City Council Regular Meeting Transcript – 11/21/2024

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[10:00:59 AM]

Good morning everybody. It's 10:00 in the morning on November 21st, 2024, and I will call to order the regular meeting of the Austin city council for November 21st, 2024. We are meeting in the city council chambers, which are located in Austin city hall, 301 west second street, and we have a quorum of the city council present members and members of the public. The way we'll proceed today is we will. I'll read changes and corrections into the record so that we have those in the record, and then we will go to our consent agenda.will hear from speakers on the from the public on our consent agenda. We will then take up the consent agenda. And after discussion and brief comments from members of theouncil, and we will vote on that items, members that have been pulled is item number 55. What we will do is have a briefing on that. You'll recall that at the work session, we deferred that until today. We will have a briefing and discussion and vote on 55. Then

[10:02:01 AM]

discussion and vote on 55. Then we have four items. Items three, four, five and six that are related to Austin water. And we will take those up. Item number 72 has also been pulled. Did you say something? Mayor pro tem 72. You said you don't think it's still pulled? Well, I'll find out about that. My notes indicate that, but we'll find out about that. And if it can go back on, we'll make sure it goes back on then on non consent items we have some items from council committees 76 and seven. And then item 77 is an eminent domain item on public hearings. Let me for the record and the public that might want to participate in those public hearings. Let me read into the record where we are on those item 78 and 79. We will hold public hearings. Item number 80 has been postponed to December 12th. Item number 80 has been postponed to December 12th. And

[10:03:01 AM]

postponed to December 12th. And on items 81 and 82, there will be a motion to postpone those to December 12th. Of course, at noon we will have public communication, general public communication and we will recess for live music. I anticipate we will be back at around 110 after the recess, after we complete the 12:00 time, certain, we will also have our 2:00 time certain related to zoning items. We are scheduled for an executive session at some point, and as I work my way through the agenda and try to run an efficient meeting, we will do that whenever it's the best time or most appropriate time. Hopefully we'll be in a position to do that before the 2:00 time. Certain with that being said, let me read changes and corrections into the record items number 34 and 37 are withdrawn, 34 and 37 are withdrawn. Items 61 and 62 are postponed to December 12th, 2024. Items 80, 81 and 82 should

[10:04:03 AM]

2024. Items 80, 81 and 82 should read when public hearings are taking up taken up, these items will be postponed to December 12th, 2024. Item 105 is withdrawn and replaced with addendum item 116 items one. Item 106 is withdrawn and replaced with addendum item 117. And I've read items that have been pulled from the consent agenda. So with that, we will now go to our consent agenda and I will turn to the clerk and ask if you will please help us by calling out names of people that are signed up to speak. We will call by the specific item. You'll be called up on a specific item to speak and you will have three minutes.

>> We'll start with in person. Item 42 William bunch.

>> Mr. Bunch passes okay. >> We will move to item 47.

[10:05:06 AM]

>> We will move to item 47. William bunch.

>> Mr. Bunch, are you going to speak on that item? He passes on that one as well.

>> Item 59 felicity Maxwell. With Monica Guzman and dick.

>> Good morning. Mayor, mayor pro tem council members felicity Maxwell, district five and or a board member. Regarding item 59, we're pleased to see the continued commitment from the housing department to work with the small, affordable housing developers here in Austin. This program would run previously, gave critical tools to local developers to build much needed affordable housing units in our city. The training started last year and had over 70 people apply for the training, with the final 20

members of the cohort from a diverse set of backgrounds, many of them having never previously participated in affordable housing development.

[10:06:08 AM]

affordable housing development. Those who participated found th content excellent, said the. The sample project was extremely insightful and great in how it allowed them to learn. A great team building approach to development. We appreciate the city's ongoing support for this effort and its continued commitment to small developments here in Austin. Thank you.

>> Okay, Monica Guzman and item 72.

>> She's indicating she does not to testify on that item. Miss Guzman, I got that right, didn't I? Yes. Okay. Thank you. By the way, she gave me a thumbs up, which is the first time it's ever happened. So I want everybody to notice that.

>> Okay.

>> We do also have Mr. Bunch on item number seven.

>> Mr. Bunch, you want to speak on item number seven? Item number seven is not the water thing three, four, five and six have been pulled. He'll pass on that as well.

[10:07:14 AM]

that as well.

>> Continue on. Item 72. We have robin rather.

>> Hang on one second for the record, on item number seven. Number 72 members, council members, there's a version two that's been posted by the mayor pro tem. So item number 72 can go back on the consent agenda unless someone else sees a need to pull that. And in any case, what we will do is we will now hear from speakers on item number 72 and it will be on the consent agenda unless something else happens. So thank you for reminding me of that. And miss rather, are you here okay, robin rather.

>> Okay. Next we have Craig nazer, William bunch, Brad Massengill, Chris flores.

>> If you're going to testify and your name's been called, please come to the front. Can I let me finish my thought?

[10:08:15 AM]

let me finish my thought? Please? Come to the front and be prepared to testify so that we can get right to you when you're ready. And if there's an empty microphone, please use that microphone. But please go ahead and get up and come down here so that we will be able to hear from you in a prompt way. Council member Alison alter thank you.

>> I just wanted to note that we haven't seen the version two yet for 72. So is that on its way? Mayor pro tem law was working as fast as they could.

>> It should be up on the message board now, and it is being emailed around so it will be available. It does incorporate the amendments that you had offered.

>> Great. Thank you. Iust wanted to make sure that we hadn't seen it yet. Thank you.

>> Thank you sir.

>> Hello friends. Craig Nasser, Sierra club and Austin environmental Democrats, item 72, 73 and 74 are very important items and the constituents I represent here salute you for

[10:09:15 AM]

items and the constituents I represent here salute you for supporting them. Austin is more than a place for humanhabitation. Nature is indispensable. Decades of bad choices have shown us that healthy ecosystems are essential for human survival. Unfortunately, humans too easily get absorbed in their own egos and forget that fact. Our great peril, the true enemies of Krishna, are the ones who go around making the unimportant things important. We need birds, bats, dragonflies and fish to eat mosquitoes and we actually need mosquitoes to feed these creatures. We need hawks, owls, foxes and coyotes to eat rats and mice. And we need some rats and mice to clean up our waste and feed these predators. We need trees and soil to suck up all the carbon we pump into the air and sequester it to maintain a livable climate. Trees and soil clean our water and make our air breathable. Neighborhoods with trees have less violence, and areas with baave an 8% lower infant

[10:10:18 AM]

baave an 8% lower infant mortality rate due to the decreased use of insecticides. We need our cats and dogs because they are family in fact, on spaceship Earth, there are no passengers. We are all crew on a beach. A boy walks to think about his life. The tide has gone out and he occasionally bends down to pick up a stranded starfish and tossed it back into the sea. An angry and frustrated man walks the beach, also thinking about his own life, and sees the child. What is this pointless thing you are doing? My child, he says, with all the war and famine and disease and problems in this modern world, why are you wasting time pitching starfish? Who on Earth could care about what you are doing with all our problems? The boy bends over, picks up another starfish, tosses it into the sea, and says that one cared. Thank you for listening to these comments. Thank you, Mr. Bunch.

[10:11:19 AM]

comments. Thank you, Mr. Bunch.

>> Thank you mayor, council members.

>> Bill bunch, executive director, save our springs alliance. We certainly support looking at increased and better funding for our parks on almost all of what's mentioned is worth investigating. We oppose and ask that you pull out any reference to expanding the park ownership public private partnerships with for profit or nonprofit entities at this time, especially, you all have an audit going forward right now to look at those. Those have gone way down the line very quickly the last few years without a hard look. And what we're seeing already is that the agendas of these nonprofits and for profits

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nonprofits and for profits vastly diverge from what the public wants from our parks, our long range plan, our parks, our future plan tells us what the public wants. They want nature parks. They want places where nature is in the city, where they can escape from the madness of the city, where they can escape concrete and structures, buildings constructed, playgrounds even. And yet what we get from these nonprofits is for profit events, money making events, viewing our public lands, our parklands, our public trust lands as a place to make money. That's not how we fund our parks. We need to be going in reverse on some of those partnerships. Quite frankly. But at minimum, that we should not be expanding those until the public gets the audits back and

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public gets the audits back and we get some standards and some compliance and some public input in the process. So please take that into account. Thank you.

>> Mr. Bunch, you also signed up to speak on 61 and 62. Did you want to speak on the merits of postponement on those two items? Okay. Continuing on item 73, Craig nazer, William bunch, Roy Whaley, Jennifer Bristol, if your name has been called and you wish to speak, please move your way to the podium and state your name for the record.

>> Craig nazer again, I was on the working group for this item 73. This has been a while in the works, going through various commissions. I think it's really important item moving forward. I think. I think it should pass. So thank you very much.

[10:14:24 AM]

So thank you very much.

>> Thank you.

>> Good morning mayor. Council members, thanks so much for hearing us out on item number 73. Bird friendly design for buildings. And I'm very excited about this resolution. My name is Jennifer Bristol and I was the chair of the working group that the environmental commission asked to be formed to really review what it takes to be a bird friendly city and, and have construct buildings that are as friendly as they can be and safe as they can be. The numbers are astounding, and they speak for themselves. We lose over 1 billion birds every single year to collisions with buildings. We cannot sustain that. And if do not have our birds, just as Rachel Carlson said in her amazing watershed

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said in her amazing watershed book silent spring, if we don't have birds, we have a silent spring. Insects, all of our different biodiversity depends on the collaboration of insects, birds and us. So I, I really hope that y'all will review this and look at how we can have the most bird friendly city in Texas. There's no one else in Texas looking at this as deeply as we are. And so, you know, I'm very competitive. And I say let's be first. So anyway, thank you so much. And thank you for everybody. All the staff that helped us out understand what this is. We had an amazing work group from conservationists to architects to developers all coming together and looking at this. So hopefully what we've put forward y'all can agree with. Thank you.

>> Thank you. >> Hello city council members

[10:16:32 AM]

>> Hello city council members and mayor I am Chris flores of district ten. I'm speaking out of turn. I missed my opportunity over there on item number 72 and now you're on 73. So I apologize. I'm taking you back to 72. I am for resolution 72, as amended by council member alter. And of course, I'm speaking about version one. I haven't seen the version two, I, I am speaking to you today to ask for a few more amendments. One remove the language about regional approach to park management. I think we need the opposite of centralized park management approach with strong unilateral, fair, equal and rules and contracts that the council, the parks board, the citizens and the parks department can easily follow. Two I would save the dollars, remove the consultant directive. The city has a sharp tax team in its corporate office that scours the country for grants. It is

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the country for grants. It is ideally suited to research parks, funding models across our country. A consultant may deliver biased results that the citizens could ultimately reject. Three remove the partnerships language. We do not need this item to be researched after living under this council imposed model for years. We need a thorough report for citizens to see that exposes the profits that are being hoarded by nonprofits through ticketed events and alcohol sales in our public lands, the people are being put out of our lands, and our lands are suffering. I close with this. In June 2026, Austin will host a national greater greener conference. This is a wonderful target for our city government to shine, to show the country how we can on our own with no outsourcing, take over our park management and make it thrive in the face of tight

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thrive in the face of tight budgets and a hotter climate. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> In addition to the folks who've been called Monica Guzman is also here in person to speak on item 72.

>> Item 73, Mr. Munch.

>> Yes, bill bonds, save our springs alliance, item 73. We certainly support moving forward with a lights out dark skies initiative, but this does relate back to 72. We need to start and do it right now with our parks and with those making profits off of our parks. We had for years a large cormorant population that overwintered in the large cypress pecan, oak trees along lady bird lake shoreline in zilker park, just

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shoreline in zilker park, just west of Luna point. That population is all but gone now, and it disappeared and was more than cut in half. We're talking about 200 to 300 birds that were there winter after winter, and they were decimated after the expansion of the operations of the trail of lights and the enormous floodlights, the huge speakers blaring loud music slash noise that were pushed right up against close to the shoreline. The one year that they really suffered, there was a huge ferris wheel that was lighted up. Also, right on top of the trees, right next to the trees. All of that needs to be pushed completely away from the lake. Those birds might come back, but I'm certain that we

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back, but I'm certain that we have similar effects from other events with lights that are inappropriate with sound. That's inappropriate after dark, when our birds and our other wildlife need it to be dark, and also need it to be quiet. And our parks are their refuge. They're their home. They're their habitat. And yet, here is a glaring example where this agenda of handing over our parks to private operators to make money are in direct conflict with what you're saying that you want. So please, let's, let's let's start at home with this policy, but also have it apply to the private sector and private development as well.

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private development as well. Thank you.

>> Good morning, mayor and council. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director of Garza. Go Austin Atmos Austin. We stand with rewild in the request to remoartnership revenue. We understand that the partnerships are currently under an audit, and we ask that the audit be completed and that the community hear the results in a briefing before that is taken into consideration. Thank you.

>> Next, we'll have item 74. We have Angela Garza, Craig nazer, and William bunch.

>> Your name has been called and you wish to testify. Please come forward. Thank you.

>> Welcome. Hi. Thank you. Thank you, city council leaders, for being up here. And I just want to say that once I read the ordinance, it was intact, which

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ordinance, it was intact, which is awesome. And thank you for that for considering the trees.

>> Say your name for the record, Angela Garza.

>> Okay. Thank you.

>> Greg nazer, once again on item 74. I think the city has made some very good strides in preserving our trees and our tree canopy. I don't think we've done enough yet, but I think we've done we've gone far down the road and I really support this item number 74. One thing about trees, if you've ever planted trees, is trees. Pick where they want to grow. They pick where they want to grow by dying. If you plant them where they don't want to grow. And a lot of times we have these mitigation efforts and they're good efforts, good faith efforts. Well, we can plant a tree here, do it here, do it there. And not all these trees that we say want to grow

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that we say want to grow somewhere will grow there. And we've seen this here, like right here out the window of city hall. We've seen this up at Arbor walk where bald cypress. They planted are dying. Not enough ro room, not enough water. I mean, we mean well, but we can't make a decision for trees. So what we got to do is protect the trees. We already have. They're growing there for a reason. And it's not just about us. It's about the entire ecosystem. We need these trees. We need them a lot. So I think we're going in the right direction. I want us to continue in this direction, but just keep that in mind, because it's not just this item, it's many items. The city does that works against trees. And I think overall, are we succeeding or failing. We could do a lot better. Thank you very much. >> Bill, save our springs

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>> Bill, save our springs alliance again. Yes, we support this move. We want to ask again that you go further what the process we have in place right now is failing developers are routinely being granted exemptions to allow the destruction of heritage trees that you can never get back. I mean, we're talking about trees anywhere from, you know, 50 to 2 or 300 years old that provide shade, habitat and protect and beautify our neighborhoods and capture carbon. And so these old trees that are absolutely critical to mitigating climate change and the urban heat island. And yet, day after day, we hear another story of a developer wanting to build on a

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developer wanting to build on a lot where there's a tree in an inconvenient position, getting a waiver or a variance or simply chopping it down over the weekend or at night and then, you know, getting a mere slap on the wrist. We have to save these trees now. We need a ghost tree ordinance that basically says, if you're going to cut down a heritage tree, you still can't build where it was and take all the economic incentive out of killing our trees. And we need second and third opinions and neighborhood input. When a heritage tree is being deemed to be too sick or fragile to survive because we're just seeing time and again arborists handing out opinions that really don't hold water aren't

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don't hold water aren't defensible. If you look closely at them. So many trees that are healthy and can live decades, centuries even further are being labeled as dangerous or diseased and it really just being done inappropriately. And again, in the name of making money and paving a lot that shouldn't be paved. Thank you.

>> All item or all speakers that sign up to speak on consent, not pulled items have been called.

>> Thank you very much. Members. As you heard, that's all of the people that signed up to speak on the consent agenda. So the consent agenda I want to be clear. The consent agenda will be items one through 75, 113 and 114. The items pulled are 55, three, four, five and six. I'll entertain a motion with regard to the consent agenda made by

[10:27:54 AM]

to the consent agenda made by council member harper-madison, seconded by council member Ellis. Discussion I'll recognize council member Ryan alter, followed by council member Alison alter.

>> Thank you very much. I just want to build off of some of the comments we heard today as it relates to item 74. Really excited to bring this forward and help create for the first time, real protections for trees in our residential areas. You know, we've heard a lot about this, whether it was in the home discussion or just as we've had conversations as it relates to more street trees and growing our tree canopy. And so we are taking a meaningful step to incentivize the preservation of these trees. When people are building homes on a residential lot, which today we only protect a couple percent of the trees, it's the heritage trees and the large and the protected trees. But you never get to be a heritage tree. If you first weren't one of these 8 to 18 inch trees. And so I'm, I'm very encouraged that we are moving forward here today and excited

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forward here today and excited to see these trees grow to be some of theost valuable infrastructure we have. So thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember Alison alter, followed by council member zo qadri and then the mayor pro tem.

>> Good morning. Thank you, mayor pro tem pool, for your resolution for item 72 into the co-sponsors for recognizing the importance of parks funding. And I appreciate you incorporating the amendments that I offered on the message board. And I want to thank council member Ryan alter, who worked with me on those amendments. You know, we have this system where we have quorums and we can't all be part of the conversation. And I've had an opportunity over the last eight years, plus more before that, to work as a parks advocate. And so I did want to add a few things. I'm really proud that while I've been in office, we've moved the needle on access to parks. So we have a goal to have everyone within a

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goal to have everyone within a quarter mile of a park if they're in the urban core, or a half mile if they're in suburban areas. In the time that I've been in office, we've moved that from 65% to be about 72% at the end. With the pandemic, we really saw the importance of our parks, both in terms of, you know, just being spaces that are available, spaces where the communities come together. And so the need to have more of them, but also the wear and tear that can happen when they're very much loved. Earlier this year, as chair of the audit and finance committee, I had the opportunity to work with the budget staff to develop a model that helped us to quantify where we were at with respect to our service levels of our parks. And that report really focused on mowing and trash and restrooms. But there are other elements of service that I want to just call to attention of my colleagues. And one of the things that we

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And one of the things that we added was to further address that. So with storm Mara, we had tremendous damage to our trees in our parks because we're only taking care of them something like every 60 years at thispoint, the preventative maintenance, the natural area maintenance with our land management plan and other kinds of things, and I also want to call attention to our suggestion that the manager considered redeploying some of the staff from the Austin convention center, who will be retained on staff but unable to work at the convention center. While it's closed, that that staff be considered as a possible resource to address some of the needs within the parks department. Parks department, you may recall, also includes the cultural centers and museums. You know, and as well as there being a lot of events and other things that are happening in our parks. While that would be, you know, temporary for a few years, it might be something that could

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it might be something that could really help us to bridge some of those gaps. And then, you know, further in our in our amendments, we just really wanted to reaffirm some of the elements that are listed in our long range plan. If you haven't read or reviewed lately, our parks, our future long range plan, it was the product of tremendous amount of work of our parks department and our community. And, you know, some of the speakers have spoken to it, that there is a desire for nature, etc. And so I'm excited to see this move forward. And I hope that the city manager and our new parks director see this resolution as a reaffirmation of the council's commitment and our community's commitments to fund our parks, to expand our parks, to sustain our parks, and to maintain our parks. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember adri, followed by the mayor pro tem, followed by council member Velasquez. Great.

>> Thank you. Mayor. I just wanted to thank council member

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wanted to thank council member or mayor pro tem pool and councilmember Ryan alter on item 72 and 74, respectively. And I'd like to be added as a co-sponsor for both.

>> Without objection, councilmember zo qadri will be shown as a co-sponsor of those items. Council member mayor pro tem, followed by council member Velasquez and then council member Bella.

>> Thanks mayor, I was able to incorporate council member alter's changes and further refine the resolution to restate our goals for equitable park access and service, particularly in areas around the city that have long been underserved. Item 72 speaks to finding a sustainable source of funding for our parks department and asks for an annual report on the parkland dedication fund, and that is something that we haven't had at the level that I think we really need to have it. Our parks tend to be heavily loved, but underfunded. Unfortunately, when budget time rolls around and I'm I'm hoping this resolution will help find a steady source of funding. So we're not having to choose between critical needs and

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between critical needs and maintaining our parks. On item number 73, this resolution that I brought asks the city manager to provide a progress update on the city's lightsut initiative 2021 and to look at the feasibility of integrating bird friendly design into our city. Regulations. As Jennifer Bristol noted. And thanks, Jen, for being here today to speak to this no other city in Texas is setting protections for birds and their role in our ecosyst is significant and unique. So full appreciation to miss Bristol and the work group, the environmental commission, convened to craft a policy that successfully focuses on these protections. And my thanks to council member zo zo qadri, council member Jose Velazquez, council member Vanessa Fuentes, council member Paige Ellis, who all have cosponsored this initiative, and to the entire diocese for your support on this important effort. Bird

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important effort. Bird populations face significant threats from collisions with buildings, particularly due to glass structures and night lighting, which result in a billion bird fatalities. Have we heard, as we have heard every year, from collisions with man made structures, our rivercorridor is especially popular with migrating birds and I'm hoping that we might be able to provide safer travels to our bird friends on their migratory pathways.

>> Thank you mayor. Thank you mayor. Pro tem councilmember Velasquez, followed by councilmember vela.

