Housing and Planning Committee (HPC) Meeting Transcript – 10/13/2026

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[1:16:06 PM]

It's 116 on a lovely Tuesday afternoon in Austin, Texas. It is, excuse me, the 13th of October. Good afternoon. I'm going to call to order the meeting of the housing and planning committee. My name is Natasha harper-madison, proud council member for district one and chair for the housing and planning committee. I'm going to inevitably forget to acknowledge it later, but I do believe this is my last time chairing this meeting as a council member in the city of Austin, Texas. So I might take a few liberties along the way. We are convened right here at city hall at 301. That's 301 west second street in Austin, Texas. We are in chambers with some members potentially joining us at some point during the course of the meeting virtually. I'm joined by my colleagues, mayor pro tem vela and council member Siegel. The committee may go into closed session at some point under the open meetings act of section 55107, one of the Texas government code. I don't believe that that is the case, but we do that to get legal counsel on items on the agenda.

[1:17:18 PM]

I was told we don't have any speakers or has that changed?

[1:17:23 PM]

>> That's correct. There is no speakers.

[1:17:25 PM]

>> Thank you, I appreciate it. That's the part of the meeting where I tell you that we're open to public speakers, but it doesn't appear that we have any signed up, although I do see a person who doesn't work for the city who's in the room. Doesn't look like it. Okay. So no speakers signed up. Prior to this portion of the meeting. So the first thing that we're going to take up is item number one. And that's to approve meeting minutes. We met on April 14th and now are going to take the opportunity to take or to make a motion, take a motion and a and a second to approve our meeting minutes from our April 14th meeting. Looks like that is moved by council member Siegel and mayor pro tem vela seconds. All in favor, please say I. We. Are you a unanimous vote with the three of us on the dais with member Ellis off the dais. The motion carries.

[1:18:23 PM]

Oh, so this one is important in that we take the opportunity to create the calendar for meetings for the following calendar year. And we had already done that. And then or we hadn't R rather done that yet. And considering we may not meet again before we need to do that, we're going to go ahead and do that today. So item number two is discussion and possible action for the schedule. This item has been sponsored by myself and council members and member Siegel. Do we have any speakers on this item?

[1:19:00 PM]

>> No ma'am.

[1:19:00 PM]

>> And again, we don't have any registered speakers on this item. So at this time, just like the last item, I'll take a motion for the item. We'll take a vote and then move on to a briefing for item number three. I look. Yes. Moved by council member Siegel and seconded by mayor. Yes.

[1:19:18 PM]

>> Can we read the dates out?

[1:19:19 PM]

>> I can read them, chair, if that's okay.

[1:19:22 PM]

>> Oh, do you want us to read the motion or read the dates for the schedule? Sure.

[1:19:27 PM]

>> Thank you. Chair. So the proposed meeting dates for housing and planning for next year are February 9th. March 16th. April 27th. September 7th, October 19th, and November 30th. So moved.

[1:19:43 PM]

>> Thank you, Mr. Siegel, I appreciate it. We good to go?

[1:19:48 PM]

>> Yes, ma'am.

[1:19:49 PM]

>> Excellent. Thank you. We took up the motion and a second. And so all in favor. Looks like we're unanimous again with the three that are on the dais. Member Ellis is off the dais. Do. In which case we're zipping right into item number three, which is our strategic housing blueprint update. This item is for discussion and possible action regarding updates to the city's strategic housing blueprint, which details the city's ten year plan to help align resources and facilitate community partnerships around a single strategic strategic vision to to create 60,000 affordable housing units. This item is sponsored by myself and council member Siegel. Again, members before us today is you guys probably got an email with the version two of this draft resolution that would initiate an update to the Austin strategic housing blueprint and provide direction to the city manager for that process. It looks like staff has a presentation

for us. Come on up, please, and introduce yourselves. Do we have any discussion before our presentation? All right.

[1:21:08 PM]

>> All right. Good afternoon, committee members. My name is Rachel Tepper and I'm a principal planner with Austin housing. I'm joined today with two senior planners, mercy Okoye and chase Bryan. And we're here to provide an update on the strategic housing blueprint. So the strategic housing blueprint was adopted in 2027 or sorry, 2017. And it's a ten year plan that set ambitious goals. How do I advance the slides? Oh. Found it. Okay, so we know that the goals originally were to create 60,000 affordable units and 135,000 total units. We did this. We set a 64 policy objectives across production, preservation and housing stability. So we're here today as we end our ten year horizon.

[1:22:06 PM]

We're approaching 2027. And we know that conditions have shifted, including major transit investments, major investments in anti-displacement. And so we want to talk to you about why we we believe the blueprint needs an update. We also want to share some of the work underway. And then we'll go over some of the next steps that staff have identified. So as I mentioned, we are approaching the end of our ten year planning horizon. We were always intended for this document to be a ten year plan. In 2025, we were awarded a pro housing grant, which was a federal grant program that allowed us cities to apply to get planning dollars, which isn't very common. So we are very appreciative of being able to get that money. And it's a six year planning grant. And so this project of updating the blueprint was already earmarked, which is great because it wouldn't mean that there would be any cost to the general fund.

[1:23:17 PM]

We also know that there have been major transit investments underway with project connect. We've continued to come up with new policies around displacement and anti-displacement efforts, and we know that our housing conditions, as well as our regulatory environments have shifted. So what this update would establish is it would it would look out for the next ten years and look at the housing production and preservation goals that we'd like to set for up to 2037. It would also look at new objectives, new anti-displacement strategies, and new strategies to advance housing stability and partnerships. So I I mentioned, we we were awarded this grant in 2025, but we didn't start the update right away because we wanted to make sure that one, we knew what we've accomplished. And so chase will be sharing a little bit about a progress report that is available on our website. But we also wanted

updated market analysis to understand what our needs are today. And then finally, we are updating our opportunity map.

[1:24:28 PM]

And I'll give you a little bit of an update of what that looks like. This is a mapping tool that helps us ensure housing units all across the city. And we, we also want to make sure. We note that this will also build on council and city manager direction, as well as all the blueprint scorecards that will continue to release for the near, you know, for the future. And then all of these will be a foundation for the updates and the strategies for the revised blueprint. So I'm going to pass it off to chase Brian to talk a little bit about the progress report.

[1:25:04 PM]

>> Thanks. Hello. My name is chase Brian. I'm a senior planner with Austin housing. I'll provide a little bit more information on that strategic strategic housing blueprint progress report as an input for this process. This progress report evaluates the objectives that the 2017 blueprint identified. The primary goals are to establish an understanding of progress made on the strategic objectives that the blueprint identified. Establish an understanding of the realized impact of these objectives. Communicate this information through an interactive dashboard, and to use this information to try to help prioritize certain objectives in the future to inform recommendations for the next blueprint. Overall, we just want to know about the strategies that we've pursued to date so that we know what to do in the future. We released the progress report dashboard in August. This is also the first time we've done an evaluation of this nature, and it involved a lot of input from numerous other departments and program managers. So the work reviews 64 objectives using two primary lenses that are progress level and realized impact, which are categorized as shown in the tables at the bottom of the slide. The review of objectives considered, ntributions to housing affordability and the blueprint goals overall, including income, restricted housing market rate, housing preservation, and production overall. The dashboard also organizes objectives by the five community values that are outlined in the 2017 blueprint.

