canopy of trees.

>> And so the and some already have a lot of different housing types.

>> We everyone keeps saying, where are these townhomes?

>> Well, come up to northwest hills. We've got a lot of them. So again, I think the way forward is a district tailored approach.

>> The way that the mayor advocated in his campaign and I'd appreciate your consideration.

>> Hold on one second, mayor.

>> Are we allowing questions from any of the commissioners, people that are speakers?

>> Yes, I would think not. This is a public hearing. And if they

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is a public hearing. And if they want to, they can take somebody name down and they can contact them if they'd like. Otherwise, we just end up going late into the evening. Do you want to clarify?

>> Sure. Request mayor community member made accusations about another community member and I did notice that she's in the crowd and I'd love to invite her up a moment to set the record straight.

>> We're not going to do that.

>> Okay.

>> Well, the community member that was making the accusations, I think he knows better, but he just likes to get the attention.

>> So they were false. I just want to give her a chance. But thank you, mayor Jonathan Sosa, B Lorraine Atherton, Alan panay, Ty Jovanny and Silvia rose panofsky.

>> Please make your way down.

>> Please make your way to the front. And if there's an open microphone, please begin.

>> Hello, my name is Alan Ponti. I live in district five. I'm here to voice my support of the proposal. I'm a member of the Austin infill coalition as well, which is a local builders coalition. This proposal will allow for more affordable

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allow for more affordable housing, which would support our medium income workers, as many people have said, these are city firefighters who are friends of mine, teachers who are friends of mine, nurses, servers, postal workers and many other workers.

>> They too deserve to be able to afford a home in the city.

>> As I was able to when I moved here, another thing I think that is really important about this is while I was able to afford a house here, thank to my wife, when my parents, who are now retired and can't afford where they live and want to be closer to us and our family, they can't afford a house in this city anymore. This proposal would allow me or anyone else to build a second unit and allow for multi-gen living, which is a key component of think of certain cultures. Lastly I would like to dispel a couple items that have been mentioned by a few people. This proposal doesn't supersede hoa or deed restrictions, so

there's no need for lawyers. You can't build something if it's not allowed. And additionally, people have brought up questions

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people have brought up questions about fire safety and tree protection requirements. This amendment does not change any of those requirements. It doesn't make any less safe homes or any, you know, less reduction on trees. And if anything, new construction is a lot more safe for fire restrictions. So thank you. Thank you.

>> Hi, my name is Sylvia rybnovsky and I'm a resident of Travis heights district nine, about two years ago, I had to make a 911 call to report a person dropping rocks off the Lamar bridge.

>> My fiance truck was hit the windshield was intact, but utterly splintered, and it was the most deafening sound I'd ever heard. But the more disturbing sound was the one that followed my 911 call for 6.5 minutes of ringing until a 911 operator picked up.

>> Imagine if we had lost control of the vehicle or if the rocks pierced through the windshield. Every second counts when it comes to emergency response.

>> It's my googling and readying led me to find that the city is quite short staffed across all

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quite short staffed across all essential department and the jobs are not attractive because the pay has been severely outpace by the cost of housing in the city that our emergency responders serve. Three months ago, that same truck was stolen from a theater parking lot five miles south of here, a Saturday matinee.

>> We saw Oppenheimer. The operator told us that the police report had to be filed in person so an officer would be dispatched to us, but nobody arrived.

>> The following morning, my fiance Uber to three different police stations on a Sunday morning. They were all closed. Two months ago. Our landlord raised our rent 30. I know my landlords increase is a competitive response to Austin's housing market and we love our home and we can bear the increase. But I think about those who can't and what our community will look like if this trend continues. Which is why I support these proposed zoning changes. My hope in sharing this is that listeners who oppose may be receptive to these truths and flexible to changes that may allow for our communities to be

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allow for our communities to be safe and to flourish.

>> Thank you so much, city staff and council members for your time, effort, patience and receptiveness as you do meaningful work.

>> Hi, my name is Trejo Vicki and I'm a native austinite and a homeowner in district five. I'm speaking in support of the home initiative, particularly. One aspect I want to touch on is the removal of the restrictions of unrelated individuals living in a home.

>> At two points in my life, I've lived in, we would say like a co-op or a community house.

>> Yeah, it was a profoundly enriching experience for me.

>> It gave me a sense of community, a sense of connection that can be pretty hard to find in modern life.

>> And I want other people to have this opportunity. Katy there's so many people to within the group in my house that were on, let's just say like they were on the margins, they were

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were on the margins, they were in financially precarious situations and having this opportunity made it so that they could afford to live in Austin in the central part of Austin. Yeah and when people have don't have these types of possibilities available to them, it becomes much easier to slip through the cracks. I also want to address some of the stuff that's been brought up today. I noticed nature seems to be a recurring theme when air is that where is that energy? When people like when we build suburb like subdivisions further and further out into the like the exurbs, every mile that you move further out because of a lack of density, because of lack of affordability. Et cetera. All those miles out means another mile of trees and forest being destroyed. If you ask the wildlife in those areas, I'm pretty sure they would rather have their homes back. Having a couple of trees in your suburban neighborhood doesn't mean your suburban neighborhood is environmentally friendly.

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environmentally friendly. Another piece is it feels like there's this idea that if we don't build it, they won't come. Newsflash they are coming. Whether or not we build it, the lack of new housing options basically just means the prices will keep going up in perpetuity. And we have seen example Ralls of. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello, Cindy reed d4 resident.

>> I'm an austinite native austinite realtor, teacher, former teacher, but always a teacher.

>> Former renter, homeowner, landlord. Someone who has experienced protesting taxes and a unique experience doing development in this city and what this is we do need affordable housing. We also need appropriate housing. Not everyone can live and not everybody wants to live in a tiny house. My house is 1500 square feet and I have two kids and that is a decent size house. It's not a 2000 or 3000 square

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It's not a 2000 or 3000 square foot house, but in this plan, what I don't like is that it does not guarantee affordable housing. It hopes for affordable housing. There's no regulation for what needs to be built and land value is the only thing that you cannot protest in your property taxes as no one's talking about that. And when you rezone a property, you are effectively changing the cost of that land. To me, this is a modern day colonization by another name. We'll look back and we see that redlining was not okay building freeways through neighborhoods was not okay. We need community input. I saw how east Austin was decimated and I'm not someone that does not have experience living in urban environments. I lived in New York, New York City, Washington, D.C, Minneapolis. I've lived all over. So it's not like I'm just this lovely Austin person that thinks Austin is the best thing since sliced bread Eid and never lived anywhere else. I have of and what we need to do in this plan is really truly make sure that there's affordable housing.

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that there's affordable housing. Not a not hope for it. So what we're going to do is effectively take a \$500,000 home and put 9000 \$500,000 homes. This is capital ism. The developer might make it smaller, but the finishes will be more expensive. We need to streamline the process, which is what the mayor talked about pre-approved 10 to 20 tiny home plans or Adu plans, so that homeowners can actually navigate the permitting process, decrease the cost of permitting permits in Austin is the most expensive in Texas. Make it more simple so that homeowners can actually have those ads for family and renters to come. Thank you. Thank you. Mayor.

>> Before we proceed, we are calling speakers in the order in which they signed up to speak. Miss reed had not been called yet. And so we do ask that you not come up to the podium until your name is called.

>> Thank you.

>> Well, we. Well, we appreciate your being here, but we are

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your being here, but we are trying to follow an order so. So if your name is not called, please do not come to the microphone. If your name is called, please come forward. She's calling them in small batches. You're that you can go out of order if somebody is not already at the podium so that we can make it efficient. Thank you for pointing that out for Ed Smith, Mike Wainwright, maggette, wade.

>> Thomas Kennedy. Joe Howard, please make your way down, please come forward.

>> Hi, y'all. My name is Ford Smith.

>> I'm from Midland, Texas.

>> When I was 19, I moved to Los Angeles.

>> I lived there for 11 years. I moved back to Austin in hopes that we'll just in hopes that we could prevent Austin from turning out like Los Angeles or just Texas in general or California.

>> I've seen what gentrification looks like.

>> It starts at the beach and it started moving east.

>> And I think that gentrification in Austin starts right here and it moves out from here.

[5:49:58 PM]

here.

>> I live in Travis heights.

>> I have an investment firm and an incubator.

>> We build consumer brands, packaged goods, food and beverage. We one of my partners who could not make it here today is the founder of Waterloo sparkling water and deep eddy vodka and those are two Austin staple brands.

>> And we manufacture those brands here in Austin.

>> And right now, all we can afford at our manufacturing facility, which anheuser-busch has put \$15 million of investment into, is one shift.

>> We can't find anybody to come in and run a second or a third shift. And I believe that Austin has is very well known for having a strong food and beverage presence globally. And it pains me to say that that I know there's strong consideration to move to California and North Carolina to start manufacturing this product because it's hard to find work here. So I think that, you know, I think that increasing density would definitely alleviate a lot of these problems. And I think that, you know, it helped keep the culture of building these strong brands here in Austin where they were born. So thank you.

[5:50:59 PM]

you.

>> Thank you. Good afternoon.

>> My name is Thomas Kennedy and I'm a homeowner. I am a homeowner in district one. And I stand in support of this effort. I'm a member of the central Texas building and construction trade councils as well as the local central labor council, both of which have voted to endorse this effort. These changes are the first steps to improving affordability in the mid range homes in Austin. I'd like to thank the zone Singh and planning committee commissioners as well as the city council for undertaking and I look forward to seeing how the home proposals move forward. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Good evening. My name is murgatroyd. Thanks for having me. I'm a small business owner here in Texas. I have a skincare company, organic products. And so I want to start by just setting the record straight on a few things as Nicole Nicole Nosek is a dear friend of mine.

[5:52:00 PM]

Nosek is a dear friend of mine. And I want to say that she lives in downtown Austin. Maybe you didn't know, but she does. And her and her husband, Luke have absolutely zero shares in airbnb . That to is to be corrected at. And Nicole has been actually very active in the yes in my backyard movement since 2016 before ever meeting or dating Luke she didn't know him so I don't know where you get that from. But anyway, I'm digressing. I'll move on to my thing here. I sit here and I'm very confused by some people who come here and they make it act. As these amendments were asking for is going to make them do something. No one is forcing you to put anything extra on your land. We're just saying for those who want to, they can do it. So what is the problem and where did that misconception come from? This is pathetic. Next I hear people talking about gentrification. Well, you know, I do think that a lot of people who are in certain neighborhoods , if they were able to put one more home, two more homes on their lot, it would make it

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their lot, it would make it would mean a lot more money for them. So maybe you would have less of, you know, people having issues with those type of things. So when I hear people talking about a gentrification thereto, I'm like, what exactly are you talking about? Or do you think that some of us blacks and browns don't own property, that we would like to make a little bit more, you know, valuable? Last is when you talking about density is bad for the environment. All the credible research proves that actually density is one of the best things for the environment. Thank you very much. So I will just end on this when I hear people then coming and the last thing they find for, oh, we're against this is because trees, because trees I've, I know this. I've been there before. Where the environment comes even before the life of blacks and browns. Okay, so. So maybe you're trying to tell me something. Us, the

undesirables. It's okay for you to put the black lives matter in your front yard, but you don't want us in your backyard. Think about it. The next group is Shryock nalluri, Heather Hubbs, Britta

[5:54:04 PM]

nalluri, Heather Hubbs, Britta Wallace, Thomas grice and Joseph Hirsch.

>> Please make your way down to an open podium and start your time.

>> Hello, I'm Heather Hubbs, a computational physics student at UT, and I'm a district nine resident.

>> Since living in Austin, I have seen countless people struggle with finding a place to live, and if they did find a place to live, they had to struggle with rising rent costs. Without the home initiative, Austin has a stark limit in affordable housing, which makes it impossible for students like me to find a place to live that won't break the bank, which forces us into overcrowded, subpar, mold infested, windowless west campus apartments that create barriers to our education and success. But it's not just about us, the students. It's about the family who have lived here for generations, struggling to keep their homes and families intact. It's about the teachers, the firefighters, the nurses and the emts who cannot afford to live in the city that they break

[5:55:05 PM]

in the city that they break their backs for. It's about the soul of Austin itself, which is continuously threatened by its cost of rent. Imagine for a moment that you are the single mother who cannot be the mother that she wants to be because she has to work two jobs to put food on the table after paying her rent. Imagine that you're the elderly couple who has lived here for generations. Watching Austin grow and change, and they're being moved out because they just can't afford it anymore. I urge everyone that opposes the home initiative or aligns themselves with the statement not in my backyard to realize that affordable housing is not just an economic issue, but it is an issue of justice, empathy and compassion for our fellow humans. Nobody wants to live in a city that does not facilitate them. I know the people who oppose this item are of an older crowd who bought their houses by doing a cool back flip and some change. But the new generation of homeowners won't just not be in your backyards, they won't be in your hospitals. They won't be in your

[5:56:06 PM]

hospitals. They won't be in your fire stations and not in your schools, teaching your kids and grandkids fight and fire safety has been brought up quite a bit. And there won't be any good fire safety if they can't afford to live here. Thank you. Please compete. Please keep compassion in your hearts.

>> Please go ahead.

>> Hello, mayor. Members of the council. My name is Srikar Nalluri.

>> I've been living in district nine for about 8 or 9 years now, and I come here to speak in favor of the item that we're considering.

>> I used to have a lot of roommates and good friends who lived here in Austin with me, and almost all of them have had to move to Houston or Dallas because the housing in Austin is too expensive. I've and a lot of them were able to afford to buy houses and become homeowners as they start to get married and have kids because in Houston there are townhouses available over there,

[5:57:07 PM]

townhouses available over there, townhouses that are much cheaper than than even my condo that I was able to buy in district nine, which is a one bedroom home.

>> And if I ever have kids, I don't know how I would, you know, be able to raise a family in my unit.

>> I love my unit. I love living close to the town, but I would like to have options to grow out of it as I get older. So so please consider supporting this amendment. I think it would really help the city. Hello my name is Joseph Hirsch.

>> I understand that you all have been here a long time, so thank you for paying attention and listening. I appreciate it. When I moved to Austin, I moved here for an \$11 an hour in-home caretaking job for my friend and even though I was making that wage, I was able to pay rent and have space in my mind and heart to do like a lot of change and healing that I needed. And now I teach full time at the Texas state math department, and I

[5:58:07 PM]

state math department, and I teach part time at McCombs business school to undergrad and graduate students in emerging technology. And I'm really grateful to Austin for giving me the ability to take the time I needed to figure things out and not be under pressure all the time. And today, with working both of those jobs, my rent is really high and I don't see it as a sustainable life for me in the future, even though I feel deep gratitude to the city and would love to continue contributing for as long as I can. Yeah. So I don't know exactly what the solutions are, but it seems to me that there is, you know, a serious obstacle for people like me to continue giving back to the city. That's really given me so much. Thank you. Thank you.

>> I'm Brita Wallace. I am an infill developer, a builder, and the president of the Austin infill coalition. Ann when the majority of Austinites cannot afford a home, the restrictions we place on housing and the types of homes we allow must change. Right now, we have no shortage of high end homes, but

[5:59:08 PM]

shortage of high end homes, but we are missing homes for middle income. Austinites, including teachers, firefighters, ems, medics, nurses and government staff. We need housing types for all different types of austinites. So thank you all for your hard work to legalize middle income housing in Austin. Infill coalition is always here as a resource for these types of changes. Thanks thank you. Hi there.

>> Hi. I'm Thomas grace. I live and own. I live in and own a condo in district nine. I would not have been able to purchase a home in Bouldin creek if condos and other small full footprint housing were not available. All I believe in safer, more walkable communities with more economic opportunity and flexibility for people that are not millionaires to live, work and play in central Austin. That is why I speak in support of council member Leslie Poole's home resolution. Without this change, it is very hard for me to picture a future in a modern

[6:00:09 PM]

to picture a future in a modern Austin where everyone isn't stuck in traffic commuting 30 minutes outside the city to and from sprawl to get anything done . It's very hard for me to picture students, early career people and young families finding anywhere to live without some increase in the flexibility of what we allow to be constructed in Austin. And it is even harder for me to picture a successful project connect without these changes, there is some concern about environmental issues, tree coverage and so forth. And I would like to say this about that just because we refuse to densify our urban areas does not mean building will stop if we refuse to add density to our city, we will be adding sprawl to the hill country. We will be dotting the beautiful hills and lands of central Texas with more mcmansion means for people, many of whom would have preferred to live inside the city and perhaps have a car lite lifestyle. So for those that say increasing density won't help with affordability, here is a simple exercise that suggests you're wrong. Open zillow, go to a go to central south Austin and look

[6:01:12 PM]

to central south Austin and look at how many apartments and townhomes that are available at any given price point versus how many single family homes that are available at that price point. There will generally be many fewer single family homes by a considerable factor. And those that are available are often small footprint homes that I suspect.

>> Thank you, sir.

>> Hi, all. My name is Adam Powell. I'm a district seven resident and frankly, today I'm feeling very great.

>> I feel very lucky to be able to say that. That's for a couple of reasons.

>> One, Ann the only reason that I've been able to exist to live in the neighborhood that I love so much in north Austin is because I rent a townhouse that's part of a three plex, the very same type of housing that would be easier to build throughout this city that we're discussing today. It's really important. And the second reason I feel so lucky is just because of how hard it was to get that place. Let's rewind back to 2019 when we 2019, when we entered

[6:02:12 PM]

when we 2019, when we entered into this lease, my fiance and I saw this place come up immediately, signed up for a tour on the drive to the tour, we had a code word. The code word meant when we said it, it was something about the floors. It was weird. The code word meant when we said it. We need to go back to our apartment as quick as possible and submit an application. So this thing doesn't slip through our hands. We said the code word we did that. We applied within 30 minutes and that's why we were lucky enough to have this type of housing. And I know that's the case because when you look at my neighborhood of north shoal creek, the northernmost tip, and the southern most tip have this type of housing, but it makes up a tiny fraction of the housing that's available in that neighborhood. And when I look along my block, the block that is designated to have duplexes in three plexes and four plexes, those units get snatched up so quickly, we just as quickly as what we experienced back in 2019. This is a meaningful option. It gave us a relatively affordable rent and I strongly support it. The home resolution for us to exacerbate this throughout the entire city and I'm extremely grateful for my council member, Leslie pool for leading on this

[6:03:12 PM]

Leslie pool for leading on this initiative.