>> Thank you mayor. I wanted to thank the mayor pro tem and my colleague Allison alter. And excuse me, Ryan alter, for their work on this item. And thank you, mayor pro for incorporating those changes to it. I'm excited about this item. I would like to be added as a co-sponsor and ensure that not only with the

acquisition, that we're also maintaining the upkeep and maintenance of parks in underserved areas. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember. Without objection, council

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Without objection, council member Velasquez will also be shown as a sponsor of the item.

>> Councilmember Bella, that was 72.

>> Just to be a thank you, mayor. I just wanted to highlight item number 69, which is a partnership between the city of Austin and capital metro, to construct a trail, really to extend a trail in near east Austin to the red line trail.

>> It's an important addition to a very key trail helping our near east Austin neighbors get into downtown. In combination with this, the capital metro is also double tracking the red line, which ultimately, if we're going to get the kind of ridership we would like to have on the red line, we're going tohave to double track it. This is mostly grant funded. And so I just wanted to again, thank the staff at capital metro. And with the city of Austin for their efforts to secure the funding and to extend the trail and to improv the quality of the red line. Thank you, mayor. >> Thank you. Councilmember vela.

[10:37:03 AM]

>> Thank you. Councilmember vela. Members. With that, without objection, council member Alison alter would like to be shown as a co-sponsor of item number 72. Without objection, she'll be shown as a co-sponsor of 72 council member harper-madison, followed by council member Ellis. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

>> Appreciate it.

>> So there's tons to be excited about today on our consent agenda. First and foremost, I'd like to recognize proudly that our dedicated city staff and downtown Austin community court as recipients of over $1.4 million from the department of justice for the very successful mobile court pilot program. Looking forward to seeing what else we're able to accomplish there and to the press conference will host this afternoon. These grant funds will complement and enhance the mobile court implementation efforts by providing resources to supplement a robust planning process and strengthen services. I'm super excited to see how this grant funding will transform more lives across our communities. Plural, which I really appreciate that we're

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really appreciate that we're able to do creative solutions, creative solutions like the mobile court are how we shape a system that truly helps to address the root cause of chronic homelessness through thoughtful and compassionate action. Thank you again to the dac staff. I know you guys work so hard and over the course of the years, it's been a pleasure to be able to be in collaboration and be supportive of your efforts. Also, to our homeless strategy team and our community partners. For all your contributions to the downtown community court, we will be hosting the press conference later on this afternoon in the atriumo further talk about the significance of these grants for all those who are interested, it'll take place just after music around 1230. With all that said, I just want to briefly also express my excitement for item number 66, which regards improvements coming to gibbons park. Anybody who has driven down 12th street on your way up to the Springdale area as of late, you see lots of digging

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late, you see lots of digging and lots of doing, and I'm super happy and excited to see. And true Austin fixture something that was in every Sunday activity for me growing up on the east side. Finally get the attention it deserves for the old community and the new community, both. I look forward to item number 33 helping us regarding funding towards bicycle programing to reduce traffic congestion caused by single occupancy vehicles and promoting more affordable forms of transportation. And I'd also like to be shown as a co-sponsor alongside council member alter. Thank you.

>> Without objection, which which which item are you?

>> The councilman or mayor pro tem pool.

>> Okay.

>> Mayor pro tem pool I'm confused for a second. Without objection, council member harp-madison will also be shown as a co-sponsor of item number 72. Thank you. Thank you. Council member Ellis.

>> Thank you. I also want to heap on the praise for mayor pro

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heap on the praise for mayor pro tem pool item number 72, and including me as an original co-sponsor. It's no secret that a lot of us on the dais want to make sure that we are able to support our park system moving forward. I think this is a conversation that will be continually evolving, but we have to get more creative with how we're funding our our parks. We can't do it alone at the city of Austin. We need to make sure we have good partners that are actually leveraging other philanthropy, th people want to come in and make sure thatour park system is equitable, accessible and thriving so that everybody in Austin, Texas can enjoy them. I want to make sure that, you know, as as a district eight representative,

that it's not just district eight parks th are only going to be accessible to people in district eight. And I think that means building up parks all over the system and making sure that we have creative funding sources and that we are open and willing to have conversations about folks that want to come in and add in, you know, their their own dollars to be able to do some of these fantastic works, like what's happening in Pease

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like what's happening in Pease park, what's happening with Waterloo greenway. These are really important partnerships, and we absolutely want to make sure that it's not just west side parks that are getting funds. We want to make sure east side parks are getting funds as well. So I'm really appreciative that the mayor pro tem has taken this initiative and been very creative with how we look at this, and I think it shows by how many people want to co-sponsor it. What a great idea it is.

>> So thank you.

>> Thank you, councilmember members. Those are all the people that have indicated discussion. Is there any further discussion on the consent agenda as read hearing? None. Without objection, the consent agenda is adopted. That will take us to items that were pulled for one reason or another. The first item that we'll take up is item number 55. And I will call on staff to please come forward for a briefing. Sorry, I may have put the accent in the wrong place on that. Yeah that's

[10:42:06 AM]

place on that. Yeah that's right. We will have a briefing and then to take this item up. Members, you'll recall this is the item that we were going to be briefed on at the work session. And we deferred till today. So welcome. And thank you. Thank you. Good. Apologize for Tuesday having you here so long. And then not getting to it.

>> We're here to serve.

>> Thank you. Good morning. Mayor.

>> Mayor pro tem council members I'm Erica Lakey, the city's chief information officer and director for ctm. I'm joined today by Jessica king, the city's communications director. Today we'll provide provide a briefing relevant to item number 55 regarding the city of Austin's website redesign. The item authorizes the negotiation and execution of a contract for a web redesign of the city's Austin, texas.gov website with materials holding, LLC for an initial term of three years with up to three one year extension

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up to three one year extension options for a total contract amount not to exceed $5.5 million. Before we dive into the actual website redesign, I wanted to take a moment to frame and provide context for this project. This project is part of a larger digital transrmation strategy to modernize key systems that are foundational to the essential services we provide as a city. The purpose of the strategy is to provide the community with simple, secure, and accessible digital experiences through our investment in modern technology solutions. The transformation occurs in three categories employee digital experience. Digital digital city. Business and community digital experience. Today, we'll focus on the community digital experience with Austin, texas.gov. The digital front

[10:44:11 AM]

texas.gov. The digital front door for city services. And when people knock, we want them to feel welcome. As part of creating that community digital experience, we identified three key projects for Austin, texas.gov, multi-language translation which covers a broad range of languages and ensures efficient and rapid communication with all residents that project is now live on our website. Our one city digital Stant that moves from multiple chatbots across the website to a single chatbot or digital assistant to streamline communication, promote better engagement and improve the overall experience with the website. That project is currently in. Testing and the focus for today's presentation is our digital experience platform and the redesign of Austin, texas.gov. That focus is

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Austin, texas.gov. That focus is to meet the community expectations for a modern site with technical capabilities to meet the demands of today's tal first mindset. Together, our departments ctm and cpio have worked diligently to improve the site, but we have reached the limits of what's possible with the current technology. We have a robust site with over 24 million visits per year. We have over 9000 pages on the site and over 500 authors throughout the city. Through collaboration between ctm and cpio, we've made extensive improvements to the site's usability and accessibility to make it easier for those visiting our site. We've removed over 6000 pages just this year, kept on pace wipgrades, and added new

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wipgrades, and added new capabilities. Many of these tasks have been manual and time intensive, and we recognize it's still not enough. We've stretched the boundaries of what we can do with the current technology as depicted in the slide. It takes a lot of work under the water to keep things calm on top. And we'll try and progress to the next slide. There we go. We've outgrown our traditional content

management platform that we use for managing traditional websites, which we do not have. The new contract will allow for a digital experience platform that focuses on helping us deliver those meaningful digital experiences designed for and around the Austin community. The platform is designed to accommodate the complexity that S with delivering many different city services, and the

[10:47:13 AM]

different city services, and the ability to securely integrate with other important technology systems and data sources around the city. For a more seamless web experience. Jessica.

>> Good morning council. She is taller than me. Good morning council members Jessica king, Pio communications director. As Eric explained, a dxp is a substantive change from our current single CMS instance.

>> A dxp allows for personalization and can help deliver connected and consistent user journeys tailored to their interests and needs. Human centered research is at the forefront of designing this dxp solution, because we know that our digital properties must meet the needs of all austinites. The collaboration of an experienced dxp vendor and our own city digital services staff is a powerful combination that leverages both broad design and

[10:48:13 AM]

leverages both broad design and development expertise with a strong understanding of resident and operational needs. The recommended vendor was selected after a competitive solicitation process in which 14 vendors responded. The selection panel scored this vendor the highest based on their deep conceptual and solutions based experience for complex and matrixed organizations that include both private sector and government clients. The selection panel also considered the vendors best in class ranking, personal experience, sizable local presence and preferred partner, and platinum level certifications. Finding a strong vendor partner is one piece of a robust solution. The other portion is ensuring that dxp will deliver on the goals of the digital services program. We've learned from previous efforts to modernize our website. Early and multimodal stakeholder collaboration is critical to establishing the understanding necessary to produce an

[10:49:14 AM]

necessary to produce an effective product. This type of engagement will be accomplished through interviews, workshops, and observation of user interaction. User centered design is a philosophy and process that focuses on the needs of the users at every stage of the design process. This has become foundational to what we do and how we approach our work, ensuring that products are usable,

accessible, and meet the needs of austinites. We are a large and complex organization. A successful solution must be scalable, sustainable and work across all departments, including council offices. The design and development process will ensure the product is operationally sound and doesn't require unnecessary time or resources. Most importantly, a clear roadmap well defined milestones and metrics are critical to delivering solutions that are timely and on strategy council, we share your goals for our website. A user friendly experience that doesn't require our residents to know how to

[10:50:15 AM]

our residents to know how to navigate our complex organization. In order to navigate the website and get the information they need to conduct business or advocate for themselves. Thank you for the opportunity to share more about this contract. It's an exciting milestone for us in our journey to strengthen digital services for all austinites. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration and record approval of item 55. Kirk and I, along with our staff, are here to answer any questions you may have.

>> Thank you all members. Councilmember vela, thank you very much for the presentation.

>> I look forward to seeing the website continue to improve our. This is a how many years is the contract?

>> It is a three year initial contract with three one year extensions.

>> Go ahead and is this my sense is that this is going to be kind of an iterative contract, not a final delivery date, or, you know, what is the nature of the contract?

>> Our nature is our goal is to have a deliver a product

[10:51:15 AM]

have a deliver a product delivered within no more than two years. Okay.

>> And then the remaining years of the contract would be for iterative.

>> And then helping to sustain and then adjustments. Because as we know, technology changes our community changes. We want to make sure that we are responsive to our community's needs.

>> Got it. So we're looking at a, let's say a 2026 ish delivery date for the new website and then multiple years of support for maintenance and improvement of the website past that.

>> That's my understanding. Yes.

>> Okay. And how just out of curiosity, in the sense of what the website will look like, is it going to it look similar to what it is currently, or will there be dramatic changes to its kind of current layout in appearance, a dramatic change?

>> This is a redesign of the site. It's not a lift and shift, which I think we've experienced over the years. Maintenance and kind of just keeping it up to date. It will be a redesign.

>> Okay, great.

>> Thank you very much. Appreciate the presentation.

>> Thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember Velasquez, followed by councilmember Kelly.

[10:52:15 AM]

followed by councilmember Kelly.

>> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. First, I'd like to request anytime, you know, me and chito are interested in a subject. If I can go before him, even if his hand has been raised first. So he didn't he didn't ask my questions.

>> Well, without it, certainly without objection. Absolutely.

>> Thank you all so much for meeting with us and, and chatting with my team about this something I'm very interested in and heard a lot about it. When I hear a lot about it in the community all the time, and I just wanted to highlight a few of the things that we talked about during our meeting. What translation service will we be using now and in what languages?

>> I'm so glad you brought that up. We have 14 languages in this community that we prioritize as a result of the diversity of our community. I want to give a shout out to my team in the community engagement team for Pio, the technology we previously used was Google translate. A lot of organizations use Google translate. The way that system works is that you can go to the website, click a language, and it automatically translates, which is wonderful. But at the same time, it may not meet the cultural sensitivity of our own

[10:53:17 AM]

cultural sensitivity of our own community. So we worked very closely with ctm and our community engagement team, and then members of our community to test and evaluate a product that is now live and online. We have 14 languages. The difference between the current technology, which is what we call a translation tool, and the technology previously used, is that we can actually well, the first step is that we actually test it with dozens of native speakers in our own community. So that was our favorite part because we got to connect with those members. But more importantly, if we identify problems with the language, then we can back end, enter it and edit the content.

>> Thank you. How are we ensuring equity and accessibility in those in these changes? I know that we we're starting with the or or working to better improve the translation service, which I'm really, really

excited for. But what other what other components are being put in place to ensure equity and accessibility on this site?

>> So content is critical. And one of the key elements that we find over the years from a space of equity is twofold. First,

[10:54:18 AM]

of equity is twofold. First, navigation of the site is challenging for a lot of people who don't understand how our how our organization is laid out. You should not have to go to the site and say, oh, I need a permit. I need to go to development services to get that permit. So from an equity perspective, our goal is to have people enter the site and be able to search easily and identify based on their user need. So knowing not having to understand our organization is the first step. Really organizing the site to meet their needs. Secondly, from an accessibility perspective, Ada standards, we have been meeting that accessibility challenge and the requirements for years actually for the last couple of years. But it's hard to maintain that I am not proficient on Ada accessibility. I lean on my staff and the technology around that, but simple things such as making sure that the content is written in such a way that you can understand the visual that's present is really critical for Ada. Another part for us is making sure that people can

[10:55:18 AM]

making sure that people can actually enter the space and really, other than translation, know where to go to get the information they need. So it's a wide range of equity issues. We want to make sure especially frm people who are tracking council issues, being able to get to the information that they need to understand what are the items that are up, how can they learn about what's going on in the community? We've learned a lot about the land development code over the years, so spaces where we can actually understand what does the code mean, how is that working? The challenges, all that content is very complex. So how do we make sure that it's legible, readable in a way that people can digest it at a reading level, that the vast majority of our community can accept and understand?

>> Thank you. And I believe that John stated we have over 9000 pages correctn our website, more than I think it's. I thought it was closer to 12.

>> It's I believe we're at the it's over nine right now is it. Yes. Over nine after the ban on

[10:56:20 AM]

Yes. Over nine after the ban on Tuesday. Correct. We keep shrinking things as we. Gotcha.

>> Well I appreciate that. No. And I absolutely I mean yeah if you just drop the font size from 12 to 8. Yes.

>> That's what we do. Shrink everything.

>> Yes. What what are we doing to cut back on copy retiring pages and to better help streamline the process. And so that I think folks will start to believe that because we are we are shrinking the amount of pages we are we are shrinking information, which isn't the fact we're just doing away with things that don't need to be in there.

>> Yes, there's a lot of archived information that we are going through. So let me start by saying that this has been a long process for quite some time, where our staff have been encouraged to really look at the content that they have on their site to really streamline that. We spoke to 9000 pages earlier. In an ideal world, we're looking at close to 2 to 6000 pages, right? That's that's kind of the standard and best practice as I understand it across websites. So when we have 9000 pages,

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So when we have 9000 pages, that's that much more content for our residents to try and sift through and figure out what is that and how does that how is that relevant to me? So our biggest challenge is making sure our staff take a look across the organization. What is relevant now, how do we streamline that content and then take that content and make sure it is actually digestible and readable to the rest of the public?

>> Thank you.

>> And just just for my colleagues so that they understand my curiosity and all this, I've worked in marketing before and built out pages for Austin ISD, and actually built my own campaign website when I was running for office. But figuring out a way so that folks have more access, because the number one thing that I hear about us all the time and I think it will be twofold in us attacking this is figuring out a way to better streamline our website so people have access to the information, but also how we are marketing those programs to people. I think both of these things coupled together is going to have an amazing impact on resources and how folks access them. And I just really wanted to thank you for chatting with us the other day.

>> I appreciate it. Thank you sir.

[10:58:22 AM]

sir.

>> Thank you. Council member I think council member Kelly is next.

>> Thank you. And thank you. Council member Velazquez, I was going to ask a question about accessibility, so I'm glad that you raised that. I was appointed by the governor to the governor's committee on people with disabilities years before I became elected, and accessibility of state websites was an important thing that we tried to reform. And so I know it's an arduous process. I'm glad that it's top of mind for you and your team, and I'm glad that it's something that we are striving to do to make the information and data available to our community, regardless of their background or experience or their needs. I did have one question, which was since council member Velasquez took my other one, it was what performance metrics would be used to evaluate the new website? How are we looking at the continual improvement process and ensuring that it is going to fit the needs of the whole community?

>> I'm going to lean on my staff. Where did they go? If we have specific metrics? I am not. I am not personally certain of those. I know that our staff looks at that clickability rate accessibility from the accessibility standards. So the

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accessibility standards. So the way we measure accessibility is that we absolutely send it through a system that checks to see if we're meeting the criteria. But in terms of I want to clarify your question or make sure I understand your question, are you looking for the metrics tied to the contract or the metrics tied to the usability of the site?

>> Let's do both. Okay.

>> Thank you. I have two wonderful people here who would introduce themselves and explain that.

>> Hi, my name is Caleb Sanchez. I'm the digital services supervisor at cpio. The metrics that we normally kind of track are going to be with analytics heat mapping tools. We also do extensive user surveys. So we're getting feedback directly from austinites that are visiting the Austin, texas.gov website. So we will do initial user research, research and design to start off the project. And then once we get closer to the completion, we will also do follow up surveys. We did very similar format formula for the translation tool where we had feedback from before the tool was launched, and then afterwards to make sure we were still going in the right

[11:00:24 AM]

we were still going in the right direction.

>> Okay. That's great. That answers my question. Thank you so much. I just want to say that I'm really excited about the opportunity that the city has before them to overhaul the city's website. As someone who's a council member currently and has access to any information just by picking up the phone, I know now with my transition back into the community, that having that information easily accessible by

people that don't have the same access that we do as council members, is vitally important. So thank you very much for your efforts.

>> Thank you.

>> Councilmember Allison alter, than.

>> I wanted to ask if the this whole redesign also includes all the enterprise departments.

>> Yes. And the way the enterprise departments work is that they might be interconnected with ours. So I have not been able to tease that out. I'm going to actually ask Jasmine Wagner to come back up here and what we are doing is looking at all the different

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looking at all the different general fund sites first, and prioritizing those general fund sites, and then making sure that we are able to integrate. So when you say a redesign of all the enterprise sites, I think our goal with a dxp is to make sure they're integrated and work together, because there are elements of the enterprise sites that are part of that user experience, and being able to ensure that our residents and users actually experience it as one journey for themselves, rather than feeling like they go from one department to another. But I'll ask me to elaborate.

>> Yeah. No, I think you. Yes, Ming Wagner, public information and Marke manager, corporate and the communications and public information office. No, I think taking summarized it well. The digital experience platform provides us with a holistic environment rather than just that singular CMS, as chief Lakey described. So what that does is add to that environment where we can start to connect the dots more readily, which

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the dots more readily, which will help a lot with those disconnected sort of enterprise environments. Like when you go to Austin energy, you're going to a completely separate site. Those will start to feel more connected. Additionally, what we're looking at too is a phased approach where we start to look at initially the main Austin, texas.gov site and then gradually start to bring in other pieces and parts and align them over time. So it's not a monolith where we take everything at once. We'll take pieces, learn from those, and then start to grow as we go. So it it will come over time. But we also don't want to just attack everything at once. We want to take our learnings and apply them as we go to everything.

>> So at the end of the two year process, if I was trying to find, say, water conservation programs and I went to our website, would that be easy for me to find? Or would there be an app where I could easily search and find that?

>> Yeah. Great question. So currently Austin water, that enterprise department is already

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enterprise department is already part of Austin, Texas dot gov. So that will be included in the work that we're doing in the next two years.

>> Austin energy and the airport Austin energy is currently a separate site as is the Austin public library.

>> They operate on separate instances. Then the Austin, Texas. Gov site. Austin, texas.gov. As far as enterprise departments currently includes Austin water, aviation and Austin resource recovery are all part of that site right now.

>> Okay, so it's really Austin energy and the library are the two that wouldn't necessarily be in.

>> Okay. Yeah, yeah.

>> And part of the reason I'm asking this goes back to, you know, a question that my colleague, councilmember Velasquez asked because or a comment that he made about, you know, finding the programs. And, you know, we have an item on our agenda with respect to water conservation, and there's a Q amp, a backup, and we have a whole lot of programs and no one is using them. And I have to

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is using them. And I have to wonder if they're not using them because they don't know about them and they don't have a have a road, you know, into using them. And so I hope that by the time you're done with this process, that it's going to be, you know, really easy for people to find that and, and figure out what they need at a, at a language level that they can, can relate to.

>> Absolutely. And I think that the addition of having personalization be part of the digital experience platform will allow for things like if we if someone starts to have an interest in programs that align with that, they will be able to start. We'll be able to tag content. So they'll start to deliver that type of content to them every time they go to the website. So it'll start to automatically pull up those types of things so they'll be able to find their way to more similar programs and similar interests that align as well. So hopefully that will go a long way. Additionally, just being able to cull down the amount of content on the site, because

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content on the site, because rinow it's serving in a large way as sort of a filing cabinet. Every time we have a piece of information, we put it on the website, which isn't serving users because they're having to comb through so much to find what they need. So we've already culled through about 3000 pages.