[1:26:31 PM]

And this is just a little snapshot of one of the objective pages. The left side of these pages shows general information. The top right, you'll have the progress notes, which are the bulk of the content on those pages. And below that, to the bottom right are helpful links and additional resources. And these are the objectives that have the highest estimation of realized impact so far, such as implementing displacement prevention programs, developing a strike fund that is a low interest private loan design for housing creation or preservation, pursuing strategic land banking, leveraging light tech, focusing federal

funds, adopting affordable housing goals to guide policy, and better utilizing land in general. That includes density bonuses, and I'll pass it off to mercy Okoye.

[1:27:23 PM]

>> Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. My name is mercy Okoye. I'm a senior planner with Austin housing, and in August we published our housing market analysis, which is our in-house data driven assessment of Austin's housing market conditions, which is designed to help us understand past trends andlslso.

[1:27:41 PM]

>> To get a little bit closer to your mic, please. Okay.

[1:27:44 PM]

>> Thank you. Thank you. Yeah. So it's designed to help us understand past trends, but also to help us identify where the greatest areas of greatest housing need relies. This is an update from our 2020 analysis, which was published in the form of a static dash, a static document. It's about 100 plus pages. We decided to update it in the form of a dashboa,, not only to encourage usability, but also to make it easier for us to update it along the way. So just to highlight some of the elements of the market that this dashboard illustrates, it looks at the trends in housing supply and demand. So things like permitting trends, housing production trends. It looks at the characteristics of cost burden and low income households by racial categories and other characteristics. It also addresses the geographic distribution of poverty by zip codes with within the county, and also renter and owner housing cost trends. Some market insights to highlight.

[1:28:46 PM]

It looks at the major shortage of units, affordable to renters who arextremely low income and low income households earning between 0 to 50 area median income. Or am I? How salaries have not been keeping pace with the increasing cost of housing and the share. The change in the share of various housing types, including middle housing types? So these are structures with 2 to 9 units. So this is a snapshot of one of the dashboard pages. All of the content pages are formatted similarly to this page. So it has a summary at the top left. It has navigation buttons that makes it easy for users to navigate

throughout the dashboard. And then there's an informational on the bottom right outlined by this lowercase I that you see here that contains the analysis breakdown for all of the visuals. So this particular page addresses income levels and housing costs. So to the left we have an interactive tool that allows users to identify the upper income limits for households by household size. For all of the various army levels, and the affordable maximum gross rent.

[1:30:03 PM]

So the incomes is in blue and the the affordable rents are in red. And then to the right, we have an analysis. The rental supply mismatch analysis, which I. Which compares the amount of households by their earnings am I compared to the occupied units that are affordable to that army group? So as you can kind of see that visual disparity between what people are earning and what people can afford. Pass it back to Rachel.

[1:30:32 PM]

>> All right. Thanks. Mercy. And all of these these two new dashboards are available on our website, which we have here Austin, texas.gov/housing/projects and Austin strategic housing blueprint. So those two tools are already available for everyone to start using. The third tool that we are trying to have before we start the update is we are trying to update our opportunity maps. These maps we used in 2017 to set goals for the strategic housing blueprint and to set them in high opportunity areas. So we use this tool to help us make sure that we get housing in all parts of town. And we previously set a goal of 25% of new income, restricted affordable housing units. In these higher opportunity areas, we know that we have fallen short of that goal as well as we know that the geography of Austin has changed, and where opportunity is across the city looks very different it did in 2016 and 2017. So we decided to update the tool. We are partnering with the university of Texas, and the researchers are working with the community. They've had several focus group meetings as well as they've assembled an advisory group, both with residents who live in affordable housing, as well as subject matter experts, housing providers and service providers.

[1:32:05 PM]

And that group is helping to inform the updated mapping tool. We do have some of the deliverables available on our speak up Austin site. You can see the url right there. There's an engagement report, there's a best practice memo. And then we in the fall, we plan to finalize the methodology for the tool to be released in early 2027. And then as I mentioned, we know that council certainly didn't stop coming up with new and innovative policies to address our housing and affordability challenges. And so we really want to make sure to incorporate those that policy direction into the updated blueprint, as well as

any additional direction that might come from council, the city manager or the community. As far as next steps, this is just an outline of kind of where we are and where we're headed in this six year grant cycle. So we started in 2025. We developed these inputs, what we're calling them kind of pre-work in 2025 and 26. And we are looking forward to kicking off a blueprint revision process with the goal of adopting a new blueprint in mid 2028. And then, of course, we'll continue with monitoring and tracking the way that we have over the last ten years.

[1:33:41 PM]

So that concludes our presentation. But we'd be happy to answer any questions.

[1:33:46 PM]

>> Any questions colleagues. Go ahead please.

[1:33:54 PM]

>> Thank you chair. Just curious about the I was trying to look at some of the, you know, significant progress, medium impact, that kind of the chart of all the different strategies, you know, and looking back at again, just thinking about my time on council from, you know, 2022 to today, the, the massive increase in supply that we saw in that kind of, you know, 23, 24, 25. To a certain extent, you know, time frame where, you know, we were building probably twice, maybe three times the units that we did in, you know. 2019, 2018, and the substantial kind of rent reductions that we saw. And even in, for example, I think about my district, the, you know, Lamar rumburg area, which has seen really zero new supply throughout that entire time period. Regardless, rents fell substantially in that area, despite no new housing in the area, despite really no new amenities. You know, those nothing kind of changed. How do we factor that in? Because again, I completely agree that we need to approach kind of targeted strategies, specific neighborhood. And we want to do things like in land trusts, you know, cooperatives, the different kind of strategies that. But the big picture, what we did do that was so effective to bring down rents was ultimately build a lot of housing. How does that kind of overarching theme fit into the the blueprint?

[1:35:43 PM]

>> Well, I think we would agree with you. And I think our progress report certainly tries to capture there were a lot of objectives focused on making it easier to build housing and that we've certainly seen. And like you said, rents have fallen. We know that there is a threshold of how low you your market rate housing can go. And that's why we're seeing the primary need being athat, you know, below 50%, probably more closer to 40% and 30% where the market is just, you know, does need some sort of subsidy. And I think that's why, you know, we want to be a lot more calibrated. We know that's where we haven't met our goals. And so we need to really refocus and make sure that our, you know, we've kind of done a lot on the market side, but what can we do to get those deeper, affordable units?

[1:36:40 PM]

>> Yeah, I could offer a little bit more as well. I yeah, the market rate production is very much a part of the blueprint and the updated blueprint. And I think it will also keep in mind the data we see on cost burden from 2025. When that comes out. I think that'll be really informative because we do see declining rents from different levels of, of types of housingm class a, class B, class C, but we don't have as current data on cost burden. And so how people are, you know, how much are they still allocating to their housing. And that brings in the, the other economic factors that are at play when we're talking about people's cost of living and income, not just the price of their rent. So we're juggling all of those factors and evaluating what the updated blueprint looks like.

[1:37:35 PM]

>> Well, I appreciate that. And from my perspective, we've done a great job, I think, in market production has done a great job at that 100%, mfi, 80%, mfi, 60% mfi to a large extent, the the gap in thinking about, you know, potential 28 housing bond. That below 50%. I, I honestly, I don't know how interested I am in subsidizing, you know, 60%, 80% mfi. I mean, think about the our old vertical mixed use the value originally at 10% and 80% that that just really does nothing for me nowadays. And I will take, you know, honestly, I'll take a fee in lieu that goes toward, you know, 30% rather than kind of a handful of units where you're shaving, you know, 100, $150 off of someone's rent. I mean, that when I think about the last ten years, I mean, that that's kind of the lesson that that jumps out to me. So but thank you.