>> Thank you so much, Scott turner.

>> Thomas, Dylan Carroll, Zach Faddis, liana amanii ly and Linda Cangelosi. Please head to the podium and state your name before you begin your time.

>> Hey y'all.

>> My name is Thomas Dylan Carroll. I'm an Austin resident.

>> I'm here in support of the home initiative.

>> The significant piece of accessible housing cannot be overstated, and it plays a major role in driving our city's growth and prosperity. As a city, we're facing an ever growing challenge of housing. And I believe that the home initiative will prevent Austin from even larger affordability crisis as accessible housing empowers people to reside closer to their workplaces, reducing commutes that rob us of our

time . It eases long haul traffic congestion and cleans our air along the way. But I want to take a moment. It's not just about these statistics. It's

[6:04:12 PM]

about these statistics. It's about the people. Housing isn't just bricks and mortar. Our housing is not just about walls and roofs and square feet. These reforms are a pledge to build a future where everyone can thrive. It enables individuals and families from diverse economic backgrounds to fully participate in urban life. And it doesn't just promote diversity, it nurtures it, provide a stage for our city to flourish. Home is a bridge to economic mobility for everyone. One let's champion accessible housing to nurture inclusivity, equal opportunity, and a vibrant, diverse urban life. Our city's strength lies in its people and its hopes and aspirations and their ability to access opportunities and build a shared future. Housing is not just a policy issue. It's a heartfelt commitment to a growing, thriving and emotionally connected city. Thank you. >> Howdy. City council planning

[6:05:14 PM]

>> Howdy. City council planning commission. My name is Zach Faddis and I'm a proud resident of district nine. Come to you all today with a personal request, but I promise it's relevant. About a year back, I was living with two roommates in one house and we had two friends down the way and another. Now the rent had increased. We're struggling to pay their bills and about to be evicted. We weren't doing too hot ourselves, so we decided to invite them into our home. Things are somewhat cramped, but we got along well and were mostly happy with the situation. A neighbor, Fred, was not happy. However, his chief complaint was that we'd often park a vehicle in front of his house. He felt that the street in front of him was an extension of his own driveway and wouldn't tolerate anyone else using it. He threatened us several times something about occupancy limits, but we didn't know what he was talking about and mostly ignored him until code compliance came knocking on our door. They said no more than four unrelated adults could live together and that we'd either have to change our living situation or leave after they come around. Several times I could see our situation was dire, so I did the only reasonable legal thing I could think of. I married my good friend and roommate, Tim. After that code got off our backs, Fred was quite irate, but he had

[6:06:15 PM]

Fred was quite irate, but he had no recourse. So life went on. A couple of months later I started dating this lovely lady named Sally. One day, Sally comes over to visit and Tim pool that he is jokingly let slip that we'd have to get divorced before me. And Sally could ever get hitched. Sally didn't find this funny at all. She asked me if it's true and I couldn't tell her no lie. So I say yes. But I explained the situation and

that's merely merely a marriage of convenience. Miss Sally took no comfort in this and asked why the city would be trying so hard to encourage marriage. I tell her I didn't think the city is overly fond of marriage, just that they dislike the young and the poor and this is one of the tools they have to keep them out of rich neighborhoods. As Sally says, there's no way Austin, the most liberal city in Texas, would do something so outright hateful and discriminatory. Sally can be naive like that. So I got two asks of you. First, if you could go ahead and pass this ordinance so I can divorce Tim without running afoul of the law. And second, if one of y'all could speak to Sally, I think it'd go a long way toward smooth things over.

>> Go look up arlo Guthrie and listen to him in his heyday, spoken from an old man. All

[6:07:16 PM]

spoken from an old man. All right? Yes, ma'am.

>> Good evening.

>> I'm Linda Cantrell.

>> I live in district nine old west Austin, where I've lived for a long time over 50 years.

>> I want to just bring it down to something that I know very much about, which is my neighborhood, the area got developed over a hundred years ago, and it was very diverse in its housing types and there's a four plex or was a four plex just around the corner from me. It's on one tenth of an acre lot. My lot is one tenth of an acre, 4000, 430ft !S. The four plex is a nice brick building. Four units plus a walkout basement. Based on what would be considered a tiny lot. Now guess the point is, and all around me, there are there are other examples of that. There's a five plex up the street, ninth in Oakland that it's a little

[6:08:19 PM]

Oakland that it's a little bigger lot. It's like a 0.1, two, five acre lot. There are duplexes and triplexes across the street from me. Lots of multifamily mixed in with lots of nice bungalows of single family and that's all changed over the past ten years and it's accelerated over the past, well over the past 20 since mcmansion and accelerated in the past ten. The units are being or the properties are being bought and converted to single family. So that four plex around the corner, which provided wonderful rentals for wonderful people who were there for years, is a single family home of over 3000ft !S. And all around me. And there's only been one direction this has gone, which is loss of units. So yeah, with mcmansion we got mcmansions and people buy these bungalows if they can't tear them down or make changes, they.

[6:09:20 PM]

they.

>> I'm sorry, Mr. Cangelosi, your time is up. Thank you.

>> Chloe Wilkinson, Ann, Judy shipway, Samuel Campbell. Dave Carroll, Ada cooper. Please make your way down to an open podium. State your name before you begin your speak.

>> Good morning. Our evening council members. My name is Chloe Wilkinson. I'm a member of district nine. I serve on the board of aura and I am a student leader at Austin community college.

>> I've come to express my support for home today because it is the best path forward for a sustainable future here in Austin. A plan that preserves our urban greenery by halting the need for another highway expansion.

>> Home is also a plan that prioritizes his people over urban sprawl, a plan that brings austinites into walkable neighborhoods where all our needs are available by just a short walk, bus ride or bike ride away.

[6:10:22 PM]

ride away.

>> This is not me lamenting for the European system or asking you to replicate San Francisco or New York. No, we have the foundation here in neighborhoods like Hyde park and Mueller homes, where we live in close proximity to our neighbors homes, where we can walk to local markets, homes where we are not restricted to one means of transportation. Ann and of course, most importantly, these homes, when we have many of them, they bring affordability to a city that needs it so desperately. A city of over 1 million people will look like I don't want to move to the suburbs, and neither does anyone here today. But the truth is, is that as long as we don't address the cost of living crisis, we keep pushing away our working class families to the suburbs. Our way to other cities where it's more affordable. Knell. And the truth is, is when I graduate, I know there will be a wealth of jobs here in Austin for me to pursue, but will there

[6:11:23 PM]

for me to pursue, but will there be a wealth of housing here in the city or will I have to move away like everyone else who cannot afford to live here and we have the option right now. Are we going to be like other cities that acted too little and too late? Are we going to rise to the challenge? I believe that our city council will rise to the occasion and I would like to thank everyone who has gone. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> I'll call the next batch. Jeff Dickerson, Ann Blair Mckay. Lucy Begg. Justin Lanier and Janice Rankin. Please head down to an open podium.

>> Hello, my name is Jeff Dickerson.

>> I'm vice president of Matthew lane, neighborhood association, and I'm speaking in opposition Ann against H O M E amendments.

[6:12:26 PM]

Ann against H O M E amendments. You're probably wondering why I said that home is already taken by the housing opportunities for music and entertainers. Have we begun? The people that built Austin 2025 years ago, or are we ignoring them? I will begin with the easily understandable word no no to changes on zoning that apply to six or more unrelated adults or unrelated adults in a single family duplex. Increased density on these housing projects and proposals are destined for failure. That's just a few. Marcy house, Brooklyn, New York. Queensbridge houses. Queens, New York. Techwood homes. Atlanta Georgia. Georgia and down Watts, California. These were all failures when you had increased density. And a lot of people in

[6:13:26 PM]

density. And a lot of people in a small area Mueller near Austin, Texas. Well, why did I say that? You can't buy a house for less than half 1 million to \$900,000. That is not affordability. No, to having that considered is 80 years. I can't believe this is a serious proposal. This is a red herring design to distract from more serious issues. But since you brought it up, what's the deal? It is a negative task impact because it eliminates property taxes and utility costs. It leaves the city and remaining homeowners shouldering the cost of servicing these units. So knowing that no zo to reducing lot sizes and increasing health restrictions.

>> Sir, thank you. Hello >> My name is Blair Mckay. I'm

[6:14:27 PM]

>> My name is Blair Mckay. I'm an architect here in Austin, Texas. I appreciate everybody on the dais and all the commissioners that are here today. I don't there's nothing much I can add that's already been not been said. I'm for the housing initiative. I think in the grand scheme of things, we would like to have a comprehensive plan. This is a plan that provides housing which is desperately what the city needs

to make the market rate of housing affordable. All it's a simplified math, but it is an economic realization that if you have more supply, then costs can come down. So I think as long as it's not disturbing the impervious cover, which would affect our environment, which it is not, then we should not have an issue with densifying the downtown area as long as we can follow up with transportation improvements and more ways to connect our communities. Thank you.

[6:15:29 PM]

you.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to speak my name is Lucy Begg.

>> I'm an architect, small business owner, parent and member of air Austin's housing advocacy committee. I'm here today to express my support for the goals of the home initiative along with a note of caution, I have experienced firsthand designing and building homes in Austin for 16 years. How our city's residential zoning has a big house bias in our office, we breeze through permitting for 3000 square foot homes on 12,000 square foot lots, while four plexes on lots half that size and single family homes on substandard small lots get murdered in zoning complexities and neighborhood politics, the data bears out our experience since 40 years ago, over two thirds of Austin's housing stock was made up of homes of under 2000ft !S. When our current development standards were put

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development standards were put in place in 1984, restricting large areas of the city to single homes on large lots. That balance reversed rapidly in the last ten years. The permit data shows that 75% of the new homes built in our neighborhoods have exceeded 2000ft !S in size. Today we are adding homes greater than 5000ft !S to our housing stock at a faster rate than we are adding homes under 1000ft !S. I strongly support the intent of the home ordinance to give smaller homes a bigger chance in Austin. Along with my support, I offer a note of caution. Our aia housing group has been working on some modeling of potential outcomes under this ordinance. We believe the successful realization of its goals will require not just broad strokes, but a careful calibration of the details as replacing subchapter F with an fa gradient adjusts the front yard and street side yard setbacks and adopting a preservation ordinance in parallel are all components that we believe would increase the chance of the ordinances success

[6:17:31 PM]

chance of the ordinances success and mitigate against unintended consequence losses. We look forward to sharing our studies with you and to working together to create a future. Austin with homes of all shapes. Thank you.

>> Good evening.

>> My name is Janice Rankin.

>> I've lived in council member pool's district since 1992. I believe in affordable housing, but affordable to me is a college student was not. What's affordable to me now. It's not what was affordable to me when I had my first full time job.

>> It's a sliding scale.

>> So what starts out as being affordable to you?

>> If you're earning \$15 an hour is not the same thing as going to be when you have graduated to a 50,000 or 60,000 hour wage job .

>> Sadly, I want to say this proposal is well meant but undermines our working poor, our low income and middle income

[6:18:31 PM]

low income and middle income neighborhoods by promoting more speculation and gentrification in the purple postcards we got are insufficient notice to homeowners of fast track land use, changes that degrade property interests in incremental stages. I raise the same points today I made on July 20th when this high density proposal was introduced. The council needs to declare its legislative intent regarding this effort to retrofit and undo single family zoned neighborhoods, because this proposal would allow lot subdivision and permits that interfere with setbacks and structural factors in restrictive covenants in some locations, these valid covenants exist in many neighborhoods. They are not race based. They are real property rights conveyed and accepted at the time of sale and purchase. These limits are environmentally sound because they reduce impervious cover and down hill flooding and preserve green space and tree canopy. The current proposal is not supported by the facts or

[6:19:33 PM]

not supported by the facts or the law. It is a one sided policy that left out the voices of community stake holders and we need to get back to that voice of the community. Stakeholders it is time for Austin residents to jump out of the pot and not be frog legs for dinner. File your protest to this proposal if you want to protect your rights. Gary McLaren.

>> Sean Atkins, Luis Asta lugo. Bobby Levin. Jennifer Bearden. Please make your way up to an empty podium and state your name before you speak. Okay. I will start the next batch. Cameron white. Mary farrow. Omar Vasquez . Alpizar. Roberto rondella de monsieur rey shock. Please make your way down to a podium.

>> If you've heard your name called, please come forward. >> Trying to enter before me.

[6:20:33 PM]

>> Trying to enter before me.

>> Oh, yes.

>> Might actually be.

>> Hi, I'm Sean Atkins.

>> I'm in district three.

>> I have two questions for people really here today.

>> The first one is this is the status quo working for anybody in this room?

>> I notice even members of the opposition talk about how housing is becoming deeply unaffordable.

>> Is that a system that is sustainable?

>> No, no. So do they have alternatives often they have some idealist, a workaround that they promise they'll support this time as long as it meets 10 or 15 criteria, they'll decide the day of.

>> The answer is there's not a workable alternative to the proposal we have here today.

>> Austin is a changing city that is a reality. Home prices are going to most likely continue to increase no matter what. People aren't going to stop having children. People aren't going to stop moving to the city because it's an awesome city. We should admit that people want to move here. So we have a couple options ahead of us. Do we adapt or do we die? It

[6:21:33 PM]

us. Do we adapt or do we die? It is a binary decision. I say we must adapt and become an affordable, livable city for everybody here. This is what the home resolution does. It makes us a city that can continue to adapt by doing it as a citywide process, we can adapt on a neighborhood level to ever changing currents that is what we need. My second question is a little more sappi, and that is, do you still believe in the American dream? Right? Like hear me out for a second. Home ownership is the number one way to build generations wealth in this country. We are denying a whole generation of

Americans the opportunity to build that wealth by putting artificial caps on the number of homes that are available in this city. I hear members of the opposition talk about how they have had their home for 40 years. I congratulate you. I made the mistake of being 25. My bad.

>> So I deserve to have that right to the American dream just

[6:22:33 PM]

right to the American dream just as much as anybody else does in this room.

>> My future children deserve rights to the American dream. Thank you.

>> Hello.

>> Yes.

>> Should I start now?

>> Please. >>

>> Thank you, mayor. Thank you. Council. I'm planning, mayor. I'll try to take up your call to be polite and be understanding and compassionate to our fellow people of Austin, your best shot. You know, I find it really difficult to come up with this, because ultimately, no matter what anyone says, a townhouse is a completely normal way of living a life and building a neighbor that you see all across the city, obviously home won't fix everything, but it's a nice step forward. And I'm really happy to see council take other steps to address affordability and building a beautiful city that everyone can call home. It's ultimately just like a normal common sense thing. But I wanted to sort of step back and address something that seems to keep coming up, which is the issue of privilege, which is

[6:23:36 PM]

issue of privilege, which is everyone tries to claim that they're really the ones defending the little guy or the really the little ones being bullied. Ultimately, everyone here in gadsden city politics is in incredibly, unbelievably privileged. When I used to be struggling every day and surviving, trying to you know, live plan out my life a day at a time, I would have never in a billion years come here, no matter what anyone told me, because I was focused on how I was going to make it to Tuesday. Wright my family, my grand uncle lost 100 pounds in Venezuela because he couldn't even afford food, let alone homes. Wright. So the people who everyone claims to be defending for aren't here. They're not going to be the ones deciding what happens here because everyone here is incredibly privileged. Whether your partner is a billionaire or you're on a \$2 million house every one here is the most powerful people of Austin who get to decide for everyone else what their lives are going to be like, what air their children are going to breathe, and whether we live in a house in a city that everyone can live in or a city where there's only luxury skyscrapers and mcmansions every single one of those buildings, if we choose

[6:24:37 PM]

of those buildings, if we choose to not move forward with this, will be a monument to our cowardice and a monument to our failure. And I am happy that the city council and planning commission, our community leaders, see the path forward that we need to do to do right by the power that has been invested in us. Thank you, sir.

>> Pardon for the interruption. Can we get the last speaker's name, sir? Luis Austin. Thank you. Thank you. And just a reminder to everyone, please state your name before you start speaking so we can cross you off our list. Sorry about that. That's okay.

>> Howdy. My name is Omar.

>> Being nice. Forgot his name for a minute.

>> My name is Omar Vasquez. Alpizar. And I'm here to voice my. My support for the home initiative. I'm a student at UT studying urbanism, and I believe these changes will create more opportunities and options for housing. The Austin community. Currently, I can speak for myself and my friends when I say it is difficult to find an affordable place. I was born and raised in Austin and it pains me

[6:25:39 PM]

raised in Austin and it pains me to say that I feel like I'm being priced out of the city that I've called home for so long. My hope is that in the future we can work towards building a city that not only provides the basic necessities to live, but one that improves our lives. And I feel like these changes can help in doing so. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello, I'm Mary farrow.

>> I'm a resident of district seven and a member of the allendale neighborhood association.

>> Now 50 years strong.

>> I'm here to speak against this proposal today and to express my dismay as to why neighborhoods were left out of the meaningful discussions until after the proposal was drafted and inviting comments after the fact doesn't reflect true participate in.

>> But first, to be clear, individuals opposing this plan recognize the need for affordable housing.

>> Many of us have experienced this need ourselves after finding a home in the lower end of affordability 35 years ago, I hope to maintain it with some

[6:26:40 PM]

hope to maintain it with some level of peace going forward and I feel compelled to say that I'm not motivated by greed or racistism, but this rushed wholesale city redevelopment plan cast aside very real concerns of people whose lives will be upended and our city forever changed.

>> The prospect of nine next door units is unsettling.

>> Lang increased environmental concerns, especially from greater flooding as we've seen today.

>> And two more intense heat island effects shouldn't be ignored as we already see the city's canopy and green spaces disappearing.

>> And there's been no response to the simple fact that the city's plan intentionally violates deed restrictions.

>> Meanwhile, all the city seemingly has not conducted impact analysis to assess how our aging and failing infrastructure can meet the needs of exponentially more buildings.

>> Except for the expectation that market conditions will improve with more housing units.

>> The plan does not specifically address affordability. I echo statements from community leaders who foresee massive speculation and

[6:27:41 PM]

foresee massive speculation and general gentrification.

>> This isn't a gentle transit option and other options exist, including redevelopment potential for thousands of parcels of city owned land. Please halt this process until a thorough review of the impact on our neighborhoods, the environment and our infrastructure is undertaken and options can be considered for dense development without ripping apart the fabric.

