

#80

CITY COUNCIL DOWNTOWN PLAN 10/6/11

Late Backup

My name is Stuart Hersh, and like most in Austin, I rent.

I support adoption of the Downtown plan with the direction that the affordable housing goals Downtown and in neighborhoods close to Downtown should reflect the income spectrum of the Downtown workforce. I want to see a denser Downtown, and plan adoption with appropriate code amendments can help us achieve this goal.

If you rely exclusively on the proposed Downtown Density Bonus program, or the Community Development Commission recommendations, you could end up helping no person or family who earns less than \$40,000 per year. I know that these are not people you want to exclude from affordable housing. I have provided you as an attachment today the City and State published income levels and rents that show you why this would be true. People who earn less than \$40,000 a year need housing either downtown or in neighborhoods close to downtown along transit routes and bus stops. Please do not leave them behind.

A few weeks ago as part of the 8/25/11 public hearing backup you finally received the staff response to the Planning Commission's 5/25/10 memo on stakeholder recommendations. It was Exhibit L in your backup and it was dated 8/18/11. This means it took 15 months to respond to stakeholder and Planning Commission recommendations from last year. As the scribe for the stakeholder group, I can tell you this lack of timely responsiveness is unacceptable and undermines support for the plan.

Please incorporate Planning Commission recommendations in the Downtown Plan so that the code implementation phase might result in some truly affordable rental opportunities for the poorest among us who often rely on public transportation in neighborhoods close to Downtown.

Stuart Hersh
shersh@austin.rr.com
(512) 587-5093 9cell0