[1:38:34 PM]

>> Thank you, chair. Thanks for the presentation, y'all, and all this work. I had a question about slide five and the progress report dashboard. So once this dashboard is complete, are y'all going to come forward with policy recommendations to meet any of the goals or metrics that might be underperforming? And

in particular, are y'all going to be providing direction about how we can ensure affordable housing is distributed equitably across council districts?

[1:39:04 PM]

>> Yes. All of those things. Yeah. And the the opportunity index and map will be very much part of equitable distribution. But I'd say those are I mean, the core point is to inform policy and produce updated policy objectives and guidelines.

[1:39:23 PM]

>> Yeah. So we we do plan to partner with a consultant to help us actually revise the, the blueprint and reviewing this dashboard and knowing where we've been. So we don't retread and we can build off of what we've done is the reason why we built this progress report dashboard. So will absolutely inform the policy recommendations going forward.

[1:39:48 PM]

>> Great. And looking at the dashboard, it seems like a lot of good progress has been made in part because of the project connect money for anti-displacement. And so do you have any information you can share about how much money is left in that fund and how it will be allocated in the years ahead?

[1:40:06 PM]

>> I think we'll have to get back to you on the specifics of that, but I do know that one of the reasons for the blueprint update is to help us set better metrics and have better data tracking around our anti-displacement initiatives, because a lot of that work, especially the project connect work, happened after the blueprint was already adopted. And so we really look forward to incorporating some of these kind of protection based or people based measures and, and supplementing our unit based measures, which we've, I think done a really great job of tracking. So that is definitely something we can get back to you on with the specific numbers.

[1:40:50 PM]

>> Okay. Thank you miss. Yeah. Whether that's an email to the committee or a memo mayor and council that would be most appreciated. And I guess the last question we had was around slide nine. And I guess the housing market analysis. And I was curious if we've done any preliminary analysis of how the annexation of dogshit might impact affordable housing developments and high opportunity areas. If that's been incorporated into your your thinking.

[1:41:21 PM]

>> So I would say that this data does include all of Travis and Williamson. So all the spatial data that was included does look at kind of the zip codes across the entire city. So there's definitely some information there. But we were really looking at the overall, this dashboard in particular is kind of looking at the overall housing needs for the city. We are looking forward to the opportunity mapping effort being more specifically targeted to what different neighborhoods need and what different areas of town, kind of what the strengths are and where there might be opportunities for more access and reducing barriers. But this one is really focused on what is the overall gap, what are the overall conditions for the city.

[1:42:09 PM]

>> That's fair. Thank you. Yeah. I mean, we're stst hearing a lot of concerns about potential displacement because of all that concentrated investment in that one region. So definitely something we want to track. Thank you very much, chair.

[1:42:22 PM]

>> Did you say.

[1:42:23 PM]

>> You had one more? One more. Yeah please.

[1:42:26 PM]

>> This has been mentioned. I'm talking to a Basta and constituents at a handful of one in particular that I'm thinking about with affordable income. I think it's a lie. Tech property a senior 55 and up property where, you know, 60% mfi, that number has gone up substantially in, let's say the last I mean, let's just say five years, right? Whereas social security or pensions for a lot of the seniors that are at these facilities has gone up not as quickly. And sometimes it's a huge gap between the, you know, what, you can charge at a 60% mfi property and what the residents can afford at a 60% mfi property. And we've had some discussions about buying down, like taking a 60% mfi property and saying, okay, you know, here's some money, charge the people 40% mfi instead of thoughts, you know, ideas about that as an approach for like, again, taking already existing affordable housing and trying to kind of buy down the affordability levels.

[1:43:42 PM]

>> Yeah. And I think this goes back to kind of those council, the council direction that we want to incorporate into the blueprint. We know one of our colleagues is working on that buy down resolution and exploring and meeting with stakeholders to try to come back with, you know, a, a workable policy for that. So I, so I, you know, I'm not the staff member that's working on that resolution, but it is going to come back to you all, and they are going to have some recommendations for how to kind of, you know, do that buy down work.

[1:44:17 PM]

>> I see. Director Dean.

[1:44:19 PM]

>> Yeah.

[1:44:20 PM]

>> Coming down.

[1:44:21 PM]

>> Are they doing a fantastic job? Yes they are. Yes. So we are working on that ifc and it is we extended it or asked for an extension. The staff person that's working on it needed some additional time to do the research. So it is due by the end of November. So we look forward to presenting that to council. It will be, I don't believe our next meeting here for the committee is until December, but we suspect that that memo will be issued prior to that. And then if the committee so desires, we are happy to do a presentation on the findings.

[1:45:01 PM]

>> Great. Well, I appreciate it. And I know councilmember alter's resolution resolution, I believe on the on the buy down. Again, I think that's a really intriguing idea. Again, a pro supply, you know, and I'd hate to take away dollars from new housing, but I it's a really intriguing idea to buy down affordability in existing projects. Maybe that's the easiest way that we get to that deeply affordable housing that we all, we all need.

[1:45:31 PM]

>> Appreciate that. Thank you. And I agree, director Dean, they did. You guys did a fantastic job with the presentation. Thank you very much. I do have some questions. In fact, I'll piggyback off of commentary from my colleague member Siegel. And then subsequently something a couple of things that you guys said. I want to point out. I can't remember exactly how you said the words verbatim, but something about how the dashboard is intended to be fluid because of the amount of changes that have occurred just in, you know, the period of time. So between 2017 and 22. And then, you know, and you recognize that that's not going to change. That's the nature of it. So I appreciate that. One of the questions I did have, though, was there was a slide that talked about trends and trending, you know, the market trends slide. I had a couple of questions about. I'm going to go back. So where this piggybacks off of what my colleague said about the area dog's head. And I hate that I'm having to do this at this point and quantify. I am explicitly talking about the area of town, no other implications when I say dog's head. So that area has been in this planning process that my colleagues, my mentors myself have been nonstop looking at the comprehensive development for what I like to call a quadrant of the city and county. That area has been in the conversation nonstop since before any conversations ever became contentious or problematic. So when I talk about that area being a part of the consideration with this high opportunity, there are no other implications. Simply that even as a layperson entering housing discussions in 2019, 2018, even when those, you know, urbanists who were just tolerating me when I had a bazillion questions about why doesn't this happen in a more comprehensive fashion, I got eyeballs. I'm a layperson. I'm not an urban planner. But I can tell you right now, looking at this map, housing is coming to dog's head, decker Walter E long hog-eye Loyola. Extend that to sh 130, 71 down to the 18329. These things, it just makes sense that they're all connected and it never it's still to this day doesn't make sense to me why we don't develop in a more comprehensive fashion. That said, that high opportunity, you know, it's the exact area that I've been saying, if we don't make acquisitions, if we don't get out in front

of this, if we don't make certain some of these projects have it built in from the start. So anybody who's coming into this discussion right now saying they're surprised by the potential for displacement really has not been paying attention to the fact that

[1:48:31 PM]

folks have been saying, where else is it going to go? It's inevitable that that's where all the development goes. There's no surprise introduction of any project that just surprised there's a displacement concern. And so I think when I look at this opportunity map here, it just makes me, oh, I did mention that I'm leaving the council, but I'm still very much going to be a pain in somebody's somewhere about housing, comprehensive housing in northeast Austin and the greater quadrant that to say. When we look at this opportunity map, I, I can't help but wonder where the opportunity is to for the consideration around. So like, that's where the housing is going to go, but that's not where any infrastructure is currently going. Talk to me about wastewater plant that won't be done for six years. I mean, what so that said, it just feels like the conversation about the like this opportunity map specifically and the trends specifically. I think it gives you guys the opportunity, especially with the vehicle that is the dashboard to watch it, but it's not giving anybody an opportunity to preempt anything. And I just sort of wonder where in the conversation that's the appropriate place for folks to be put in there. So for example, I'm not going to leave any future items for consideration.

