

Therese T. Crocker, Chairman  
Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Historical Foundation  
The Mansion-National, State and City of Austin Landmark  
2312 San Gabriel

**REASONS FOR OPPOSITION**

To the Proposed Land Code Amendments and Population Density Increases

**NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

*Reduced quality of life due to overpopulation in a confined area  
Degradation of historical landmarks and surrounding neighborhoods  
Stress to the aquifer  
Stress to man, animal and remaining tree life*

*Destruction of trees and vegetation to accommodate buildings and driveways will greatly reduce air quality, climate improvement, water conservation, soil preservation and wildlife habitat*

*Destruction of trees and vegetation to accommodate buildings and driveways will greatly reduce shade that naturally insulates homes thus causing increased costs to home owners and unnecessary extra energy consumption*

**DECREASED SAFETY AND SECURITY**

*Adverse effects on public safety as persons in RVs can quickly change their permanent resident address, a great plus for terrorists, sex traffickers, mobile meth labs and other criminal activities  
Burden on the police force  
Burden on fire and rescue services  
Burden on trash collection services  
Burden on all city services*

**INHIBITION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES AND TRASH COLLECTION**

*The greatly increased parking along streets will inhibit Austin City services such as emergency medical services, fire and rescue services and trash collection thus causing added danger to citizens*

**STRESS AND OVERLOAD TO EXISTING UTILITIES**

*Major stress on the existing utilities of water, gas, electrical and internet capabilities will be caused  
Cost of improving utilities to meet the increased need will need to be budgeted and paid for  
Cost to citizens of their time, money and convenience to live with the work needed for upgrades is unfair to existing residents*

**ACERBATION OF THE EXISTING PARKING CRISIS AND STREET TRAVEL**

*Multiple residences will increase the amount of cars on already very crowded streets causing even more havoc to travel and time management*

**REDUCTION OF PROPERTY VALUES**

*Reduction of property values for current home owners  
Reduction of city tax revenue due to the possibility of only one land owner for a lot of many residents who may not be tax paying customers*

**TRENDEMENDOUS COST TO CURRENT RESIDENTS AND TAX PAYERS**

*Possible tax increases to cover costs of non-permanent residents  
Environmental studies needed  
Loss of income for businesses that require auto travel and parking  
Loss of quality of life for existing tax paying citizens  
Loss of the beauty of the City of Austin and its neighborhoods*

Good evening, I'm Monica Guzmán, policy director at GO Austin/VAMOS Austin, reading a resident statement:

Good afternoon, my name is Kecia Prince - long-time Austin resident, displaced from District 3, now living in District 1. Like most Austinites 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 have seen me fight with my neighbors to prevent evictions after Winter Storm Uri & 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 8 voucher. If the HOME Initiative passes, the house I rent will be at an even higher risk of gentrification and I'll be at risk of displacement again. With a rezoning of this single-family home, investors will be interested in buying the lot to turn into a 3-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 renters like me will find themselves at risk of displacement, with the houses we rent being demolished. Because HOME has **no** affordability requirements, I have **no** faith that these units will be affordable to "middle class" families. Because of all of the rich people constantly moving to Austin, these 3- & 9-plexes will be sold to the highest bidders, 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 one 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.

GAVA and our coalition 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 LDC 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 CM Pool's: [A HOME for Everyone](#):
  - Tiny Homes & 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 family can afford to buy. Austin residents at or below "middle income" cannot afford what developers propose to build.
  - 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 water use, which isn't reflected in this policy
  - This is written as if for residential homeowners and their family members, but these entitlements are for investor-landlords. This is "developer-level" development.

If our City Council truly cares about creating affordable home ownership opportunities, they will not take this approach. Our council could show care by only allowing redevelopment for affordable projects, and not by allowing redevelopment that eliminates existing affordable housing. CM Pool's 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 Displacement Pressure noted on page five. It was also unfortunate Commissioner Cox was silenced when trying to speak about the Affordability Impact Statement. <-- Mic cut here

To quote Mayor Watson, "Austin, Texas is a truly exceptional place." As a Native Austinite, I wholeheartedly agree. ATX is a place I dreamed of owning a house, raising my child, watching my grandchildren play in the backyard, retire, and eventually pass leaving my home to them. Instead, I was a single parent, at times working more than one job, struggling paycheck to paycheck, always looking for the apartment move-in special which also meant moving every year. I became a long-time renter with my child & grandchildren in another city, and at the rate city staff recommends and council approves drastic LDC changes benefitting developers and investors, lacking responsible, equitable, resident-led planning, like many others, I await the knell signaling a need to move from the city I call home.



November 14, 2023

Austin City Council  
City Hall  
301 W. 2nd  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Honorable Mayor Watson, Mayor Pro Tem Ellis, Council Members Natasha Harper-Madison, Vanessa Fuentes, José Velasquez, José “Chito” Vela, Ryan Alter, Mackenzie Kelly, Leslie Pool, Zohaib “Zo” Qadri, Alison Alter, Planning Commission Chair Todd Shaw, Vice-Chair Hempel, Commissioners Alberta Phillips, Awais Azhar, Adam Haynes, Patrick Howard, Alice Woods, Nadia Barrera-Ramirez, Greg Anderson, Felicity Maxwell, Jennifer Mushtaler, João Paulo Connolly, and Grayson Cox,

The Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) Executive Committee (EC) Membership unanimously passed a resolution regarding Council Member Pool’s HOME (Home Options for Middle-Income Empowerment) Resolution. We do not support the HOME Resolution as currently written. The ANC EC supports efforts to provide affordable housing, BUT the proposed HOME resolution does not address affordable housing. We advocate for complete and safe communities. The HOME resolution has the potential of creating a multitude of social justice and public safety issues, including but not limited to the following:

- Intensifies, if not completes, the gentrification of Black or African Americans and Hispanics or Latinos in East Austin;
- Compromises the public safety of vulnerable populations if occupancy limits are not regulated;
- Intensifies flooding dangers in a city that is nationally recognized as Flash Flood Alley;
- Compromises the implementation of the Climate Equity Plan; and
- Intensifies the Heat Island Effect.