We've gone from about 12,000 to about 9000. We're on our way down to hopefully about 3 to 4000 by the time we're done. So that'll go a long way to streamlining what's on the site and available to users to be able to find. Thank you, thank you.

>> Council member. Thank you all very much. Thank you. I'm sorry. Council member zo qadri yeah, sorry.

>> I'll make my questions. I don't know if they're going to be quick, but I'll make my questions. So the first question I had was you had how many folks visit the city website every year or how many clicks does it get?

>> 24 million.

>> 24 million. But I'm a 10th of that.

>> Yeah, I was going to I was going to say, I think Jose's

[11:06:27 AM]

going to say, I think Jose's checking on his page time and time again.

>> So I'm not sure anybody else is looking at it. So no. Go ahead.

>> Sorry.

>> So is that 24 million unique visits or is that just like if I go and look at my page ten times a day and that happens to you, that happens to.

>> Yeah, it is not unique.

>> It's not unique.

>> Okay. Got it. And then I don't know if you guys are able to track this, but are you able to track like what folks are like, what is the number one thing that people are looking to through? Like, I assume council member Jose Velasquez's page is number one and then it's down.

>> I worry it's going to be a competition among this group. Yes, we are able to track the most clicked pages.

>> So out of curiosity, what are folks looking for when they go to the city of Austin?

>> I don't have that information. I'm going to lean on my technical expert, Mr. Mayor.

>> Yes, I think council member zo qadri just wants to see how many times people click on his page, and that's really why he's asking.

>> Just cut to the chase, that's what just let him know he's doing.

>> I just want to I just want to make a comment. We had drawn new

[11:07:27 AM]

make a comment. We had drawn new rooms and Jose had gotten a new office, but if people are visiting my page more, I think I should get the new office. So to answer your question, it's mostly department pages and the big departments like parks and recreation and then service pages. Okay, great. And then this questmight have been answered when we had our one on one, but I was looking through my notes and I couldn't find it. I know the I guess the company that we're using had done a website redesign for that city. I think right outside of San Francisco website looks great, but are there any other cities that they've worked with?

>> We did find out that New York City was one of the cities that partnership. So there are other large cities. Again, I do want to stress, though, that for us it's an issue of complexity. So when you look at a city's website right now, it can tell you how they worked with their vendor at the time to design it and that is truly a reflection of both the partnership with the vendor and the organization. And so the complexity is what's critical to us. So even if we don't see another city, there are a lot of other organizations that are as complex as we are.

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that are as complex as we are. And so we look to both. But yes, New York City is one other city that we were informed was a client of theirs. Presidio was the city that you saw. And they they are smaller, but also levels of complexity. Crane was another it was a private entity. And then there are multiple governmental entities at the state and federal level.

>> Great.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Council members. We'll now take up speakers on item number 55. And then at the conclusion, I'll ask for a motion. I'll turn to the clerk's office.

>> We have one speaker, William bunch.

>> Mr. Bunch, are you here? Bill bunch, you're passing okay. No other speakers on item number 55. The chair will entertain a motion with regard to item number 55. Motion to approve by council member Vila, seconded by council member harper-madison. Any discussion on item number 55. Hearing none without objection. Item number 55 is

[11:09:29 AM]

objection. Item number 55 is adopted. Thanks, everybody. Appreciate you all. Members that will now take us to items three, four, five and six. The reason those are pulled is they come as recommendations from our water oversight committee. I am going to call upon the director of our water utility. If she will come forward, then ask her to address us and then we will go to speakers on the item following that. And then I will look to the pro tem as the chair of that committee to make a motion.

>> Good morning. Mayor. Mayor pro tem council members, thank you for your consideration of these items today. My name is Shea Ralls roalson and I'm the director of Austin water water forward is Austin's integrated water resource plan, which supports a sustainable and equitable water future for Austin's next 100 years. Revisions to Austin's water conservation plan and drought contingency plan have also been completed and complement the strategies in the water forward

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strategies in the water forward plan. Austin's first water forward plan was adopted by city council in November of 2018 as part of our adaptive management approach, Austin water began updating the water board plan in late 2021. The updated plan is the culmination of detailed technical analysis along with extensive community input. The plan development process was led by Austin water with support from the council appointed integrated water resource planning, community task force, also known as water forward task force. In addition, we convened a climate technical advisory group that provided bjbject matter expertise throughout the plan update and we obtained technical support from the university of Texas at Austin on developing climate projections. This effort also incorporated a community ambassador cohort to provide broader participation from historically underrepresented communities in the plan's equity and affordability roadmap. Most of

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affordability roadmap. Most of the strategies in the water forward 2018 plan continue as key strategy in the water forward 2024 plan, which includes a 50 year portfolio of conservation, reuse and supply strategies and a 100 year adaptive management framework to respond to changing conditions. Alongside water forward, we completed a review of the water conservation plan and drought contingency plan, resulting in additional water conservation measures and drought restrictions. Austin water has facilitated extensive community engagement to develop water forward as a plan that is inclusive and reflects our community's values. This engagement has included numerous public meetings such as workshops, task force meetings and briefings to the Austin water oversight committee and water and wastewater commission. This month, the water forward task force, water and wastewater commission, resource management commission, and our Austin water oversight committee voted to recommend these plans for council approval. The plans, the

[11:12:32 AM]

council approval. The plans, the items on your agenda today. Item number three is the water forward plan. Item number four is the updated water conservation plan. Item number five is the updated drought contingency plan. And item number six includes amendments to city code chapter 6.4 to codify the updates to water conservation and drought contingency plans. And with that, I'm happy to take any questions.

>> Members, if you have any questions, we can do that now, but I'll go ahead and go to I'm not seeing a so I'll go ahead and we'll go to speakers. The way I would like to do this is we'll go three, four, five and six when we complete the speakers, I will call for a motion. And the way we'll do that is on three, five and six. And then I will come take up item number four, because there is a proposed amendment and some direction to the manager's office on item number four. So we'll take up three, five and

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we'll take up three, five and six in that way. So I'll turn to the city clerk for speakers on three, four, five and six.

>> Okay. Our first speaker is remote Karen Krebs. Hello.

>> My name is Karen Krebs. I live in district eight. I am writing to oppose these items. Number three and four, for three reasons. The rising utility bills. The water forward plan proposes costly infrastructure projects such as aquifer storage and recovery, and additional water treatment plants, which will likely result in higher rates for us Austin water customers. The conservation strategies are weak. The plans undereimate the potential of traditional and cost effective water conservation approaches, such as robust public awareness and education programs that have worked very well in the past and I feel like there's been a lack

[11:14:35 AM]

I feel like there's been a lack of transparency. The process of updating these plans has lacked sufficient clarity about justifying these large scale projects. And there has not been enough data explaining why customer engagement and rebates and incentive programs have been so severely low. So thank you very much for your time moving to in-person.

>> On item three, we have Monica Guzman, Tanisha Karim, Brad Massingill, Noah Elias, Robert mace, and Nico Garza. If your name has been called for item three, please make your way to the podium and state your name for the record.

>> Please move forward. If your name has been called.

>> Excuse me. Okay, it's still morning, so good morning, mayor and council. I am Monica Guzman, policy director at lugo Austin.

[11:15:36 AM]

policy director at lugo Austin. Stin. We stand with save our springs alliance in opposition to items three and four. As you just heard, we oppose. Due to the rising utility bills, weak conservation strategies, and lack of transparency, the water forward plan proposes costly infrastructure projects such as the aquifer storage and recovery additional water treatment plant, which will likely result in significant rate hikes for Austin water customers. And if we're going to if they're going to increase the rates, then there needs to be some sort of relief. The weak conservation strategies, the plans underestimate the potential of traditional and cost effective water conservation approaches, such as robust public awareness and education that have successfully achieved substantial water savings in Austin's past. And speaking of robust public awareness and education, as you just had a briefing about the website needing to be multilingual, so does that public awareness and education needs to be language accessible online and off. Severe lack of transparency. The

[11:16:37 AM]

Severe lack of transparency. The process of updating these plans has lacked sufficient clarity and justifying these large scale projects. We must hold Austin water accountable and ensure that water management strategies reflect our community's needs. Thank you.

>> Your name has been called. Please come forward. Just identify yourself for the record. Please.

>> For the record, my name is Robert mace. I represent district seven on the water forward task force. Also serve as the vice chair for the task force. As. As shay mentioned, this is an update refinement of the previous plan, a continuation of that plan. Conservation is a big part of where our future water is going to come from. A substantial increase in water reuse, as well as aquifer storage and recovery. Brackish groundwater desalination, and then using Wall Street, long lake as an off

[11:17:38 AM]

Wall Street, long lake as an off channel reservoir. As Shea also mentioned this, this plan is integrated pretty intimately with the water conservation plan and the drought contingency plan, which I think is a is a good thing that Austin water did with us as a task force. So we're all marching to the same drummer to ensure we have resilient water supplies for the future. I do want to thank Austin water so particularly Shea roalson, Kevin Crittenden, Teresa Lutz, Marissa flores Gonzalez with Austin water for doing a fantastic job. They have the patience of saints in terms of dealing with all the ideas coming from the

representatives on the task force, as well as as well as from the public and concerns that have been brought up during this multiyear process. There's also numerous other folks that are involved in this effort across city departments that provided invaluable assistance. I also

[11:18:41 AM]

invaluable assistance. I also want to thank the task force members and also recognize our chair, Jennifer walker, who couldn't be here today due to a conflict. And then also thanks to the public that participated and provided feedback to help make this a better plan. Finally, I just want to thank the foresight of city council for developing a plan. To my knowledge, this is the only city or water provider in the state of Texas that considers climate change going forward. And as we see from our reservoir levels being low, continuing to see record low inflows to our reservoirs, increasing temperatures, this is this is a serious fundamental issue for Austin, and I'm proud to be part of a process to ensure that we have resilient supplies for the future. I am logged in. As for this item, thank you, thank you, thanks for your service.

[11:19:43 AM]

thanks for your service.

>> If your name's been called, please approach the microphone.

>> Hi, my name is Tanya, science director of save our springs. I'm here to oppose items three and four. While I recognize the importance of diversifying our water resources, our water sources, the strategies laid out in these plans rely far too heavily on costly infrastructure projects and neglect to place emphasis on aggressive and effective conservation programs that empower Austin customers to reduce our water usage. Instead of building on tried and true conservation strategies, Austin water is placing a lot of stock on costly and invasive water supply and storage projects that will ultimately overburden us with rising utility rates. The last iterative of these plans set the water savings goal to 119 GPD, and it's now bumped up to 121. Austin water is justifying going backward on our goals by blaming this on customers for their lack of interest in water conservation, which I believe is a

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which I believe is a disingenuous attempt to avoid accountability with the hundreds of thousands of customers. Their failure in conservation is evident through their severely low engagement numbers, which can be found in the water conservation plan. These numbers should be a wake up call for the utility department to deeply reflect on its outdated and effective approaches. Cities of similar sizes and water use characteristics all across the nation are achieving greater water savings by prioritizing reuse

and conservation programs and incentives. But Austin water has yet to match this level of ambition. While Austin water has pledged to improve its conservation methods, no concrete evidence has been provided. I have submitted requests and public information requests and have been replied back with no records found. I followed up and they provided an eight page report and to be respectful, I will not name any names, but even a team leader who is spearheading these plans does not even know their watering day. This should indicate to you how ineffective these practices are and that

[11:21:46 AM]

these practices are and that they need deeper examination and not be placed on us. How can customers be expected to trust? To trust these strategies if they're not implemented in good faith and cannot be provided any evidence that they put in genuine effort? Conservation should be our strongest strategy and not an afterthought. Yet these plans lack concrete measures for accountability and transparency, and I firmly believe in the power of our community to rebuild the culture of conservation that has been eroded by Austin water's priority prioritization of revenue generation. City council I urge you to take the lead in changing this narrative and pressure Austin water to prioritize conservation over revenue driven decisions. Thank you.

>> All speakers for item three have been called at this time.

>> There's somy else.

>> Please state your name for the record.

>> Yes, my name is Nico Howard. There's an error in the podium sign up. Where my last name is spelled wrong. It's actually H a

[11:22:48 AM]

spelled wrong. It's actually H a U W E R T if the clerk please correct that. Yes, I'm speaking against approval of items three and four. I'd recommend starting over on the water forward plan since it's vague. It has a lot of errors and omissions, and primarily it fails to correctly note how land management and natural systems work to affect our water supply. It climate change from carbon and other emissions is a real and sequestering carbon is noted in the climate equity plan with a 50% canopy goal is a is a great step. It's not acknowledged in this plan. And one of the big forces clearing trees on the green space is the city of Austin. And going even more forward on that. So just to note that the effective land management plan, you know, it wasn't climate change that filled in the 1893 lake McDonald lake Austin reservoir by half in just four years. That was the

[11:23:48 AM]

just four years. That was the massive deforestation going on at the time. Also, the filling up of lake Travis at this time, which is reducing our our storage or the sediment plume that plugged Austin water filters in 2018, again, related to deforestation, the llano area, it wasn't climate change that caused the cities of shady hollow, city of sunset valley, City of Lynwood, Westlake hills, city of Georgetown that used to have a local source of water to switch over to city of Austin or the lake Travis. It was the management practices that they applied during the boom of the 1980s. And at that time in 1980, about 8000 residents of the city of Georgetown became sick from contaminated well water, particularly during drought. Austin's water supply doesn't originate from the reservoirs. It's filling up with sediment from land disturbance, but primarily from the springs and caves in the limestone aquifers

[11:24:49 AM]

caves in the limestone aquifers of central Texas. Hundreds of caves we've known about for decades remain filled that have been filled by pioneers, ranchers, and the city of Austin to keep water at the surface, to dispose of trash, to eliminate livestock hazards and other public hazards. They're like plug, plug bath holes, some of them draining hundreds of acres. That would be reducing flooding, increased recharge, increased spring flow, sustain our water supplies during drought. If they were restored, the clearing of forces causes soil loss, increased flooding, increased extreme temperatures, reduced spring flow, reduced rainfall, poor air quality, and water quality. Increased fire risk in a loss of native wildlife habitat. As Brad Wilcox A&M university noted, thank you for your testimony.

>> Appreciate you being here. Mr. Are you going to speak? >> Thank you, bill bunch. Save

[11:25:54 AM]

>> Thank you, bill bunch. Save our springs alliance also, just want to add a little bit to what you heard from miss tansy Karim, our science director. There is adaptive management in this plan, but it I no mean structured to address what we're facing with climate change and a future with far less reliable water in the highland Lakes and also in our aquifers, it continues to rely overwhelmingly on giant pork barrel construction projects that put money in the pockets of construction firms, but don't do anything to actually make us resilient or sustainable. We are not going to have the water to put into expanded treatment plants, into expanded sewage treatment plants, which all are rushing forward to build with no

[11:26:56 AM]

rushing forward to build with no justification whatsoever. And that costs over $1 billion for our ratepayers. Asr might work and might help, but it's unproven. And yet we're putting most of our eggs in

that basket. We know what to do from the last drought, and that is to embrace and engage decentralized conservation and reuse, and to challenge our community to participate and do it creatively. It was a standard buzz phrase that worked, and that is create a culture of conservation. We had the rey Benson asleep at the wheel star singer poor of Austin community music doing, you know, telling us watch your water, watch your water like your son and daughter. It was wildly effective. It made

[11:27:56 AM]

It was wildly effective. It made protecting our water part of our culture. And that was ditched in favor of the most lame, ineffective communications we've seen. And for the first time ever, our per capita consumption has gone up in the history of the city. That's never happened. We're going backwards. And as miss Karim pointed out, people don't even know what their watering date is. Do you know what your watering date is of the week? Do y'all know? Okay, 1 or 2 of you. That's nice. I drive around my neighborhood at night. I hear sprinklers running at night all the time. On days when nobody is supposed to be watering. There's no enforcement. The utilities prioritizing selling water, not saving water and that is upside down. And we're we're paying through the

[11:28:57 AM]

we're we're paying through the budget for.

>> All the speakers have been calling item three. We do not have speakers for five and six. We do have speakers for four. And we'll call them when you're ready.

>> Very good. Thank you very much. Members. Those are all the speakers on items three, five and six. The mayor pro tem moves adoption of items three, five and six. That, seconded by councilmember Allison alter. Is there any discussion on items three, five and six? There? Councilmember Allison alter.

>> Sorry.

>> So just on items three, five and six and eventually four, I just want to say that I'm really proud to support this update to the water forward plan today, and I want to extend my gratitude to the Austin water department for their diligent efforts in updating their plan, as well as the members of the Austin water task force for their valuable time and

[11:29:58 AM]

their valuable time and expertise. Throughout this process. We've heard some from some folks today that want us to go further, and I hope that Austin water will have heard those requests and we'll take those ideas and be creative about how to continue with these messages. We're going to talk about conservation plan. I think we all would like us to do to do more Austin water included in that. I want to say that I'm particularly excited about the extensive Colorado river analysis, which has helped to evaluate and prioritize land protection opportunities. This is an essential addition to our land conservation strategies for the whole community. For a range of issues, and I really look forward to seeing Austin waters continued progress on the conservation, reuse, and supply strategies outlined in this plan. We've taken several steps, particularly over the last year and purple pipe and other things that that are important steps. This is a 100 year plan. And we're we're we're taking the steps that we need to the best we can at this time. Could we do more? Sure. Should we strive to

[11:31:00 AM]

more? Sure. Should we strive to do more? Yes. But I still think that today's vote and this update is an important, important process. So I wanted to thank folks who made it happen. Thank you.

>> Thank you, councilmember.

>> Councilmember Ryan alter I just want to echo that a little bit. You know, I it is I didn't know we were the only utility in the state that does something like this. And that speaks volumes to the work. You all are doing and how this community feels about the need to conserve water. You know, I love that you all not only show what we're going to do, but you show all your homework. And it's obviously a ton of work. You have pages and pages of all the options and how you know what they cost and how much they save and how you balanced. And I think that is really helpful for us to understand how you've gotten here. So I just want to thank you and I'm sure so many members of your staff who have worked tirelessly, tirelessly on this, it shows, and I just

[11:32:00 AM]

this, it shows, and I just really appreciate it.

>> There being no further discussion on items three, five and six. Without objection, items three, five and six are adopted. That will take us back to item number four. I'll turn to the clerk's office for speakers on item number four.

>> First speaker is remote. Karen Kreps. Miss Kreps, are you there? You can unmute. We'll move on to in person. We have Monica. I'm sorry. Monica Guzman. Tanisha. Kareem. Brad. Massengill, Noah, Elias, and Nico Hayward.

>> Your name's been called, and you wish to testify. Please come forward. Let's make sure the microphone is on for you.

[11:33:03 AM]

microphone is on for you.

>> Science director of save our springs. I just wanted to reiterate about the transparency commissioner. Alter, you mentioned that you appreciated the thorough depth of information providedbut it should be revealed that it's actually very concerning how much critical, critical information would have been withheld from the public eye if stakeholders did not actually push for greater transparency. There are some examples that are not included in the water conservation plan, bn the water forward plan, which are one informs the other as an example, the service extension request process, the land preservation analysis, the water loss report, which mose buchele had actually reported on, the ipr intake locations, the off channel reservoirs, a lot of these have been blindsided by the water task force members themselves, and I genuinely hope that we can, you know, this is probably going to be approved unanimously, but I would urge

[11:34:04 AM]

unanimously, but I would urge you all to press Austin water for their commitment to the water conservation. The culture of water conservation, and hold them accountable to the modeling and the strategies that they're implementing. And like bill had said, given that this isn't intended to be an adaptive plan, it would be very beneficial to the customers and the Austin water itself to prioritize the practice of fostering transparent communication with not only the task force members moving forward, but also us as stakeholders who are very heavily invested in the future of our water resources. Thank yoyou, Mr. Guzman.

>> Thank. These comments are applicable to item four as well.

>> Thank you very much. Is there anyone else whose name has been called that wants to speak? Please come forward.

>> Yes. Nico Howard H a U W E R T. Just to mention also that the

[11:35:05 AM]

T. Just to mention also that the for fiscal responsibility to sustain our our water supply. You know, we should be investing in, in land to preserve it. The hill country alliance 2022 state of the hill country report noted that Austin and the rest of central Texas wasn't keeping up with investment in green space. With the population growth to protect our water supply. Once the impervious cover exceeds about 15%, enhanced by deforestation, the water supply is not sustainable. So you need to start planning really on

protecting the upstream water supply and not just count on lcra or someone else to do it, to do it for you. So just also mention that in the in the in the plan, you know, it does specifically point out that management of these lands focuses on ecological restoration of vegetation to native prairie and savanna ecosystems. So the Ford plan actually is saying, yeah, we're going to do more deforestation. This is what we do, which is a

[11:36:06 AM]

This is what we do, which is a which is a poor, poor practice. Also to mention that an aquifer storage and recovery, they were proposing that in 2000, Seton hill was going to do it. I had to point out that data. I collected showed that that water would just store in the northern segment just for a few days and come out so they stopped doing it then. So there are a lot of details about the desalinization and also the purple pipe. If they're applying irrigation on sensitive areas like the Edwards aquifer, that could be a problem, just like it was in the 1980s when we saw pathogenic outbreaks. Thank you very much.