[1:49:57 PM]

That would be inappropriate as far as I'm concerned, but I will be coming back and talking to my colleagues in the capacity of concerned citizen, like, where's the conversation about how to preempt what we know is coming as soon as there are anynfrastructure investments out in that area? Hopefully that wasn't too much to take in sort of what my.

[1:50:19 PM]

>> I mean, I think it's a it's a good opportunity to plug that. Imagine Austin is happening and we're kind of kind of come at the tail end of that imagine Austin update, which should B our citywide growth strategy, right. I think that the strategic housing blueprint is going to focus, you know, focus more in on what are the policies, what kind of dollars do we need to develop housing? This mapping tool is going to help us prioritize that housing investment, but we are somewhat dependent on what can be built where. Right. And that piece is, you know, is happening through the Austin update that our colleagues and planning are working on. And we are glad to be coming at the tail end of that. So a lot of that community conversation will have been had, and we'll have a better, a better sense of where infrastructure is going and where housing development is projected to, to go. And I think we can we can

respond to that and be a part of that. And our displacement maps, as well as these opportunity maps, can help inform where that is.

[1:51:23 PM]

>> I guess I'm having a difficult time placing where or how rather to articulate. It feels like it feels like there's a delineation between two things that should be happening simultaneously is what it feels like, and I'm not sure what that even looks like. So I'll just move on to my next question. Again, I'll just say that with the speed of change, I appreciate that there's a lot of room for flexibility. You talked about the partnership with the university. Which department is that for the for the tag?

[1:52:03 PM]

>> So the research team is with the community and regional planning. It's actually the same research team that's working on our displacement risk maps. And this early warning system for displacement that they're developing. So we think having the actual same research team is really critical so that these tools can work in sync with each other.

[1:52:27 PM]

>> Well, you know, part of why I asked is because that advisory panel offers a lot of opportunities for varying perspectives. There are, you know, folks who are bringing information to the table that you just never would have even considered. So I do appreciate, I really appreciate that approach. And that leads me into the question about we talked about a consultant. I'm curious to know, like, what kind of consultant leads is the advisor for this kind of approach? Because there are so many considerations.

[1:52:54 PM]

>> Yeah. So I think we would be looking for an affordable housing planning consultant and that it is niche, but it is a is a type of consultant that helps cities across the country with their housing policy work. And, and so that, that as well as, I think looking at consultants that really bring a strong understanding of community and community engagement and, and so it's probably not going to be just one consultant. It'll probably be a team.

[1:53:26 PM]

>> I appreciate that. Thank you. And that you guys thought about that. I think sometimes the, the uniqueness of our fair town and how involved our general citizenry is in these housing discussions is unique to Austin and something that needs to be thought about on the front end. Then I had one final question. And it was about new strategies for anti-displacement. I heard that said twice, and I'm just curious, can you guys give us one example of like a new strategy where experimenting with exploring that we see a peer city working on.

[1:54:11 PM]

>> So one thing I can say is that we did do a lot of research on what peer cities are doing, and there was a plan in Cincinnati that we were really impressed with that set goals for production, preservation and protection. And we think that having that kind of framework, having a protection framework, this is where things like, you know, our, you know, housing development assistance, making sure that the tenants in those developments are treated well and that there's regulations to protect them. But it also includes what, what kinds of policies we need to put in place to make sure people aren't displaced through, you know, being really monitoring naturally occurring affordable housing and efforts like that. So I think by actually having that as a framework in our, you know, in our planning document, that will really help us make sure that that stays top of mind. So I know I didn't give you a great innovative example, but I think that's a, that is an innovative framing that we hope to use in the, in the update.

[1:55:24 PM]

>> Well, you did.

[1:55:25 PM]

>> For me a city. And that's specifically what I was looking for. So for example, a city that we don't have anything in common with. Detroit was a really good city for me to go visit to about the housing conversation. So, for example, Detroit had, you know, so many people in the population move out to the suburbs that they got to the point where they could no longer deploy public safety services to the suburbs. So they were encouraging people to move back city center and some of the practices that they deployed to do that ended up inadvertently creating a lot of affordability opportunities. So a city that I never would have looked at, you know, became a good city to look at as a city. And so since I never would have looked at, with the exception of I have in fact, gone to a deli where there were six units in this building and the deli existed on the ground floor with five residential units. No, I'm sorry, for

residential units and a dance studio included. So just types of use allow for a lot of affordability and versatility and diversity in cincy, but it's not one that I would have looked at for this. So anytime there's a suggestion along those those lines, I'd love to look at what other cities are working on. That was the last of my questions, colleagues.

[1:56:41 PM]

Any other questions? Thank you for the presentation and for answering our questions. We really appreciate it. So with no further discussion on that one, the proposed action is to recommend that the the Austin strategic housing blueprint resolution resolution to the full council. And if I understand correctly, it's appropriate for me to be able to make the motion to approve the strategic housing or I'm sorry for us to recommend that the strategic housing blueprint resolution be taken into consideration before the full council. Can I get a second and seconded by member Siegel. All in favor are unanimous with all three of us on the dais today. In which case the housing and planning committee recommends approval of the resolution to the full city council. And oh, it looks like we only have one other item left. Except I did think of a future item. So what did you say? Do we. Oh we do, thank you. And so it looks like next up is item number four.

[1:57:56 PM]

And this one is our green social housing item. We're looking forward to a briefing from staff on housing that is focused on creating affordable, sustainable, environmentally responsible housing and exploring financing options for housing developed under this policy. We'll hear today. It looks like almost everybody's here. We'll hear today from Erica league housing policy lead with the city manager's office. Paul books, principal planner with Austin planning. Courtney baker who I don't know.

[1:58:36 PM]

>> That.

[1:58:37 PM]

>> No.

[1:58:41 PM]

>> Received.

[1:58:42 PM]

>> I know Steve either. So I'll turn it over to Steph at this time. Thank you.

[1:58:48 PM]

>> Great. Good afternoon, chair, vice chair and committee member. I'm Erica lake and I'm joined today by colleagues Nicole, Jocelyn and Paul books. And so we are going to provide an update on staff's response to the city council resolution regarding green social housing. We'll cover the definition of what it is, what the resolution directed the city manager to investigate case studies from other cities, the programs and tools that both the city and other entities use in Austin. Our research findings, economic analysis, and then finally, considerations and recommendations. So now I'll turn it over to Paul.

[1:59:40 PM]

>> Thanks, Erica. So I'm Paul books, I'm principal planner with Austin planning. And we'll start off by getting a baseline understanding of what it means when we say green social housing. So as stated in the city council resolution, green social housing refers to housing that is publicly produced, community driven and permanently affordable. It should be produced to address a variety of community needs, including increased economic opportunity and social mobility, reduce racial and economic segregation, and importantly, provide increased stability in an individual's housing situation. Green social housing should also prioritize housing design that is sustainable, healthy, energy efficient and protects the surrounding environment. From wrong direction. So, as you know, this update is in response to the February city council resolution, which directed staff to evaluate the potential for green social housing in Austin. The evaluation was set to consider funding strategies, in particular the use of a revolving loan fund, alignment with existing city and partner agency programs, strategies to achieve social and green goals, and importantly, feedback received through a robust stakeholder engagement process.