>> Thank you, miss Farrell.

>> Hello.

>> My name is Roberto Rondella. I'm a resident of district one and I've lived in Austin for 12 years as an attorney and an entrepreneur.

>> And I'm here in support of home Wright you if you look back at the first half of the 20th century, housing was abundant and affordable and we built a range of housing types, duplexes, fourplexes and we built that so that all wage earners could afford housing, housing was easier to access for all classes and with that came diversity and people afraid of diversity. >> We realized pretty soon that

[6:28:42 PM]

>> We realized pretty soon that zoning laws could be used to raise prices and rents, making homes unaffordable for blacks, hispanics, Jews, eastern and southern Europeans, and in states and municipalities started to adopt zoning laws which restricted most of the nation's residential land to more expensive single family detached homes, outlawing or excluding other, more affordable options and that happened here in Austin. And so today we have zoning laws that encourage exclusionary effects and those who oppose the measures to increase housing supply are piggybacking off of these historically purposed exclusionary zoning laws. And they're perpetuating those exclusionary tactics. I don't blame him for doing that. They walked into that opportunity, but it still was under lying exclusionary tactics. Wright in in the next ten years, unless we overthrow capitalism, rectifying, we're not going to be able to rectify that without more supply to meet demand.

>> So zo home will help us with that, right? >> It will help with

[6:29:42 PM]

>> It will help with displacement and lack of diversity. Houston tells the story. From 2000 to 2021, Houston's black and hispanic populations grew by 4% and 40% after they updated their zoning laws to allow smaller lot sizes. And so the lesson is simple when housing, when there's more housing available, the price of housing goes down and it certainly shouldn't get worse. And displacement and lack of diversity can help be solved. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Steven reed, Marilyn Shockey, Julio Rojas Aguilar, Diana molina, and Roger Faulk.

>> I suggest a seventh inning strategy.

>> I suggest you let us run the meeting and good to see you.

>> Oh, it's always a pleasure. >> I'm Steven reed from district

[6:30:45 PM]

>> I'm Steven reed from district two here in support of home, Austin has become a very expensive city to live in, particularly if you'd like to home to own a home. And even more so if you'd like to be able to raise a family.

>> Homes in Austin are simply not attainable for the majority of austinites.

>> Those of us who can afford a home are being driven farther from the city center and the amenities it has to offer. New development is rarely as conveniently located as, say, district ten.

>> Young people and people of color who this very code redlined into areas east of I-35 want to feel like a part of this city. All that is to say, if you're here in opposition to this initiative, what are you doing?

>> We have a housing shortage.

>> A housing shortage which was created by the land development code and which we have the power to fix by reforming the land development code. It's simple supply and demand. This is red tape. And there's a market solution. If you restrict the supply of housing price does go

[6:31:46 PM]

supply of housing price does go up and people end up broke and homeless. Look around and we must do something. And while modest, I would much prefer widespread mixed use zoning. This is a step in the right direction. There is another city that faced a similar crisis and chose not to address it. San Francisco, California and many of its residents have moved here because, despite its natural beauty, San Francisco has become completely unlivable for all but the most well-off. Let's not be another San Francisco. Let's address the crisis that is staring us all in the face. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello, everyone.

>> Ann.

>> This is my first time public speaking.

>> Really.

>> So bear with me. But my name is Marley Shockey, and I'm a resident of in district nine and currently a student at UT. I stand before you to express my unwavering support for the home initiative in Austin and why it is crucial for our community and our future. The current housing

[6:32:47 PM]

our future. The current housing market is wildly unrealistic for me and many other people of all of Austin facing many or much harsher realities than mine raising occupancy limits is recognizing that our city's needs have evolved. This adjustment acknowledges the diverse ways we choose to live in and unique challenges we face as a growing community. It's about embracing change and ensuring our housing policies remain relevant and accommodating to our residents. Perhaps one of the most impactful changes is the proposal to allow three houses on a lot on a single lot instead of two. This means more options for housing, more options, amenities for families to find homes and more flexibility for homeowners to make the most of their properties and possibly earn some extra income if they choose. Not only is this initiative beneficial to those seeking more affordable housing, but it will improve the opportunities for everyone in Austin, including longtime homeowners. It promotes diversity in housing types, which is essential for accommodating various income

[6:33:47 PM]

accommodating various income levels and family sizes. This this is about creating a city that is inclusive and welcoming to all, regardless of the socioeconomic background. But it's more than just statistics and zoning, zoning regulations, the home initiative is about building a more equitable Austin. It's about bridging the gap between the haves and the have nots. It's about ensuring that every austinite, regardless of their income or family size, has access to a safe, affordable and comfortable place that they can call home. I wholeheartedly support the home initiative and encourage you to as well. Thank you for listening.

>> Thank you.

>> Good evening. Roger Faulk, district ten. You know, when all else fails, lower your standards .

>> This is an attempt to try trade quality for quantity. What? What is the result and the unintended consequence of all of

[6:34:48 PM]

unintended consequence of all of this? I'm not sure. You know, I think a lot of people are expecting lower rents and a lot more affordable housing. But one lady, she was here earlier was talking about strong towns saying this. Well, they had an article in April that came to an opposite conclusion, Ann, as did Brookings institute. Bloomberg the Pratt center, the urban institute, Furman center and the North Carolina university all did studies on upzoning, and they found very mixed results. So basically you're experimenting here and you're experimenting with people's lives and their biggest investor in those lives. That's that's just not okay. This is not well thought through. And I don't think it's going to deliver over the promises that a lot of these folks are expecting. It's kind of like the mobility plan at 2016 was going to fix traffic congestion. Well, what is it, seven years later, still got the traffic project kinect going to

[6:35:48 PM]

traffic project kinect going to fix the traffic congestion? Yeah, we'll see about that. If project kinect ever gets off the ground a lot of this effort is to get density to make project connect work because Austin has 3000ft !S. People 3000 per square mile. And it's not not nearly enough to get those federal grants. That's the bottom tier in the grant applications. We don't have the density. We this is probably an attempt to do that. I realize people want homes, but little shacks, this is going to turn us into a chanty town. I mean, allowing trailers that are not designed for full time habitation is insanity. And we say, oh, we want musicians. Well, would you like an Adu in your next door neighbor's backyard with a drummer that pounds that bass drum on. Felix de pau to Roger Corbin?

>> Eric kylberg, Russell Jones, el Allen, please make your way to an open podium, please come

[6:36:50 PM]

to an open podium, please come forward.

>> Go ahead and start.

>> Good afternoon, council. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Felix de Porto.

>> I am a resident of district four and I'm.

>> I came here to tell you my story. My wife and I were born and raised in Puerto Rico. The only place we had ever called home eight years ago with great sacrifice.

>> We left our family and friends and we moved to this great city so that she could pursue a job opportunity we rented for some time.

>> It took us many years on a joint income to save for a small down payment on a home of our own. We knew we wanted to live close to our jobs.

>> Our options were either single family homes that were entirely out of reach or 40 year old condos in various states of disrepair, and almost nothing else in between. So we eventually settled for a tiny condo in the highland neighborhood we now call home. But why is this background important? It is thanks to the availability of smaller units like ours that we are able to afford a place inside the city and to live car free within walking distance of my barber,

[6:37:51 PM]

walking distance of my barber, our doctor, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, a supermarket, major transit routes and so much more.

>> We were and we still are middle income earners.

>> And yet we consider ourselves more privileged than many of our peers. We have no student loans, no children, Ann, and no desire to live large. But even without major expenses, holding us back, it was still challenging for us to find something suitable. I'm here today in support of the home initiative because every family should be able to afford to live the life that my wife and I are lucky enough to have. We like our neighbors and we welcome the idea of making space for more and I believe that this initiative is a step in the right direction toward achieving that. Please legalize the missing middle. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Please go ahead.

>> I'm Roger coffin. I live in the downtown neighborhood, but I'm here representing friends of Austin neighborhoods, a coalition of neighborhood

[6:38:51 PM]

coalition of neighborhood associations and residents reclaiming the word neighborhood to include the full diversity of voices moving beyond neighborhood protectionism. We've come a long way in this city, but we're not there yet. In 2012, the city council unanimously adopted the imagine Austin comprehensive plan Paige 201 of that plan states that to meet the market demand of our growing and diversifying population in the range of available housing choices must expand throughout the city. Alternatives to the typical larger lot single family and garden style apartments that characterize much of Austin's housing stock are needed. We've come a long way since then, but we're not there yet. And in 2017, friends of Austin neighborhoods membership called for allowing all forms of neighbor, neighborhood scale housing, including small apartment complexes, single family homes on small lots, duplexes, triplex triplexes, accessory dwelling units, row

[6:39:53 PM]

accessory dwelling units, row houses, co-ops and tiny homes throughout all neighborhoods. We've come a long way since then, but we're not there yet. In 2019, city council called for a land development code that prioritizes, quote, all types of homes for all kinds of people in all parts of town, unquote. It we've come a long way since then, but we're not there yet. Friends of Austin neighborhoods enthusiastically supports the home act as a modest step towards legalizing the full diversity of housing types. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

>> Good evening, all.

>> My name is Ellie Allen and I have worked for real estate development companies for most of my employable life. I have recently left my full time role working for a builder to start a business of my own and today I'm testifying in support of home.

[6:40:54 PM]

testifying in support of home. You've probably heard a lot of arguments over the years about how developers will always choose to build the largest and most expensive home they can, but in reality there is a desire to be able to deliver a product that caters to a wider range of buyers. We are actually incentivize us to create a product that would have more customers. I would much rather create multiple, moderately priced homes on one lot than one mansion with the same value. The price point at which we could build these smaller homes allows home ownership to be achievable for more people

instead of home ownership for just the wealthy or people who were here first. Be able to apply this model in the core neighborhoods of Austin allows us to be able to create opportunities for people to move into or perhaps back into the most desirable neighborhoods that Austin has to offer. As a new business owner and an incoming generation of builders, I would love to be able to provide homes that my family, friends and peers can afford. Thank you for your efforts to make housing more plentiful and

[6:41:56 PM]

make housing more plentiful and affordable in Texas.

>> Thank you. Thank you. Please proceed.

>> Good evening.

>> Council and planning commission.

>> My name is Diana molina. I moved here 23 years ago, but only very recently became a first time homeowner here in district nine. During a brief window when mortgage rates were at record lows. I couldn't do that today. I consider myself very lucky when median cost of single family homes in my neighborhood are north of \$1 million. So as you can see, it's not easy for me. An urban planner and landscape architect, to be able to join the ranks. I'm a playground designer by trade. Yes, I really do design children's outdoor spaces, including here at walnut creek and north north walnut creek park off north Lamar. I live in one of Dineen's few multifamily developments. That's over 60 units built in the 80s. And I'm here to attest that density is not scary. That we aren't a strain on the utilities and the water resources of the city and that single family homeowners do

[6:42:57 PM]

that single family homeowners do not hold a monopoly on community in this city. Let me give you some examples. During the lockdown, in the worst parts of it, my yoga teacher neighbor offered free classes at Stacy park to any and everybody, including some of the people here opposed to this resolution. My public school teacher, neighbor is able to live near her students, which she considers a privilege. We are blessed by majestic 100 year old oak trees in our community, a lot of green space, and even a tree that we've designated as a vigil space for our deceased pets. So you know, we don't ask who's a renter and who's not in my complex, 50% of renters, but it doesn't matter. When the apocalypse happened and we were all helping each other out, all hands on deck. I resoundingly support the home resolution and I'm proud of this council and I'm proud of this commission for doing the right thing to help the missing middle people like me and my neighbors to remain in central Austin. Now, this is not a panacea for no one. Resolution can tackle all problems, but it's an important step in the right direction. Just like project connect and the removal of parking minimums so that we

[6:43:57 PM]

of parking minimums so that we can stay here. Neighbors in Austin while we can't immediately undo policies of the past. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much.

>> My name is Eric Kilburg.

>> I live in district seven.

>> I'm here to support the proposal. I live in a townhome actually, and I love it.

>> I live within walking distance of four grocery stores.

>> People worried about density, bringing traffic. I only drive to work once or twice a month. Rest of the time it's capmetro or bike. It's very diverse neighborhood. We have young, old immigrants, students, workers, retirees. It's lovely. I've lived in Texas for 31 years in Austin for seven. This is the first time I've ever actually lived in a home that wasn't older than me. If this townhome community wasn't here, I wouldn't be able to afford a comfortable home in this area either, be it an apartment or I'd be one of those unhappy I-35 commuters. So I love that families live near me. Everybody thinks, you know, I'm sure

[6:45:00 PM]

thinks, you know, I'm sure everybody agrees with that nominally. But there wouldn't be nearly as many families in my neighborhood without this added density and extra choice in housing. I did a quick check of real estate listings in the adjoining neighborhood where density isn't allowed. Brentwood the other side of the tracks. The only listings I found that were attainable, not even affordable, but attainable for middle class buyers are 70 years old and under 900ft²!\$. Is that quality housing? I heard someone use the word shack recently. The shacks are already here and the zoning code is keeping them up. So that might be acceptable to live in that shack for a bachelor like me. But none of my friends with kids wanted to spend \$600,000 to raise their kids in a house that's older than their kids, grandparents and smaller than most apartments. We need more modern, affordable homes and new homes. I'm done seeing mansions go up, and I want more balance and diversity in my community. And I would also invite people to take the long view. These density measures are good on their own, but project kinect is coming up. And so with the added vision of

[6:46:01 PM]

And so with the added vision of project kinect, this density will be doubly good. Thank you.

>> Justin Lanier Michael Banghart, Robert Ochoa, Justin levy and Greg Gonzalez.

>> Everyone, please come forward. If your name has been called, please start.

>> Good evening, city council and planning commission. I'm Justin Lanier. I am a graduate student of public policy at UT. D7 resident and I love Austin. I'm also a new Yorker and I'm here to say, don't New York, Austin. We need to pass these zoning changes because they're the best chance that we have keeping around the people, all the diverse, young, creative people that make Austin special, the ones that keep it weird. If not, the city is going to become like every other gentrifying city without enough housing. I saw it happen living in Brooklyn, New York, neighborhoods literally get sucked dry by unaffordability. People move in and out fast and

[6:47:02 PM]

People move in and out fast and they don't stop to invest in the community. They don't go to the block parties. They don't do the cleanups. They work their job for a year or two, and then they move on to another expensive city. When I came to Austin a little over a year ago, it felt like turning back the clock. Wright granted, my shack ain't cheap, but it's still possible to live here as a student, so please trust me when I say what you've got here is worth preserving. And these Idc changes are the way to preserve Austin's character. Without stopping it from growing. And there's no question. Right. We're going to grow. So it's predicted that 200,000 people are going to move here by 2030. So we can either continue on the path we're moving down, we can push people further out of downtown, we can gentrify neighborhoods far from downtown, pack more people onto I-35, create more emissions. Or we could create new housing that's closer to the venues and the lake and the capitol and UT and all the things that make Austin a really, really rich place. And if we choose the first, we'll become a city like the one that

[6:48:02 PM]

become a city like the one that I moved from. It's a playground for the rich that's squeezing out the culture that makes it special or we could choose the second and broke. Students like me could continue to live here, and musicians and first responders as and I just want to take a quick moment to acknowledge a very real concern by homeowners to the Wright if we increase density that property taxes could go up rapidly, it would make it really unaffordable for them. And so I would ask city council, do both. Thank, thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Hello, council. My name is Greg Gonzalez and I'm a new resident and renter in district nine urging the council to vote in favor of the home initiative. Though I moved into Austin from Chicago 18 months ago, I speak to you today as a proud product of aisd schools.

>> When my parents first moved to Austin in 86, the median home price for our 450,000 residents was just \$85,000.

>> When work moved my family away from Austin in 2000, the population had grown to 650,000

[6:49:02 PM]

population had grown to 650,000 and the median home price was 125,000 on a 44% growth in population. But a 47% growth in the cost of housing. Already we were falling behind and supplying enough homes for our new neighbors, though then affordability was still intact. But today our population is around 950,000 and the median home price in the city is \$525,000.

>> Since 1986. That's a 2.1 X growth in the population and a staggering 6.2 X growth in the median home price.

>> The cost of owning a home in Austin has grown three times as fast as our population. Ann chiefly due to the lack of supplying housing. If we continue to fail, supplying housing affordability will only continue to get worse. I'm thankful my teachers at hill elementary keep Lang and Ibj could afford to live here. When I was growing up, as Austin continues to grow, I ask do we expect future ISD teachers to care as much about teaching the

[6:50:03 PM]

care as much about teaching the kids living in a neighborhood they cannot afford to live in as they would educating the children of their next door neighbors by advocating for the home legislation? I'm not asking anyone to enjoy my childhood home any less. I'm just asking for the opportunity to be able to call it home again. Thank you. Thank you, Peter.

>> Peter Breton. James Hillhouse . Greg Nasr. Monica Guzman. Christina Pollard and Monica Guzman has had two minutes donated by alexia Leclerc. Alexia, is there in the audience. Thank you. Thank you. Monica Guzman will have four minutes. Yes. Yes

>> Is this thing on? Hi it is. I am Peter Breton. I'm a current resident of district eight, the former resident for three almost years of district nine. Hello, your honor. Mayor, council members and commissioners. I'm here to speak in support of both home and the removal of occupancy limits, but that comes secondary to something I'll ask

[6:51:04 PM]

secondary to something I'll ask of all of you, including those behind me, to do today. Look around the room and celebrate. We're in a moment worthy of recognition. Singh people are here today with many shared values sustainability, justice, community. We may not all agree on how to best fulfill those those values. That's politics. I believe today is more than just the people in this room. It's a chance to set our sights on a more affordable, livable and healthy Austin. It's an opportunity to reverse course on what many people my age feel government has all too often done fail the future. I'm a public sector employee. I don't own a car. I make it work. I live with a roommate. But I want to own a home or a condo in the city next to places I love. I want to build community, to create places that are inclusive and safe for our most vulnerable . A place to learn, to be

[6:52:07 PM]

. A place to learn, to be challenged, to overcome. I want to have a family. I want them to be safe from harm. I want them to be close to so many opportunities. Me and those in opposition to the home act here today, I think share something we are afraid. But I am afraid today that without these changes I won't be able to do what I want to do here in Austin, and I'm going to have to leave my friends and my found family. So thank you. And to our future. Thank you.