>> Okay. We have Karen Kreps remote.

>> Do we really?

>> Karen Kreps, are you there?

>> Yes. Thank you. I'll pass. >> Okay. Thank you.

[11:37:07 AM]

>> Okay. Thank you.

>> That concludes speakers on item four.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Members that concludes all the speakers on item number four. The mayor pro tem moves. Approval of item number four is seconded by council member Alison alter. We have two proposed amendments to item number four. I'll recognize council member Ryan alter on his proposed amendment. Members, you have a copy of that amendment. It is labeled version two. Councilmember Ryan alter, thank you very much.

>> This is our alter motion sheet one, version two. And what it is taking us to our water conservation target that we had ere we are actually hoped to be today. But five years from now. So if you look back to the last time we did this five years ago, our goal in 2024 was to be at 119 gallons per capita per day. And so I believe it is

[11:38:10 AM]

day. And so I believe it is really important for us to at least maintain our level of ambition and our goals by lowering the goal to 119. And I know Austin water is looking for ways to get there. I think we saw in the water oversight committee, one of the potential is to even do more as it relates to our water loss. We are losing millions and millions of gallons throughout our system, and we have the ability with a more aggressive goals to give Austin water kind of that authority and mandate to say, you know what? We maybe we need to do a little more in terms of some of this proactive either pipe replacement or going out and finding where these broken pipes are. So I think we should always be pushing ourselves as much as possible. And Austin waters is really trying to do that. But that is why I have done these

[11:39:11 AM]

that is why I have done these numbers, and that's where those numbers come from. It's from our previous water conservation plan and goals.

>> Motions made by council member Ryan alter to approve, alter amendment number one to item number four is second by council member Vella. Discussion on the motion to ame mayor pro Ted then council member Vella.

>> I have a question for director roalson. Thanks. We talked about this in the oversight committee meeting for Austin water at our last meeting, and I think you and I had a conversation about who would be responsible for meeting this particular stretch goal. And I think this amendment stretches the stretch goal that Austin water is recommending. So could you talk a little bit

[11:40:11 AM]

could you talk a little bit about this? Who would be responsible? Is the water utility. Is it Austin residents? If you could.

>> Thank you. Mayor pro tem again. Shea Ralls roalson, director of Austin water. Yes. Achieving this stretch goal will take action by the entire community. Everyone has a role to play in creating a sustainable water future for Austin. And this is not a goal where we can just put enough money and people into it that Austin water can meet it on our own. This is the most robust water conservation plan that we've ever had, and there are no strategies that we are holding in reserve, and we're going to do all the strategies that are in the plan. On the Austin water side, we will implement the results of the external review of our water loss program in Orto reduce water loss from our system, we will continue to assess and evolve our incentive and rebate programs to make them more attractive and actionable to our customers. We will continue to provide effective and compelling communication to

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and compelling communication to our customers through media channels, as well as through the my atx water portal, and we will use the features of the my atx water portal to alert customers to high water use. That's what we can do, but the amount of water we use as a community is distributed to all of our users. Setting a goal in terms of gallons per capita per day is not especially meaningful to the average austinite. But what is meaningful is education and incentives that are attractive and actionable so that our customers understand their responsibility and their opportunity to help us meet our collective, collective goals. So we will also be reporting quarterly and annually to council and the community to show them the progress we're making so that everyone can see the role that they have to play in meeting this goal, this is a call to action. I believe our community will respond, and I understand that the plan was presented to the water and wastewater commission, resource management commission, as well. >> And then of course, the water

[11:42:13 AM]

>> And then of course, the water forward task force and those three groups agreed on the stretch goals that you are recommending here today. Is that correct?

>> That is correct. All three of those bodies recommended this plan for your approval.

>> And just last, what impacts do you think the stretch stretch goals might have on the community if they're not, if they're not met, you know, across the water business right now, we're talking a lot about generational investment.

>> 50 to 70 years ago, our predecessors made generational investments in building water and wastewater infrastructure that makes modern life possible. Today, we are faced with another set of generational challenges, and in this time, we are challenged to rethink how we think about water, including reducing our water use, expanding reclaimed water. We even have to rethink our

[11:43:13 AM]

even have to rethink our relationship with the Texas Colorado river, which not only runs through the heart of Austin, but truly is in a lot of ways, the heart of Austin. We need strategies to store water in times of plenty, so we have access to it in times of need, and in the future we will need additional sources of supply. So just like the generation before us, our community has the opportunity to set the stage for future generations and what we do today matters. And adopting these plans today and their respective goals is meaningful step toward a secure water supply. So the next five years are a critical time, and our community has to see that we can make a difference. The risk we face in this time is that if we fail to make significant progress towards our goals, our customers may no longer believe that what

they do as an individual can make a difference, and which could make it more difficult to achieve our goals over time. So when we set the goals that are in the plan

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the goals that are in the plan today, we used a bottoms up approach that looked at all of the strategies in our plan as I said, we're we're not holding anything in reserve and estimated the yields from those strategies. And then stretch those an additional to set the goals that are in the plan today. That being said, I got into this water business because I'm passionate about water sustainability and I wanted to play a role in helping our community plan and deliver high performing water and wastewater solutions. And Austin water is full of people just like me, and we are going to do everything in our power to empower our community to meet these goals.

>> Thanks so much, director roalson and mayor. I just have to say, I do worry that the council with this amendment may be setting a goal that today that is beyond the city's administrative ability to reach even as I trust staff's absolute commitment to meeting the goals

[11:45:18 AM]

commitment to meeting the goals that the council would set and that Austin water could then be criticized in the future for not meeting a goal. And so I want to set goals that are achievable because I want to foster public support and trust in our policies. And so, mayor, that is why I am not able to support this amendment number one, thank U.U.

>> Mayor pro tem councilmember Bella, thank you.

>> Mayor. I we have a lot of positive indicators in Austin in terms of, for example, more folks biking, more folks walking. There's a lot of electricity usage per capita is down, a lot of positive indicators. This is one indicator that it to me is kind of going in the wrong direction. Our per capita water consumption are not going kind of where we would like it to be. I do support the ambition. I will say I'm conscious of that. We're setting a very a tough goal for staff, but just in terms of the

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staff, but just in terms of the stretch goal setting, I do appreciate the ambition and I support the amendment.

>> And thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember harper-madison, do you wish to be heard on this item?

>> Yes, please. But it's not so much about the well, I suppose it's ancillary to the amendment. We had the opportunity.

>> I'm sorry if it's not on the amendment you want, it is on the amendment.

>> It's commentary as opposed to a question. I just wanted to encourage my colleagues to take into consideration. We had the opportunity recently to meet with our new intergovernmental relations folks, and this was something that came up for me as a part of their infrastructure considerations. And to your point about our water utility only being able to bear so much of the brunt, I really hope that we can get some support from the state with our infrastructure needs. That was my point.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Councilmember. Councilmember Allison alter, thank you.

>> I serve on the Austin water oversight committee. And you know, we've had some discussions over over this and I'm going to say that I'm going to support

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say that I'm going to support this amendment because I think we can do more. I don't I think Austin water's been out there trying to push the conservation on their own. I think the council itself could be really instrumental. And so regardless of whether this amendment passes or not, as we adopt this plan, I would really encourage those of you who are out in your community to have and invite Austin water and their water conservation groups to come and table at your events. Include this in your newsletters. There's a ton of conservation programs. I was a little disheartened to see in the q&a how little they were being used, and I think some of that is just people really don't know about them. And I think that, you know, if each council member is regularly pushing this message, combining that with atx water, combining that, you know, with a, you know, a public campaign, I think we can do more. Last year, we made tremendous strides and or actually over several

[11:48:22 AM]

and or actually over several years, we've made tremendous strides in our wildfire preparedness and prevention. We saw last season a huge drop in the number of human starts for wildfire. And there really was nothing you could attribute to it except to the campaigns that we had done, telling people about how to do that. And so I just think that there's really an opportunity, but it's not just on Austin water. As director said, it's on the whole community to make better decisions. But, you know, I just think that there's more that we can be done. And the difference between the two gallons may be symbolic, but I would rather in pushing for more conservation.

>> Thank you. Council member. Council member Ryan holt-rabb I'll allow you to close on the motion to amend and then we'll vote.

>> Thank you very much. I appreciate the commentary. And you know this as as councilmember Allison alter mentioned, this is not just on

[11:49:22 AM]

mentioned, this is not just on the water utility. You help empower us, but this is on us, and this is on the community. Knowing the mindset that we had eight, seven, six years ago when we were in the midst of such a horrific drought. You know, people did change their ways because they could see it every day. You know, driving out, whether it's to lake Travis or just looking at your lawn and seeing nothing but brown, crisp desert, essentially. And we need to shift the way we think as a city. We are not Houston. We are not an area that has rain in abundance. We are more like the desert to our west than the forest to our east. And so it is on us to really help change the mindset. And Austin water is going to help give us those tools to allow people to change the way that they behave. And so I hope you use these targets to come to us and say, look, you

[11:50:25 AM]

come to us and say, look, you asked us to do more. Maybe you need to auize a few more positions or funding to do that. And I can tell you I will be here to support that. So appreciate the work. You're doing and appreciate all the comments made.

>> Thank you. Councilmember. Although the motion the vote will be on the motion to amend or alter motion to amend, and it's version two that you have in front of you. Those in favor, please raise your nd. Those opposed. So the motion passes on a vote of 9 to 2, with the mayor pro tem and the mayor voting no. So the motion to amend is adopted. That will take us to the second proposed motion to amend. This is my proposal. It is direction to Austin water that when they make that they will provide quarterly reports and about progress and the progress that the community is achieving based upon the discussion and in part on the discussion that we just had with regard to the Ryan alter motion

[11:51:25 AM]

regard to the Ryan alter motion to amend, and that when those reports are provided, they are broken down by different uses residential, industrial and commercial customer classes so that we that we will be able see where it is working, see where the issues are, and we will have that information in front of us. And I move to approve this. I move adoption of this direction to Austin water. It's seconded by the mayor pro tem. Is there any discussion on this motion to amend hearing? None the without objection. Watson motion to amend is adopted that will now take us back to the main motion, which is item number four at I have a second motion that you also should have in front of you.

>> Oh.

>> You do. I didn't realize you did. I apologize for that. You'll be recognized on alter

[11:52:26 AM]

You'll be recognized on alter motion number two.

>> Thank you very much.

>> And this in the vein of trying to give Austin water the tools to help us change a community behavior. What this does is has the utility utilize the water, the advanced water meters that we have deployed into our utility and use those data to help not only inform people that they might be watering on the wrong day, but ultimately use that to enforce our watering rules. I know this is something that other utilities and other cities do, but I think it's time that we get a little more aggressive and make sure that people understand how serious it is. When you do see you know, waterinat is not supposed to occur. And the volume that, that, that that accumulates over time. We need

[11:53:28 AM]

accumulates over time. We need to step up our enforcement. And this is a tool to allow us to do that.

>> Council member Ryan alter moves adoption of alter amendment number two. It's seconded by council member Bailey. Is there discussion on the motion to amend mayor pro tem had a question for our director.

>> And that's basically can can you talk to us a little bit about how Austin water does enforce and whether this recommendation here is part of your planning currently.

>> So we do have enforcement staff in our water conservation division. And we do have both courtesy and monetary courtesy notices. And monetary fines for repeated violations of watering restrictions. The my atx water portal. At this time, we are working with the vendor to develop the kind of reporting that we will need in order to

[11:54:29 AM]

that we will need in order to differentiate in the data. What is possibly irrigation violations versus somebody doing laundry. So you know, those those pulling that data apart in a meaningful way so that we are are accurate in our assessment of how that water is being used is something that we are actively working on. You may you all may know this, but for those who don't check the my atx water rollout web

page every day, we are about 98% done with rolling out our smart meters. So we are really at the beginning of exploring all of the ways in which we can use this data. We've done a lot of work on it already, but in terms of rolling out new features, we need to do that when everyone has their meter so that we're not selectively imposing these new features on on one part of our community or another.

>> Thank you very much. Thank you. Mayor.

>> Any further? Yes. Councilmember Ellis. I'm sorry, councilmember Ellis. >> Sorry, director Allison

[11:55:29 AM]

>> Sorry, director Allison Aldridge.

>> So does the software currently have the capability to trigger things like people who are watering outside of their schedules, or is it just there's data and you have to figure out that.

>> That's right. So right now we don't have reporting coming out of that system right now that says these people are irrigating on the wrong day or time so that that data and reporting, we have the data about the water use, but the ability to evaluate that data to determine that it's irrigation is something we're still working on.

>> Okay. And do you have any idea how big the scale of this issue is residential versus commercial? I know there's probably some folks that are, you know, pinching and trying to make sure they're not watering outside the schedule, and then you see a broken sprinkler at a commercial site and I am going to invite division manager Kevin kluge to come answer your questions about about that.

>> Okay. >> Morning, council members. My

[11:56:31 AM]

>> Morning, council members. My name is Kevin kluge, R conservation division manager, regarding trying to get an idea of how many people are watering on schedule and off schedule, was that the question?

>> More residential versus commercial, like the issue of people watering outside of schedules versus, for instance, a brokerinkler head at a commercial development? You know, we could tell every homeowner in the city, you know, hey, you did it on Tuesday and not Wednesday. But if a commercial subscriber is not participating effectively and not following the rules, do you have the data to kind of walk me through that?

>> Well, we do.

>> We're moving towards that. Trying to be able to identify it, particularly for residential and commercial, for residential, we've had a little more chance to look at that since there's just more

residential meters that have gone through. We found that in snapshot analyzes, those that are watering, about half of them are watering on schedule, half of them are watering off

[11:57:32 AM]

half of them are watering off schedule. We're not quite sure if that would be the same for commercial, but that's something that we'd be moving towards.

>> Okay, okay. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

>> Counc for the third time.

>> Thank you. Council member, councilmember Allison alter.

>> Thank you, director Wilson. I wanted to congratulate you on getting that far with atx water. I think that's really important. I think there are things that may be less technical that even could be done. So, like, I didn't till I got atx water, I wasn't getting texts from Austin water. And so like I wouldn't overdo it. But you know, you can tell me in the early December, you don't need to keep watering your lawn. Remember to turn off your sprinkler or, you know, here's a reminder at the beginning of March or April, whenever you start watering again, you know, remember, you're supposed to water on on on this day and use your meter. Use your system to do that. I think there's people are paying

[11:58:34 AM]

think there's people are paying attention now that we have it, because some of us just got it. And I think there are things that are not. I mean, I know there's a back end and all that has to happen, but I would love to see, you know, some of those things explored and experimented with in a way to see, to see if, if they do matter.

>> Absolutely. And we are I mean, the atx water portal is a game changer for us in, in many ways. And so it's a big push to get people onto the portal. You ow, we've had we had an emergency in our system where we had a major pipe failure, and we needed people in that area to conserve. And we were able to target the people just in that area, just the affected people, and ask them to turn off their sprinkler systems. And they did. So absolutely. We are all about using this portal to communicate more in a more targeted way with our customers so they understand the part that they have to play.

[11:59:35 AM]

the part that they have to play. And I'm, as you can tell, very excited about it.

>> So if I understood correctly, there's people who are on the meter but are not signed up for the portal. That's right. What percentage of folks is that?

>> I will ask Randy Jenkins, assistant director of customer experience, to answer that question. And maybe add a little more color commentary about how great the portal is.

>> Good morning. As director Wilson mentioned, I'm Randy Jenkins, assistant director of customer experience for Austin water. And to provide a little more Intel about our portal, we have over 50,000 customers registeredoror the portal, but one of the nice features about the portal is that despite some not registering yet and filling out their profile, we still are able to push messages to them in emergencies and others about their bill. So they do still get leak messages, leak notifications as well as high bill alerts. Even independent and away from the fact if

[12:00:36 PM]

and away from the fact if they've registered or not.

>> Thank you. So I think there's an opportunity again, we all haewsletters. We all send stuff out. If you guys can package something of what is the information that is most important, we can multiply that message and amplify it out through our channels. People do pay attention. We're all speaking in different places as long as we understand what what it is that people are getting from that access and how it makes a difference for achieving our goals, I think we can all and would willingly be messengers in doing that. So I would encourage you to do that. Wonderful.

>> We'd love to partner with you all.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Councilmember.

>> Councilmember harper-madison thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'll be brief. I just wanted to say anecdotally, I've had to remind some of our park facilities and district one to lead by example and follow our own rules and turn off their sprinklers during the times when we should. So I

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the times when we should. So I just want to make certain that we're taking the opportunity to start at home with encouraging good behavior there and then as a secondary measure, also, anecdotally, I've approached a couple neighbors whose sprinkler systems were running outside of peak usage periods throughout the course of the year, and they had absolutely no idea how to access and or adjust their systems. And so I'm just curious, what's our relationship with commercial vendors and encouraging them to encourage their customers with irrigation systems under their purview?

>> Again, Kevin Kelly, Austin water divi manager working with the commercial irrigators is something that we're really going to be leaning into. We do now require all facilities that have more than an acre of land to submit an irrigation assessment every two years, so we have a close relationship

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we have a close relationship with those commercial irrigators, and we engage with them every two years, actually every year. And we engage with the irrigators and it's really going to be we're going to take that up to another level with this mighty water. As it's finished up being built out, and we're able to more closely engage with the commercial facilities, which is really important. And their irrigators, both of them will have to be we'll have to work with closely.

>> Thank you, I appreciate it. And pun absolutely intended since every drop counts. I was more specifically referring to residential commerci vendors. So for example, in my neighborhood, I've had to ask a half dozen people to make adjustments to their irrigation schedule. You know, when they're using water outside of when we should be using water for using potable water on on grasses? Ridonculous to me anyway. But that said, when I asked them that question, they don't know how to do it. They have to

[12:03:39 PM]

how to do it. They have to specifically make a call a service call to the people who handle their irrigation, in which case, you know, the commercial services who provide residential service. I wonder if the city of Austin and Austin water has taken the opportunity to communicate directly with them as well, to communicate with their customers. When we should and shouldn't have irrigation running and or when they should take the initiative to specifically encourage their residential customers. That from this time to this time, let's go ahead and just make this adjustment by way of protocol.

>> That's what I meant more specifically, okay, in terms of the irrigating companies. Correct. How often they reach out to their customers. Correct.

>> We do try to I just think at every level, communication is critical and important in alignment with the council member alter's point.

>> That's very true.

>> Thank you members.

>> With that, you want to close real fast.

>> So I think you know, obviously a lot of discussion on this. I really think of this

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this. I really think of this akin to like our speed limits. Right. If there were no speed limit signs on the road, everyone goes as fast as they can. And then we put speed limit signs up and some people start slowing down because they pay attention and they say, oh, I know I'm not supposed to go very fast. And then sometimes we put up the flashing signs that say, hey, you're going too fast, and then some more people will slow down. And that's kind of where we are with pushing out some of this information. Hey, you might not be watering properly, but unfortunately for too many people, the way that they stop speeding is either they get a ticket or they see a police officer and adjust their behavior because they know there's enforcement. And so this is a little bit of a policy shift. And that's why I want I'm I'm trying to do this here is we want and Austin water is trying to figure out how to make the data work so that they could do this. But then allowing them to use that data for enforcement instead of just for as collection or informing

[12:05:40 PM]

collection or informing decisions or making notices. And so I think it is it is crucial if we're going to meet the goals that we're setting as a city and as a community that we do step up a little bit on the enforcement side. So with that, I move adoption motion has been made and seconded to adopt.

>> Council member Ryan alter motion to amend number two. It is our third motion to amend on item number four. But it's item it's our alter motion to amend number two. It's been seconded. Is there any further discussion on the motion to amend without objection, motion to amend. Numb two of council member alter is adopted. That will now take us back to the main motion, which is item number four as amended by the three amendments. Is there any further discussion on item number four as amended? Hearing none withoutection. Item number four, as amended, is adopted members on item number 55. Council member Velasquez had

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55. Council member Velasquez had gave had given a beautiful speech and talked a lot about this, and then immediately left the dais for whatever reason. And so he was not here when we actually voted on item number 55, he would like to be shown as voting in favor. Following that, that speech and it would not change the outcome of the vote. In fact, it would make the vote unanimous. Is there any objection? Hearing none. Council member Velasquez will be shown voting in favor of item number 55.

>> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I just I thought that council member Gary was going to run longer asking about it, so fair enough.

>> I thought I had some time fair enough.

>> That will take us. That will take us now to our 12:00 time. Certain. What my proposal would be is that we take we go to our 12:00 time certain which is public communication. We hear from the public and then we will immediately go to the non consent items. We will first we will go to we willecess for live music. And then following

[12:07:42 PM]

live music. And then following the live music. And I want to ask that we recess until probably 110 and immediately go to our non consent items with that I will turn to the city clerk for our 12:00 time. Certain public communication.

>> Okay, for general public communication, we have Alan, Keith, Barbara Altman, robin Schwartz, Shelly Schwartz. Please state your name for the record. Before you begin, sir, I'm Alan Keith and thank you, mayor and council members.