[2:00:50 PM]

Thank you. As part of our evaluation of social housing for Austin, we conducted peer city review of social housing models across the country. There has been a growing trend for innovative social housing models in recent years, with the map representing localities where new tools are in use. Most of these focus on providing construction financing through revolving loan funds. While some look for opportunities to redevelop underutilized public land. We'll cover the models in Seattle, Atlanta and Montgomery county in more detail. So we took a closer look at these programs based on four key characteristics primary financing tool, public ownership stake, affordability requirements, and the role of the private sector. The social housing program in Seattle was created through a recent ballot initiative. This established the Seattle social housing developer, which is funded through a 5% tax on employer paid compensation over $1 million. Under this initiative, the social housing developer must be the exclusive owner of all housing produced or acquired. Developments are to include a mix of affordability levels up to 120%. Mfi since the social housing developer was created to develop, own and maintain the housing developments, there is limited involvement by the private sector. In Montgomery county, a housing production fund was approved as the main financing tool. We will be discussing in more detail about this fund on the next slide. The housing opportunity commission's commission, an existing public housing authority, provides long term ownership of the housing developments. Use of the housing production fund includes requirements for a minimum of 30% of units as affordable under the housing production fund model. Private fee based developers are used for the construction process, but the housing opportunities commission maintains operational control post construction. Atlanta's urban development corporation is funded through a similar housing production bond as Montgomery county, but is primarily intended to spur social housing development on underutilized public land. This involves public private partnerships to activate theproperty with deal specific elements on ownership, stake and affordability requirements.

[2:03:05 PM]

The Montgomery county housing production fund operates as a $100 million revolving loan fund, providing short term construction financing to housing opportunity commission social housing developments. It was created through two

[2:03:19 PM]

>> A separate bond issuances, the first in 2021 and a second in 2022. Both of $50 million. The fund is estimated to cover $250 million in construction loans, funding 3000 units over a 20 year period. Each 50 million is expected to fund two projects a year and revolve every five years. The construction period financing is similar to the Austin community foundation housing accelerator loan fund. The hfpef fund in Montgomery county requires 20% of units at or below 50%, and 10% at 60% mfi. The hfpef first completed development. The laureate. Pictured here, was completed in . The development has 268 units, with 25% affordable to households earning 50%. Mfi 14.3 million from the hfpef was provided as short term construction financing for the development. The site is at a transit oriented location with a

metro station directly adjacent. The property features a mix of uses with commercial and civic uses on the ground floor. Now, I'll provide a brief overview of what some of our partner agencies are already doing in the Austin area. Austin housing authority, formerly housing authority of the city of Austin, provides affordable housing through two primary channels publicly owned and subsidized housing communities, and the acquisition or co-development of mixed income housing through their subsidiary, Austin affordable housing corporation.

[2:04:46 PM]

These mixed income communities include similar elements to the green social housing resolution, such as ownership by a public entity, inclusion of affordable units and for new development. Green building through participation in the smart housing program. We also studied other programs operated by partners across the region. This includes work by the housing author of Travis county strategic housing finance corporation, Travis county finance corporation, the Texas housing conservancy, and Austin community foundations housing accelerator fund. Together, these programs contribute substantial affordable housing and incorporate some, but not all of the green social housing elements. Now, I'll let Nicole from Austin housing describe some of their current work.

[2:05:29 PM]

>> Good afternoon y'all. I'm Nicole Jocelyn, the housing and community development officer for Austin housing, not Courtney baker. But I'm happy to join in her place. Can I are you going to. Oh, cool. Two clickers. Oh, you're already on the slide. Okay, I'm gonna present a couple slides about what hfc and the Austin housing public facility corporation is doing to advance of these ideas in green social housing. So through hfc, the city is has three primary channels where we are incentivizing or investing in the production of affordable housing. One of those is providing gap financing through rental and ownership developments in rental and ownership developments, by providing funding that goes towards providing income restricted units within that development. Those are 50% M mfi and below for rental and 80% and below for ownership. We also administer developer incentive programs that exchange entitlements for developments, including income restctcted units. And then the tool that I'll probably talk most about that's most relevant for this conversation is, are the tools that we use for public private partnerships. So the Austin housing finance corporation and the Austin housing public facility corporation both have the ability to participate in the ownership of rental housing developments. And we provide a tax exemption to that project.

[2:07:00 PM]

We are also the generally usually the general partner in those developments. So we're able to leverage that tax exempt status to reduce the operating costs of the development and secure deeper affordability for over the long term. All of the tools that I mentioned typically also come alongside participation in our smart housing program. I wanted to just highlight that the smart housing program does have a minimum requirement for green building standards. We require all projects to meet at least a one star rating in Austin energy green building program. And this is just a list of what those minimum requirements are. The partnership programs. Typically, the partnership projects typically exceed the one building, one star building requirement. But just just for your information, most of when we're talking about affordable housing projects that the city has invested in or is an owner of, there are minimum standards for green building. And then. Additionally, developments that receive gap financing or participate in a partnership are also required to adhere to program guidelines that utilize a and utilize a lease addendum that offer certain tenant protections in alignment with green social housing philosophies. I'll just take this opportunity to highlight a couple of the updates that we just made to both the lease addendum and rh, a program guidelines. These include clarification on eviction protections and procedures, expand tenant payment protections, and further specify requirements for unit entry and community rules. We also laid out requirements for eviction prevention plans that will be included on our rhd program guidelines. So again, this is applying to all projects developments that receive gap financing, but also that H, F, C or H, P, F C are involved in the ownership of.

[2:08:59 PM]

And then the partnership tool itself is, is being used to enable public ownership and long term public control of housing developments with a minimum ground or property lease term of 55 or 40 years, depending on which tool is being used. These partnerships produce a mix of income restricted units with strong emphasis on 30% and 50% mfi units. They apply the same green building standards as smart housing and often exceed them. They apply the same lease addendum and tenant protections required by the rhd program, and prioritize transit oriented locations, and consider what real estate strategy is most appropriate to serve in areas specific displacement risk profile. And then here's some information about what that currently publicly owned portfolio of units looks like across the city. So we have over 4300 units overall, 500 of which are in development right now. You can see the, the income breakdown of what that portfolio serves. So the majority of the units are income restricted at 50% mfi or below. We also own a large portfolio of vacant land spread across the city. We are actively developing a number of those parcels, including two solicitations that will be releasing in January, another one following shortly behind that, and that also includes the the land being developed at the grove Riverside campus.

[2:10:39 PM]

These properties serve both rental and ownership needs, and we also have a number of properties that are specifically serving. Household characteristics such as senior properties, family oriented properties, properties serving people exiting from homelessness. So we have a wide variety of housing needs being

served across that portfolio of publicly owned units. And we, with the way that those partnerships are structured, do often require a co-developer, a co-owner, to access additional equity sources and things like that. So we do own some of these properties outright, including properties that are owned by the city of Austin, not even H, F, C, and we also have properties in that portfolio that we co-own with other private developers as well.

[2:11:37 PM]

>> Thanks, Nicole. So based off of that peer city investigation and then some of our conversations with some of our partners and Austin housing, we had some preliminary research findings. So first, across all the peer city programs we reviewed, one main theme was consistent. Ongoing revenue sources are essential to keep rents affordable for low income households. Cities like Seattle rely on dedicated, predictable taxes to sustain affordability over the long term without a steady revenue source in Austin, especially given rising operating costs, maintaining deeply affordable units becomes extremely challenging. Second, our research showshat low cost, permanent debt is a critalal component of any revolving loan fund. A construction fund alone is not enough to make mixed income social housing viable. Programs like Montgomery county's housing opportunities commission demonstrate that access to below market rate, permanent financing is what makes projects pencil out over time. Third, successful social housing models often depend on high rent market conditions to help cross-subsidize low income units in Austin. However, market rents today are roughly equivalent to what is affordable to 60 to 80% mfi.