>> Good evening, mayor Watson, your honor. City council and staff, thank you all for holding this hearing. My name is Jim Hillhouse, and I rise in support of the home initiative. I've lived in Austin and been a homeowner since, well, 35 years in district ten terrytown in that time, I've seen a lot of change. One of them has been the very high cost of home ownership and one of the reasons I moved

[6:53:08 PM]

and one of the reasons I moved to terrytown was to be near to the city, near to what was going on around me. And it's sad to see that because of those higher home costs, people can't live next to the city. They can't even live in the city. A lot of times. And that's not right. I don't know how else to put it. I hope that this home initiative that you all are doing will change that. And I wish you all the best of luck. Thank you very much. Have a great evening. Bye bye.

>> Hi there.

>> My name is Christina Pollard. I am a montessori guide and a waitress and the caretaker of a disabled United States marine Corps veteran.

>> I wrote a speech a while ago to set fire to the unruffled stoicism of this establishment, but I'm all out of fire after I leave here today.

>> I'll go wait tables tomorrow morning. I'll care for the infants of the city's wealthiest people, and then I'll go wait

[6:54:08 PM]

people, and then I'll go wait tables some more. Saturday, I'll work for nearly ten hours at the restaurant Sunday I'll do the same.

>> Seven days a week, two jobs a day.

>> Most days at the care of my father, a disabled veteran. And you'll have my life.

>> A series of never ending tasks for trivial pay that barely keeps my head above water in July, I'll be moving in with my parents because rent in Austin has become so grotesquely high.

>> Forget even homeownership every day people flee to Texas.

>> The last bastion of free will and manifest destiny.

>> And while I understand their motives, the impact of their existence cannot be understated. They're pricing us out. Are these transplant millionaires going to watch your children? Are they going to serve you meals? Are they going to be with your loved ones in the hospitals? No, that's people like me, the people that live to accommodate your lives need your help. When the people who work in Austin can no longer afford to live there, something has gone terribly, terribly wrong in the city. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello, city council and planning commission.

[6:55:08 PM]

planning commission.

>> My name is Craig Naser from Gracey woods in district seven. I support some of this plan.

>> There are good elements in it.

>> Austin could use more dense housing, particularly along transportation corridors. Austin also has a series affordability issue. However where I'm not convinced this plan will do all it seeks to do to increase density. Does not guarantee affordability. The cost of housing in a large dynamic city is mostly governed by desirability desire. Viable neighborhoods always have access to nature and dense development. This means access to parks. This plan does not take into account nearby parks or indeed any new parks at all with higher density. The parks we have will get more use and require more intensive care contained Singh to drive nature out of the city. Sets up the future equity problems that already plague many older American cities. My mitigation for climate change

[6:56:11 PM]

mitigation for climate change demands humans live more efficiently, among other changes. Living ifishing only requires us to live closer to nature, not further from it. The devil as always, is in the details, allowing three housing units before Shaw allowing smaller lot sizes could provide a back door way to increase impervious cover. This plan will make it more difficult to reach our climate change tree canopy goals. The new density may make Austin resource recovery collection far more difficult. Increased property taxes, as well as unknown required expansions to our utility infrastructure could increase unaffordability. Let's make sure we think this through before we commit ourselves to this plan. Thank you.

>> Good evening. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director at go Austin. Vamos Austin. >> Reading a residents statement

[6:57:12 PM]

>> Reading a residents statement at good afternoon. My name is Keisha prince, a longtime Austin resident displaced from district three, now living in district one. Like most Austin its who will be impacted by this policy, I can't be at city hall because I'm working during the day as a caregiver and taking care of an elderly family member. Some of you council members may have seen me fight with my neighbors to prevent evictions after winter storm uri and mismanagement at rosemont. I ask you to support low income renters of color. Now by opposing the home initiative. Because I was displaced, I currently live in a house I rent with my section eight voucher.

>> If the home initiative passes the house, I rent will be at an even higher risk of gentrification Ann.

>> And I'll be at risk of displacement again with the rezoning of the single family home, investors will be interested in buying the lot to turn it into a three plex or multifamily property. The rezoning will also cause higher property taxes, which may cause a rent increase and add pressure on the owner to sell many, many renters like me will find

[6:58:14 PM]

renters like me will find themselves at risk of displacement with the houses we rent being demolished because home has no affordable city requirements. I have no faith that these units will be affordable to middle class families because of all the rich people constantly moving to Austin. These three and nine plexes will be sold to the highest bidders. Be about as expensive as a current house and completely out of the budget for middle class people. Austin has become a city of the haves and have nots and this will only make it worse. Finally, I've been working very hard to get to the position where I may 1st day own a home through a voucher program. However, with increasing property values due to home, it will be much less likely. I can afford a home in the Austin area or compete with investors who are buying to build many more units for profits and sell to households above my income level. Please vote no on the

home initiative, which has no affordability requirements, will displace Austin renters like me and gentrify Austin for investors profits, Garza and our coalition of neighbors following these

[6:59:15 PM]

of neighbors following these land use policies believe that we need appropriate, safe and truly affordable housing for all. That includes protecting the affordable housing that exists in our communities. We believe that the home initiative and concurrently proposed land development code amendments present danger to Austin's working poor, low income and middle income neighborhoods by spurring speculation and gentrification. And they have the potential to create unsafe conditions for renters and unhoused neighbors. We see many caveats in the rhetoric of council member pulls a home for everyone. Tiny homes and rvs are not family friendly. Rvs are warranted for recreational use only in designated rv parks, not driveways. Starter homes are what a person or a family can afford to buy. Austin residents at or below middle income cannot afford what developers propose to build at lower energy and water use isn't necessarily about the size of a home. It is more about the number of residents and their energy and

[7:00:15 PM]

residents and their energy and water use, which isn't reflected in this policy. This is written as if for residential homeowners , sorry, and their family members. But those entitlements are for investor landlords. This is developer level developer Swint. If our city council truly cares about creating affordable home ownership opportunities, you will not take this approach. Our council should show care by allowing only allowing redevelopment for affordable projects and not by allowing redevelopment that eliminates existing affordable housing council member pools. Home initiative hurts the elderly, families, renters and the working class and poor. The following thoughts are mine alone. I'm not going to use my precious time to read it to you. But what the staff did not mention during the presentation is the displacing pressure notice noted on page five. It was also unfortunate commissioner cox was silenced when trying to speak about the affordability income impact statement to quote thank thank you, ma'am.

>> Your time is expired and including the extra time

[7:01:16 PM]

including the extra time tonight.

>> I agree. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. Eric Reichman, Nick Quijano, Isaac Cohn, Ian Connor, Kenny, Patty sprinkle.

>> Please make your way to the podium. State your name before you speak.

>> Hello, mayor and council. My name is Isaac Cohen and I am the proud owner of a 740 square foot home in Bouldin creek district nine. I am a vocal member of the I am a vocal member of the Bouldin creek neighborhood association board. And on one of the city advisory boards. Although today I only speak for myself, I am in favor of the home with the caveat that there should be a mechanism for increasing entitlements as unit count and implicit affordability increase is. And I'm sure we can get there before this comes to a vote. Mr. Bunch I am a real person. I want this many other

[7:02:17 PM]

person. I want this many other people want this. Please consider looking up and looking around my path to this room today as a relatively wealthy homeowner is a product of more blessings than I can enumerate. Sadly the people who will benefit from home are less likely to have the privilege. So remember that what you hear here is not the whole story. The shifting arguments against this are exhausting. They always end up in I support more affordable housing, but not like this. So what then? We have tried, shrugging, deflecting, blaming others, wishful thinking. This may not be perfect, but it's a pretty good start. Thank you. And I hope you support this. Thank you.

>> Zeeshan Malik, Elizabeth, Beth wood, will Davis, rich carney and Greg Underwood. Please make your way to the podium. State your name before you speak. >> Good evening. I'm Connor.

[7:03:22 PM]

>> Good evening. I'm Connor. Kenny. I was born and raised in Austin, but that doesn't matter. I build homes with capital a housing mostly for low income austinites. I was on the planning commission during codenext, so I do feel your pain. I wanted to answer a question raised earlier by a gentleman from zilker who wants this people reach out to us actually all the time because they have ideas for housing. One lives in zilker and emailed excited because she heard about home and wanted to know if she could afford to replace her poor condition home with a new one for her and two paying tenants. One lives off east mlk and got constant tear down offers for her single family lot, but she wants to stay on her lot aside. Smaller more affordable homes rather than mcmansions going up all around her. One lives outside of Austin and we're meeting with her to build a group of tiny homes for her and her friends because they don't live in Austin. Under our land development code. I support home, but probably won't use it myself. There are hundreds of gcs in Austin who mostly build single family homes, mcmansion burns because they can't risk a rezoning and they can't finance 200 units, but they can finance three these and related reforms could change the dominant form

[7:04:24 PM]

could change the dominant form of redevelopment of small lots in Austin, from McMansions to something like triplexes. I have three suggestions. One please get rid of as many design rules as possible. We have wonderful tree rules here in Austin, but the tree rules combined with the design rules, make building on many, many lots nearly impossible. If you want the city to build triplexes and not McMansions, make it more feasible for them to do so. Two please involve in the modeling plans. They understand this stuff better than anybody else in city government. Three I don't know why I wasn't involved officially in this, but planning commissioners council members, I assure you they'd love to take your call model all the suggestions so thank you very much for considering these reforms. I think it's a great thing for Austin. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Go ahead and come on up.

>> Good evening. My name is Zeeshan Malik. I'm an Austinite, born and raised live in district five. I'm here to speak in favor of the home proposal I'm testifying to urge the council to support council member Leslie

[7:05:25 PM]

to support council member Leslie Poole's resolution to create home options for middle income empowerment. Thank you all for your time and thank you for your dedication to the future of our community. Appreciate it. Thank you.

>> Hello. Forgive me.

>> I sprinted over here so I can make it in time.

>> Mr. Mayor and council.

>> My name is Will Davis. I live in district nine.

>> I grew up going to church and I still attend from time to time.

>> Although I don't attend as often as I should. But something keeps coming to mind among these endless discussions about Austin housing that I can't help but draw parallels the idea that the church is not a physical place or building.

>> It's the people. I think there's wisdom in that idea that we can apply to our own secular community here in Austin, Austin is so much more than the physical boundaries and buildings or even the universally beloved I-35. Austin soul is the people, all the artists, musicians, teachers,

[7:06:27 PM]

artists, musicians, teachers, professors, firefighters, police, doctors, tirz, tech bros , lawn keepers, dishwashers, dreamers and slackers. And we have let them down. We have allowed a very vocal minority to block any attempt at housing and zoning reform for the past 40 years. Meanwhile all the soul of Austin has been priced out and forced to move away or never come at all. The status quo is a nonstarter. We've allowed the experiment to run its course and look where it's gotten to us. The soul of our city. The people have been hollowed out. Home is our chance to fix the damage that has been done to our city with a very gentle touch home will enable much needed housing, prevent further displacement of our existing communities, and will help bring back more vibrant neighborhoods that we once had. I love this city and I'm thrilled to express my support for home, and I appreciate all the hard work that councilmember pool, the council and city have staff have

[7:07:28 PM]

council and city have staff have done on this. Thank you. And sorry, I'm so out of breath from running.

>> Thank you. Mayor Watson and council members.

>> My name is Greg Underwood. I'm the president of the bryker woods neighborhood association. And Allison alter's district ten, our neighborhood is coming to you today with hope. We're coming to you today with empathy that we can find a common ground on. One of the biggest issues facing our city affordable housing. We also come with a sense of confusion and a sense of deja Vu, because it's been three years since codenext the last big zoning plan, and that created a battle between the neighborhoods and the city that wasted a lot of money and a lot of time on both sides. And we

[7:08:29 PM]

of time on both sides. And we believe that a sweeping zoning issue like the home initiative that's made without the involvement of neighborhoods, goes against the principles of sound community planning. And we believe that the home initiative in its current form will not address our urgent housing problems. We see this as the a winner for real estate investors and real estate developers, and they do not usually build affordable housing as the leaders of our city, we know you're faced with big problems when it comes to zoning and it comes to housing, but we do believe that resolving these intricate matters requires the active participation of all stakeholders. Tirz and that inclusive strategy is the way forward for success. Yes, for both of us. Thank you for your

[7:09:30 PM]

both of us. Thank you for your attention and consideration and thank you for your service.

>> Sean Morse. Bertha Rendon. Delgado Austin Stowell. Attila Horvath. Victory o'grady. Victoria Grady. If your name has been called, please go to an open podium.

>> I will take the name victory if it's available.

>> I'm Victoria Grady. I'm speaking today on behalf of my husband and myself and our two children. And we live in councilmember alter's district. I saw her at our neighbor hood event the other night, actually. And I am going to tell you a personal story of mine, because I think people talk about infrastructure and they think that it's like a dog whistle for, you know, racism and all sorts of things. As a young,

[7:10:31 PM]

sorts of things. As a young, single woman, before I married my husband and I moved to Austin and became a public servant. And my husband and I both are still public servants. And in our professional lives. And I bought a home as a young single person and my sister, who came to graduate school at UT, rented a room from me in my house and I thought I was living the Austin dream. And then two years later, my home flooded in tarrytown, Ann, and I could not imagine why this had happened and why my neighbor to the right of me didn't flood and my neighbor to the left me didn't flood until I hired an engineer who informed me that the city had designed storm drainage plans that turned my lot into a stormwater retention pond for the entire neighborhood and didn't tell anybody. After I sued the city because they would not meet with

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because they would not meet with me to resolve it amicably. I then settled with the city who tried to get me to sign a non-disclosure agreement and took four years of my life to deal with all of this. When the city settled with me, they settled with me for just the amount of money I needed to be able to walk away because I had been paying both my mortgage and my rent for the house that had been uninhabitable for all of that time while also trying to pay rent. The house was ultimately the lot was purchased by somebody who tore it down and built a house on a four foot slab because the city still never fixed the detention pond issue on that lot. Our infrastructure problems are extremely real. It is extremely dangerous for the residents of Austin. We should not be creating any additional density until we have our infrastructure addressed. >> Thank you.

[7:12:33 PM]

>> Thank you.

>> Your time is up. Thank you for speaking today. Ready

>> My name is Austin Stoll.

>> I'm a resident of the Zilker neighborhood and I'm here to speak in favor of the ordinance here tonight.

>> I currently live in the Zilker neighborhood and bought a micro lot. I know that there's a secondary ordinance going to be considered later this year, but I believe it to be connected to this one. I was forced to go through the variance process on that particular property to enjoy the benefits of being able to live in the best neighborhood in the city of Austin. Our land development code has a legacy of exclusion. And I'm here in favor of hoping that we can change that legacy. We had to spend over \$5,000 in variances to be able to just have the right to build on our property and it was a frustrating experience to be accused of my fellow neighbors, mostly octogenarians, accusing me of being a land baron and never actually living the neighborhood. And through a lucky I have the resources. I'm lucky to have the

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I'm lucky to have the knowledge of the code and to fight the process. And we were able to live in this fantastic neighborhood. And I'm now able to walk my children to school in a neighborhood that was previously the neighborhood school that was previously at risk of closure from lack of attendance. And I hope that others are afforded that opportunity. I'd like to fast forward briefly to another property that I have bought in hopes that my children don't defect and go to Texas A&M and go to the university of Texas where I attended. And it is over on 21st street. It's a small lot on a corner with an alley. Currently, it's 720ft IS. And the code incentivizes me to tear that house down. I've rent it to a bartender friend and it's a great opportunity. But if I were to, I have to carry it at a \$700 a month loss to just be able to break even on that property. But what I would like to do is have the options and that's what this code amendment would do, is to give people the option to do something other than to build mega McMansions, which is what we have financially incentivized every developer in the city of Austin to do. And as a developer myself, I'm in an infinitely

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myself, I'm infinitely aware that that is exactly where the code is pushing us to do. This particular lot could easily preserve this house, preserve that original east Austin house and give to other options that could be built behind it that currently is excluded in our current code. Thank you.

>> Hello y'all. My name is Attila Horvath and I gave out a handout, which is really a reference to codes and I'm an electrical engineer and I've been doing repair care and corrections on unintended consequences for the last 40 years.

>> And I see a lot of unintended consequences that can come from all this.

>> First of all, we've been hearing a lot of apples and Oranges.

>> People are talking one way or the other way. I'm going to approach this in a manner that speaks to code. You know, we learn by mistakes. Our mistakes are probably the best lessons. And I think what we find is that

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And I think what we find is that the codes that we have that I referenced in my paper really deal with those things that were learned from mistakes. So existing neighborhoods right now have codes and regulations, and they were there for a reason. And Ed, I'm going to talk about something that nobody's really talked about. They talked about infrastructure. Well the electrical, the water, the sewer, the drainage, these things are not a small item. It's like Jennifer was talking earlier. They're very important. And in order to talk about changing something without taking into consideration those items is almost it is almost irresponsible to because I understand and with the electrical system is a and it is so tenuous the way it sits right now. And the situation in terms of getting new equipment for even even houses or commercial or industrial equipment is

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or industrial equipment is absolutely amazing. How how expensive things have gotten. So what that means that getting the infrastructure built up the way you need to have the infrastructure culture built up for infrastructure for problems. Thank you.

>> Thank you, sir.

>> Richard Raymond and Lauren Mauer, Ryan knell, Susan rodengo and Mac Ragsdale, Mac Ragsdale had two minutes donated by curt Phillips. Curt Phillips, are you with us? Okay Mac. Will four minutes.

>> Thank you.

>> So, I'm Ryan knell.

>> My. Should I go now or wait for the other folks?

>> Okay, go ahead.

>> Thank you. My name is Ryan knell.

>> This is Theodore, my son.

>> So I'm representing the Austin cooperative business association today.

>> I lived in a co-op when I went to college at and the co-ops are about 50 to 70% lower

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co-ops are about 50 to 70% lower cost than many other housing types in their neighborhoods. And so they're a great way to live affordable co-ops. The benefit, I think they get this low cost in large part because they're a type of shared housing, right? They have occupancy limits above the six people. So you can share space, you can share, you can share appliances, utilities and all these things that a family can share.

>> And, you know, students, elderly people, they don't necessarily have a family.

>> They can live with. So they kind of make their own family. And by getting rid of the occupancy limits based on familial status, you can enable folks that don't have traditional families. And this doesn't just impact that, you know, students and the elderly.