>> Good morning. I'm here speaking today as a us army veteran and as a proud member of the Austin jewish community, I served nine years on active duty and finished my service at fort Cavazos. When leaving the army, we look for a city to raise our family. Austin was the perfect fit for us, welcoming to everyone with a growing jewish community. It was under mayor Watson's first term that the jcc opened. The campus has been a place where we celebrated many

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place where we celebrated many life cycle events. We have lived in Austin for more than 30 years, always felt safe and welcomed in my years in the military. Never once, despite often being the only Jew in the room that I ever experienced any incidents of anti-semitism, never did we have to hide our judaism. It has been most disturbing to experience firsthand the hate and anti-semitism we have endured the past year in Austin, especially, sadly, in this very chamber sitting in this hall, I've been subjected to violent, hateful speech. Exiting the building I have been called by the local mob, an effing Jew and an effing zionist. Our jewish community has been spat upon, made to leave by site execs, and many have felt the need for escorts to get to their cars. We no longer feel safe and welcomed in their shouts from the river to the sea, we hear a call for the destruction of the state of Israel. The words globalized intifada often heard from bullhorns on his very property, is a call for violence against

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is a call for violence against Jews. Why are these mobs allowed to display, poster and chant these hateful slogans? Why are we the only group of people who are not allowed to define what is hateful speech to us? Slurs, racist and bigoted remarks would not be tolerated toward any other minority group

in this city. Yet we are asked to endure these calls for our destruction. At every council meeting, we saw the results of calls to globalize the intifada, play out as a modern day pogrom in Amsterdam, a modern day Jew hunt and we are asked to tolerate the same outrageous calls for violence right here. The mideast situation is complex, well beyond the jurisdiction of a local city council, an Austin city council ceasefire resolution will not end theazaza war, but it would embolden and reward those who have bullied and harassed us. The message will be sent that intimidation and threats are ways to behave in order to further your agenda. Instead, why are we not talking about ways to improve the lives of every austinite, making this a better city for everyone? We

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a better city for everyone? We have been shocked as you have had to endure the same vitriol as we have in this space. Please know we are grateful to your dedication to the city. As new members joined the council, I implore you to continue to stand up to these agitators and resist the city's cease fire resolution. As mayor Watson has said he wants Austin to be a nice place for his grandchildren. I couldn't agree more and thank you for your time.

>> Please come forward.

>> Good afternoon, mayor Watson, council member Alison alter and other distinguished members of the city council. My name is Barbara Weinberg Altman, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am a very proud member of the Austin jewish community and applaud your courageous decision to not bring forward an israel-gaza war ceasefire resolution forward. I've been attending city council meetings

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attending city council meetings on and off since the unproductive demonstrations about the israel-gaza conflict started over a year ago. I've been horrified by the language and antisemitic rhetoric. I have heard in this chamber. These demonstrations are disrespectful to you, the leaders of our city, and they only have a negative impact on your work and that of loyal citizens like me. I am pleased to see today that the council is relatively quiet, and I hope that continues. I have lived in Austin for eight years this time around as a proud longhorn. I attended school here many years ago. Both the university of Texas school of liberal arts and the Lyndon B Johnson school of public affairs. My first career was in city management with the city of Dallas. I served as assistant director of the public works department and director of risk management. Based on that education and experience, I am intimately aware of the

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intimately aware of the challenges of running a great city. Those challenges are where the council's energies neo remain focused as an active volunteer in the Austin jewish community, I'm on the boards of our day school and jewish family services, a dedicated social services agency whose client population is fully jewish and non-jewish. I also serve on the planning committee for shalom Austin, our jewish community is an integral part of Austin and stands ready to work with the council on many of its initiatives. The divisiveness and anti-semitism displayed in this chamber and on our streets over the past year has no place in our wonderful city. I strongly encourage you to stay the course. Please remain committed to the business of the city. Not a conflict thousands of miles away. >> Thank you, mayor Watson and

[12:13:53 PM]

>> Thank you, mayor Watson and members of the city council. My name is robin Schwartz and I'm here today to express my concern regarding the cease fire resolution. Respectfully, I believe this is a matter that should not be under the jurisdiction of our city council. And I encourage you to keep it off the agenda while the situation in Israel is of serious global importance, I believe it is not the role of our local government to take a stance on international conflicts that are far beyond our purview and direct influence. Austin has a proud history of inclusivity and respect, but by involving ourselves in international political statements, we risk fostering division within our community. And in this situation, potentially inviting hostile actions against our jewish and Israeli residents. This is deeply concerning as no city resident should feel unsafe or singled out as a result of the council's position on global issues. I have been in this community for 30 years. I am jewish and I am a proud zionist. I have sat in these chambers for the last many months, listening intently and respectfully as

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intently and respectfully as speakers presented their positions. Yet I have been called a baby killer, a genocidal maniac, a zionist terrorist. I slightly bumped into someone who then proceeded to tell me she'd have to shower for two hours because a zionist touched her, and a dear friend of mine was told that they wished her family would burn to death. I have listened to the propaganda which inevitably ends in curses being hurled towards you and the jewish community in these chambers I have felt unsafe walking out of this chamber, and am grateful we are now able to exit separately. I should not feel this way in my own city. For months they've been calling for the annihilation of Israel and a genocide of Jews as they scream from the river to the sea, palestine will be free. I've seen signs calling on council members to ignore their rich donors and watch out for white jewish supremacy. This is anti-semitism, folks. Jew hatred, pure and simple. And we're all frankly, tired of it. There are 40,000 Jews that live in Austin, and we have a vibrant Israeli community of a thousand.

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Israeli community of a thousand. And I can assure a thousand families, and I can assure you each family was affected by the October 7th massacre. Many of your jewish constituents, constituents have supported and defended all communities against hate, including in 2016. As we gathered outside a mosque in solidarity with Muslim Americans after a rash of islamophobia, hate crimes. We promote tolerance, humanity and strength of community. But those here with their slogans of hate are trying to destroy the fabric of this peaceful coexistence. Here in Austin. They are part of a well-orchestrated national anti-Israel campaign. Their objective is denying the legitimacy of Israel. It is a one sided resolution. This movement is dividing our city, and passing this resolution will only galvanize their hateful rhetoric. We are community builders. They are community destroyers. They are creating fear amongst our jewish constituents. We want peace. Our sincere hope is that we are able to walk the streets as proud jewish austinites and not be afraid. I urge you not to pass this resolution allowing us to

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this resolution allowing us to focus on the work to keep Austin incredible.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> Okay, the next group of speakers is near Kalish Assaf Lerner, Eileen Mcgarrigle, Irene H. Her name has been called please make your way to the podium and state your name before you speak.

>> Hello. My name is Seth Lerner. Mayor Watson and city council members. I'm a father of four kids who attend the great Texan public school system. I'm married to my beautiful wife, rinat, a small business owner. I'm an Israeli, a Jew, a zionist, and a proud austinite. I'm here to thank you for making the right decision the past year since this meeting started setting these chambers and listen to the anti-semites behind me throw brutal accusations that everyone who chose to apply critical thinking and not automatically conform with what they believe is reality. Thank you for standing strong on the right side. I want to use this precious minutes to

[12:17:55 PM]

to use this precious minutes to draw everyone's attention to what's happening in Europe, and how we can use it as a wake up call and take action. Let's look at Amsterdam, the capital city of the Netherlands, in which in many aspects it's similar to Austin. Both cities have emerged as vibrant hubs for technology, innovation and creative industries. The tolerance the city of Amsterdam show towards pro-palestinian groups in the past year directly contributed to an organized attack on Israeli sports fans. Following a soccer match on November 7th. Just two weeks ago, after the game when hundreds of fans were on their way back to their hotels, they were brutally attacked by an organized mob as evident in the many videos posted. These hate fueled criminals were looking to hurt Jews. Not zionists, not Israelis, not

colonizers, just Jews. At this point, the masks are off. They fit those sports fan apps, store their belongings and threw them into the amstel

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and threw them into the amstel river, including kids and elderly, leading to dozens of injuries and arrests. This violent attack was officially condemned as anti-semitic hate crime by local authorities. The incident sparked international outrage and highlighted concerns about rising anti-semitism driven violence in Europe. Similar scenes have been seen in Paris, Madrid and Berlin. Now, I'm not against the freedom of speech. Every person has the right to express their opinion. But now the line is very clear. No one should take advantage of this god given rights and call for violence and hurting others. We hear the calls for intifada a resistance by force. We hear the calls to eliminate zionists, which basically means killing Jews. Whenever we show tolerance towards these groups, all we get in return is violence. We don't want more attacks in our city. In Austin. Let's not be the next Amsterdam. So again, thank you. Mayor Watson and I want to thank you again for your firm stance. There is no room for violence in Austin. Thank you all.

>> Thank you. >> If your name has been called,

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>> If your name has been called, please make your way towards the podium. Bob Allen as well. I'll call all the names again. Shelly Schwartz near caliche, Eileen Mcgarrigle, Irene and Bob Allen, Irene heights, district seven.

>> That petition. Can I have my slides? At partition, newly arrived Jews were one third of the population of palestine.

>> Only 5.8% of the land.

>> Unga resolution 181 of November 1947. Granted Jews control of 55% of palestine. Not satisfied with this generous gift, zionists began a pre-planned campaign of ethnic cleansing and violation of Unga. 181 over 1470 were killed, 250,000 displaced before the British left in may 1948, and Arab countries joined the fight. Palestinians and zionists knew

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Palestinians and zionists knew this. British soldiers, international news reporters and red cross workers knew this. Since it was declassified in 1998, anyone who wants knows this. By the end of the war, Israel

had expanded its boundaries. Transjordan captured the west bank and Egypt. The gaza strip in its 1967 war of aggression, Israel and gaza, the west bank and Golan heights. Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians and Syrians have all negotiated for peace in exchange for return to pre 1967 borders multiple times, the Israeli prime minister has backed out of negotiations due to public pressure. Oslo offered the Palestinian authority limited autonomy and a small fraction of west bank, in keeping with Oslo. The pa cracked down hard on Palestinian resistance. Israel continued to build settlements. Netanyahu, who diberately sabotaged Oslo, has been elected seven times. The unarmed great March of return protests of 2018 was met with sniper fire,

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was met with sniper fire, killing children, the elderly, people on crutches and in wheelchairs, journalists and medics. 183 were shot and killed, 8000 wounded, 83% of Israelis approved. Israel doesn't want peace. It wants expanded borders to get us support. It must control what we hear. Any journalist, academic or politician who questions Israel is targeted. Last November, 185 Israeli and Thai hostages were released in good health. At least 36 hostages are now dead, only eight rescued by military means. Families of hostages concern for families concerned for the hostages.alall for a cease fire. The zionists mocking dead children in this chamber are not keeping Jews safe, bringing hostages home or saving valuable study time. Like any hasbara propagandist, they seek to control the narrative to keep the murder spree going at us. Taxpayers bid. Today, the icc issued an arrest warrant for Benjamin Netanyahu for the crime,

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Benjamin Netanyahu for the crime, war crimes of torture, starvation and slaughter of civilians if he sets foot in south ACA, Europe or Australia, he will be arrested. Dearborn and other American cities have said they will arrest Netanyahu on site if he comes to their cities. Will you state your commitment to international law as well? Counseled.

>> All right. We will move to remote. We have Jeannie Ramirez.

>> Hi, I'm Jeannie Ramirez. I'm in a band. I've been a musician for many years. My band is gonna speak very fast. Sorry. Left hand thread. Jeannie Ramirez band. I'm in two other bands, but that's the one I'm talking about right now. I applied for a music grant this year, and I was horrified to find out what the criteria was. The poor. I'm just going to go on with the criteria. The poorer you were is how you got up to $30,000. Grant had nothing to do with music. I

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nothing to do with music. I asked the woman who I had to request a review. They did not do this for the music grant. They did it. The elevate and the thrive grant for the public who don't know. That's what the cultural arts department that's also grant actually did videos that they posted online with the judges names, everything but not the music, grant no transparency. But I asked Kimberly Mccarson, who's with the Austin music commission, did you listen to my music? And she said, no, we don't do that. Wow. It's a music grant. Okay, I'm in shock. Anyway, they basically they do not. If you live in impoverished part of town, you got more. You got more points.you had a bank account, you were penalized. Really? Like seriously, look at my bank account. How much money I have in there? If you had health insurance, you were penalized. I'm with haam haam, an organization, an amazing organization that helps

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organization that helps musicians get health insurance. And under the irs, I am considered in povertvel. But yet because I had health insurance, I was penalized. Artists who got grant last year are still eligible for this year. High profile people. You can all go on the Austin gov and look at the names. They publish the name, but they're high profile people. Shame on you. Who makes tons of money, have sponsorship and yet you know they don'tlish the works of art that y'all are paying for. Meaning if you gave them $15,000 for a music video, where's the link to the music video? If, say, you gave them 30,000 for an album, where's the link so we can go buy the album? Check it out online. Et cetera, et cetera. I asked the judges. I asked kymberley who were the judges. She said they were from the long center, and I said, the long center. What's their criteria? Have they ever put their mouth to a microphone? Have they ever been in a recording studio? No transparency. The elevator. Right. Like I said earlier, they post the videos. Erica shamley

[12:26:05 PM]

post the videos. Erica shamley is the head of the economic department. Music division. She has a lot of power and I think that she needs to go back to the drawing board with this criteria here. I want the city to publish the works of art. I want like the music videos. Everything I just said, and I want artists to have be allotted personal or personal funds. We're not able to even buy a stick of gum with this grant yet. The other grants, the cultural arts you're able to pay yourself a salary. Musicians are hurting. They're out of touch. This is what you call out of touch. Not listening.

>> Thank you for your time has expired. Is there anyone in chambers whose names have been called?

>> I'm called.

>> Does anybody. Would you please come forward and testify if your name has been called and there's nobody standing at that microphone, I'd grab it. That'd be you. Yeah. Thank you. Paige Bob Allen, think about the

[12:27:11 PM]

Bob Allen, think about the marshaling yard.

>> Public health policy perspective.

>> I'm sorry. I think your mic isn't on.

>> Punch that microphone. My name is Bob Allen. I'm here to speak about the marshaling yards.

>> First, from a public policy perspective, my involvement in Austin politics goes back 50 years from when I was a high school senior at Crockett high school and a precinct captain for the Jeff Friedman campaign for mayor.

>> And over the next 20 plus years, I was a paid consultant on multiple mayoral campaigns. And over a dozen city council campaigns went to the lbj school of public affairs and was involved in a policy research project with Barbara Jordan, all paid for by the city. Did my master's thesis on employment, training and industrial industrial development here in Austin and the city manager asked me to make a presentation to the council on that was the

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to the council on that was the youngest person ever appointed to the zoning board of adjustment at age 25. And I want to congratulate the council on the decision you made recently. I watched and observed everything. The mayor, I think you are giving the primary credit for coming up with the idea of the marshaling yards, and I think it was one of the best decisions. The council has made in a long time. But I also did come from a different perspective. I was undiagnosed for about 20 years with survivor syndrome from an incident back when I was 15 from a bus accident with my church youth group tt T killed 19 people, and I've had other PTSD incidents, and I found myself hopeless. Earlier this year, and I've been

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Earlier this year, and I've been a resident at the marshaling yards since may this year. And so I have a rather unique perspective of seeing it from the view of a resident, as well as somebody who is well versed in policy from the city. I met with constable Stacy suits, who I've known for 40 years, recently about what's going on with the county and their work with homelessness, and I'd like to let everybody know here that anytime I can be of help by providing that kind of perspective of being a resident there, as well as somebody with background in public policy, I'd love to do whatever I can to give back, since somebody was there for me when that time of need came for me. That's all I

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need came for me. That's all I have.

>> That's wonderful. We appreciate your offer and thank you.

>> Very sorry to hear that situation. Thank you for coming down and talking to us today.

>> All names for noon public communication have been called at this time.

>> Thank you.

>> That concludes our 12:00 time for general public communication members. We will now set up for live music. Without objection, we will be in recess until 110. We'll be in recess until 110. There being no objection, we are now in recess at 12:30 P.M. Until 1:10 P.M.

>> We are. >> Bring an unforgettable vibe

[12:41:54 PM]

>> Bring an unforgettable vibe to any event. Recently nominated as one of Austin's best djs, she has captivated audiences worldwide with her dynamic performances with roots as a classically trained percussionist, dj Kay cali seamlessly transitioned to the turntable, delivering unforgettable soundtracks for major music festivals like acl afrotech, essence festival, south by southwest and ces, as well as numerous fortune 500 corporate events. She's gained popularity not only in Austin, but across the globe, making her a sought after entertainer who guarantees a night the audience will never forget. Recognized internationally, her impact extends bonond music. Her rule of the day is to pour yourself into pour yourself into yourself, and to take care of your mental health. Book an appointment with your therapist. Take a mental health day from work and spend some time

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work and spend some time connecting with nature outside to ground yourself. Ladies and gentlemen, dj Kay cali.

>> And the morning. Any time of day, in the middle of the day. I like why you're here. Alright, let's do it.

>> Rosie. Like this.

[12:44:12 PM]

Like this.

>> I know, I know, in the middle of the day. But I need y'all to rock with me. One time.

>> When I listen, Sturrup, you can't be up and looking down other side of day. Tomorrow will be knell. You hear my voice on the breeze. I'm telling, this can't even be down. No matter how hard reality singing. Just hold on to your dreams. Yeah, although I need you never will. You will always have your dad. And you be the Hedrick snipes. My baby. As long as you be my guiding. Zaffirini. Would

[12:45:17 PM]

be my guiding. Zaffirini. Would you hold that Rainey. Would you hold that? Make that money. Let me see those hands again. Get on out! Hey, everybody jump! Jump jump jump jump jump jump!

>> Everybody jump jump jump jump jump jump jump!

>> Now listen to me. Y'all know how to do this.

>> Show me y'all. Y'all show me up.

>> I just with this show, y'all want to listen. Let me clear my throat. Let's go y'all. Oh, say what I say. Get on my. Dedication to everybody across the nation. Ramberg roalson typekit Shea.

>> Hey, Yo, clap your hands, everybody. If you got what it takes.

>> Take cause I'm Kate Kelly. What's up? I said these are the breaks.

>> Let's go. Clap your hands, everybody.

[12:46:18 PM]

everybody.

>> If you got what it takes. Cause I'm Kurtis blow.

>> And I want you to know that these are. Clap, clap. Clap, clap clap cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck. Clap your hands. Clap hands. All right. It takes two to make it outta sight. It takes two to tango. Right? Yes, it takes two to make it outta sight. I wanna rock right now. I'm rapping I came to get down. I'm not internationally known. But I'm known to rock a microphone.

[12:47:18 PM]

known to rock a microphone. Cause I can spit a mean outrageous. Stay away from me. If you're contagious. Cause I'm a winner. No, not a loser to be an emcee what I choose a ladies love me, girls adore me I mean even the ones who never saw me.

>> Like the way that I rhyme at a show. The reason why I. Man, I don't know.

>> So let's go. Cause it takes two to make things go right. It takes two to make it outta sight. Ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba.

>> Can you clap with me one time? Can you clap with me one time? Hey, hey. Boarded up, boarded higher.

>> Ba da ba ba ba by. Up by. Up by I keep popping with me. Keep clapping with me. Keep clapping with me.

>> Yeah, yeah. Fired up, fired up, fired I fire.

>> Ba da ba ba ba. Fire, fire fire fire. Ba da ba ba ba. Fire

[12:48:22 PM]

fire fire. Ba da ba ba ba. Fire fire fire fire.

>> Ba ba da ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba I-I-I-I I-I-I-I-I-I-I. Go Na Na Na Na.

>> Da da da da da da ba da ba. Go down. Moment by moment. By. Da da da da da da da.

>> Bet bet bet. Bet dj made my day. Working the

[12:49:23 PM]

Bet dj made my day. Working the banks. Feeling the highs. Tweaking the mids. Hold the drums and sanctified bassline. As we celebrate our youth, our energy, our sexuality, our spirituality. You see the dj directed us to a better place. I'm talking about a place where our souls can shine. Talking about a place where we can love. A place where we can be free and not be judged. And when I look behind those turntables, I know everything's gonna be okay. Cause that dj made my day. Grown ups in between turning babies right about now. It's your voice you heard back again. Dj, that's my dj. Go dj, that's my dj.

>> Say go, go dj, that's my dj.

>> Go dj, yeah, weezy, we step up to the mic. Dude, do what you

[12:50:26 PM]

up to the mic. Dude, do what you do.

>> What you have. Yes. It's fun to hear the young man young I need your help one last time. I need your help one last time. Say, say. Hey, say. That's my hey dj. Cause my dj, dj.

>> Cause that's my.

>> Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

>> K.K. Kelly dj Kay cali. Why don't you come over here? If you don't mind, let's do some. Oh, yes. And we're joined by council member Natasha harper-madison. Thank you. You sure did.

>> It was amazing.