[2:12:45 PM]

That means that there is very limited extra rental income available to subsidize low income units, so additional funding sources would still be needed. Fourth, strong property and asset management capacity is essential, especially to incoate tenant governance. Peer programs show that meaningful tenant participation requires clearly defined roles, formal structures, and professional management to ensure properties remain financially stable and well maintained. Fifth, we heard from many stakeholders that additional requirements such as workforce development, higher wage standards or enhanced green building features can increase costs and potentially narrow the pool. The pool of qualified development partners while these goals align with the vision of green social housing, they also require thoughtful attention to feasibility. Finally, our research suggests that an independent entity with liability separation is generally preferred over the city. Acting as developer, guarantor and landlord. Other cities note significant risk when the municipality holds these roles, ranging from financial exposure. In the case of default to operational challenges. In addition to these research findings, we have also reviewed economic analysis related to the feasibility of social housing within Austin at this time.

[2:14:01 PM]

This included pro Forma level analysis provided by the center for public enterprise, and a review of a recent portfolio analysis of ahc properties. The pro Forma analysis considered two distinct development scenarios. Scenario one of baseline market conditions. In this baseline scenario, 20% of units are restricted at 50% Ami and the remainder are rented at market rate. Development costs are assumed at 250,000 per unit of hard costs and 325,000 total development costs per unit when including soft costs. The capital stack includes 70% traditional senior debt, 20% provided from a city initiated revolving loan fund, and 10% in equity from a private development partner. The analysis found that under current market conditions, social housing development solely through a low cost construction financing and cross-subsidization cross-subsidization is not financially viable. This is primarily due to the lower market rents that do not support cross-subsidy of the more deeply affordable units provided in the development.

[2:15:04 PM]

Scenario two model development outcomes under more favorable conditions. This favorable scenario added a property tax exemption and steps up market rate rents to 100% Ami levels, while also expanding affordability to 30% of units. The tax exemption lowers operating costs by up to one third, increasing net operating income and debt coverage ratio. This favorable market scenario resulted in a feasible development, with debt ratio coverage ratios achieving acceptable levels by year two and no financing gap on construction costs. It should be noted that in this favorable scenario, it does not meet the affordability requirements for a tax exemption of housing finance corporation properties in Texas, thus making it an eligible for the exemption needed to make the development viable. So some key takeaways from the financial analysis include the sensitive nature of the feasibility of cross-subsidization to market rate, rental prices, operating costs, and permanent financing sources. This is particularly true in the use of a revolving loan funds without additional subsidy below market rate financing, both short term and permanent, is necessary for feasible projects, meaning a revolving loan fund can only operate if there is a below market rate. Permanent financing that would be able to pay off the construction costs and allow the fund to evolve into future projects. Even when the model included public land and a tax abatement, ongoing subsidy was necessary as market rents are not high enough to cross subsidize the affordable units at present, a review of hfc current assets for the possibility of social housing model implementation yielded similar ways to. The analysis found that social housing approaches are viable tools within a broader housing strategy, but should be deployed in circumstances where marketonditions warrant their use. As traditional low income housing tax credit financing can in many cases, deliver more efficient affordability outcomes at a lower cost.

[2:17:05 PM]

Further, our peer city research indicates that places with established programs have ongoing revenue sources, such as taxes to support subsidized rents and cover operating costs, or are on much higher rent locations. To summarize, our research indicates that there is a feasible pathway to mixed income social housing when certain conditions align, these being a dedicated and predictable funding source for both construction and permanent financing. An administrative structure with robust property development and ongoing management capabilities and market conditions that allow for cross-subsidization of affordable units. And now I will pass it to Erica to close with some additional considerations and final recommendations.

[2:17:52 PM]

>> So as you have heard, both the Austin housing finance corporation and the Austin housing public facility corporation mouthfuls already create mixed income developments, and other changes could potentially be made to be closer to the resolution resolutions goals. If additional funding and staff capacity are identified, though, that's that's challenging in xas. If that additional funding and staff capacity were identified, you you could add other requirements, but we just need to be very clear that these other requirements do add additional cost. And so we have to make sure that those could be supported financially. So in terms of actual recommendations, wee think it's important to continue to monitor market conditions because, as Paul mentioned, the current market conditions don't support a mixed income development because market rents have crcreased, which is good overall, except it doesn't work for this type of scenario and continue to think about it as the housing blueprint is updated. As you all discussed earlier today, this is just a slightly different visualization of the gap of affordable units needed for households under 50% of the median family income. So that gap is approximately 55,000 units, which is which is significant. The final recommendation is that we we can incorporate features of the green social housing resolution in upcoming requests for qualifications for hfc owned land to test their feasibility, to kind of see, you know, what might work as market markets change. Et cetera. So that's the plan. And those requests for qualifications will begin in early 2027. Just as a reminder of the timeline for this project, we have we have completed the research and policy development, financial analysis and modeling. We've had initial stakeholder engagement. We're presenting to you all today. Then we'll do a second round of stakeholder engagement just to make sure we didn't miss anything. As we collected all of this information. And then we plan to have the final report completed by December. Here. The the contacts for anyone who has questions. And we're happy to to answer any questions you all have. Thank you.

[2:20:50 PM]

>> Thank you. I appreciate it. Colleagues. Do you have questions? Councilmember Siegel.

[2:20:55 PM]

>> Thank you, chair, and thanks to all three of you and everyone who contributed to this major effort. Really appreciate all the research and analysis for me. For me, this is an exciting opportunity, but I can see how, you know, the current market conditions in Austin don't make the cross-subsidization that has worked in Montgomery county really possible in this moment. And just for my my colleagues, we actually had a national organization that specializes in social housing policy that at first wanted to help us with this project. And they realized a couple of things. One, they realized that Austin has done a lot of the aspects of social housing and a lot of its different programs, and the other is that our market conditions are so unique that their approach, which might be more cookie cutter, doesn't actually apply here in terms of Wright, the falling rents, the higher vacancies, you know, the basically what works in in the DC area is not necessarily appropriate for Austin right now. So I appreciate you all, you know, continuing to do the analysis after we learned that and also for identifying there are still paths to test this strategy and to see what might work in Austin. I wanted to ask just a couple quick questions.

[2:22:08 PM]

First in relation to slide six and some of the national models. You know that, Paul, you mentioned looking at would you say that one or another national model or model from another community would be more appropriate to apply to Austin? Do you think any of these look, look more appropriate for what we could do here?

[2:22:34 PM]

>> Sure. I mean, and I think this also comes from what you were saying before about CPS, you know, model that they tested here in Austin, which was really similar to the one in Montgomery county, which did look to provide that construction period financing and kind of get the cross-subsidization engine, as they called it, working to allow for the affordability to be included into the development. So I think in the right conditions, that model is something that would make a lot of sense in the Austin area.

[2:23:03 PM]

>> So, for example, if rents started spiking again, or if particular neighborhoods rents really went high, that could be an opportunity where the city could support market rate housing that also cross subsidizes deeply affordable housing.

[2:23:15 PM]

>> Yeah. That's correct. And I think that was also pointed out that in, in hdfc's portfolio analysis that, you know, in stronger rent submarkets, even this is something that could be possible down the road.