>> I know that the lgbtq community really suffers from this, you know, having non traditional families and people would benefit from it.

>> And that community additionally, I've heard stories about immigrant families who

[7:18:42 PM]

about immigrant families who live together.

>> So you can imagine under today's code, if you had a family of three and a family of three in central Austin, that would be illegal because they're limited to four people.

>> And the three and the three are six, and they're not related . So once again, I like you all to support moving the occupancy limits and. I think I'll just throw play with the mic and we'll call it a day.

>> Thank you. Go together. Thank thank you.

>> Let's see. I should have some slides up here and. Honorable mayor city council and planning commission.

>> Thank you for allowing me to speak and especially thank you for having the courage to tackle this. Most difficult issue that's been kicked down the road for so many years. I'm Mac Ragsdale, a longtime resident of rosedale. For some 45 years, and I lived there when central

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I lived there when central market was proposed and many good people were vehemently opposed, as if the world was coming to an end.

>> We see many years later, the world did not come to an end and I think most would agree that the neighborhood is better off because of its full disclosure, I'm a retired recovery architect and so I have seen the dark side.

>> I also happen to believe that we can both increase the density and maintain neighborhood character at the same time. And both Austin and the planet will be better off for it. A few years ago, I acquired a lovely 1927 farmhouse on a large lot with heritage trees, with the intention of fixing up the old house and adding some right sized compatible housing to the lot. I soon got schooled on the difficulties of navigating the code and severe restrictions on doing any kind of development, but I decided to wait for the city to come to its senses, and I hope that day is finally coming. I'd like to show you case studies of what limitations burns would be required under

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burns would be required under the current code and what would be allowed under the proposed changes. So this plan existing conditions plan shows a large 11,000 square foot lot with an 11 50 square foot lovely historic old farmhouse surrounded by heritage trees on a three zoned lot which allows duplex the site severely limited by heritage trees which prohibit connecting to the existing house to make it a duplex. The next slide scheme one under current code shows how a monstrous unaffordable 3300 square foot monstrous to some people unaffordable 3300 square foot single family house could be added to the lot. But the existing historic house would have to have 50ft IS removed in order to make it comply. As an 1100 square foot Adu. This not only forces a big expensive house to be built on the remainder of the large lot, but also forces 50ft IS to be torn off the existing old farmhouse

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the existing old farmhouse compromised its historic character. This makes no logical sense, does little to promote affordability and removing 50ft IS of the old farmhouse to make it an Adu is a nonstarter for me scheme to. So next slide. Under current code shows how an 1100 square foot Adu would be added to the remainder of the large lot. But the existing 11 50 square foot historic farmhouse house would need to be nearly tripled in size to bring it to the allowable floor area of 3300ft IS. This force is building a big, expensive house that compromises the historical character of the existing house and only adds one affordable unit plus a monstrous, unaffordable house. This also makes no logical sense and does little to promote affordability. So scheme three is the proposed code revisions, and it shows how the existing historic farmhouse

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the existing historic farmhouse could be minimally expanded to make it more family friendly. Size without compromising the historic character. The remainder of the lot could be redeveloped to add a duplex of up to 2800ft² or 1400 square feet per unit for a total of three affordable family friendly missing middle units on the entire lot. All the while preserving existing trees and staying within impervious cover limitations. Three units is modest, but it's a 50% increase as opposed to just two under the current code. It's very compatible and sensible redevelopment. That would not be allowed under current code. This is not only not the end of the world, but will allow the planet to breathe a little bit easier. Thank you.

>> Okay.

>> My name is Lauren Maher. Before I start, I would like to thank all of you for spending

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thank all of you for spending your Thursday night listening to us. I applaud your patience.

>> So once again, my name is Lauren.

>> I am a district nine resident and a part of UT Austin's habitat for humanity Fauci. I'm testifying to urge the council to support the home resolution. I'm going to make this quick and simple. I understand that my opposition has argued that the home resolution won't be a solution to affordable housing and will cause a long list of issues.

>> But I'm asking of literally everyone in here today, if not with this initiative of how and most importantly, when is the affordable housing crisis going to be fixed or even attempted at there is not going to be a singular, perfect solution to providing housing, but we can't shut down plans like these that actually make a strategic attempt at solving affordable housing for everyone who has spoken today, they have meant well.

>> But the more we nitpick, the longer this is going to take. I

[7:24:48 PM]

longer this is going to take. I support the home resolution because something is better than nothing.

>> This is not an end all be all solution, but it is one step closer to creating an Austin we all want to live in. Thank you, mace.

>> An eir J John Williams, Mary Engel, Ryan Pollack, George coffer. Mary Engel has had two minutes donated by Lee Ziegler. Lee, are you with us in the room? Thank you. Thank you.

>> I'm John Williams.

>> Please go ahead. Just please make your way to an open podium and state your name before you speak.

>> All right. Pardon me. My name is John Harvey Williams. I live in district five.

>> I'm a native austinite, living in the home that my parents purchased in 1964. The home is located in western

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home is located in western trails, which is a single family residential subdivision in the 78745 zip code within council district five I and all of my neighbors that I have been able to contact are completely opposed to the changes being proposed to the land development code, which would allow more than one housing unit as well as rvs on single family zone property.

>> We are also opposed to removing restrictions regarding the number of unrelated adults that can occupy a housing unit. My parents and myself have worked all of our adult lives to maintain the neighborhood environment that we have enjoyed for over 60 years in western trails and are opposed to changes in the land development code that would dramatically change the nature of our neighborhood. In addition, we have restrictions in all of our deeds that would not permit what the city is proposing. We are organized, well financed with legal counsel and. Will most definitely pursue all legal

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definitely pursue all legal avenues to prevent any entity from executing any development that conflicts with our deed restriction. As the vast majority of the residents of western trails in southern oaks made their opposition to similar proposals contained within the south Austin combined neighborhood plan loud and clear. Eight years ago. Our position on this matter has not changed. We are adamantly opposed to any changes in the existing land development code that would change the nature of our neighborhood from one single family housing unit per property. Unless the majority of property owners within each of our deed restriction Zones should vote to do so as prescribed and said restrictions risk evictions, which have been recently upheld in court as legally binding covenants. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Thank you, commissioners and council. My name is Ryan Pollock. Currently in D nine and I'm hungry. I'm here representing myself as an

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representing myself as an austinite and my brothers and sisters of the international brotherhood of electrical workers local 520 to ask for your support in the home act. Union electricians don't do residential construction in Austin, so that's not what I'm here for. We do, however, work on electrified transit systems to reinforce what my buddy bill pointed out earlier. The federal government prioritize ISS grants for transit based on the amount of riders projected to be served in a proposal due to our low density here in Austin, we rank low on that criteria, causing us to miss out on potentially billions of dollars in federal investment that means that in order to meet our transit needs, needs that will continue to increase from here, we have to find we have to fund our transit projects primarily by passing bonds, which means an increase in property taxes, which means an increase in the cost of living, which will then lead to more people who want to work in the city, having to move farther out, which means longer commutes, which then further increases the demand for transit . And then the cycle starts all over again with the need to pass more bonds and increase taxes to myself and my brothers and

[7:28:56 PM]

myself and my brothers and sisters of the electricians union, whom I represent, the home act is one necessary step in making progress in confronting our city's most challenging and pressing issues from homelessness to traffic to workforce shortage and more. As many have noted here before me, this change alone won't address every challenge that we're facing, and I share those concerns. So we unfortunately still have more work to do. In addition to passing this necessary change, I'm under no illusion that increasing housing supply alone will solve our housing crisis. But I do know that a shortage of housing supply stock is real. So I look forward to working with you all in developing further initiatives to complement the home act and I and to help grow an Austin where all of us can thrive. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Good evening. I'm Mary Ingle. I'm a resident of north university neighborhood, a former ANC officer, a contact team member and a founding member of community, not commodity. This resolution, Ann, in my opinion, will monetize profit properties for profit, pure and simple. Single

[7:29:57 PM]

profit, pure and simple. Single family lots will not be multifamily according to our current definition in the land development code, we, the property owners, were not consulted and most of us don't want this. The home resolution is disingenuous because because of its two phases of implementation so far we've only been told about phase one. Three units per lot. Doesn't sound too bad Ed. But the city needs to do a better job of informing the public about what they really intend to do. They need to support their data. They need to support it. They need to supply data to support their intentions . My husband and I live live near the UT campus, where occupancy limits were a priori city. The community around UT fought hard to get these occupancy limits in place for obvious reasons of health, safety and a reasonable quality of life changing occupancy limits from 6 to 6 teen people

[7:30:58 PM]

limits from 6 to 6 teen people is defies common sense. Direct action has never produced a desirable community product at an issue of concern is about the future of our our mature urban tree canopy. When the neighborhood lots are divided into smaller increments, where will the trees grow and as one of the other speakers pointed out with his site plan, it's very hard to relocate mature trees on subdivided lots into smaller parcels. I really feel that this is home resolution is a reckless act and it's not based on data or cost analysis. This action is a gross overreach by the city council at this time, when good planning should be called upon. This is what good planning can do. Support a collaborative process to craft solutions for our our community. Allow us good planning has been ignored and forgotten. I would

[7:31:59 PM]

ignored and forgotten. I would like to give a shout out to Allison alter and Mackenzie Kelly for their bravery. Thank you.

>> Daniel Yanez, Jolene kill Basa and Charlotte Patterson, Ariana Azeem, Ana Aguilera. Please make your way to an open podium and state your name before you speak.

>> Thank.

>> Thank you.

>> My name is Danielle Yanez. Hey, mayor. Can't hardly see you all. Thank you all. First of all, I want to say thank you for your service, man. This is this is where it happens. And I appreciate regardless of what we agree on or disagree, I appreciate that we're all trying to make a better Austin. And so for that, I'm saying to you that I certainly and I don't think anybody in this room or any of the speakers would disagree that we need housing. But the market

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we need housing. But the market and I consider this initiative market driven does not provide affordable housing. Vol medium density, do not equate to affordability. What equates to affordability is a new paradigm, a different paradigm. The housing market has never provided affordability. What so you have tiny houses or you have smaller houses, smaller lots? There is nothing to prevent those being sold for \$1 million. Look at Manhattan, 6 to 800ft IS, \$3,000 a month. That's rental. So affordability is not in this thing. So please don't make it as though it is like I say, we need a different paradigm, a new paradigm, a proactive plan. So I'm on the executive committee,

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I'm on the executive committee, the Austin neighborhoods council, and we sent you all a letter and I sent you our press conference. I hope you look at it because it has a lot of great ideas in there about this. And it's not that we don't want housing, but it has to be the right kind of housing. And it cannot be blanket. So proactive planning. I spoke to the mayor and the city manager about this. We have an incredible creative population. If we have aisles people on this side of the aisle and that side of the aisle, we should come together. I'm sorry, Mr. Yanez, your time has expired.

>> I appreciate it. Thank you for being here. Ms. Aguirre there you go.

>> Thank you.

>> Good evening, mayor Watson.

>> Chair Shaw, council members and planning commissioners. My name is Ana Aguirre. I'm the president of the Austin neighborhoods council. We want to thank council members Allison alter and Mackenzie Kelly and commissioners Taylor and cox for asking the very important questions that deserve consideration as the council navigates the consequences of what is being proposed. Public

[7:35:05 PM]

what is being proposed. Public safety shall be and must be a priority. The ANC executive committee has sent each of you an email briefly outlining our concerns with the home options for middle income empowerment resolution Ann and the city's focus to end single family zoning on residential lots. I see that our letter nor statement noting our concerns are posted like the letter supporting this resolution. It is ironic that central Texas was under a flash flood. Flash flood warning today. The county clerk's office announced earlier that the recreation center located on shoal creek was closed as an early voting site due to flooding. Austin is nationally known as flash flood alley. Neighborhoods are concerned over the same questions that never seem to be answered and will affect all residents. Public safety, our quality of life plus have a multitude of unintended consequence, such as flooding due to lower impervious cover regulated options, reduction of tree canopy aging infrastructure incapable of handling current demand, deregulation of parking regulations, occupancy limits

[7:36:05 PM]

regulations, occupancy limits and notifications, safety concern with fire and flood. An inadequate public transportation monetization of properties for profit and increasing property tax evaluations as on a personal note, as ad2 and former flood mitigation task force member, I propose that under no

conditions, no additional density or increases in occupancy limits be allowed in airy area. Any area that is susceptible to creek and localized flooding and within the 14 flood plain, unless you're prepared to fully fund the home buyouts and relocate all displaced flood victims so they can all remain in Austin without any additional financial burden. Sadly, with the support of council member Fuentes, we're having our lower onion creek ten year anniversary commemoration. People died because of flooding.

>> Thank you very much for being here.

>> Megan Ramos Nina Rinaldi. Michael Berryman, Johnny roofer Dan keshet. Please come forward

[7:37:08 PM]

Dan keshet. Please come forward if your name has been called, so you'll be ready.

>> And just if there's an open microphone, please state your name for the record and proceed.

>> Good evening, everyone.

>> My name is Megan Ramos and I'm a resident of district nine and also a UT undergraduate student.

>> I would like to begin by saying this is my first time speaking in this particular setting. So to be honest, it's a little nerve wracking. But overall, knell, I'm very excited and grateful to have this opportunity to be in front of you all today. I'm testifying today to urge the council to support council member Leslie pools home resolution. This resolution holds immense promise for our city as it addresses a critical need that has long been neglected. It will open up more housing opportunity for students like me, retirees and families of all income levels. As we all know, Austin is a growing city. Students young professionals and new families are coming to Austin for its vibrant community and stunning landscapes and abundant opportunities in education. Work and life.

[7:38:09 PM]

education. Work and life. However, the affordable Katy and access ability to live here has not kept up with our growing population. Without action, we risk leaving countless individuals and families behind, struggling to find a place they can call home personally, it pains me to see friends of mine move farther away from campus because rent prices are too high . As students, we are already burdened enough with the expense of our education and making living near campus unaffordable certainly doesn't help. This effect ripples throughout the broader community and continues to displace long standing residents and strain local businesses. We can't let unaffordable housing disrupt the close knit social fabric of our community. So let's take this opportunity to redefine Austin as a city for all. Not just a privileged few. As a new student here at UT, as well as being a young new austinite, I have fallen in love with my new home. There's so much to be proud of here and I feel lucky to be welcomed into this community again. I'm extremely grateful to be accompanied by my fellow

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be accompanied by my fellow young peers who have also spoken here today from habitat for humanity and UT Austin. And I hope that you will continue seeing and hearing from us again as this project progresses. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

>> Please begin. Hello.

>> Thank you so much for listening to all of us tonight. I wanted to say thank you to council member pool for bringing this resolution. It's much needed and it makes me feel really excited and optimistic about our opportunities to achieve more affordable housing in our city. I am a resident of district four. I live in Windsor park in a small condo community that was built in the 6070s. We have about 40 units on a pretty small lot tucked up right next to a creek in Windsor park, and it's not the kind of thing that would be legal to build today, but it's a great place to live. You know, with kind of medium sized units where you get to be near a lot of neighbors. And

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near a lot of neighbors. And someday I would really like it to be legal for that, to be that kind of community to be built again in Austin. So I hope that we're on our way there and thank you so much for your time tonight. Thank you.

>> Hi, y'all. My name is Johnny rufiyaa. I'm a resident of nine student UT Austin, and I'm here to speak in favor of the item at hand. I was going to make a joke about, you know, all of us being out here in the rain, but that time has long since passed. Still I want to state how excited I am about this particular resolution.

>> I think that it is very important to have items like this because they recognize the situation that Austin is currently in and make genuine steps to try to alleviate some of the inequities that we're seeing in our city. You know, the issue is very clear. There are too many people and not enough houses. And at the heart of this item is, you know, progress towards making sure that displacement does not happen, while also making room for new folks that are coming in. Obviously as a student at UT

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in. Obviously as a student at UT Austin, this is something that is particularly important to me. You know, for a few students, Shaw Austin is a transient place where they educate and then they go back home. They go somewhere else, and that's that. However, students who want to stay here and, you know, sort of contribute and become a part of this community ought to have the option to do so. And without

ensuring that there are smaller, more affordable lots throughout the city, that can't become a reality for quite a few people. For instance, I live right next to Hyde park. I love Hyde park. There's like a really awesome sandwich shop. It's a great sandwich shop. I don't want to have to drive there. I want to be able to go there whenever I want. So many amenities parks, libraries, alleys aren't accessible for people in the long run by ensuring that we have these small lots, we're going to increase that accessibility for everybody and ensure that Austin isn't just a transient place for many young people, but instead becomes a place where we can put our roots down. Please let me eat at my sandwich shop more often. It's

[7:42:16 PM]

sandwich shop more often. It's really good. I can't remember the name uncle Nicky's. You all should go to uncle Nicky's. It's really awesome. And you all should build more housing by uncle Nicky's. So yeah. In short, you know, I really thank council member pool for introducing this item, and I hope that we can continue our progress in making sure that Austin is accessible and affordable. Thank you. Mark Betancourt, Bryan Pena, Jasmine Kelly, Judah rice.

>> Belinda Davis. Please make your way to an open podium and state your name before you speak . Hi

>> Hi.

>> My name is Jasmine Kelly.

>> I haven't spoken in front of people in a long time, so just apologies in advance for the nervousness.

>> I live in district one and I'm here to support the home initiative.

>> This is really important to me for multiple reasons.

>> One of them is that part of the reason I don't speak is because I do a lot of behind the scenes sort of political activism.

>> I do a lot of letter writing campaigns, I fundraising, that kind of stuff. And one thing that's been recurring issue is that the people who I who want

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that the people who I who want to help make big changes in the world in their local communities can't afford to live in their local communities. I've actually only been in Austin for a year. I moved here from Houston and somebody mentioned flooding earlier and I was like, oh, this isn't anything compared to that. But I do understand how that can be a serious issue. And so I want to say, while I support this, I do understand that it's not going to be the end all, be all of what needs to happen. And I think everybody here knows that and knows that the work is yet to come. But we have to start and initiatives like these

make for really clear pathway that, hey, we are going to allow more dense housing. We are going to say, welcome, come here. We're going to make room for you. We're going to make sure that you can afford to live here . And yeah, there might be some other steps we need to do to close that deal. But I believe that by taking this first step, it makes those other steps easier because if you don't put your first foot down, how are you going to get to the end of the road? So thank you all for listening to us for hearing all of that. Thank you, everybody who's been supporting that. And thank you, everybody who's been

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thank you, everybody who's been opposing it, because your opinions are valuable and you'll be needed as we continue to tackle affordable housing. So I appreciate you all. I am for home. I hope you can all come to be for home as well. And so thank you. Have a good night. Thank you. Good evening.