>> Why don't you hold that and let me read this proclamation to everybody? Be it known that whereas the city of Austin, Texas is blessed, and we just heard from one of its many creative musicians whose talent extends to virtually every musical genre. And whereas our music scene thrives because

[12:51:27 PM]

music scene thrives because Austin audiences support good music, music that's produced by legends, by our local favorites, and by newcomers alike. And whereas we are pleased to showcase and support our local artists. Now, therefore, I, Kirk Watson, mayor of the live music capital of the world, the city of Austin, Texas, and joined today by council member Natasha harper-madison, do hereby proclaim November 21st, 2024 as dj kayi day in Austin, Texas. Why don't you come up here, tell us a little bit about how we can hear you, how we can follow you in social media, those sorts of things and that was great.

>> By the way, Mr. Mayor and dj Kay cali, I'm going to selfishly request, can we get a photo of the three of us real quick? I'm going to run back over and finish out a press pass. >> Sure, sure, sure. Thanks.

[12:52:27 PM]

>> Sure, sure, sure. Thanks.

>> If you get in the middle of us.

>> Oh, you get all that?

>> I got to I to come over here. Let's come over here.

>> Thank you. I appreciate it.

>> Sure. That's great. Thanks. Great. Thanks.

>> Now I'm telling you.

>> Thank you. Council member.

>> I appreciate you being here. Now tell us how we can follow you and keep up with you.

>> First of all, it wouldn't be ghght if I didn't say bam, bam, bam, bam bam bam. I just want to say thank you to my lord and savior Jesus Christ. I want to say thank you to my family and friends. And I want to say, if you can follow me on Instagram, Facebook, that old thing we used to call Twitter slash ex at dj Kay cali. We have some amazing things coming up. This is just the beginning. Thank you so much to my community to my city for letting me pour into you. I feel the love right back. Thank you guys. >> This is the way.

[12:53:28 PM]

>> This is the way.

>> Thanks everybody for being here. Let's give another round of applause to dj K cali on her special day. The city council of Austin, Texas will come back into session at 1:10 P.M. Thank you all. Thank you hi, folks. It's 1:10 P.M. Good

[1:10:26 PM]

hi, folks. It's 1:10 P.M. Good afternoon everybody. It's November 21st, 2024 and I will call back to order the regular meeting of the Austin city council for November 21st, 2024 at 1:10 P.M. Members. The what we're going to do is now go to non consent items. The first item we will take up will be item number 46. The item number 46. Let me ask if we have anyone signed up to speak on item number 46.

>> No, we do not.

>> Mayor members. There's no one signed up to speak on item number 46. I would like to have the chair of the committee make, since that's item coming from committee. But she's not here. I'll tell you what. Let's do. Yeah. You're vice chair, if you please. It's a great idea. If you would, if you'd make a motion on item number 46, I 76, I move adoption of item 76 members. The vice chair of the committee for which this was recommended has moved that we adopt item number 76, seconded

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adopt item number 76, seconded by council member vela. Is there any discussion? We've already identified that there is no one signed up to speak. So without objection, item number 76 is adopted with

the mayor pro tem, council member Alison alter, and council member harper-madison off the dais. That will take us to item number 77. Is there anyone signed up to speak on item number 77?

>> No, there are no speakers on 77. Members?

>> There are no speakers on item number 77. So the chair will accept a motion on item number 777. That will be to the following. This is a nonconsent condemnation item. So the motion will be that the city counof Austin authorizes the use of the power of eminent domain to acquire the property set forth and described in the agenda for the current meeting for the public use described here therein. Is there a motion? Motion made by council member zo qadri, seconded by council member vela. Is there any

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member vela. Is there any discussion on the item? Hearing none. Without objection. Item number 77 is adopted based upon the motion that I read into T record with council member harper-madison and council member Alison teter and the mayor pro tem temporarily off the dais. That will take us to public hearings. Members, remember that item 80 is postponed to December 12th. Item 81 and item 82 will also be postponed to December 12th. But before we do that, I want to ask for a motion on those two items. Council member vela moves that we postpone items 81 and 82 to December 12th. It is seconded by council member zo qadri. Let me ask if anyone has signed up to speak on items 81 and 82.

>> Yes, we have some folks that signed up. I'm not sure if they're here, but I can call their names. Please do that. Okay, 81 we have Monica Guzman, Bobby lavinsky, Brad Massingill, Noah Elias and felicity Maxwell.

[1:13:29 PM]

Noah Elias and felicity Maxwell.

>> I see miss Guzman and miss Guzman. I'm going to ask if you would to speak just to the merits of the postponement.

>> That's what I figured. So good afternoon. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director of lugo. Austin Atmos Austin. Thank you, council member vela for the motion to postpone these two items. People are already asking me what additional work y'all will be doing, so hopefully we'll hear that from you. And we urge you to include in those stakeholders, people who are experts on environmental hazards, such as toxic pollutants in, you know, residential development in those areas. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Is there anyone else whose name has been called on items 81 and 82 that wish to speak to the merits of the postponement?

>> I can call 82. >> I'm sorry. Please do that.

[1:14:30 PM]

>> I'm sorry. Please do that.

>> We have Monica Guzman, Mary Caleb, Bobby lavinsky, Brad Massingill, Noah Elias and felicity Maxwell.

>> Is anyone here that wishes to speak on either item 81 or 82? I we I figured that and we all did. So thank you for that. The chair doesn't see anyone standing to be recognized on items 81 and 82. The motion was to postpone items 81 and 82 to December 12th. Is there any further in any discussion without objection, items 81 and 82 are postponed to December 12th, 2024. That will take us back to item number 78. I this is a public hearing. Without objection, we will open the public hearing on item number 78. There's no objection. The public hearing is now opened. And that puts us in a situation where we will have a staff presentation with regard to item

[1:15:30 PM]

presentation with regard to item number 78. Thank you.

>> Good afternoon, mayor and council. Burton, with the planning department and very pleased to be here to speak to you about the equity based preservation plan. This will be just a brief refresher. The preservation plan has been developed over the course of three and a half years through a community based process. So this is a major milestone, and I've actually run to get into the chamber. So this is very even adding more excitement to this moment. The plan was developed by a community working group at the request of the historic landmark commission, to replace our existing preservation plan from1. Let's go to the next slide. Here's the vision for the plan. Historic preservation in Austin actively engages communities in protecting and

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communities in protecting and sharing important places and stories. Preservation uses the past to create a shared E of belonging and to shape an equitable, inclusive, sustainable and economically vital future for all. This vision was approved by the community working group that developed the plan. It was drawn from a community heritage survey. I think it's big. It's a big vision for preservation. It's an exciting one. And it's an active vision for preservation in our rapidly changing city. Next slide please. The plan has 107 recommendations organized under 14 goals. I won't go through all of these, but I will just emphasize that they're very broad. They speak to expanding the idea of what's significant in terms of stories and heritage, cultural heritage, better recognizing and preserving archeological resources, connecting preservation to other community priorities like displacement prevention and

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displacement prevention and environmental sustainability. Inviting more people to participate in the work of preservation, whether they are property owners, tenants, craftspeople, commissioners, the community at large, other stakeholders, and supporting them in that preservation work. The last six goals on the right really speak to E nuts and bolts of how we do historic preservation, and the plan has a number of recommendations for making our work more strategic, more effective and more equita next slide please. We did community engagement around the plan funded by council. So thank you. This spring, ovee course of four months it wa a really robust community engagement process. Thousands of people were engaged. This is a very conservative number number here. We did presentations, outreach and events around the city, engaging a representative group of austinites around the draft plan. It was a really

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draft plan. It was a really robust process. I think largely because we partnered with community members in substantial ways. We paid nine community members to act as community ambassadors for the plan, reaching out to their networks. And we awarded many grants to five community organizations to reach out to their networks. As a result, we heard from many people with a roughly equivalent percentage of people of color as the city. We heard from people all over the Austin from. I think we had really good representation from 40, about over 40 of Austin's 60 zip codes. So really making this a city wide plan. Next slide please. This is a nutshell version of the development of the plan. I mentioned it was a three and a half year process. You can see those three and a half years stretching out here. So the preservation plan working group, those 26 community members developed the plan with input from about 275 other community members. The draft plan was presented to the

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plan was presented to the landmark commission in fall of 2022, at which point council funded outreach. We did that outreach and engagement this spring, and then this summer, the preservation plan committee of the landmark commission and the preservation plan working group worked together to revise and finalize the plan. And here we are. So 14 city boards and commissions have recommended that council adopt and implement the plan in a timely way. And today it is here for your your review and possible adoption and amendment of imagine Austin. Next slide please. Next steps. We are looking forward to beginning implementation of the plan right after adoption. We've we're we've laid a lot of groundwork. And we'll begin with high impact recommendations that we have the resources to do. We'll also lay the groundwork for bigger initiatives that require additional resources, and we hope to begin

those in the next fiscal year with funding and staffing that will be identified through the budget process. We'll have a public dashboard to track progress on

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dashboard to track progress on the plan. We'll continue working with other city departments to align our work and continue the community engagement and partnership building that have been at the heart of this of this process. I'll mention that I think you'll hear from a few of the preservation plan working group members today, and I just want to underscore how much work and commitment they have put into creating a city plan for us and for all, all of Austin. When emphasized the commitment of the historic landmark commission and to thank the other city staff who have worked on this plan, especially Greg Farrar and Colin ntreras and the late Steve Sadowski, who was also instrumental in getting this process started and whose legacy continues on. Thank you very much. Thanks, miss Bertran.

>> Does anyone on the dais have questions on the presentation? And if not, we will move to speakers and I'd ask the city clerk to help in that manner.

>> Okay. We'll start remote on item 78. We have Miriam Connor. >> Hi. My name is Miriam Connor,

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>> Hi. My name is Miriam Connor, president elect of preservation Austin and the founder of creative policy. I've called Austin home for 33 years. I've seen the incredible vibrancy that the city has, but I've also seen it fade away. Austin stole the heart of the city. Makes it unique. It is disappearing, and preservation is the key to protecting it. Pulling from the equity based preservation action plan. Preservation isn't just about saving buildings, it's about saving the stories bipoc, lgbtqia+ communities built. The culture of Austin. Yet only 16% of our historic landmarks reflect that their contribution contributions in 1928, city plan displaced black families, pping away $290 million in land value across, and that we feel constantly. Today. Preservation offers a way to honor these stories while

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honor these stories while creating a more equitable future. Preservation also makes an economic makes economic sense. Every dollar spent on preservation tax incentives generates 4 to $5 in private investment and $772 million in annually. Annually, the Texas economy preservation jobs preservation supports local jobs with 60 to $0.70 on the on the dollar going to labor, compared to $0.50 in new construction. Only 40 only 4% of Austin's land is home to the majorof the buildings consted before 1945, yet these areas, these historic areas are twice the density of small business jobs, twice the density of women and minority owned businesses, while also housing 20% of the city's arts and cultural facilities.

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arts and cultural facilities. Cultural capital includes traditions, spaces, stories that have given Austin its soul, from live music to the unique character of our neighborhoods like east Austin, south congress. People come to Austin for its authenticity, not cookie cucutter developments. Losing cultural landmarks risks making Austin a just another fast growing city. Investing in the cultural capital has real impacts. It strengthens our communities. It fosters our community pride and belonging. And it supports creative industries that generate over 12 billion annually in central Texas. And it provides spaces where artists, musicians, storytellers can thrive. It also helps our neighborhoods resist gentrification and displacement by anchoring their identity and purpose. I urge you to vote for the equity based preservation plan as solutions like affordable housing, incentives tied to historic properties, tax

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tied to historic properties, tax abatements for rehabilitation and transfer of.

>> In person for item 78, we have Angela Garza Zenobia Joseph Travis holler, Megan king. If your name has been called, please make your way to th podium. State your name for the record.

>> Hello, I'm Angela Garand thank you. First of all, I want to say thank you to each and every one of you for the over the top work you're doing for people with disabilities. Up until this past year, I didn't know I was going to have a disability. A debilitating disability, and I've only had two months to get back up to speed after a health setback. I also want to thank you all for the work that y'all are doing for 55, to make it more accessible, I'm having to adapt and use systems like chatgpt everything else so that I can understand how to function for

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understand how to function for with my disability. Thank you for not making fun of my disability because unfortunately, we've had some representatives make fun of disabilities in Austin, which was very not good. I also want to thank Kara. When I came ck to get back up to speed in two months. Getting back into my community, etc. And I just had a quick setback with my actual medication that I was on to get back. She has done incredible work. Diana Dean is an incredible person we work with at the east mlk contact team. A lot of people seeking us out now in desperation with all the changes, because they're not sure where to look for these changes. But one thing I do want to say is that I went back to look at the ordinance. The ordinance states that you're going to be paying more attention to the national designations. Thank you. Because I heard back feedback from our people, how that system just wasn't easy for our people east of the highway and having to pay

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of the highway and having to pay money only to find out that they were not going to get approved. But what I do ask on that ordinance, instead of us checking every five years if the preservation Austin is working, is to maybe check it every year because we get too many people gentrified in our area versus every five years. Also that people that we actually have a report that shows you who is applying for the national designation, why are they not getting approved, being much more proactive rather than not being proactive as well, and making sure that people I mean, you have people that were ambassadors were getting declined this opportunity and they had no idea why they were getting declined. But I want to thank everybody who came together on this. This was this is a huge document here, a very huge document and a lot of people worked on this. I was happy to give Diana Dean survey feedback and information, but the biggest roadblock that I saw on it was the actual the

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on it was the actual the national designation, where a lot of our people just don't know how to navigate that system at all. And we're hoping that that gets simplified for them as well. But once again, I want to thank Kara for meeting with me personally to sit down with me at a coffee to get me up to speed, to understand exactly what was going on with this. And it is an incredible document, worked very hard by many people. Have a great one. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Hello, I'm Megan king, policy and outreach planner for preservation Austin. I'm also proud to have served on the preservation plan working group since it began in 2021. I'm here today to express our organization's enthusiastic support for council's adoption of the equity based preservation plan. Since Austin's current preservation plan was adopted over 40 years ago, our city has undergone significant changes. Many beloved businesses and homes have been lost and

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homes have been lost and historic communities displaced. With so few tools at our disposal to preserve this new plan empowers preservation advocates like us to push for policies and solutions that will protect more of the places and spaces we all love. Preservation Austin is proud of what we've accomplished for preservation over the past year. With this dais. The preservation bonus was adopted into code, and work is underway to make house relocation and deconstruction easier in Austin and preservation protections for critical historic corridors was incorporated into the overlay. But we know there is more to be done. We need to be proactive to protect the vulnerable heritage sites we have in

east Austin. We need formalized protections for legacy businesses and murals. We need new and creative incentives that make preservation an economically viable option over demolition. We need to maximize preservation contribution to our sustainability goals. We need to halt the displacement of historic communities of color and give them resources that will allow them to stay in their homes. We need to protect the people, places, and stories that

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people, places, and stories that define Austin's culture and soul. The equity based preservation plan gives us a path forward to achieve all of these goals, but we also need the political will of council to ensure its vision is made into a reality. Today, we will celebrate the adoption of this incredible plan to galvanize us for the work to be done tomorrow. Preservation Austin looks forward to continued collaboration with this diocese to ensure the historic and cultural spaces have a place in Austin's future. Thank you for your time and consideration.

>> Hello council. Hello, council. Hello. My name is Michelle Benavides and I have spent the last three years working on this preservation project since the very first meeting until now, I've attended meetings on zoom and in person.

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meetings on zoom and in person. I've given my opinion. I've helped write text, I've manned tables, and I've spoken in front of the council groups. I believe in this plan. I believe it will allow people from every part of Austin help preserve our unique history. I believe it will boost historical tourism, something that Austin has not put enough effort into. And we have such a great history, our history, and our uniqueness will be proudly displayed for all to see. People will enjoy coming to see the historical parts of our city. They can do walking tours, biking tours, car tours and see all that Austin has to offer. The plan will help achieve this wonderful goal. It will ensure that all parts of Austin's history are preserved. We don't want to lose what makes Austin Austin and this plan equity plan will help all the groups do that. The minority groups that have been overlooked, along with groups who still have more to

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groups who still have more to offer. I love Austin, my family is from here and has roots from the 1920s. I want to see our our history preserved and I want to see Austin take a front stage in country in historical tourism. Thank you. Council.

>> Continuing with item 78, we have Mary Cahill, William bunch, felicityaxwell, Ben heimsath, great, good afternoon council, thank you so much for your service.

>> My name is Mary Cahill. I'm on the board of preservation Austin and I chair their advocacy committee as well. I'm an oral historian with extensive experience in environmental and community history. I'm here today to encourage you to adopt the equity based historic preservation plan, because it makes good sense from a sustainability standpoint. The plan highlights several ways that historic preservation supports sustainability. And as

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supports sustainability. And as all of you know, Austin has a long legacy, which I've studied extensively in environmental protection and trying to maintain and beautify our city. Within the plan, some of the recommendations are to connect property, property owners and tenants with the information and resources they need to make their buildings more energy efficient. Historically, Austin is ground zero for some key energy efficiency initiatives that went national. So we're famous from that standpoint and I think by enacting that particular recommendation, we can keep on that path. We also would encourage you with, through the plan to recognize the costs associated with demolition. As all of you know, all three landfills are located in east Austin. This is a huge equity issue. If we can, through historic preservation, prevent demolition debris from going

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demolition debris from going into the landfill. We've made some positive steps in that direction. Also, thank you to council for the resolution on relocation within the city that also improves our sustainability. We also want to encourage deconstruction. San Antonio has a model deconstruction ordinance. I would encourage you to explore that. I've written about it. It's on the preservation Austin website. Not only does it improve environmental sustainability, but it creates highly paid, high skilled jobs in in in this industry. So for all of these reasons, from a sustainability standpoint, I would encourage you to adopt the equity based historic preservation plan. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you.

>> Mayor. Mayor pro tem council members felicity Maxwell, district five resident and or a board member here to speak in support of the equity based preservation plan and specifically the amendment offered by council member zo qadri. We're excited to see new efforts to better manage

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efforts to better manage historic preservation for our city and appreciate the tremendous work done by staff and their efforts to engage with community on this issue. This plan is award winning and the thoughtful, comprehensive recommendations in the final report highlight exactly why one of those recommendations is a careful consideration of the new transfer of development rights program, which

we feel is a critical element of modernizing and enhancing our historic preservation program going forward. We also fully agree with the amendment brought by council member zo qadri, asking the city manager to reform the current historic tax tax exemption process, decoupling the exemption from zoning cases is actually best practice. This is one of the few cities in Texas that links these two items. We also support focusing on the preservation of historic structures versus complete sites and the creation of a time limit for tax exemptions, which, again, is best practice, practice and used by many of our peer cities. We urge you to support this important amendment. Again, we're delighted to see this final report come forward for consideration today, and firmly believe this creates an excellent baseline for reforming and reconsideration of Austin's historic preservation process.

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historic preservation process. Let's equitably preserve the essential parts of Austin's history in a smart, financially responsible way that makes our city proud. Thank you.

>> Thank you all speakers have been called for item 78. Thank you members, you just heard that all speakers.

>> Sir, I'm sorry if your name has been called. Please make your way to the podium and state your name. For the record, I'm Seth.

>> Yes. All yours. Sorry. Hi, I'm Ben heimsath.

>> I'm an architect in private practice, but I also have the honor of serving as the chair of the historic landmarks commission. And I wanted to just add my thanks to all of the folks who spent so much time as both volunteers and staff in making this possible. I also wanted to recognize the leadership of our current historic landmarks commission, as well as a number of former members. This has been an ongoing effort for a while, and a lot of people have put in a lot of time to make all of what you have possible. I do think it's also important for you to

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it's also important for you to know that our commission has already been making significant progress in addressing equity in the historic preservation program in the city of Austin. We have been adding new properties very deliberately that are located on the east side and also represent underserved and underrepresented communities. Our grants program has been making headway in celebrating and supporting areas in underserved parts of our community. But the tools that we've been given, as you have been aware, all date from the 1980s, and they're outmoded and they don't give us enough opportunities to really have the impact that we already are trying to expand. So I wanted to point out that this is not only an important plan, but this is just the first step, because in the months and possibly years ahead, we'll be coming back to you with specific ordinances and recommendations that will give

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recommendations that will give us those tools to make it possible for us to have continued involvement of all of Austin as we work to improve and expand our historic landmarks program. So again, thank you so much for your support, and we'll be seeing hopefully a lot of you in the in in the implementation program to come.

>> Mayor. We mayor, we just had a remote speaker join our queue. So we'll allow them to speak right now okay.

>> Please.

>> Julia Brookins.

>> Hello. Can you hear me? Yes.

>> Yes, please.

>> I just wanted to. My name is Julia Brookins. I'm a historian, and I had the honor of being a member of the community working group that developed the equity based historic preservation plan from several years ago, and it was ongoing, and it was a great experience, especially during covid, to have that kind of community and to meet with people from all over the city and share our optimism and our hope that the city will

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hope that the city will prioritize and support more historic preservation. As a public service, not just as a benefit to private land owners and this takes a lot of work. I encourage the city council to take advantage of the current staff and the historic preservation office. Austin is fortunate to have national leaders who are at the forefront of this field, and I really hope you take the advantage to build on this with a sense of urgency. Also, don't be overwhelmed by the scale of this. Austin is a big city, but historic preservation in Austin doesn't need to be overwhelming. It's not an infinite scope. It's manageable, and it's possible. It's also popular and we can do it. So I really am looking forward to seeing what comes next. You know, even just since we started our meetings, we've lost a lot of properties. So as I said, there is that sense of

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I said, there is that sense of urgency. But but also optimism. So thank you.