[2:23:27 PM]

>> Great. And then, I mean, looking ahead and I guess more to slide 19, what elements of green social housing do you think are most feasible to incorporate into affordable housing investments? And I'll just say in the resolution we adopted in February, there were a lot of different elements suted, but it was more thought of as a menu, not as a list of of hard core requirements. You don't need every green condition, every, you know, social condition. But do you think there are certain elements that could be better implemented here in Austin, for example, because we could collaborate with our electric utility or water utility? Have you all thought of like, what components in the original resolution might be most, I guess, powerful to use here?

[2:24:12 PM]

>> Yeah, yeah.

[2:24:13 PM]

>> I mean, I think in our upcoming solicitations, we're going to be very open to the types of financing that might be possible to achieve the depth of affordability that we need to with the investment of public funds. You know, I think that there's always there are always things to explore with green building requirements. How can we, you know, add to the sustainability and the efficiency of our of our developments to the benefit of us as a long term owner, we want to reduce the operating costs of these developments and increase the durability of them. So how can we balance that desire as a long term owner with the additional costs of the development? You know, I think that it it's it is a goal that will always be evolving as new technologies and come out. And I think we need to be open and reliant on the partners that we're bringing in to bring in that expertise on the the sort of new approaches to green building that I'm excited about exploring with these solicitations and with the tenant protections aspects, that's something that we're always looking at with the, the tenant or lease or lease addendum that we require for both projects that we own and that we finance, and then the ride guidelines. So that's something that we're continuing to, to push on not only from the aspect of what developments that we own on public land, but also wherever we're putting public funds.

[2:25:40 PM]

>> Thank you. I'm just thinking about, you know, we have that great policy that our climate office is moving forward on for solar power on city facilities, right. And theoretically, that could be paired with a program like this. And Nicole, I guess since you brought it up, I guess Erika brought it up as well. But there's been some kind of comments about upcoming rfq. Can you share any more about like, what the housing department is looking at next year?

[2:26:03 PM]

>> Yeah, yeah, we released a memo back in January of this year, which feels like yesterday. But that memo laid out recommendation for three priority sites that will be advancing rfq on that includes 2908 south congress, which is just across the street from saint Ed's. So just down the street from the old turf, the plan old turf station for project connect, and then 6200 manchaca in south Austin and 4800 Bowen road. So those are three developments that our partnership team is currently working on solicitations for. So we anticipate the solicitations for 6000 202,908 south congress coming out in early 2027 and coming to the hfc board with a recommendation sometime either right before the summer break or right after the summer break. We'll see how quickly we can get through our procurement process. So those two properties will be up next.

[2:27:07 PM]

And then shortly after that, we'll release the 4800 boem solicitation. That was a property that was owned by the city that we transferred to hfc. So that process of transferring it and working with the department that's currently occupying the site has just delayed that solicitation a little bit, but that'll be the next one on deck.

[2:27:26 PM]

>> And then after that, are there other city owned properties that could theoretically be kind of available for this kind.

[2:27:33 PM]

>> Of oh, other city. Yeah. There. Yeah. We're always in communication with the real estate team for with Austin finance and, you know, always looking at city owned properties that could be used for affordable housing. We also have a number of properties that hfc already owns that were bought either with project funds or gio bonds. And the other properties that hfc already owns are on that memo as well. And with the what what we anticipate a appropriate development type to be, whether that's rental or ownership, if it's rental, is there a an idea of the size and financing structure that could be viable on that site? But that will always depend on the market that we're developing in at that time.

[2:28:20 PM]

>> So right on. Well, thank you so much for all the information and, you know, for continuing to explore this opportunity for innovation and look forward to work ahead. Thank you, chair.

[2:28:29 PM]

>> You're very welcome. Good questions, I appreciate it. No questions.

[2:28:33 PM]

>> I don't know that I have any questions either. With the exception of the one that I have. So we were talking about city held assets, and it got me thinking about a conversation that I had initiated before about community development corporations. And I'll tell you, that conversation came about because we were talking about the application of. What's the one I'm looking for, not a land trust, but the other one, land banking. Okay, we're talking about land banking and talking about who would be the steward for that. And I think whether or not it's directly connected, I'll just share that the conversation was about our community development corporation capacity in the community and how some areas where we could apply a thing like a land banking tool or a community land trust tool without the stewards in the community, who could be those folks to serve on a community development corporation, either by lack of time, expertise, experience, whatever. The thing is, I, I have found in my experience that even the desire to deploy those types of tools was limited by our community development corporation capacity. So just wanted to bring that to your attention.

[2:29:48 PM]

When I thought about the the application of us using land that we own outright, that, that those tools are great, but not if we don't have all of them, then. Oh, the other one was from my staff about the memo, the January memo. So those are all my questions. If we don't have any others. Thank you all for your presentations today.

[2:30:12 PM]

>> Appreciate it. Thanks all.

[2:30:18 PM]

>> So moving on to our next item. We get the opportunity to check in. Hi, Steve. With our division manager Greathouse about our land development code status, timeline of amendments, and all that jazz. So without further ado, let's get right on over. Good. Hello, chair. Thank you.

[2:30:46 PM]

>> Committee members. Steve Greathouse, division manager, Austin planning. I'm here to provide a briefing on the status of all of our land development code amendments. In the backup for this item, you will find a copy of the presentation as wells the October 2026 version of the land development code amendments timeline Gantt chart. Since the materials were last shared with the housing and planning committee in April, staff have made adjustments to the timeline to reflect the adoption of recent code amendments and other considerations. In this presentation, I will briefly cover items adopted or completed since April. Upcoming items and the updated version of the land development code. Amendments. Gantt chart for actions have occurred since the since April. Related to the land development code. On may 21st, city council approved land development code amendments that created a new citywide density bonus program.

[2:31:47 PM]

On may 21st, city council also approved amendments to an ordinance related to the regulation of Austin LI rail. On may 28th, city council approved phase one of an update to the downtown density bonus program and rezoned the core and Rainey areas of the downtown into the new downtown density bonus 400 combining district. On September 10th, city council approved a refinement to the citywide density bonus program that requires participating projects to provide their required affordable fee in

lieu or affordable rental units, rather on site when building near Austin light rail and its priority extensions. City council has also taken action since the beginning of 2026 to approve multiple resolutions that either initiate amendments to the land development code, or that direct staff to undertake analysis and bring back code amendment recommendations in the future. I'm not going to read through everything on this slide because I know it's a lot, but those links are available for folks to peruse from backup.

[2:32:56 PM]

Between now and the end of 2026, we anticipate that a number of code amendment related activities will be occurring, including releasing memos with recommendations related to parking maximums in areas to the potential for unbundling parking or requiring unbundled parking, as well as recommendations related to the redevelopment requirements for density bonus program developments. We also expect to bring forward a work plan related to improving streetscape and building design standards, and to bring forward possible code amendments related to streamlining city code by relocating certain non zoning regulations by the end of 2026. We also expect to bring forward the first phase of a regulatory framework for data centers. Staff are also actively engaging in ongoing analysis and stakeholder engagement related to phase two of the downtown density bonus program. Update related to creation of new mixed use Zones, the update of the east Riverside corridor plan, and we are also working to launch other important work initiated by council in the last year and shown on the previous slide. I wanted to acknowledge that there's a significant code amendment project that you will see coming forward, coming forward in phases over the next six or so months. That could have an impact on our overall work program. As you all are likely aware, city council on August 27th approved a resolution initiating code amendments for data centers.

