



October 22, 2026

Questions and Answers Report



Mayor Kirk Watson

Mayor Pro Tem José “Chito” Vela, District 4

Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Council Member Vanessa Fuentes, District 2

Council Member José Velásquez, District 3

Council Member Ryan Alter, District 5

Council Member Krista Laine, District 6

Council Member Mike Siegel, District 7

Council Member Paige Ellis, District 8

Council Member Zohaib “Zo” Qadri, District 9

Council Member Marc Duchon, District 10

The City Council Questions and Answers Report was derived from a need to provide City Council Members an opportunity to solicit clarifying information from City Departments as it relates to requests for council action. After a City Council Regular Meeting agenda has been published, Council Members will have the opportunity to ask questions of departments via the City Manager's Agenda Office. This process continues until 5:00 p.m. the Tuesday before the Council meeting. The final report is distributed at noon to City Council the Wednesday before the council meeting.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Item 22

Authorize an amendment to a contract for continued I Belong in Austin program administration, to reduce residential displacement and prevent homelessness, for Austin Housing with El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission, to increase the amount by \$2,250,000 for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$24,050,000. Funding: \$2,250,000 is available in the Operating Budget of Austin Housing.

COUNCIL MEMBER DUCHEN'S OFFICE

1) What is the total amount spent on rental assistance across all city funded programs?

Austin Housing has the I Belong in Austin program. From June 2021 through April 2026, the program distributed over \$16 million to over 3,100 local households facing eviction. Over 9,000 individuals have benefitted from the program, including 4,646 children residing in households facing instability. The program provided 2,562 households with direct rental assistance, helped 744 households with negotiated settlements, and assisted 89 households with moving and storage costs. Service was highest in zip codes 78753, 78741, 78744, 78723, and 78758.

A dashboard with the geographic distribution of assistance is available at <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/elbuen/viz/LKTEST2/Dashboard1>.

2) How are we evaluating the effectiveness of our rental assistance programs? The social services agreement evaluation included a rubric, scoring determinations, and grant summaries. Has a similar review been completed, or is one planned, for these housing contracts? Specifically, what performance measures and outcomes are being used to determine how well these programs are working?

Resolution 20260827-069 directed Austin Housing to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its tenant stabilization and displacement prevention programs and present the progress of the evaluation to committees and Austin City Council by February 2027. This review will assess program performance, service delivery, and outcomes to better understand the effectiveness of City funded investments and identify opportunities for improvement.

El Buen Samaritano conducts a 6-month post assistance follow-up survey for I Belong In Austin to evaluate housing stability, financial well-being, and clients' ongoing financial challenges. The survey provides insight into whether households continue to experience housing stability after receiving assistance and whether their financial circumstances have improved.

3) Please share any data to support how this rental assistance program is preventing homelessness.

74% of program participants have maintained stable housing continuously since receiving rental assistance. In addition, 64% reported improved financial circumstances over the preceding six months, 32% reported no significant change in their financial situation, and 4% reported that their financial situation had deteriorated. Finally, 80% continued to experience financial challenges, indicating that many households remain financially vulnerable even after receiving rental assistance.

Staff Contact: FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov

Item 36

Authorize negotiation and execution of twelve advertising agreements with Clear Channel Outdoor, Lamar Advertising Company, Waterloo Media, iHeart Radio, Telemundo, Univision, KVUE-TV, KXAN-TV, Austin American-Statesman, Google, Meta, and Ground Truth, for public outreach campaigns associated with the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, the Construction Partnership Program, Vision Zero Program, the Safe Streets for All Grant, Community Services, and GetThere ATX in a total amount not to exceed \$2,337,000. Funding: \$437,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget of Austin Transportation and Public Works, \$1,810,000 out of the Climate Reduction Implementation Grant, and \$90,000 from the Safe Street for All grant within the Capital Budget of Austin Transportation and Public Works.

COUNCIL MEMBER SIEGEL'S OFFICE

1) Are these dollars only available for the listed advertising company contracts or can they be reallocated to other departmental needs?

The dollars identified in this item are only available to the vendors listed for specified not to exceed amounts. This funding supports tied to specific program budgets and grant requirements and therefore cannot be redirected to other departmental needs. Funds provided through federal grant agreements, including the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant, must be used for required public outreach and education. Operating budget funds for Vision Zero, Public Information, Community Services Placemaking, and Transportation Demand Management were approved by Council for outreach purposes in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget. Any remaining spending authority could be reallocated to other departments through Corporate Purchasing.

COUNCIL MEMBER DUCHEN'S OFFICE

1) Regarding the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funding: what specific audiences will these advertising campaigns target, and how will this outreach support the grant's implementation goals?

Please clarify whether the proposed advertising budget reflects grant requirements, a recommended outreach strategy from Staff, or an approved grant work plan.

What performance measures will staff use to evaluate whether these campaigns are achieving their desired outcomes?

The Climate Pollution Reduction Grant requires the City of Austin and its regional partners to conduct coordinated public outreach to support mode shift, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and promote participation in transportation demand management programs. Along with the City of Austin, grant recipient coalition partners include the Texas Department of Transportation, Capital Area Council of Governments, Capital Area Rural Transit System, and the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The advertising campaigns funded through this grant will target audiences whose travel behaviors have the highest potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions when shifted toward lower pollution alternatives. These audiences include commuters traveling into and within the five-county region, residents living along major corridors with congestion and air-quality impacts, and individuals who regularly rely on personal vehicles for short, local trips. The five counties included in the grant program are Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson. Outreach will also focus on underserved communities identified in the Climate Equity Plan and in the regional planning effort associated with the grant.

The proposed advertising budget reflects the approved federal grant work plan from October 2024, which includes a required public outreach component and a staff-developed outreach strategy designed to meet the grant's mode-shift and public-engagement goals. Measure 3 of the Grant Agreement allocates \$9,000,000 over the life of the grant for paid outreach and advertising to inspire behavior change. Grant funds may be used only for eligible outreach activities that support the implementation of the Transportation Demand Management programs described in Measure 3 of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application and award agreement.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these campaigns, staff will rely on performance measures included in the Grant Work Plan and be consistent with the City's communications performance framework.

These include:

- Audience reach (impressions and unique individuals reached);
- Engagement (click-throughs, survey responses, video completions, and platform-specific interaction metrics);
- Cost efficiency (cost per click, cost per thousand impressions);
- Participation in program offerings (use of travel behavior tools, downloads of the CTXGO app, transit route ridership changes, event participation, and incentive uptake); and
- Geographic and demographic distribution of engagement, aligned with the equity goals identified in the grant.

These measures will allow staff to document performance, demonstrate compliance with federal grant requirements, and report outcomes to both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and regional partners.

Staff Contact: Jeff Stensland, Public Information Division Manager, Transportation and Public Works