>> Thank you. Now all speakers for item 78 have been called. Great.

>> Thank you very much. Members. All the speakers have been called on item number 78. So without objection, we will close the public hearing on item number 78. There being no objection, the public hearing is closed on item number 78. Members that we have a proposed amendment. So what I'm going to do is call for a motion to adopt item number 78. Get that on the floor. And then I will recognize council member zo qadri. If you want to be if you want to speak on the amendment or if you want to wait to speak on the final version, just I'll call on you if you sign up here and I'll let you know. The mayor pro tem moves adoption of item 78. It is seconded by council member Velasquez. Before we go to discussion, I now recognize councilmember zo qadri for a proposed motion. Members, you have a yellow sheet in front of you on item number 78. It is

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you on item number 78. It is designated motion sheet number one. Council member zo qadri council member zo qadri. You have the floor. Great.

>> Thank you. Mayor. I'm really thankful and I so appreciate the hard work and dedication of the historic preservation office regarding the equity based preservation plan. And I'm really looking forward to helping achieve the many recommendations of this plan. And I also want to thank council member Natasha harper-madison for kicking off the preservation plan. I know she's really interested in taking the first steps in implementing the plan, and I'm looking forward to working with her and preservation Austin to implement the plan. I believe this is a success for Austin. It's a turning point for our city and that's a turning point for our city to make sure we celebrate everyone's history and create great places in the process. A key component to equity and preservation my office has been following, which is actually my first resolution way back when almost two years ago, was addressing the equity of our

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addressing the equity of our historic tax exemption program. This plan and staff's next steps really chart there for the future of tax incentives based on best practices and making sure those who need the help will receive it. My other colleagues might want to lead on other parts of the plan. To clarify this motion is about the historic tax exemption program. The motion today simply asks to accelerate what we can do to address the inequitable program we have on the books today. My motion sheet provides further direction to get specific changes we can to make sure that as a city, as early as as spring of next year, that we're able to address the historic tax exemption as it applies moving forward. The considerations I put forward are specific things Houston, Dallas and San Antonio are doing and are outlined in the UT law clinics property tax exemption report. Knowing fully reforming the program will take much longer. I ask staff to return with mid and long term strategies to reform the program

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strategies to reform the program in the name of equity and best practices across the country when they are ready with the expansion of the tax abatement programs and possible tdr program. So with that, I move adoption of zo qadri motion number one, councilmember zo qadri moves adoption of zo qadri amendment number one to item number 78 is seconded by council member vela.

>> Discussion on the motion to amend. Council member vela I just want to thank council member zo qadri for bringing the amendment when I was back on planning commission.

>> It was troubling to see just an overwhelming number of the historic tax exemption cases coming from really small part of town, largely extremely expensive homes that were quite honestly not in any danger of, you know, being torn down. And I just saw this over the, you

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just saw this over the, you know, three years or so that I was on planning commission, and it's I appreciate council member zo qadri amendment doing something about it, trying to address it.

>> Thank you. Council member any other discussion on the motion to amend? Council member Allison alter yeah, I had a just a clarification from legal.

>> So I really appreciated how this was presented to us with very clear, actionable steps of what has to be implemented. But from part six down there direction to the city manager and so I haven't seen it in this format before. And so I just wanted to clarify whether council member zo qadri motion is another part or is a direction on top of the ordinance.

>> It's indicated it's indicated to be direction as application of the ordinance for application of the ordinance.

>> I understand that it's indicated that as written. My question, though, is this is a different form of the ordinance than we've seen before when

[1:45:08 PM]

than we've seen before when we've had these and we have a part six, seven and eight that says the city manager's directed to do things like identify funding and all of these other things. And so I just wanted to get clarity if this is really another part or if this is direction of drafting another part.

>> So it would have to be redrafted, I imagine.

>> But let's let's hear from the law department council member, the way that this list is drafted is considering the following. So it wouldn't create any sort of penalties or anything like that. It's just telling the manager to consider these these things as he goes through this process. Okay, so it's just because the other ones are saying the same thing, but they're in the ordinance as that which I've never seen before. I think it's great when we adopt a plan to give the implementation, but I wasn't sure if this made this, gave this a different status. No. Okay. Thank you, thank you.

>> Any other discussion on the motion to amend? Council member zo qadri, I recognize you to close if you would like.

[1:46:08 PM]

close if you would like.

>> Yeah. I mean, I'll just close by saying I really appreciate staff's work preservation, Austin's work, appreciate the speakers who have come, many of them who have their fingerprints on all this, on the preservation plan. So with that, I move forward to action.

>> Thank you. Councilmember members. The vote is on the motion to amend by council member qadri. There being no further discussion, do you want to discuss the amendment? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Without objection, the motion to amend is adopted. That will now take us back to the main motion as amended. With that, I will recognize councilmember Fuentes.

>> Thank you.

>> I just want to share my gratitude to everyone who participated in the stakeholder process and the community process. Thank you to the working group, the historic preservation board, the historic landmarks landmark commission, and most importantly, thank you to our to city staff as part of the conversations on this equity based historic preservation plan, I remember one of someone on the team mentioned, you know, we can't freeze Austin in time, but we can preserve and capture

[1:47:09 PM]

but we can preserve and capture the ethos of what makes our city so special. And I think it's a milestone moment for us to be adopting this equity based historic preservation plan with a corresponding implementation plan. So kudos to staff for having that ready and available. I also just want to share my gratitude to council member Natasha harper-madison for her strong leadership on this issue and for bringing it to council for our consideration. Thank you.

>> Thank you, councilmember. Any further discussion on item number 78, as amended? Councilmember Alison alter, thank you.

>> I don't want to repeat everything that councilmember Fuentes just said, but I do want to thank the staff and the community who were involved in this plan. I think from the engagement process all the way through is a good example. In my earlier questions notwithstanding, I love that it has the implementation direction to the city manager, so we don't have to add that when we believe in a plan. So I think that's great. And I hope that will be followed through. And I also want to recognize councilmember harper-madison and office in their in their role in

[1:48:10 PM]

their in their role in shepherding this. Thank you.

>> There being no further discussion on item number 78, as amended. Without objtition, item number 78, as amended by the zo qadri amendment, is adopted. Members. Apparently, there was some confusion on item number 76, and there were in fact speakers here to speak on item number 76. So I would entertain a motion by council member Ryan alter, who made the main motion to approve item number 76 to reconsider item number 76, seconded by council member harper-madison as chair of that committee. Is there any discussion? Without objection? Item number 76 will be reconsidered and I will now ask the clerk to please call the names of the people that have signed up to speak on item number 76.

>> Yes, we have in-person speakers. We have Angela Garza, Zenobia Joseph Carroll, lily Chad Wallace. If your name has been called, make your way to the podium and state your name.>> I'm Angela Garza and I am for

[1:49:11 PM]

the podium and state your name.>> I'm Angela Garza and I am for this. And thank you, Natasha, so much. Cw Natasha is I actually helped my dad with aging in place. I do a lot of work with my father. We try a lot of different systems for them. He doesn't understand the work we do for him. We do this with his ity. So I'm so grateful that you're taking senior citizens in mind for this and really looking at what you can do for them. I know it's been a lot of work for me, and then somehow I got old in the process, and then I had a setback in health. And then just I got old. I don't know what happened. So I had to step back and I got to see it from his eyes, from a disabled person aging in place and really comprehend the need for this. At the time, my son was in Israel in the middle of a war, earning his master's degree. Luckily, he

[1:50:11 PM]

his master's degree. Luckily, he made it back in one piece. And this is where I really wanted to talk in hone in about disability. It is a lot of work, I'm not going to lie, especially when you're trying to convince

a father that things have changed in Austin. It's a ton of work and they don't want to understand that, but you want to keep their dignity in this process and progress and really be mindful. And this is so incredible. And going back to 55, having that access to understand how to use the systems, because from an efficiency point of view and million of a million of us asking questions is not feasible for you all at the end of the day. So we need to know how to find that information to help others. And usually I'm looking for information to help others, whether it's people in my community or my dad who just simply just doesn't understand what's going on. And with that being said, thank you so much for all the work that you are doing to really keep this in mind and going back to the historic preservation, the more that we see, I know news coming,

[1:51:11 PM]

that we see, I know news coming, our young is coming as well. They're young and we see all this new development. We hope to see more of our history in that development. And I know that I'm working with an architect here that's going to come up with solution that incorporates our history into new develop, and bridge that and marry that. Thank you again for all the people who worked so hard on this and keeping them in mind as we progress as well.

>> If your name has been called, please state your name for the record.

>> Carol Lillie, I'm with boomers collaborative foundation. Please approve item 76 so that groups like boomers collaborative can provide shared equity housing for seniors and accessible and walkable urban urban village settings near dependable transportation and daily goods and services. As in the past, most of our seniors are unable to attend this

[1:52:14 PM]

are unable to attend this meeting due to doctor's appointments and ability or inability to stand for hours waiting to speak. In other words, mostly for the very reasons we advocate for the development of limited equity cooperative housing for seniors and locating these projects in Austin area equitable transit oriented developments. As we've shared with you in earlier presentations and email messages, the Harvard joint center for housing studies and their housing America's older adults report of last fall. The us is not ready to provide housing and care for the surging senior population being forced to age in place alone because they and I'm saying we do not have the resources to do otherwise. But there is another way that boomers collaborative. We are part of a growing contingent interested in innovative housing models that bridge the gap between the option of aging alone or paying for services. These are elder cohousing, senior cooperative housing and home sharing models where seniors can age in place

[1:53:15 PM]

seniors can age in place together through mutual support and healthy interdependence. As we've pointed out at earlier, council city commission and council committee meetings, seniors especially, can benefit from shared housing projects within Austin's new tods as lose the ability to drive and must somehow survive on modest, fixed incomes in increasingly unaffordable urban areas, primarily because we need to be near health care facilities. We need affordable housing and vital economic settings where everyday goods and services are within easy walking distance and dependable public transportation is only footsteps away. We understand how important these tods will be as hubs of economic activity, social engagement, public transportation access and housing for our workforce. But they they are equally important for accommodating the needs of today's seniors. On a final note, as technical assistance is vital to assure the success of these models, please continue the city's cooperative coaching

[1:54:16 PM]

the city's cooperative coaching program, currently available through the city's economic development department. Coaching. Under this program has been crucial to the successful growth of our boomers collaborative initiative, and we ask that it remain available to us and other groups seeking to develop cooperative or other shared or community based housing. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Good afternoon, mayor Watson, council members and city staff.

>> My name is Chad Wallace and I serve as the vice president of the boomers collaborative foundation. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in support of agenda item 76, which directs the city manager to prioritize city owned land, especially within equitable, transit oriented developments for the development of income restricted shared equity, senior housing and housing for people with disabilities, including cooperative housing and community land trusts. Bcf is an Austin based nonprofit dedicated

[1:55:17 PM]

Austin based nonprofit dedicated to providing cooperative housing to seniors and collaboration spaces to entrepreneurs of all ages. Our mission is to address the urgent housing needs of seniors, particularly elder orphans, single adults aged 55 and older with little or no supportive family. These individuals often have no one to lean on in times of financial or health crises, and housing security can exacerbate exacerbate this vulnerability. Vulnerability. As the Austin chronicle recently reported, Austin Austin's older adults are facing unprecedented housing insecurity, with rising costs forcing many to choose between basic necessities like rent, food and medicine. This is a reality that no one in our city should have to face. Let me put this into perspective. According to a 2023 report by the Texas demographic center, the number of Texans over 65 will double by 2050, and many of these

[1:56:17 PM]

2050, and many of these individuals will live on fixed incomes. Austin, known for its rising housing costs, is already a difficult place to afford for seniors. The average rent in the city has surged by over 40% in just the last five years for seniors relying on social security or modest pensions, this is simply unsustainable. The resolution before you aligns closely with our vision by prioritizing prioritizing city owned land for income restricted housing within the city can facilitate the development of mixed use facilities where seniors can co live in a housing cooperative and co work in multifunctional collaboration spaces. This approach not only addresses the housing affordability but also promotes economic security, communal support and sustainable urban living. Models like shared equity cooperatives and community land trusts offer long term solutions by keeping housing permanently affordable. These models empower residents with ownership stakes and ensure that the land remains a resource

[1:57:20 PM]

that the land remains a resource for the community, not a tool for speculative profit. When paired with transit oriented developments. They also provide residents access to public transportation, reducing the financial burden of car ownership and increasing their mobility and Independence. Imagine seniors being able to walk or take public transport to a local grocery store. Health care facility, or community center instead of relying on expensive and limited options. Imagine the peace of mind that comes.

>> Sorry, your time is up, but we get the message. Thank you.

>> Continuing.

>> We've already passed this thing once, so I think. I think you're winning.

>> Continuing on item 76, we have Ryan knell, Alice woods, William bunch, felicity Maxwell.

>> Y'all be careful that you don't talk us out of it. It's been bad all day long. I

[1:58:27 PM]

It's been bad all day long. I will get to that and try to fix it.

>> Thank you. Hello. Council members mayor Watson. Mayor pro tem. My name is Ryan knell. I lived in housing cooperatives for 13 years and am a cooperative housing developer. Housing cooperatives are a type of housing which is democratically managed by the residents. They offer affordable home ownership at a lower cost of entry than traditional home ownership. In particular, limited equity co-ops are set up to cost a fraction of what it would cost to buy the same property underneath another model, and it additionally preserves the affordability for future buyers by having restrictions on future resale

prices. So, for example, you might be able to buy a home in a cooperative for $50,000, and it would be restricted to a resale appreciation of 3%. And if you decided to sell ten years later, the future buyer would buy it at 68,000 and not anything above that. And using that function,

[1:59:27 PM]

that. And using that function, you're able to preserve affordability for all future buyers. In addition to financial benefits, there are many social benefits co-ops create an environment where you have to know your neighbors and work with them. There's often social programing and meal programing, so you can have those needs met by your co-op. There are more opportunities to meet people in your co-op social network, to carpool to and to share other home resources that you wouldn't necessarily get to share with other folks who had a more isolated living environment, like seniors and students. Sorry. Because of the social environment, isolated groups like seniors and students often particularly benefit from this social housing arrangement. I know when I was a freshman in college, I lived at the jester dorm and had a pretty lonely year, which was resolved when I moved into a co-op and suddenly had many friends. So developing housing co-ops can be a

[2:00:29 PM]

housing co-ops can be a challenge. They have all the same challenges as just developing any real estate project and then more on top of that, there are coordination problems of getting a big enough group of people to join the project and committing to an unbuilt concept, their financing problems where your banker might notw how to deal with your structure. They might require every single member to come in. They might require members that own at least 25% to come in and sign documents where no single owner owns more than 25%, and then, given the limited equity nature of that style of co-op, there is a cap on how much equity can be raised. So they're highly reliant on debt financing or philanthropic giving. Historically, co-op systems have needed some sort of public support to get started and to continue thriving. The student co-ops were originally part of the UT system before they went out on their own, and New York City continues to support hundreds of co-ops. So I want to

[2:01:30 PM]

hundreds of co-ops. So I want to thank the council, the planning commissioners, councilmember harper-madison and her committee for bringing this item up and supporting it. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Hi, felicity Maxwell d5 resident or a board member. I'll keep this brief here. Speaking in favor of item 76, we're proud to support this effort to expand housing options for Austin seniors. As reports have

noted, 85% of older adults in the Austin Round Rock area cannot afford the cost of assisted living, and in many places, older adults are on fixed incomes, are the fastest growing demographic of homelessness. This effort allows us to expand housing choice for older adults and broadens options, particularly for low or fixed income individuals, and we fully support the recommendation that those developments be prioritized in sites and walkable mixed use areas, thus strengthening mobility, access to local businesses and expanding services for seniors and people with disabilities. We appreciate the work of co-op co-op housing advocates,

[2:02:31 PM]

co-op housing advocates, planning commissioners, the housing and planning committee members and particularly the support of council member zo qadri and council member harper-madison who helped move this resolution forward. Thank you for expanding housing choice and the opportunities for older adults, and encouraging new housing technologies in the Austin community. Thank you.

>> Hi mayor and council, I'm Alice woods and I'm speaking to you today in my role as vice chair of the Austin housing coalition. The Austin ING coalition comprises nonprofits, income restricted housing, developers and housing and policy experts who support the development of safe, affordable housing for austinites. We recognize the importance of diverse and innovative housing solutions, and with this in mind, we strongly urge city council to prioritize the development of affordable cooperatives, including for seniors and individuals with disabilities, on city owned land. Housing cooperatives. While currently implemented only on a small scale and predominantly in west campus, can serve residents of all backgrounds efficiently and

[2:03:31 PM]

backgrounds efficiently and affordably. The need for affordable senior housing in Austin cannot be overstated. 38% of those 65 and older in the Austin Round Rock msa are housing cost burdened, and 85% are unable to afford assisted living. Seniors are the fastest growing segment of the population falling into homelessness, comprising nearly half of the national unhoused population, with numbers expected to triple by 2030. We strongly support this recommendation to prioritize city owned land, especially within tods for senior cooperative housing and support. Broadening these recommendations to include cooperatives for all communities, shared equity housing models, particularly limited equity cooperatives, offer a unique opportunity to address our housing crisis rapidly and cost effectively. Importantly, limited equity cooperative housing can be developed with less reliance on rental or ownership. Housing development assistance funding from the city of Austin as compared to traditional affordable housing models. This allows the city to stretch its limited resources further and create more deeply affordable units, which our coalition

[2:04:32 PM]

units, which our coalition members work hard to develop. Beyond the financial benefits cooperative housing fosters connections and support among residents, leading to positive health outcomes. This will not only improve the quality of life for seniors, but reduce the burden on our city health seices in the long run by facilitating the development of cooperative housing, Austin can become a leader in proactively addressing the impending crisis of senior homelessness and isolation while efficiently using city resources and complementing our other affordable housing efforts. Thank you for your consideration and reconsideration of this critical issue, and thank you to councilmember Natasha harper-madison for bringing this issue forward from the committee. Thanks.

>> Thank you all people's names have been called on item 76 at this time.

>> If your name's been called on item 76 and you haven't talked, stand up and let me know. Okay. Is our second run at this thing. So far nobody's been against it in this room. And I can tell councilmember harper-madison, I

[2:05:33 PM]

councilmember harper-madison, I recognize you as the chair of the committee to make the motion to adopt. Thank you.

>> I appreciate it, because I wasn't in the room, apparently. No you weren't. I blame it on Sharon. May she introduced me to this magical concoction called magic water, pomegranate juice, coconut water, and himalayan sea salt. I had to take leave and so that said, I really appreciate our vice chair council member alter jumping in to make sure that it went forward in my absence. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you. So I'd like to invite our housing department staff up briefly to describe how this resolution could impact us existing policy around co-ops and other creative housing types and particularly as it pertains to, like everybody's mentioned so far today.

>> Yes. Thank you for that. Good afternoon. Jamie, may the housing and community development officer for the housing department this resolution will give us a direction to prioritize co-ops for our. Sorry, I can't think of the word right now. It's been

[2:06:36 PM]

the word right now. It's been early for our dispositions. When we sell land, when we develop land, look for other developers. We recently had one that has closed. We are working through the memorandum of understanding with the awardee now, and that's for the Ryan drive property, which is at an itod or a transit oriented development as that one has already been awarded. It would not be impacted by this. By this resolution. However, we do have several other properties that are in itod areas that are in transit

oriented development areas. And we do expect to prioritize this through that disposition, either part of the scoring process or as a requirement for the rfq.

>> Thank you. I appreciate that very much. And speaking since we've said it so much today, I was actually listening to it recently, and I heard that city of Austin staff got some kudos and national award for work. So congratulations to the folks who worked on that. And it should. Good job guys. Thank you Jamie I

[2:07:37 PM]

Good job guys. Thank you Jamie I appreciate it. That was all I had. I just want to remind my colleagues that, excuse me, the housing and planning committee has begun accepting recommendations from planning commission for consideration by the full council and this item, promoting senior co-ops is the first recommendation of its type I appreciate that that process allows us to take into consideration public input and staff consideration prior to bringing the items forward for the body, for the full body to consider. And so thank you to commissioner Alice woods and boomer cooperative advocates, which, by the way, Catherine and our office thinks your name is awesome for your work on the initiative. And thank you, staff, for walking us through those implications.

>> Councilmember harper-madison moves approval of item number 76. That's seconded by council member Ryan alter. Is there any further discussion on the item? Without objection, item number 76 is adopted. Members I'm going to go ahead before we go to our

[2:08:39 PM]

to go ahead before we go to our 2:00 time certain and take up. Make sure we're clear on all the public hearings on item number 80. Is my understanding now from the clerk's office that there may be somebody that wants to speak to the postponement of that item. This was one that was postponed. And I read it into the record first thing this morning. So let me see if there's someone that wants to speak on the merits of the postponement. Number 80.

>> Yes. We have Monica Guzman, William bunch and felicity Maxwell signed up to that item. If they would like to speak on the merits of that postponement.

>> I'm seeing that miss Maxwell does not. Mr. Bunch, I haven't seen Mr. Bunch. Are you in the room? Okay, that leaves you miss Guzman.