>> My name is Belinda Davis and I happen to own a home in district one that I inherited and I want to say this to begin with, I am in favor of the home initiative, but I want you to know this. I am not a person with a lot of money. I'm not a real estate developer. Over 80 years ago, my mother moved to Austin, Ann and purchased bought a home in central east Austin.

[7:45:18 PM]

a home in central east Austin. She came here to go to beauty school. She went to beauty school. She bought the home a nice big lot. After she married my mom and dad built a home on the in the back of the lot, a two bedroom home. So so they worked hard and they dreamed of being self-sufficient. They always wanted to have something. So they sacrificed. They they were dreamed of being home owners, entrepreneurs. My mom did build a beauty shop attached to the first home that that she owned. And it was necessary for them to rent the property. Parts of it, a room here, a room there . At one point, the small house they built in the early 1950s, they rented out because they needed that income just to maintain the property in 1996.

[7:46:19 PM]

maintain the property in 1996. I'm sorry, 1976, after after my parents passed away, my sister and I inherited the home. We paid taxes on. It just a couple of years ago. We have been able we've had an opportunity to make renovations and restore.

>> Thank you. Appreciate your being.

>> I wish I could tell y'all more. But listen, y'all have been so patient and kind. We appreciate you being here.

>> Thank you.

>> First, I just wanted to thank all of you guys for being here today and hearing us all out. My name is mark Betancourt and I'm a freshman biochemistry student here at the university of Texas at Austin. And I'm representing habitat for humanity. While my time here has been relatively short, one glaring issue is very clear, and it's affordable housing. In my short time, I've already heard my fellow students talk and worry about the

[7:47:21 PM]

talk and worry about the skyrocketing prices of west campus apartments and how they don't know if they're going to find somewhere to stay that they can afford. And live near campus .

>> I've encountered this issue already, searching for a safe and affordable place.

>> Next year has already become a burden to me and it's a struggle that many students across UT are going through. The affordable housing crisis is a present reality that is affecting students, workers and individuals of all age groups each and every single day. The home initiative to me embodies a crucial mission that strives for equitable housing and the well-being of every resident in this city. Without concrete steps to change these outdated regulations. The problem is only going to persist. Prices are going to continue to soar and families are going to continue to endure hardships. And this crisis will continue until it's too late to turn back.

>> I come from a single parent, low income household and I've witnessed firsthand the difficulties and the pain and struggle that come from the financial burden, the fear of uprooting my life and leaving my

[7:48:22 PM]

uprooting my life and leaving my friends to find affordable housing.

>> The wondering of when my mom's going to come home from her long hours and the heartache of watching her lose herself in the pursuit of providing for me. These are all experiences that no child should witness or be subjected to rejecting the home initiative and failing to create a more affordable housing options will subject countless families, children and workers to a similar financial crisis. To my own housing costs will relentlessly climb, leaving them only with two options work harder, longer just to stay in their home now, or abandon it all to find more affordable housing outside of the city. Thank you for your time.

>> Thank you.

>> Howdy. Council

>> My name is Brian Pena. I represent university Democrats and I'm a member of the west campus neighborhood association. First, want to thank you all so much and the planning commission for willingness to hear us all out for so long.

>> It really does mean a lot to me and I know it means a lot to

[7:49:22 PM]

me and I know it means a lot to people everywhere.

>> I'm here to strongly, strongly urge you to support council member pools. Home provision, and I'll tell you why we have so many members that are terrified about the future. They know that at the end of their time at UT, they're going to have to make the decision of whether they're going to have to move farther and farther and farther away from a place that they have jobs in, a place that they love, a place that they have called, they have made home, or they're going to have to move somewhere completely different.

>> It's unfortunate there is just not enough affordable options here in Austin. There's not enough affordable options for them as renters as they're trying to find places around Ed UT and there's certainly not options for when they graduate. All we're here, all we're asking as students and as young people is that you keep in mind that young people and students are just as much austinites as anyone else.

>> We just we have a right to affordable housing and to live in this city as anyone else. And we just please, please strongly urge you to support councilmember pool's amendment.

>> So thank you. Thank you. >> Kymberley Cole, Annie Fierro,

[7:50:24 PM]

>> Kymberley Cole, Annie Fierro, Caleb McClain, mark dukan. Taylor Jackie Ann. If your name has been called, please make your way to an open podium and state your name before you speak. Please come forward.

>> Hi, I'm Ford.

>> Caleb McClain.

>> I thought you already said your name was forward. Yes, sir. Okay

>> I'm an Austin property owner and president of our hoa.

>> We represent about 1200 homes up in northwest Austin in the city of Austin's proposed rezoning puts all the burden and risk on Austin's greatest asset. The people who live here. We are passionate about the city. We committed to its improvement and determine to see this vision become a reality. But

this approach is flawed. Eid Austin is a tapestry of colors and differences as this one solution being applied across the entire city won't work. You are attempting to rezone the Austin property and asking that we the voters, the property owners,

[7:51:24 PM]

voters, the property owners, pretend our properties aren't being rezoned. You're asking us under the pretense of affordable housing, to allow our properties to be rezoned. This is brinkmanship. Erp and facts do not support this approach. The city tried something like this before the courts ruled against you. They overturned that and they said changes in zoning regulations and district boundaries and changes in zoning classification are synonymous.

>> Re zoning and this reclassification of the same thing.

>> The city website even confirms that deed restrictions are a civil matter to you are transferred Singh. All of this conflict and all of this risk to the property owners, not all property owners, only the ones that are fortunate enough to have an hoa to help protect them or have the financial means to go to court to defend their property rights. It's reassuring only to those people who can afford it. You know, a lot of people can't afford high priced

[7:52:28 PM]

people can't afford high priced homes. They can't afford the time to participate in an hoa. They can't afford the resources to defend their property rights. The implications of this rezoning and changes to the zoning definition levy a significant financial burden to the current city of Austin. Residents lawsuits will increase . There will be significant property tax increases.

>> Thank you for schools and infrastructure. I appreciate you being here tonight. Thank you. Hi everybody.

>> My name is mark duchin, the real false narrative in this room right now is that it's this or nothing and that is bs. I believe we have a town of smart, creative, reasonable people. Let's engage them, get our facts and data together, come up with something that most of us can live with. I'm a long time resident of district ten. I'm president of the stillhouse canyon hoa, about 180 multifamily homeowners. I'm speaking against the proposal.

[7:53:29 PM]

speaking against the proposal.

>> I wouldn't be surprised if any member of my community supported this.

>> Make no mistake, we want affordability and affordable housing because we want our own property to stay affordable.

>> But as far as I know, the specific proposal hasn't been tried elsewhere. So just like other prior major city plans, homelessness, transit, public safety that have generated a host of unintended consequences, we are marching into the unknown based more on faith of building affordable units than science and data. Put another way, if you've lived here long enough and have been promised affordable housing again and again, downtown condos Mueller the grove, it is hard to take seriously. I've heard the mayor say if you don't want this, what do we do instead? So here are some ideas. One density limits for short term rentals and other regulations. There are other places in the us that take str regulation seriously, operate illegally and you're fined 1000 to \$10,000 a day. We are not one of those places.

>> These are homes that could be part of our housing supply and don't even contribute to hotel

[7:54:30 PM]

don't even contribute to hotel occupancy taxes.

>> Two at the legislative this spring proposal to override local rules for adus. But they overreached, placing a sensible square foot limit would have probably seen them pass out. There are opportunities to compromise on ads we can explore three test this proposal before rolling it out citywide. Provide opt outs. Houston did both before its own lot size reforms in short, make sure it actually provides affordable housing without the unintended consequences. Then give people a neighborhood to choice. Finally, find ways to incentivize prospective homeowners to either buy or build over institutional investors. I fear this proposal does the opposite. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Hello, mayor and council.

>> I'm Taylor Jackson, CEO of the home builders association of greater Austin here today in support of phase one of the home initiative, the Austin today is certainly not the Austin of 20, 30 or 40 years ago.

[7:55:31 PM]

30 or 40 years ago.

>> And as you heard from the staff presentation earlier, the Austin is now the 10th largest city in this nation.

>> But we have not updated our policies to meet our decades upon decades of rapid growth. Our city has grown, our city has grown. And the opportunity to own a home has become out of reach for so

many due to the existing restrictions on housing and the types of housing we allow citywide cities across the country are facing similar affordability challenges and have taken steps in recent years to allow for more units on single family. Lots for example, many apolis enacted housing reforms in 2020 that are already showing positive results because of their work. The city is seeing more housing supply reduced, rents and increased affordability overall, our housing crisis thus demands action. Phase one of the home

[7:56:32 PM]

action. Phase one of the home initiative provides a modest step forward for more housing that is actually attainable for the people who are the heartbeat of Austin. It provides the opportunity for our teachers, our musicians, our first responders, our young families to buy more affordable homes in Austin. It provides the opportunity for our seniors to age in place and allows multigenerational families to age together in the same community. The gradual change we can expect to see from this measure will mean that middle middle income families can stay in Austin long term, own a home and build generational wealth. I urge your support of this measure and thank council member, thank you.

>> Thank you. Sorry beat you.

>> Parker Welsh. Jay Crossley. Austin Talbot. Richard Iverson. Calm bananas, please make your way down. Jay Crossley had two

[7:57:33 PM]

way down. Jay Crossley had two minutes donated by Chris Basulto. Chris, are you still all present? Okay, so you'll just have two minutes then please go ahead and begin.

>> Mr. Mayor. Council members, commissioners.

>> Austin is in a housing crisis .

>> Could you please state your name for the record?

>> Oh, sorry.

>> My name is parker Welch with a C. Austin is in a housing crisis, but it's not just a housing crisis.

>> It's an education crisis too outrageous housing costs have made it impossible for us to fully staff our schools and the educators. We do have are facing mounting pressure. Last year in a district survey, 73% of aid employees were officially housing burdened. We have teachers living in Kyle and commuting into Austin schools every day.

>> And I have to ask, what are we doing here?

>> Why are we building a city to live in or a city to look at the

[7:58:36 PM]

live in or a city to look at the fate of this proposal will answer that question and our teachers will tell us if we got it right.

>> And none of this is hypothetical.

>> All right. Now at the former rosedale school, aisd is planning a fully affordable development for educators with just 50 houses last year at a similar development for 30 houses, they received 1200 applications from aisd employees in a single week.

>> These amendments will make it possible for real projects like rosedale to build more houses for teachers without changing current zoning with three units instead of two units, we can add another 25 to that 50.

>> In rosedale, 25 more teachers, a bus drivers and librarians coming home to the community they serve. We must reject the narrow minded interests that would prefer teachers simply disappear when the last bell rings. We must

[7:59:37 PM]

the last bell rings. We must reject the voices of exclusion and fear.

>> We must pass these amendments .

>> Thank you for your time.

>> Hi.

>> Jay Crossley.

>> Thank you. Mayor Watson.

>> Council members and planning commissioners for your service to all the people of Austin and for listening to all of us here today.

>> I live in district seven in a single family home with my wife and nine year old son and I'm executive director of farm and city, and we strongly support the home initiative and urge you not to water it down in ways that will keep people from finding affordable housing options in our city. At our core, farm city is a climate change organization that focuses on changing public policies to allow Texans to have affordable options to live healthy, low carbon lifestyles.

>> Please. As of today, the city of Austin's use of exclusionary zoning continues to accelerate climate change unnecessarily and contribute to our region's extraordinary rate of destroying trees in rural and open space. Mandating low density housing

[8:00:39 PM]

Mandating low density housing disconnected from jobs, schools and stores worsens air pollution by forcing us to drive too much and adds more impervious surface to our region than necessary, while ironically also making our city and our region less affordable through exclusionary zoning is a lose lose policy for over 70% of our expected regional growth in coming decades will be people of color. If city policies continue artificially limiting the housing supply. The people we are denying the opportunity to live healthy, low carbon lifestyles in this city are predominantly people of color, while lower income people will be disproportionately impacted by the ways exclusionary zoning drives up our housing and transportation costs. Austin is not unique in our rate of growth . In spite of how special and weird we feel for every person, we will add the next five years. Houston and dfw will each add two people. If we believe in combating climate change and preserving the land and the plants and the animals and the humans of our region, we have a

[8:01:39 PM]

humans of our region, we have a responsibility to provide for our share of the growing human species in a more responsive, climate aware manner, as shown by the city of Austin. Watershed department analysis and codenext . And a report I sent you from the EPA land use reforms of this type will significantly reduce the future total impervious surface in our region and the total in our city. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you, Mr. Crossley. Jake Wegman, Michael curry, Barbara Macarthur, Celine Rendon, Christian Shope, Michael curry received two minutes, donated by Caroline Reynolds.

>> Caroline, are you still here? She's still here, yes. Barbara Macarthur received time donated by Nancy bessant. Nancy, are you still present? Yes. Okay

>> All right. Thank you.

>> Do I have four minutes?

>> You have four minutes.

>> Mr. Okay. Well, if I take that throw a tomato at me.

[8:02:39 PM]

that throw a tomato at me.

>> Well, first I want to acknowledge the council and the city manager for mailing written notice of the proposed zoning changes. At issue today. This is a big step in the right direction for the city. So thank you for doing that. Unfortunately the council's also taken a big step in the wrong direction by splitting consideration of the number of units per lot from reductions in lot size as council member Allison Alter pointed out weeks ago, the change to lot size would interact or will interact dramatically with the three unit lot item. So talking about three units per lot is misleading and pointless. When the council has decided to allow existing lots to be carved up into multiple three unit lots. Three units per existing lot becomes six or 9 or 12 and we haven't been told about the heights setbacks, impervious cover and building bulk or far that will change. So

[8:03:42 PM]

bulk or far that will change. So what we're left with is a half baked proposal that cannot be honestly evaluated and that's a failure of process. Yes. And a failure of government. I urge you to pull this item down and consider it or hopefully a more genuine community based proposal in connection with your consideration of lot sizes. As I find it disconcerting that some council members and others have misled people into believing that this proposal will create housing for first time home buyers other than wealthy ones that they can afford, or that it will drive down rent and purchase prices that first responders can afford. The evidence shows that's not true, and it's terribly unfair to the public to suggest that it is. I find it appalling that a so-called housing ordinance is super charging anti housing says the sharp division you here today represents a failure of

[8:04:44 PM]

today represents a failure of government. You fail to provide or rather refuse to provide a process that promotes. Collaboration, compromise and a working consensus. You've not tried to bring people together. If you think that's not possible, it's because you haven't done it. That's a failure of imagination. The community was promised community planning. The home proposal is a repudiation of that. We can move forward, but we have to do it together. Our simplistic proposal feels like the home proposal are going to unleash a deregulate market which will displace low income homeowners before anyone else and not require even produce affordable housing. Certainly, there's no evidence to suggest that it will. The only thing worse than not providing affordable housing is saying that you are when you're not. This is not a situation Ann where one side is right and one side is wrong. The

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right and one side is wrong. The truth or what is referred to as communal truth is more nuanced. I'm ashamed that my city government doesn't care enough to pursue that. We can do better than this. We must. Thank you.

>> Hi, my name is Celine Rendon and I live in district five.

>> I'm sharing my statement today in solidarity with a group of young renters of color and organized hours who work across environmental, climate, housing and food justice efforts across Austin as renters and longtime Austin residents, we've seen the ways in which urbanist policies to redevelop Austin have only led to gentrification and displacement of our communities. Our generation can barely imagine home ownership, but we refuse to sign off on false promises of home ownership for middle home homeowners, for middle income people, especially when this is at the expense of low income communities of color.

[8:06:45 PM]

low income communities of color.

>> Home has no affordability requirement, meaning developers will sell to the wealthiest buyers, not middle class families, as home will cause low income homeowners owners to feel the pressure to sell to investors due to rising property taxes, as renters like us will be displaced for demolitions. The ripple effects of rising rents and displacement will be felt throughout our working class and poor neighborhoods in the eastern crescent by creating a higher incentive for investors to buy up, Austin home will accelerate gentrification, especially in the eastern crescent, where investors profit margins are the highest. I heard someone say earlier something is better than nothing and we have to stop nitpicking new urbanism density and walkable cities mean nothing if low income people and people of color aren't even there to experience it. Because we've been displaced for profit, develop redevelopment plans like home are for are the cause of the housing affordability crisis, not the solution. We're calling on council to stop buying into this false narrative. So by investors and

[8:07:46 PM]

narrative. So by investors and developers and once again, we're not against change or density. We are against irresponsible planning for profit and the rich , our young generation of young austinites of color are watching and we're ready to defend our communities. Now and during election season. Thank you.

>> My name is Barbara Macarthur. Thank you very much for sending out notice of these changes to our communities, as you may either be true believers or you may be swayed by the money and power of the groups pushing citywide deregulation of our neighborhoods. Those same groups lost at the state level. They have brought the proposal back to the city about on steroids. And I'm going to ask the proponents on the dais for some honesty. First, you have cut the proposal in half, saving the tiny lots and

environmental degradation for phase two, trying to sell that as only three units now be honest about your whole plan and consider it

[8:08:47 PM]

your whole plan and consider it in total. You've leapt over promising affordability, a supportive zoning everywhere to the term middle income empowerment, as if that is more palatable. The resolution and explainers refers to mercatus as the experts at the Washington post has described the mercatus center as staunchly anti regulatory center funded largely by Koch industries. Indeed, Charles Koch himself was executive director and coo. So I'm going to read from a very recent publication by Salem firth, part of mercatus, who serves with Greg Anderson as advisor to the Texans for reasonable solutions. One of the big proponents of this. And this is from their proposal in many cities, poor people occupy valuable urban land close to downtown jobs, amenities and transit. They can afford to live there because the housing stock in the area is usually older if it hasn't been completely renovated, the result can be quite cheap. Even if the land is

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quite cheap. Even if the land is pretty valuable. We need to implement policies and programs specifically designed to penalize sitting on valuable land. We need to implement programs specific designed to accelerate neighborhood change. Change is more important than gentrification or displacement. It. So let's be honest, it. This isn't about helping homeowners, but about redeveloping land alacoe starting with land which you will deliver the biggest profit to investors and developers. And this morning, your housing group put this on the website just the morning and I want to read it to you. Austin's average home sale price was 393 in 2019 and 625 in 2022. The massive inflation in prices is not a function of zoning and its impact to development cost. Let me say that again. The massive inflation in prices is not a function of zoning and its impact on development costs.