[2:34:30 PM]

This resolution directed staff to bring back an initial phase of this work by the end of the year, and staff are working to develop a phasing approach that will be described in more detail in an upcoming memo to mayor and council. The overall approach to regulating data centers across these phases will include developing land use definitions. Designating Zones for particular uses will be prohibited, allowed or allowed through a conditional use permit. Establishing regulations for each type of data center. Identifying requirements for an operations plan for certain data center uses, and the approach could also include creating a new zoning district specific to data centers, as well as amending certain regulations. Outside of the land development code. Staff have launched a preliminary speak up page for this work that can be accessed via speak up, austin.org/ldc updates and have begun to engage internal technical stakeholders. We anticipate beginning to reach out to key external stakeholders by the end of the year. We will also be holding additional engagement events, including a public open house, once a full proposal has been developed, likely in early 2027. Since we understand that this topic is a top or. This is a topic of great interest to many who live, work and play across Austin, but folks can visit the

speak up page for more information as we go through the process. The goal is to bring forward an initial focused phase of work by the end of the year, and to bring back a comprehensive package of regulations related to data centers for adoption consideration in spring of 2027.

[2:36:10 PM]

As wve into 2027, we also anticipate bringing back multiple additional code amendments for council consideration, including update of the east Riverside corridor plan and regulating plan. The second phase of the update to the downtown density bonus work to create new mixed use Zones. Work to create a life sciences land use code amendments that would regulate the tobacco sales use code amendments to make changes to our parks improvement permitting process, as well as phase one of improvements to the home amendments. Staff are continuing to work to ensure that we structure this timeline in a way that moves projects forward with the urgency that they deserve, while allowing adequate time for decision makers and the public to understand and review the amendments. So you could continue to see timeline adjustments, as you have all along as we move into 2027. It is also worth noting that several of these items, including data centers, will likely be processed through the alternative notice process, which requires consideration at a joint meeting of planning commission and city council. So that's another scheduling consideration as we continue to balance the timeline for this ambitious body of work on screen, you will see the detailed schedule that is included in your backup. As you review the detailed timeline, you will also notice a number of amendments for which timelines are yet to be determined, as specific timelines are developed for these items, the overall schedule will be amended to reflect those timelines. The schedule continues to reflect an ambitious work progr, and as processes move forward, staff will make adjustments while working to identify specific review and adoption dates. For all of the timelines that are shown on the chart.

[2:37:59 PM]

For more information or to provide feedback, folks can also visit speak up, austin.org/updates. And this updated Gantt chart timeline will be posted on the speak up Austin site as well later today. And with that, I'm happy to answer any questions.

[2:38:17 PM]

>> Member. Vice chair. Look at that. You're so good. No questions, I appreciate it. I can imagine that the data center data center discussion has taken up a good bit of time. I do have one question there, and I think it would be. Maybe again, the theme is about peer cities. Are there cities that we, while we're doing our independent research and answering questions of our constituents, are there peer cities that

you have found to be that you all have so far found to be more or less. Helpful with our particular considerations? As a comparison?

[2:39:05 PM]

>> Yeah, there actually are a number of peer cities that were all referenced in the memo to council ahead of the resolution initiating the data centers work that I would encourage folks to take a look at. It's a lot of the smaller suburban communities around Texas have obviously been kind of the front line within Texas facing data centers. So a lot of the smaller communities in Dallas, Fort Worth may be worth taking a look at in that backup, but all of us are on a bleeding edge together, if you will. So we're continuing to have conversations with peer cities about how they are addressing it, particularly within the state of Texas and vice versa. All of us kind of moving forward together in this work.

[2:39:48 PM]

>> I really appreciate that. I've been taking the opportunity to make some regional connections. I think that's also, you know, as I talk about our comprehensive development opportunities, I think that might be one where we're missing the that connective tissue. But in doing so, I'm asking questions of, you know, local leaders in smaller cities. And I one of the constituents commentary was, I'd rather have a data center than an apartment complex, which I thought was interesting, but that that person's perspective, right. So as we're taking all these things into consideration, it was it was an interesting comment for me to just, you know, as we're taking all the things into consideration, not everybody's perspective is the same or even understanding of what is performed at a data center, what the potential impacts are, and all those things. So I look forward to it continuing to be a very interesting discussion, and that's all I have. Thank you very much. We appreciate your presentation.

[2:40:43 PM]

>> Thank you.

[2:40:45 PM]

>> All right, folks, our final discussion for real finals time is item number six. And that's to identify items to be discussed at future meetings. And because I was wrong and I do have one more meeting, I am going to make a couple of suggestions. One of them was, and I'll turn to my colleagues when I say this

one, because it was a thing that I was thinking about us when I thought about this. I think we all probably have similar pockets of communities that we represent that have very specific special needs. And what I'm talking about is those small pockets of blighted areas where, you know, very much like commander Davis said, we'll never police ourselves out of the Challen in these very specific areas. I personally have two very specific areas that I'm making reference to, and one of them where we were successful in addressing some of the characteristic elements that come along with poverty and blight and rapid change in communities. We were able to get a lot in the way of progress and community participation by way of activating spaces. So like having, you know, folks in the community be able to host events. I mean, I'll be entirely honest, a girl scout cookie booth really deterred some behaviors that were occurring in a particular park.

[2:42:12 PM]

But all those kinds of sort of innovative approaches to addressing the situation, I think are going to have to happen more comprehensively. And not just there's not just one council office that has 2 or 3 pockets that require some very special attention. And so what I was thinking about was an approach, a fund, a combination of those things, a suite of options around addressing very particular areas of blight in our various districts. And that's something that I'd like for us to discuss moving forward, please.

[2:42:50 PM]

>> No, completely agree. And we may we may share some of those areas that that are difficult. And just figuring out new strategies and new approaches. Agree. You know, we can't just flood an area with police. I mean, we can, but we can't sustain that. And it's gone. The problems come back with a more long term publicly engaged, positive approach to some of these blighted areas. I mean, I can just from my perspective and from my constituents, that's probably one of the most frequent conversations that I have as a council member.

[2:43:33 PM]

>> So I agree the same. And for what it's worth, I, I, I really do appreciate this. When our constituents bring the concern, they're not asking for penalization, they're not asking for punitive action. They're asking for comprehensive approaches. And they're asking for, for what it's worth, you know, one particular area that I'm thinking of, we activated a lot of our advocacy groups. That was helpful. And for what it's worth, it was the activation of all these groups towards a singular effort, the community activated in a way that I hadn't seen before. I mean, there were folks that were saying some things on nextdoor that got them literally kicked off a next door, who are now the people who are leading the charge in some of these community based efforts, because the community got together and said, why

don't we stop complaining and start doing something that actually matters? And the truth is, they were coming up with ideas that I don't think we were even thinking about yet. So I, I wouldove to see us talk about that in a larger setting moving forward. And then the other thing I had was the thing that I brought up, and I know the conversation is already happening around community development corporations, but I really wanted to double down on that. If for no other reason, I heard three separate city council candidates who are thinking about district one pursuits, talk about community land trusts and land banking.

[2:45:03 PM]

And when I know in the background that that was one of the challenges that that kept coming up, I would like very much for the conversation to leave just the district one office and our conversations with our staff around, what do we do to make certain that communities that could benefit from land banking and community land trusts have the capacity within the community to operate their own CDCs? The truth of the matter is not all CDCs are built the same, and not all communities have the same level of expertise built in in to their access. And that's it for me. Anybody else? All righty. So that means there's no further discussion. Let me turn my screen back to the input. I need to see the time. So with no further business, this meeting of the housing and planning committee is adjourned at 2:45 P.M. Thank you, everybody for your time. Have a good day.