This is an extremely important social justice and public safety issue for our community. The promise of opportunities for public input and engagement has not happened. We have not had regular public updates. There have been no conversations with ALL the neighborhoods impacted.

The ANC EC urges Mayor Watson and the City Council to follow Mayor Watson’s campaign position: to step back and initiate a collaborative approach with stakeholders in each district. We ask that the City Council consider a **collaborative process** that includes environmentalists, neighborhoods, and the development community to come up with a plan that will work for the whole community. Only through this process will a good solution arise for Austin. Thank you for your consideration of this ANC EC Resolution.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ana Aguirre".

Ana Aguirre  
ANC President 2022-2024  
PO Box 301975  
Austin, Texas 78703

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**RESOLUTION OF THE AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOODS COUNCIL (ANC)  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REGARDING COUNCIL MEMBER POOL'S  
HOME (HOME OPTIONS FOR MIDDLE-INCOME EMPOWERMENT)  
RESOLUTION**

**Whereas**, instead of city-wide upzoning, the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) Executive Committee (EC) members acknowledge the need for a more carefully thought out and tailored approach that takes each council district and neighborhoods' needs, infrastructure capacity, ecological uniqueness, and culture into account; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC acknowledges the need for affordable housing opportunities for a range of incomes, including a critical need for those within the 30-60% MFI; and

**Whereas**, the staff's Affordability Impact Statement, dated October 23, 2023, shows the HOME Resolution does not make housing affordable and would result in the redevelopment of owner or renter occupied single-family homes; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC represents neighborhoods throughout the City of Austin and acknowledges the past harms caused by the "1928 Master Plan"; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC is alarmed that the HOME Resolution will escalate the gentrification of Black or African Americans and Hispanic or Latinos and escalate the displacement of any resident (owners and renters) who will be impacted, as a result of the increased taxes; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC supports the City's efforts to implement the Climate Equity Plan and is concerned with the HOME Resolution's negative impact on the environment, including the reduction of tree canopy and green spaces needed to combat the Heat Island Effect and other climate related problems including flood resilience and drought protection; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC acknowledges the City of Austin is nationally recognized as Flash Flood Alley and recognizes additional density throughout the city without addressing the vulnerability of flood-prone areas and neighborhoods which will result in greater catastrophic loss of life and property as proposed by the HOME Resolution; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC recognizes the need to address the public safety infrastructure (police, fire, EMS), including access to those in need, that has not been maintained or sustained to effectively keep up with the demand in the city's growth throughout the decades; and

**Whereas**, the ANC EC membership has historical knowledge and experience and is vested in the importance of creating complete communities and strategically implementing a plan that keeps current and future residents, including visitors to Austin, safe.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the ANC EC opposes the HOME Resolution as currently written; and

Be it further resolved that the ANC EC urges Mayor Watson and the City Council to follow Mayor Watson's campaign position: to step back and initiate a collaborative approach with stakeholders in each district appointed to a task force and charged with consensus on finding realistic density and affordable housing goals in each district and addressing the following recommendations:

- Implement a collaborative process that incorporates a qualitative and quantitative community engagement process that includes environmentalists, neighborhoods, and the development community that will result in creating a safe and habitable environment for all residents of Austin in the long term; and
- In the interest of transparency and good governance, the 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, storm water, and traffic infrastructure needed to support his increased density. The Council should fund a report from a CPA on the cost of this infrastructure repairs or upgrades. Only after these reports have been released to the public should these proposals be considered; and
- Maintain Subchapter F and existing FAR requirements and reevaluate areas for improvement; and
- In the interest of public safety:
  - Occupancy limits should follow national and state laws and once adopted, must be enforced as to not result in harm to vulnerable populations (i.e., human trafficking, those with disabilities, seniors, homeless, etc.).
  - Prohibit any new density in areas susceptible to creek flooding, localized flooding, streambank erosion, or designated to be within the Atlas 14 floodplain.
  - No increase in impervious cover allowances over the currently assigned limits and sight plan area evaluation of infrastructure in cases of expansion to meet those limits modified for increased density.
  - Prohibit "fee-in-lieu" stormwater control options to new density, development, or redevelopment upstream of areas susceptible to creek flooding, localized flooding, or designated to be within the Atlas 14 floodplain.
  - Comply with the FEMA regulations so as not to compromise any property owner's ability to participate in the federal flood insurance program.
  - Address the impact that additional density will have on sanitation related services including street access for pick-up (trash, recycling, composting); and
- Ensure basic public services are provided when housing density is introduced – utilities infrastructure (water, electricity, gas), public safety infrastructure (police, EMS, fire), public health infrastructure, and public transportation; and
- Comply with all national housing standards, including ADA accessibility; and
- Maintain, respect, and not undermine existing homeowner deed and covenant restrictions (CCRs), so as not to financially burden any residents wanting to exercise their rights to enforce them (i.e., Houston defends deed restrictions); and
- Incentivize homeowners so they can afford to participate in providing affordable housing on their lot and that meets protective and functional code compliance; and
- Explore housing options on City owned and vacant properties.

**Presented to ANC Executive Committee:** November 12, 2023

**ANC Executive Committee Approved:** November 13, 2023