[8:10:50 PM]

impact on development costs. Rather, it is the product of land speculation and the right to treat housing as an investment, as in rights. While Austin's housing market experienced unprecedented speculator inflation, newly built units that are not subject to affordable city based deed restrictions will be subject to these same warping under our current market conditions as market driven solutions to the housing crisis will likely reproduce the same dynamics that play out today. We're in parties with more resources may take advantage of the new regulatory landscape, while those with the fewest resources and experience increase in precarity. This is from your staff. I don't know if you've read it. Thank you very much.

>> Please go ahead.

>> How did council? I am Chris Chen sappi and I grew up in the northeast side of San Antonio in

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northeast side of San Antonio in deep poverty. My family ate bean and cheese tacos to get by. Luckily enough, my dad got a job at the Toyota manufacturing plant when it opened in San Antonio and that lifted us from the deep poverty into something sustainable or something living. My grandparents, as they owned the house that my parents live in, they they discounted the rate so that my families could afford it, so that my parents can afford it. At 100 grand, they that property today is worth \$250,000. My family could not have afforded that if they were raised Eid in San Antonio today. Even on that, Toyota manufactured salary. So what does three units by right mean?

>> It does not mean forcing people to put three homes on

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people to put three homes on their lot.

>> It does not mean increased property taxes. If you don't put three homes on your lot, it does mean home owners have an option to add homes to their lots. It does mean decrepit tear downs will probably be rebuilt as three town homes instead of one mansion. It does mean more families will get to afford to own a home in Austin.

>> You can't get only a little bit pregnant.

>> Bill brunch earlier today. Well, I think that's I think there's something in that. But you also don't get a little bit pregnant and then don't plan for the future for your child. Right. So you know. Oh, the trees. Oh, the water pipes bring some environmental regulations. Add them on top.

>> Yes.

>> Those are important concerns. >> Thank you. Thank you.

[8:13:55 PM]

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Skyler corgill, Tom nickells, Ellen Mcmurtry, Riley Patterson and robin rather, please make your way to the podium. If you're here, please come forward . Okay. I'll call the next batch. We've got Amy

Deluna, Paul Russell, Melissa Hawthorne, horn, Helen Pavlovich, Brad swell. Swale. Please state your name before you start speaking.

>> I'm Melissa Hawthorne.

>> I felt like I should go get a baby.

>> You know, go and get it up here.

>> But if I email y'all a picture of my dog Truman, you'll know it was me. So I'm Melissa Hawthorne.

>> I live in Barton hills. I'm a little bit of a code nerd. I probably could tell you when things were put into the code.

>> Probably more than most people in this town. I.

>> I do want to say that I do find this to be a bit

[8:14:56 PM]

find this to be a bit disingenuous because there's a part one and there's a part two.

>> And, you know, when you look at the nice pretty slide and it says 45% impervious cover and it says 40.

>> And then there's the questions about far and the result, if not having the far cap and made any changes to mcmansion and all the devil is in the detail without seeing it as a whole, I cannot support anything. I do live in the Barton springs zone and right now the city of Austin does a zero environmental review on houses. So when you all of a sudden make one house because I live in a f2 and f3 three in all of that, you know, you have the Barton creek greenbelt, you have the water, you know, the aquifer , you're going down to Barton springs pool.

>> If any of y'all, you know, protecting Barton springs pool is pretty important.

>> I think it's the soul of this town and when that thing is gone

[8:15:57 PM]

town and when that thing is gone , we've lost.

>> We've lost our humanity.

>> So I also would like to say that in the past year, I've lost power four times.

>> I've lost water four times. And the sewer line that's behind my house in the greenbelt. Yeah, it was clogged too. And I live on a house with six houses. I live on a cul de sac next to parklane and six houses. I

had 25 water and wastewater trucks in front of my house. This year. So if you can't give me power for a year, you can't give me water for a year. I had to have a plumber out three times to unclog a sewer line.

>> What are you going to do?

>> I mean, we just don't have the infrastructure for this.

>> Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Carmen Yanez is Adriana Griffith. Linda Godinez, Kai

[8:16:58 PM]

Griffith. Linda Godinez, Kai Harkey and Andrea freiburger. Please make your.

>> Good evening, y'all.

>> It's been such a long night and day and I appreciate your service.

>> I'm Carmen Yanez. I'm in district nine with go Austin. Vamos, Austin. We organize in north and southeast areas of Austin that are still affordable to some of the most diverse working class communities and integrated communities of color. In Austin in which is a big part of why I'm concerned. I also live off airport boulevard and I-35 and one of the most paved areas of Austin. But I live in a beautiful what's left of a post oak forest and some urban canopy that we continue to try to keep livable. You've heard a lot from all of us. I'm I see all of the young people. I see the advocates and the progress lives. I'm heartbroken Ann that a trickle down policy has become

[8:17:59 PM]

a trickle down policy has become so attractive to us because we feel like we have fewer good options. And I just don't believe that's true. Our city's sitting on an an 80 year resolution from December of 2021. Some of us were on planning commission, some of us weren't. It makes ads feasible. Tiny homes. Many the few people of color. You saw up here who were advocating for the home policy and I don't mean there were a number of people of color, but I'm talking about people of legacy black and brown communities that have been disenfranchized by land use policies in Austin are talking about maybe one unit, if they're lucky. And we have the tools for that. That also came with looking at loans and creative financing for low income people. So maybe more people could have access to this than just those who have access to half a million in capital or credit. Up here is a rendering of one of the duplex options. That would be available under this home option, reminding you all that there is no affordability requirement here. So it's

[8:19:00 PM]

requirement here. So it's complete disingenuous at worst and misguided at best by many of these advocates to talk about teachers. Do they know what teachers make in this city, their low income? Do you know what postal workers make in this city? They're not renting for 3000 a month, which is what those townhomes in Houston cost. I know people who live in Houston heights, gentrified neighborhoods. We have solutions .

>> Thank you. Thank you. Good evening.

>> Mayor Watson council members and members of the planning commission.

>> Thank you for being here. My name is Andrea freiburger.

>> I live in district five.

>> I am incredibly grateful to actually own a house about two miles south of here, and I am for the proposal. Changes to the land development code to support the home initiative.

>> I agree that our neighborhood is are the heart of the city and

[8:20:01 PM]

is are the heart of the city and probably that Barton springs is the soul of the city and that is why it is so important that our neighborhoods are not just closed off to those of us who bought 20 years ago or who are can put down \$1 million. It is so important that our neighborhoods are accessible and affordable for all of us and I encourage you to move with haste in making these changes to the land development code and keep going. And thank you. Hello

>> Council members and commissioners. My name is Kai Harkey and I'm a native austinite. I'm a proud McCallum knight, Lamar Scotty, a gallette gecko was born in Seton hospital on 38th street, class of 1985. I'm also a Texas conservationist . I spent a decade of my conservation career working for Texas parks and wildlife department, where I was the director of education for the

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director of education for the Texas state parks system. My parents bought their house in allendale in 1982, and I feel a little bit as if I have won a geographic lottery to be born and raised in Austin and our community is growing as new community members seek out the same things that you and I love about Austin. And so I feel like our only choice is where that growth will go. The nature conservancy estimates that less than 1% of native Texas prairies remain so when we make policy decisions that force this inevitable growth growth into exurban Greenfield development, we are sacrificing that remains prairie.

We are sacrifice ING that remaining pollinator habitat. It the home amendments and associated land use development changes will not only be a warm, inclusive

[8:22:02 PM]

only be a warm, inclusive welcome to existing and new middle class austinites, but it will also help protect the very limited remaining native Texas prairies and habitat that native pollinators, like the monarch butterfly depend on. As a native austinite and a Texas conservationist, I'm very proud to support the changes to land use development code, the home amendments. And I ask your support as well. Thank you.

>> Hello. My name is Amy Deluna. Good evening. City council mayor and planning commission. I live and work in district nine. I am here today to encourage this council to support the home initiative. I am a public servant. I work for the state. I work with some amazing and intelligent people who are passionate about their work and I greatly respect them. Several of my colleagues live outside of

[8:23:03 PM]

of my colleagues live outside of the city since they cannot afford to live in Austin, he are some of the places that my colleagues live in live and commute to and from or from into Georgetown. Round Rock, Elgin, Buda, San Marcos and new braunfels. We are public servants. We serve the public by helping the residents of Texas, helping the people in this room. And everybody who has testified today is one of the things that I and my coworkers love about our jobs. I want my brilliant and hard working colleagues and other public service workers to be able to live in the city that they work in. The proposed amendments to the city code are a reasonable start to allowing more housing to be built out that my colleagues and I and others would be able to afford. Thank you for your time. I'm going to call a larger group since we have more room at the

[8:24:03 PM]

since we have more room at the front.

>> Now. Robert Griffiths, Paul tardy, Connor Ogilvie, bill woods. Shivani desai, Cindy Kohler. Andy hicks. J Farrell. Christopher Paige. Megan meisenbach. Please make your way to an open podium. State your name before you speak. Go ahead.

>> Hello.

>> My name is Connor Ogilvie.

>> I'm from district nine and I'm standing here today at a city council meeting for the first time in support of the home initiative, both as a student who wishes to be able to afford a future here. And because I want other people to afford it and because I want other people to have access to the same opportunity as I've been given, I've only lived here for a year and some change, but I've come to truly love the city and even when I was in middle school, obsessively googling Austin skyscraper, Austin skyline, Austin infrastructure projects et cetera. I knew that this city was unique. Sitting at a crossroads between its past and its future as it faced the rapid growth it still sees today. And now that I actually live here, I've been able to

[8:25:04 PM]

live here, I've been able to witness this evolution firsthand. I've seen numerous individuals and organizations work to combat this growing issue. They have worked hard along with the people who are burning themselves out to be able to afford a space they can call their own. And now it is time for the city itself to take a step in the right direction. Austin has an obligation to meet the needs of its residents and a desire for a roof over our heads is among the most important. It is easy for people to simply say no, to deny the inevitable evolution and growth of the city, but not treating housing like the necessity it is does not negate the needs of families in the city. And personally, I don't want to be playing the most expensive game of musical chairs. As demand continues to outpace supply. And you shouldn't want your kids to either when it's their turn. Allowing more units to be built is not a threat to the city of Austin. It is an effort to allow more people to reap the benefits of this wonderful city. In spite of the attempts from those who have come before to pull up the ladder behind them. Thank you so much for listening to me. Good evening, mayor.

>> Council and the planning commission. Thank you for being here tonight. My name is Megan meisenbach and I live in

[8:26:05 PM]

meisenbach and I live in district nine and in my neighborhood it's very small. We have townhomes, we have garage apartment, we have basement apartments, we have fourplexes, we have duplexes, we have condos. A little bit old, and we have over 400 affordable units. So we went around and asked, how much do you charge in this small area? So there are places where there's already affordable housing and I wanted to point out that originally my impression was this was a this home initiative was to provide housing for the middle income people and or needed middle income housing and I remind you, I'm sure you know better than I do that the lower part of middle income is \$53,000 a year. And then the higher range. Is 159,000. So the house that that the middle income people would be able to afford would be from

[8:27:05 PM]

be able to afford would be from 158,000 to 520,000. Now a small row house in Mueller, which is on an even smaller lot. That's being proposed now on margarita lane. Costs \$930,000. So it's not middle income necessarily. If it's small. That's my point. Okay then if you really want to know all about how this works with affordability and whether it works at all, look at the urban institute dot com. They've got studies from many, many cities and if you want to know something really close to home, call the city manager in bastrop and ask them what's happening and why are they rolling back their upzoning? And I heard her on the radio. You probably did too. It's she said, it's a disaster. We're having to tax the poorer people for all the roads that are not working and the other infrastructure. So

[8:28:05 PM]

the other infrastructure. So that was yesterday or day before. Thanks. Thank you.

>> Isabel Webb. Carrie Ritchie shakur. Lily Brummett. John Foxworth. Bruce blumentritt. Deborah blumentritt. Lynn Whittington. Kyle Dingman. Stephanie duff o'brien. Freddy beymer. Matthew Atkinson. Please make your way to an open podium and state your name before you speak. Okay okay.

>> Please begin.

>> Christopher Paige. I'm sorry. To the students that have come out today advocating for this policy, but it is not for you. I'm sorry. To the working class people that probably couldn't make it today because they are working. But this policy is also not for you. You Austin does have an affordability crisis. There is no question about that.

[8:29:07 PM]

There is no question about that. We started this by talking about what this does and what it doesn't do. So I'll go through a couple of things that it doesn't do. There is no affordability requirement, but if there was, it would still be unaffordable and out of reach for the people that are actually vulnerable to displace Swint 80. Mfi right now in the city is close to \$100,000 and that's only going to go up. There's no str prohibition in this, so there's no guarantee that any of this will actually result in housing. There's actually not even a guarantee that anything will be built. It could be rvs if he puts that provision back into it. If they are built, there's no guarantee that anyone's going to be able to buy those. So they're still going to be subject to the same volatility in rent that there is right now. There seems to be very little concern or not enough about the displacement effect that this is going to have, because as we know already from development trends in east Austin and the target of most institutional investors is the

[8:30:09 PM]

institutional investors is the lowest cost acquisition which can be demolished. Right. And if you give them higher entitlements, there will be a stronger incentive to do so. So there seems to be very little effect out of the environment that's concerned. That's considered Ed. That has both to do with flooding, which people have already covered extensively as well as heat island effect, which I think will be putting people in hospitals in the years ahead. There is no incentive to preserve naturally occurring, affordable housing. There is no meaningful conversation that's happened with the public. We were hoping that that would happen when this was announced it. And frankly, we have no one on the dais right now in district one. And most of the neighbors, in fact, all of the neighbors that I've talked to in my neighborhood don't even know that this is happening. They. Please begin.

>> Good evening. My name is Isabel Webb Kerri. I am a senior

[8:31:09 PM]

Isabel Webb Kerri. I am a senior at UT Austin.

>> As you can probably guess, I'm not actually from Austin originally, but I am the founder of UT for housing transparency, which is a student advocacy group campaigning for affordable housing and accessible housing near the university.

>> I love the city. I am so profoundly grateful to every single person here who has made it home for me over these past three and a half years. Sad thing is this might be my last year here, and it certainly is the last year here for many of my friends who are moving out because it is unaffordable. And I speak especially to those friends who I'm so proud to have who wants to be teachers, nurses, social workers, socially conscious peoples. I think everyone on this stage is being here till nearly 9 P.M. On a Thursday evening. So thank you very much. Again, when we look to the future, we don't see hope. We see struggle. We see insurmountable rent, we see lack of change. And I'm tired. We have so much practice as students, as with housing insecurity, as it erodes our wellness, our health, the health

[8:32:09 PM]

wellness, our health, the health of our academics, the health of our bodies, the health of our souls. And I speak especially to students of color here. We're tired of anti density rhetoric. We're tired of the desperation and nothing happening. And if it means affordability, we're happy to live on top of each other. Have you heard of co-ops? This is student living at its finest. It is an example of student flourishing. We just want to learn. We want to grow. We want to contribute to our city and our community. So please just help us do that. Pass this initiative, give us a place to live, and let us let us be able to pay for it. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Hello, I'm Bruce blumentritt. I live one mile east of Q2 stadium in an ethnically diverse and walkable neighborhood of renters and homeowners.

>> We all know each other.

>> We all get along small homes on less than 1500 square foot houses, 1.15 acre lots.

>> I planted six trees on this small lot. We have a plethora of birds, butterflies and bees. >> And like mayor Watson, I love

[8:33:10 PM]

>> And like mayor Watson, I love Austin and so do all the people wanting to move here.

>> Housing prices are up, but due to high inflation and mortgage rates over the last two years, the prices in quail hollow have actually dropped. We were \$600,000 two years ago

>> Now we're 500 and \$400,000 for the same homes. Unfortunately, they've all been bought by out-of-town investors and turned into short term rentals. And according to the website inside Austin and inside airbnb, there are more than 14,000 zoned short term rentals in Austin, every single one of them displacing, displacing a long term renter or a homeowner you want available. We get rid of these strs and as far as increasing options and earning passive income, it sounds great. But in our neighborhood, all the they're all turned into strs from my front door, I can see six of them, including two travel trailers that aren't even code certified for residents,

[8:34:10 PM]

code certified for residents, but they're being lived in occupancy limits. Imagine 30 people in a 1300 square foot house like the one behind me. They finally burned it down. No one was hurt, but not before every single neighbor around them called the police multiple times as this home resolution team is very well funded, very well organized. They have professional signs, promotional materials, talking points. I'm not getting paid anything. It's costing me money to be here. I'm just a guy. But they struck the word family. It's not just rezoning sf2. They struck the word family from the thing. I get it. You don't want us. Well there you go.

>> Good evening.

>> Namaste. My name is Richie shaker. I'm the executive director of our children matter most. We are children's rights

[8:35:10 PM]

most. We are children's rights advocacy. There is no keener revelation of a society's soul than in how it treats its children. A quote by Nelson Mandela that my organization and I stand by my journey for stable housing began at the issuance of final orders in 2019 in very hostile family court cases in Travis county and I was told that I had to sell my lake property and come close to Austin to see my sons on a regular basis. Have I been able to do that till date?

>> Have I been able to afford it?

>> No, I have not. And I'm a hard worker. I'm an intelligent woman and I'm still not able to afford living in Austin to see my children. And that is a problem. Now, my story is not unfamiliar. I serve Texas families and the number one thing that my clients tell me is their biggest pain point is when they get divorce or divorcing is affordable housing. That is the biggest problem. And the biggest

[8:36:13 PM]

biggest problem. And the biggest killer of a democratic society is the family unit. So my organization, Ann, has partnered with naacp Austin and hopefully we'll get a grant from the city of Austin as well to develop a sustainable agrihood housing community on 123 acres in bastrop. But now we're seeing some changes in bastrop and our project is also in jeopardy. So you know, what I want to say is something I love quotes. So Confucius said that there is no the strength of a nation is derived from the integrity of the home. So I say, yes to affordable housing, taking into consideration parks, wildlife, flora and fauna. That's very, very important. Let's look outside of our immediate society and look at cities like Singapore for some inspiration. Why not? You know, and let's give the stable middle class some stability. We thank you very much. Yes to the

[8:37:14 PM]

very much. Yes to the resolution. Thank you, Riley Patterson, Jordan Allen, Zach Abnett, Michael Rhodes, Kaylee Craig.