>> Yeah. It seems I'm stuck in the back all the time. Good afternoon, mayor and council. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director of lugo. Austin Atmos Austin. Thank you for the postponement of item 80. It has been a lot to try to absorb. So the additional time allows for

[2:09:40 PM]

the additional time allows for more reading and reaching out if we have questions. So thank you.

>> Thank you. No one else signed up to speak to the merits of that, right? Correct. Okay. Item number 80 has been postponed to December 12th. Members on item number 79. That's a public hearing. Without objection, we will open the public hearing on item number 79. There being no objection, the public hearing is open on item number 79. I will turn to the clerk. Is there anyone signed up to speak on item 79?

>> There are no speakers on item 79.

>> Members. There are no speakers on item number 79. So without objection, we will close the public hearing on item number 79. The public hearing is now closed and I will entertain a motion on item number 79. Council member zo qadri moves approval of item number 79 is seconded by council member Ellis. Is there any discussion on item number 79? Hearing none without objection. Item number 79 is adopted with council member harper-madison temporarily off the dais. Oh, she's. She she she's close enough for government work. And

[2:10:43 PM]

enough for government work. And we will counter vote. With that being said, we will now go to our 2:00 time certain which are our zoning items, and I will recognize miss hart, vice chair.

>> Mayor and council. I'm joy harden with the planning department. Your zoning agenda begins with item number 84.

>> Npa 2022 0005.01. This item is offered as an applicant. Indefinite postponement. The related rezoning is item number 85 c1 for 2022 0107. Again, this item is offered as an applicant. Indefinite postponement item number 86 is npa 2023 0002.01. This item is offered as an applicant. Indefinite postponement. The related rezoning is item number 87 c1 for 2024 010010. Excuse me c1

[2:11:44 PM]

for 2024 010010. Excuse me c1 for 2024 0010. Again, this item is offered as an applicant. Indefinite postponement. Item 88 is c1 for 2024 0017. This item is also related to item 86 and 87. Again is offered as an applicant. Indefinite postponement. Item 89 is c1 for 2023 0131. This item is being offered for consent. Second and third readings. Item 90 is c1 for H 2024 0115. This item is offered for consent on all three ratings. Item 91 is c1 for 2024 0130. This item is being offered for consent on all three readings. Item 92 is npa 2024 0015.02. This item is being offered as a neighborhood. Postpone request to your December 12th council meeting. The related rezoning is item 93 c1 for 2024 0104. Again, this item is

offered as a neighborhood postponement request to your December 12th council meeting. Item 94 c1 for

[2:12:44 PM]

council meeting. Item 94 c1 for 2023 0110. This item is being offered for consent first reading only. Item 95 is c1 for 2024 0129. This item is being offered for consent on all three readings. Item 96 is c1 for 2023 0134. This item is being offered for consent on all three readings. Item 97 is. C8 1482006.02.83. This item is being offered as a staff postponement request to your December 12th council meeting. Item number 98 is npa 2023 0002.02. This item being offered for consent on all three readings. The related rezoning is item 99 c1 for 2023 0153. On this item is being offered for consent on all three readings, and I do want to note that there is a valid petition, so it will require nine votes. And we're asking that out of an abundance of caution, there was a neighborhood meeting last night and you should have received. As

[2:13:45 PM]

and you should have received. As for that to be passed out. So I hope you receive the letter of support, but wththank you. I got confirmation y'all have the letter from the neighborhood of support.

>> However, whether this is related, I want to make sure the record is clear. Items 98 it's labeled at the top and handwriting item 98 and 99 it's in rey 1307 and 1309 east fourth street C 14 20230153, and npa

(202) 300-2002. Signed by Eric pace, chair.

>> Yes, that's the chair again. They did submit a valid petition. They had a meeting last night. They are now supporting the contact team is now supporting this rezoning request. However by state law we would have had to receive signatures removing their name and there wasn't. We did not get that. So we're moving forward as a valid petition, even though the contact team now supports this rezoning request. Okay. Fair enough. All right. Thank you.

[2:14:45 PM]

enough. All right. Thank you. Item 100 c14851 49.70.02. This item is being offered as an applicant postponement request to your December 12th council meeting. Item 101 is npa 2022 0017.01. This item is being offered for consent. Second and third readings. The related rezoning is item 102c14 2022 0035. Again, this item is being offered for consent. Second and third readings. Item 103 is npa 2022 0020.01. This is being offered as a postponement request by council member Velasquez to your December 12th council meeting. The related rezoning is item 104c14 2022 0062. Again, neighborhood postpone request

to your December 12th meeting by council member Velasquez. Item 105 is npa 2023 0081.06. This items withdrawn or replaced with number 116 on your addendum. Item 106c14 2024 0132. Again, this item is withdrawn and replaced with item 117 on your

[2:15:48 PM]

replaced with item 117 on your agenda. Item 170 814023 0057. This is being offered as a staff postponement request to your December 12th council meeting. Item 108 is npa 2024 0026.01. This is being offered as a postponement request by council member Vella to your December 12th council meeting. The related rezoning is item 109 c1 four 2024 0008. Again, postponement request by council member Vella to your December 12th council meeting. I don't want to see one four 2024 0079 this item is being offered for consent. Third reading I don't want 11 c14 2024 0095. This item is being offered as consent. Second and third readings. Item 112 is c14 2024 0007. This item is being offered as a neighborhood postponement request to your December 12th council meeting and then moving on to your addendum items. We have item 116 npa 2023 0018.06. This item is being offered for

[2:16:49 PM]

This item is being offered for consent on all three readings and the related rezoning is item 117 c14 2024 0132. And again this is being offered for consent. All three readings I think that's correct. Yes. On all three readings. This concludes the reading of the neighborhood plan amendment and zoning agenda. And as always, this is at your discretion. Thank you.

>> Thank you members is there any member that wants additional description of the items as miss harden has called them out at this point? Thank you very much, miss hardememembers. What I'm going to do is I'm going to read through the proposed consent agenda. And at the end of that, that will be on what we base our motion for 84, 85, 86, 87 and 88. Indefinite postponement 89 second and third reading 90. All three readings 91. All three readings 92 and 93. Postponed to December 12th 94. First reading only 9596. All three readings 97. Postponement to December

[2:17:52 PM]

only 9596. All three readings 97. Postponement to December 1298. All three readings 99. All three readings. But remember, this is the one that had a valid petition. So it will require we will have to vote it as a valid petition, even though the neighborhood contact team is now in agreement. But we will have to vote that as a valid petition. So we would still be looking for nine votes. Item number 100. Postponement to December 12th, 101 and 102. Second and third readings of 103 and 104. A postponement to December 12th, 105 and 106 have both been withdrawn. They are added in the

addendum, and I'll call those in a moment. 107, 108 and 109. Postponement to December 12th 110 third reading only on the third reading only. So. By definition in law 111 second and third readings 112. Postponement to December 12th,

[2:18:54 PM]

Postponement to December 12th, 116 and 117 are to replace the two withdrawn items, and those would be on all three readings. Is there a motion on the consent agenda as read motions made by council member Vila? Is there a second, seconded by council membyan alter? I will now turn to the clerk's office to see if we have speakers on these items.

>> Yes. Starting with item 84, people can speak on the merit of the postponement. We've got Susana Almanza or I'm sorry, Monica Guzman. Carlos pinon, Pedro Hernandez Jr, Valerie Menard, Angela Garza, Brad Massengale, no. Elias, if your name has been called and you wish to speak, please make your way to the podium. Okay. Moving on.

>> I apologize, I apologize. I was making a note. What item are you on?

>> I just called the folks from 84, item 84. >> Thank you. I apologize.

[2:19:55 PM]

>> Thank you. I apologize.

>> Moving on to item 85, we have Monica Guzman, Carlos pinon, Pedro Hernandez Jr, Valerie Menard, Angela Garza, Brad Massingill, Noah Elias.

>> Before you start the clock, I want to ask. I've got several zoning cases. Is it possible to make a single statement on all of them?

>> If you can do it in three minutes, I think I can do that. Then we'll be happy to hear your testimony.

>> Thank you. Good afternoon, mayor and council. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director at Garza lugo Austin Atmos Austin. Thank you for indefinitely postponing items 84 and 85 for mixed use. Thank you for postponing items 92 and 93 and 103 and 104, allowing time for the east. Mlk neighborhood and south congress contact team to work with the respective applicants. We stand with the community, especially Austin's eastern cscscent, crescent's vulnerable

[2:20:56 PM]

crescent's vulnerable communities and community groups deeply rooted in community, and the Austin neighborhood council in collective opposition to all db 90 cases and in support of the Austin neighborhood council db moratorium, we urge you to postpone all of them. Even if there was no postponement requested. You are destroying Austin's eastern crescent neighborhoods when you could be working with them on equitable growth and neighborhood stability. Finally, I'll actually ask permission. First. I meant to sign up for 112 and actually did 117. Mayor, if you and council will permit me, I got one final remark.

>> If you just start talking, maybe we'll ignore the state.

>> Okay? My work as an organizer is focused on north central southeast and south central Austin. Item 112 is not in those areas, but approval sets the potential for dangerous precedents, especially in Austin's eastern crescent. Thank you. Thank you.

>> Everyone's name has been called for item 85. I can move on. Oh, I see Mr. Massengill. Yeah. So. I like Monica, I want to kind of group these together.

[2:22:08 PM]

to kind of group these together. Just.

>> If you can do it in three minutes. Okay? Otherwise you need to come up individually.

>> Okay.

>> I just wanted the folks at home to, to know that. Which one of these are the db 90 cases and that is a 96, 80, 87 and 94. The 1 in 96 is at 2201. Willow creek, 87 is at at second in San Marcos, and the 94 is over in east 38th and a half street at at 1230. These things aren't aren't ready for prime time. And. Y'all just need to keep postponing these indefinitely. All of them. And I appreciate that. Thanks, mayor.

>> Yes, councilmember Ryan alter, I just want to say a two seconds to say thank you to Mr.

[2:23:09 PM]

seconds to say thank you to Mr. Massengill.

>> He and some people have gone out and cleaned up onion creek weekend after weekend after weekend, and I've seen the results and I just want to say a quick thank you for the work that you all continue to do out there.

>> We also have miss Guzman and Mr. Massengill on item 87. Do they wish to not?

>> My understanding is that they both indicated they were done with all of the items by talking that one time. Is that right? Is that right? Mr. Massengill? All right. We'll keep calling his name.

>> Okay? We'll do next.

>> We'll move on to 92. There's the postponement on items. Item 92, we have Shirley. I'm sorry. Eric shepherd. Wendy Franck. Brad Massengill. No, Elias.

>> I don't see anybody rising. If your name is called and you wish to be heard even on the merits of the postponement, either stand up and or wave your hand so we know that you're you're here. Otherwise we're going to move to the next item. >> We'll move on to item 93. We

[2:24:10 PM]

>> We'll move on to item 93. We have Eric shepherd, Wendy Franck, Emily noble, Brad Massengill, and Noah Noah Elias.

>> If your names been called, please come forward.

>> Okay. Next we have an item 94 Jim walker. Brad Massengill.

>> Mr. Walker is waving his hand. No. Okay.

>> 96 we have Brad Massengill. Noah. No. Elias.

>> No one's coming forward. We have movement. Okay.

>> Good afternoon. Council, I'm speaking on number 96. My name is Noah Elias. I'm an educator with Austin ISD. I also work with housing, with poder number, item number six is a DV 90 case that seeks to upzone a low density apartment complex on east oltorf and willow creek.

[2:25:12 PM]

east oltorf and willow creek. Well, I taught 13 years at Linda elementary, which is just down the road, and most of our families live in these apartments. These are some of the few apartments where you can still get a two bedroom apartment for around $1,000 a month. If you pass this zoning case, of course, these apartments will be demolished. The rent will increase for the families, and even though they have the right to return, they won't be able to afford the new rent in these apartments. So as an educator teacher at Linda elementary, then also at Allison elementary, we see how our schools are losing student population. And this is one of the biggest reasons for that is that there's all these upzoning, all this development that does not prioritize working families, does not prioritize the workers in our city. It just gives developers opportunities to make more and more money. And we're seeing it as teachers in our in

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seeing it as teachers in our in our schools, how we're losing our student population. So I ask you to postpone or vote against item 96. And please don't upzone this area because you will be displacing our working families and the students. Thank you.

>> I just I just wanted to concur with. No, this this is in the heart of where a lot of affordable housing is. And all these projects that are this big and are impactful because a lot of these people that are moving in here don't have kids that are going to be going to school, and it's going to decrease the funding and whatnot for the for the different schools. We've seen it at some other schools in east Austin where the population is unsustainable at the school because of displacement. So please continue this. >> Moving on to item 103. We

[2:27:14 PM]

>> Moving on to item 103. We have Mario Cantu, gene Adams, Brad Massengill, Noah Elias.

>> Good evening. Council members Mario Cantu, chair of the south congress neighborhood contact team. I want to say I appreciate the postponement. We want to get back with the applicant. Has more conversations and solidify a really good restrictive covenant. I just want everybody's attention to be brought about. The affordability within Austin, Texas at all times. We always work on making sure we get affordability within our city for the contact team. We want to get it within the contact team area as well as for the city of Austin. And when we do that, we just want to make sure that it's guaranteed it's going to work and it's going to happen at some point in time. It may take, you know, two years, two days, 20 years, but we want

[2:28:16 PM]

two days, 20 years, but we want it to be there and we want it to be solidified. So that way it does happen. Thank you.

>> Moving on to item 104, Mario Cantu, gene Adams, Brad Massingill, Noah Elias. Gene Adams with south congress combined neighborhood plan contact team.

>> I'd like to say again, thank you very much for the postponement on items 103 and 104. The. We were expecting product from the applicant last week, last Thursday, and unfortunately it was not forthcoming until the past 24 hours. We don't have time to review that. And as Mario referenced, ensure that we keep guaranteed affordable housing in the city of Austin and then the district three. Thank you very much. We look, we did speak with the applicant today and feel like we can work forward and work together. So it's moving.

[2:29:16 PM]

work together. So it's moving. The train is pulling out of the station just very slowly. So thanks again. Appreciate it.

>> Postponement item number 107 William bunch. Oh I was just to speak.

>> I'm here in support of my contact team. I've just recently found out that there's been a shift in in city policy away from contact teams and neighborhood planning to go to district planning. And it makes me really frustrated to feel like a lot of us have lost power somehow in this shift. And then our contact teams aren't being listened to as readily as they should be. I mean, there's a lot of effort that goes into it's not a paid thing, y'all. Y'all know how that is. The commissioners, they have the same, same obligations and no pay for it, as do some of the nonprofits in town. And to do this shift away from neighborhoods to do district planning without any

[2:30:16 PM]

planning without any consultation or notification to the general public, I think is a disservice to the heart of the city and the soul of the city because it's a different animal. So I wish y'all would be clear about that. Thank you.

>> Postponement. Item number 107, William bunch. After that, we'll move on to item

>> Before we do that on item number 111, let me recognize councilmember qadri. Inow he had a question with regard to item 111 Wright.

>> If it's possible for the applicant to come up for 111 to answer some questions, is the applicant on item number 111 in the room?

>> A little hard for me to ask questions. Yeah.

>> Mr. Whalen, you want to just answer some questions? No, no,

[2:31:18 PM]

answer some questions? No, no, no, I'm teasing, I'm teasing.

>> Yeah, I mean, I can okay, very good.

>> Thank you. Good. Please go to item 112.

>> Okay. Item 112. We'll start with Sheila Leone. Moving on to end after her will be Evelyn Fujimoto. Donna Osborne. Beverly Dunn. Matt tower, John Tyner, Kim o'brien. Steve Amos. If your name has been called and you wish to speak, please head to thepodium.

>> Anybody the names been called that wishes to speak, please let us know.

>> All zoning speakers have been called at this time.

>> Thank you very much, members. That includes all of the people that have that were signed up to speak on our zoning items. The consent agenda has been read and

[2:32:18 PM]

consent agenda has been read and has the motion has been made and seconded.

>> Yes, councilmember, I apologize.

>> Quick question with with the applicant for 111 not being here, is it possible to postpone it? I was looking to ask questions and get a commitment on some on some things, but if they're not, if they're not here.

>> Yeah.

>> No, it is possible to do that. And what I was going to suggest on that is that we pull item 111 from the consent agenda and vote on that separately. And that's the same thing. I would suggest on item number 96 when I want to recognize council member Velasquez. But before I do that, miss Hardin, did you just hear what council member qadri is contemplating is that we pool item 111 from the consent agenda. In other words, we amend the motion to on consent so that he has an opportunity to ask the applicant questions. Since thernot a representative

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thernot a representative from the applicant here. Do you know of any reason that we can't do that?

>> There is no reason that you cannot do that. So you can pass a consent second reading. Only you can. Oh, sorry. Consent second reading only. Or you can postpone it to December 12th. Have your preference the council.

>> Yeah I mean I probably postponed to December 12th.

>> So. Okay. Very good. Thank you very much Mr. Harden. So I also before I take a motion to amend the consent agenda as read, let me recognize council member Velasquez on item number 96.

>> Yes, sir.

>> Mr. Mayor, I'd like to amend it so it goes on. First reading only. Also.

>> Right. So members, the motion is made by council member by council member Velasquez that the consent agenda be amended so that item number 96 pass on first reading only and item number 111 be postponed until December 12th. That motion is seconded by council member zo

[2:34:19 PM]

seconded by council member zo qadri. Is there any discussion on the motion to amend the consent agenda hearing? None. Witht objection, the motion to amend is adopted. That will take us back to the main motion, which is passage of the consent agenda as amended, wishing to show themselves recusing themselves from any vote on the consent agenda. On abstentions. I have council member Kelly abstaining on items 89, 94 and 96. Is there anyone else wishing to be shown abstaining on items on the consent agenda?

>> Council member Alison alter I'd like to abstain on 94 and to save you time. No, on 89.

>> All right. The council member, Alison alter, will be shown abstaining on item number 94. Council member qadri.

>> I'm sorry, item 96 was the first reading only. Is that correct?

>> 96 will now be first reading only.

>> Yeah. Never mind anyone else wishing to be shown abstaining

[2:35:21 PM]

wishing to be shown abstaining on a consent agenda item on no.

>> No votes. I have council member Velasquez and council member Alison alter being shown voting no on item 89. Is there anyone else wishing to be shown voting no on a specific item on the consent agenda? All right then. Without objection, the I'm sorry, councilmember Bella, just a brief comment. Sure. Please.

>> I just wanted to thank the folks on the item 116 and 117. This is an amendment to the crestview Dodd, and the developers have agreed to this. Part of the tod actually does not require any commercial ground floor commercial, and they are going to put a dollop of commercial in there for coffee shop or nail salon or,

[2:36:22 PM]

coffee shop or nail salon or, you know, something like that. And I know that will be a great benefit to the neighbors. And I just wanted to say that I appreciate that and look forward to that item passing.

>> Thank you. Any other discussion with regard to the consent agenda? Yes.

>> Councilmember Velasquez yeah, I just wanted to say thank you to the applicant for 98 and 99. Thank you to the applicant and the community. This I think this is one of those one of the few projects where folks came together and really worked on this, and it came down to the wire. We were still getting stuff as late as I was sitting up here on th dais, a couple of hours ago, and I just wanted to say thank you from a very thankful council member.

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

>> I just wanted to give a shout out on items 101 and 102. This is the crestview village situation that we've been working on for a really long time. And thanks to Anna land and capmetro for working with folks and with the developers

[2:37:22 PM]

folks and with the developers representative here for finding a way to ke sure that we have room for the train at this site so that no matter what happens in the future, will be able to operationalize the whole image of having additional public transit in the crestview village area. And for this part. So Anna Lang is here. She works at capmetro, and she was singularly helpful in making sure that this happened for crestview village district seven and all oe city of Austin. Thanks, Anna.

>> Yes. Thank you. Thank you, mayor pro tem, any further discussion on the consent agenda on zoning? That being the case, the consented, without objection, the consent agenda for our zoning items is adopted with council member Velasquez and council member Alison alter being shown voting no on item number 89, and council member Kelly being shown abstaining on

[2:38:24 PM]

Kelly being shown abstaining on items 89, 94 and 96 and council member Alison alter being shown abstaining on item number 94. Thank you all members. That takes us next. To an executive session. And so the city council will now go into a closed session to take up two items pursuant to section 5.51076 and 551089 of the government code. The city council will disc information security issues related to item 83. Cyber security matters, including assessments and deployments of personnel and devices, audits, network security information and information technology resources, and critical infrastructure. And pursuant to section 55107, one of the Texas government code, the city council will discuss legal issues related to item 115 cyber security matters. Is there any objection to going into

[2:39:26 PM]

objection to going into executive session on the items that were announced? Hearing none, the council will now go into executive session at 2:39 P.M. For members of the public. When the council can. When the council completes this executive session, I will come out and announce that we're out of executive session. There is no further business once that's completed to come before the Austin city council. At this regularly scheduled meeting on November 21st. So when I return, it will be to adjourn the meeting to finally adjourn this meeting. So with that, we are now going into those session. I said at 239, but it's now 2:40 P.M. Because I talked too long. The city council at this

[3:30:05 PM]

The city council at this regularly scheduled meeting on November 21st, 2024. Without objection, we are adjourned at 3:30 P.M. Thanks, everybody.