>> Robert Bowler. Michael Kennedy. Mike Kennedy. Mike Burnett. Philip Wylie. Lydia Moore. Please make your way down.

>> If you've heard. If you've heard your name, please come forward.

>> Just here one time for Mike Cannady. I'm a resident. I'm an Austin for nearly 60 years. So my opinion is more important than everybody else's. I am here to support the home ordinance and I stand here today as a curious combination of being a neighborhood association leader and advocate a member of the McMansion task force and an environmental leader with Barton Springs Conservancy and friends of Barton Springs, pool. And while I'm not representing any of these groups today, I am a longtime Austinite and a father of three children and one grandson. And they would all

[8:38:15 PM]

grandson. And they would all appreciate having access to more affordable housing options than currently exist in Austin. Given my long and steadfast neighborhood activist role, I understand the concerns from the neighborhood about how zoning changes could harm the character of our neighborhood. But on the other hand, our neighborhoods are changing under our current zoning rules in ways we can no longer afford. On my own street has had 60% of the homes be torn down and rebuilt since I moved in on the street. We're changing. I do think that from my perspective on the environmental issues, we cannot as an environmental community continue to say we oppose both urban sprawl and also oppose increased density in our urban core and on this point, I recently listened to Audrey McGlinchey's growth machine podcast. I hope you all heard it about the historical role of the land development code and housing prices. And I must confess, I recognize my own role as a neighborhood leader in being part of the problem that was described there. This was really all brought home to me when my own children, who have told me that my work has been towards promoting nimby protection, that was their word

[8:39:15 PM]

protection, that was their word for me, calling anything else that. But it really helped me understand kind of things have changed in the last ten years and I think we need to find some solutions with this understanding. I'm supporting the spirit. If not every single letter of the home ordinance, it will promote more affordable housing options by allowing duplexes and two unit residential uses and more zoning categories. It will remove the minimum lot size, reduce the minimum lot size requirements. It will also remove some of the complicated duplex design rules that all contribute unnecessarily to housing costs and the proposed addition of the three unit residential uses should also help promote smaller, more affordable housing options. Provided shoot. There is some far limit. I'll stop there. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Please go ahead.

>> Hi, my name is Riley Patterson. I live in district ten. I just want to first say thank you council and commission for hearing all of our voices in this critical issue.

>> As we all know, we're experiencing a housing affordability crisis here in

[8:40:15 PM]

affordability crisis here in Austin, and it's past time to consider decisive action like we're doing today.

>> The most important reason, as everyone knows, is affordability.

>> But I want to share a perspective on how we also contribute to quality of life and community. My wife and I are fortunate to live on a rare 2600 square foot lot and a single family neighborhood near deep Eddie, which was split before the 1984 code, made such lots of legal. We love the proximity to our neighbors, the fact that everyone knows each other.

>> We love the small maintainable lawn and the fact that we weren't forced to pay for twice as much land in order to own a home in Austin and we'd love for future neighbors to have access to the same neighborhood and lifestyle that we love.

>> So.

>> So please support the measure. Thank you. Thank you.

>> City council.

>> Oh, my name is Robert bowler. Thank you.

>> City council.

>> I've been paying attention planning commission.

>> Thank you all for the marathon of testimony today. I'm a four year single family

[8:41:17 PM]

a four year single family homeowner here in district four, a 12 year austinite, and I'm strongly in favor of the home initiative on my bus ride over here to this, I overheard an older guy talking with the bus driver and he said, I've been working in construction for 4 or 5 years, but I can never afford to rent the places I was working on. That ain't right. And I doubt he's the only one. I had more to say, but I'm just going to donate my second minute to y'all so we can all go to sleep before tomorrow starts. Thank you very much.

>> Last testimony of the night. Thank you. Well, let's change the temper a bit.

>> My name is Mike Burnett, and I was developing in this town back with mayor. True. Long before many of you were born. And the problems that exist now and the problems that exist then haven't changed at all. I spoke with mayor Adler at a town hall meeting held by miss kitchen practice. Mr. Alter has discontinued and explained what I'll explain to you later. The

[8:42:18 PM]

I'll explain to you later. The and he decided it was probably best to put this before the voters. We absolutely need something like the home initiative. There's plenty of raw ground on east, west, north and south. And I agree with the gentleman from the institute for justice that that represent the best

opportunity to go forward as it pertains to the existing communities. That's what the variance process is for. It's been successful. It's worked. I've heard people complain about it this evening, but to a one they've been able to get what they needed. Ultimately, in the end. And frankly, this is capricious and arbitrary implementation of planning and zoning. In my humble opinion, I believe this abrogates any any semblance of objective or sovereign immunity that you may enjoy. And I pray that the first child who dies or the family of the first child who dies as an unexpected consequence of this, should you go forward with it, brings about an Alex Jones level of retaliation. Now many of these people don't understand that in days of yore, 17% of

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that in days of yore, 17% of their apartment rent went directly to maintenance, which was the cost of paying for the taxes on the apartment. Currently, you're looking at between 30 and 35. So so the very people you've come before to help you with the affordability crisis are in fact those that are responsible to a great extent for creating that crisis. If you wish to deal with this in a more appropriate fashion, possibly the track the governor has taken represents a more viable alternative of reduce the blasted taxes, get the water and sewer bills under control, get your electric bills under control, and open the city up for more widespread equity. And thank you for your time.

>> Good evening, mayor Watson. Council members and commissioners. My name is Lydia Moore and I am a member of ebenezer Baptist church in

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ebenezer Baptist church in Austin, east side and I'm a representative from central Texas interfaith east Austin has been our church home for over 150 years.

>> We have seen a lot of change.

>> And, you know, a great deal recently.

>> Sometimes we're a little bit afraid of what we see.

>> We're not really sure, but we do insist that change is for the benefit of the neighborhood, of the people who live there, the residents who've been there for long periods of time.

>> We have heard from the community about both their hopes and their fears of the new homes.

>> Initial give.

>> We would like to hear from more from the council all about the following issues.

>> One as taxes on these already overburdened properties increase, our primary concern is that residents who are struggling to hang on to their homes would not be displaced. >> What relief will be given to

[8:45:24 PM]

>> What relief will be given to in increasing the number of structures on a lot reduces the space green spaces for children. Where will they play? Where will they have to go outside?

>> What is the city's plan to open up any green spaces for the community and three parking is already an issue in more than one household on a lot will mean that there's more parking Lang.

>> What's the city's plan to accommodate that? I would also like to note that in in about a month ago we were here to speak on nxp proposal and a member of the congregation asked for questions and hoped to receive answers.

>> Thus far, she has not received any.

>> But I hope tonight you will give us some answers as to what will happen after our homes.

>> Thank you.

>> Russell Frazier. Malcolm Yeatts. Sarah Madera. Angelina

[8:46:26 PM]

Yeatts. Sarah Madera. Angelina Alanis. Danielle silva. Michelle bezzenberger. John Salinas. Carl McClain. Brian bishop. Bright dornblaser. Please make your way to the podium. Where was your name called, sir?

>> If your name was called, please come forward. Just. Good evening.

>> My name is Brian bishop. Maybe we're saving the best for last.

>> Don't know. I'm here in support of the reform.

>> As a resident of Austin, my interest here is as a software developer, a tech executive entrepreneur. I always look around at cities and I wonder, how is all of this made?

>> Where does it come from? The schools, the streets, the buildings?

>> You know, one answer is debt.

>> Maybe that's the answer, but maybe the answer is just

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maybe the answer is just generally economic growth. Where does that come from?

>> I believe that Texas is one of the greatest places to build families and businesses in order to build families and businesses, you need people.

>> We need to make room for people.

>> If we want to welcome more people to Austin and Texas, then we need to make room for them.

>> Thank you.

>> My name is Malcolm Yates. I've been a resident of Austin for 38 years. I have not seen any analysis of the impact of these zoning changes to the physical infrastructure or to the financial burden that will be placed upon taxpayers to upgrade the infrastructure to accommodate the proposed increased density. Now no information on this impact was in today's staff presentation, and no information is available online when a major development is proposed in Austin, there is a site plan review to confirm that the impact of the increased

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that the impact of the increased density will not be detrimental to existing residents. This this process should be followed for these zoning changes is in the interest of transparency and good governance. City council needs to fund an independent analysis of the impact of these zoning changes. There should be a signed and sealed report from professional registered engineers on the water, sewer, electrical grid, stormwater and traffic infrastructure needed to support this increased density. We only then a report from a cpa should be funded by council for the cost of this infrastructure upgrade over after these reports have been released to the public. Should these zoning proposals be considered? This is a massive project and there is no reason to rush the approval process. We all remember what happened to project connect when the citizen burns were promised a system that could not be built with the approved funding. Let's

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with the approved funding. Let's do a better job this time. I hope that one council member at least will sponsor this proposal . I'll thank you.

>> Hello.

>> My name is John Salinas. I've lived in district two for 20 years. I'm an architect. I'm a small business owner and Austin is all about his people.

>> What makes Austin great is the people and what is created here. It's and that's what makes it unique.

>> And so I'm here to show my support for the home initiative and the. Addition of adding a third unit in that building is gives people the ability to create a building type typology.

>> That's needed and in our residential neighborhoods I see it as an investment in the people of Austin and the opportunity for people to invest

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opportunity for people to invest in themselves in the city. I personally see it as an as an opportunity for myself as I'm at a certain age where I'm trying to figure out what my plan is for my aging parents and my partner's aging parents. And something like this would really create an opportunity for us to create a community in which people are close, they're safe. It's an accessible space.

>> And we're we're all together.

>> So I'm here to show my support for this home initiative. Thank you. Thank you .

>> And this will be the last group. Galen hers is mark vorenberg. Jude de la Santos, Taylor Weinberg and Roy Whaley. Please make your way to the podium. Thank. You. >> Go. Okay.

[8:51:29 PM]

>> Go. Okay.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

>> My name is Galen Herz.

>> I was raised in Austin. I went to Davis murkison and Anderson and I still live in my family home in the Angus valley neighborhood in district six.

>> Almost all of my childhood friends have left Austin or live outside city limits, large part due to the high cost of housing that does not match our incomes during the pandemic, I worked the night shift at the Amazon warehouse due to in south Austin.

>> Most of my coworkers there cannot afford to live in Austin.

>> They had long commutes from places like Gerald or Kyle, which meant less time with their families, more gas money and more pollution. Ann.

>> I remember all the rhetoric from our politicians and the public about valuing essential workers.

>> Sadly, we back then and still today, I think much of that rhetoric is hollow. Talk is cheap.

>> But today you have an opportunity to take a baby step towards living those values. Austin needs more homes of all shapes and sizes for people with

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shapes and sizes for people with a wide range of incomes. I welcome new and more neighbors in Angus valley. It's not right that Austin has added thousands of new jobs, and yet our neighborhood has added almost no new homes.

>> But even though our neighborhood looks the same physically, it has changed a lot.

>> It used to be affordable to middle class families like mine, but it isn't today.

>> Changing zoning is not a silver bullet.

>> It is a baby step. We also need public or community land trust owned, mixed income, affordable housing that has the ability to scale with limited or no subsidy. And that mixed income piece is really critical.

>> Please say yes to more homes, yes to a city that doesn't price out its people, yes to healthy neighborhoods.

>> Thank you.

>> Howdy, y'all.

>> My name is Roy Whaley. >> I am the conservation chair

[8:53:31 PM]

>> I am the conservation chair for the Austin regional group, the Sierra club. And I'd like to point out that I am not a pre historic insect encased in amber . That is to say, I have been allowed to evolve, as has the Sierra club since the 1890s. We have been changing. I have been changing. I'd like to say that we are neutral on this proposal because because there's so much we still don't understand. One thing we do want is to see an environmental protections and cased that we have the tree protections that that is mandatory. We that we have floodwall control that is mandate tree hopefully reuse use but that we have to have these things to preserve our environment. Let's take environment first. Now, of course, as our citizens are part of our environment and it is a

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of our environment and it is a clean air quality issue also. So we do want to have people, but we want to make sure that home owners are able to use this, not developers, as that means that when people because the way this has been pitched is that it will allow people to stay on their homes, in their homes

without having to sell and move, that they can subdivide their property. They don't have the expertise to do that. They don't have the expertise to work their way through the city bureaucracy and do all of that. A lot of the developers mouth pieces and lobbyists don't have that either. So the city should have supply that. They should help people that want to do that. And then they should be able to give low interest loans to the people that are wanting to do that. So that really is a proposal for homeowners, for austinites to be

[8:55:32 PM]

homeowners, for austinites to be able to stay in their homes, which is the way it was pitched to me. And I know you're going to turn off the microphone. So. Hello, my name is Taylor Winberg. I'm a working musician and a professional planner here in Austin. I'm here tonight to voice my support for the home initiative.

>> First came to Austin about 20 years ago as a child with my family to move my brother into school at UT. I was able to get here in 2016 myself and ever since then I've watched quite a few and too many of my friends and colleagues all very talented musicians have to leave town, move back to nacogdoches or Lubbock or literally anywhere else because they couldn't afford to live here anymore.

>> And that's in a town that calls itself the live music capital of the world. Big thing here seems important to make sure that people that are

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sure that people that are playing music can stay here.

>> I also recorded my first album in an Adu here in town close to downtown, in a very purpose made studio that was soundproofed and had no complaints, still has no complaints. It's been a very good resource for the music community and has been lucrative for more than one individual. We know that increasing housing stock and increasing housing stock diversity is only good for cities. It's only good for people that want to live here and do live here. And it makes cities more accessible and more affordable for everyone.

>> I think the only thing that I ask of you all tonight is, as you're thinking on this decision , Ann to think about how it fits into the Austin of the next 20 years and not the Austin of the last 20 years. >> Thank you.

[8:57:33 PM]

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Hi, my name is shivani desai and I'm a senior at UT. I've lived in west campus for almost three years, which is district nine. People don't think of west campus as top tier living, and that's completely understandable . And I agree. But when I think about graduating and moving out next year, I get sad and I think it's because I know I'm going to miss the community and accessibility of living in a dense area. I'm going to miss the possibility of randomly running into a friend while I'm walking to class. I'm going to miss always passing by, people laughing and talking. I'm going to be able to. I'm going to miss being able to walk to restaurants and convenience stores, which are definitely overpriced, but but at least since I don't have a car, at least I don't have to worry about paying for gas and speaking of not having a car, I'm going to miss having a bus stop right in front of my building and being only a ten minute walk away from the 801. And 803 bus stop. I'm not

[8:58:34 PM]

And 803 bus stop. I'm not advocating for every neighborhood to become a haven for partying college kids. I would just love to have the option to move somewhere in Austin after college where when I leave my home, I can run into a neighbor and have a conversation Ann but also where my home is not in an apartment on the 15th floor of a 30 story building and instead maybe a small unit like a triplex or a townhouse that I can call my own . I want to live in a place where the neighbor I run into might be an emergency responder or a teacher or anyone else who keeps a great city running because they can actually afford to live here. Some people are against this initiative because they want to preserve the way their neighborhoods exist. Now but you can't expect to live in a great city and reap its benefits without also expecting other people want to live here too. So please, I support and hope that you will support this resolution. Thank you. Thank you .

>> That concludes all speakers. >> Thank you very much. First,

[8:59:35 PM]

>> Thank you very much. First, let me say that I want to thank everyone on behalf of all of the city council and council members and on behalf of all the planning commissioners, I want to say thank you to everyone that has participated in this unique hearing. We're very grateful that we live in a place that has this much participation in where people want to be a part of what we're doing. As I said at the beginning, it's a Franck. It's a demonstration of all of our commitment to a unity of purpose, and that is to have a great city as we can. I also want to say thank you to chair Shaw and the planning commissioners for all being here tonight. We appreciate you all participating in this unique setting along with us now, I want to reiterate that this is not the end. Arguably this is just the beginning. And remember that I've pointed out that the planning commission Ann will

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planning commission Ann will meet as a commission on November 14th. That will be another opportunity for people to be heard and if ready, the planning commission at that point will be posted so that it can take a vote and make recommendations to the council. There will be a lot happen, I believe, between now and then. So that's the purpose of this, is for us to hear take notes, which I know everybody did, and be able to bring it, bring ideas forward and thoughts. The city council will be posted and for a hearing and a vote on December seventh, December seventh. And if the if we are prepared, we will at that point in time be in a position to vote. There will also be a work session of the city council. And I want to make sure I give the date at

[9:01:38 PM]

sure I give the date at accurately so that people will be able to watch that if they would like. And I'm not finding it in my notes. November 28th, I'm being told, yes, it is there. I found it. It will be Tuesday, November 28th. And as I indicated earlier today, Shea what I anticipate we will probably do is not only have a presentation and a discussion by the council the way we do it, work sessions, but hopefully what we will do is utilize that date as a date set where potential amendments, thoughts that we might have about proposals for amendments can be brought forward and laid out so that there'll be greater transport agency for the community to see what we're thinking in that regard. On. November 6th, from six until 8:00 pm, there will be an open house where members of the

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house where members of the community can gather with our professional staff, ask questions, get answers to those questions and raise issues. Luz that will be November 6th, from 6 to 8 that will be held at the central library, which is located at 710 west. Cesar Chavez. Also remember that the planning commission, each member of the planning commission has a way to ask questions and seek written answers. As the planning commissioners will be doing that, I anticipate that and members of the city council have a way to do that. Those those answers will be posted so that the public will be able to see what the questions and the answers were to again, give greater transparency and greater ability for the public to know what's going on. The way to see that is to go to public input.com and that's public like

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input.com and that's public like I input public input .com forward slash L D C updates all one word ldc updates is public input .com forward slash ldc updates with that and without objection I will close the public hearing of the joint public hearing of the Austin planning commission and the Austin city council. I'll recommend, recommend, recognize chairman Shaw to adjourn the planning commission.

>> All right. With without objection from any planning commissioners, I adjourn this meeting of the planning commission. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you again to the planning commissioners. And without objection, the Austin city council is adjourned. It is

[9:04:40 PM]

city council is adjourned. It is 9:05 P.M. Thanks everybody.