

Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Committee Meeting Transcript – 03/25/2015

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>> Pool: Well, I want to welcome everyone. I'm Leslie pool, councilmember district 7, chair of the open space, environment, sustainability committee. I want to welcome y'all here. When I talked about what room to program for this, I said boards and commissions is great, good sized room, we can sit around and it isn't too large and imposing but what I didn't expect is we would have a full house here. So to the extent that folks, when you're speaking, you can come and take some of these chairs, that would be really great. Let me introduce who my committee colleagues are. District 6 councilmember is don skims, vice chair is Delia Garza and mayor pro tem Kathie tovo. I've invited and have standing invitations for the chairs of the different citizen committees whose work will flow into this committee. Our purview of course is parks, trails, environment, how we define that to be inclusive and comprehensive and then the sustainability of all of these -- I can't see anybody behind this podium, but I guess I know you're back there. So to that end, I just want to let you know that today dale gray, who is chair of the water Weis wastewater commission has joined us, Jane Riviera, chair of the parks board and Mary chair of the environmental board. All three have held these positions for a time. My thinking is that they have firsthand knowledge from chairing their different efforts that will inform the work that we do here and will be a resource to us, can inform our conversation and answer specific questions that may arise as to the tenor of conversations that

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may have happened in their different commissions. So I welcome everybody here today. We will start off with citizens communication. And I have a number of -- and I wanted to make a note that my vice chair, councilmember Delia Garza, is here with us now. >> Garza: I'm here. >> Pool: Thank you. I have some speaker signups generally for citizens communication and then on a couple of specific topics. And why don't I -- since I am just now looking through all of this, go ahead and start with Melissa tomorrow, west Austin youth association. These will be general comments on whatever topic you wish to speak on. We have three minutes. Is there someone who can help with timing? Great. Thank you so much. Hi, Melissa, welcome. >> Thank you all for serving, it's great to see such a full house that cares about open spaces. We really appreciate that. We've having a collaborative partner with the city for over 30 years. In August distinguish we renewed that partnership and extended it for another 25 years. The amendment we are requesting is an extension of the time line of the original agreement and I think it's on one of your future agenda items but I just wanted to kind of get you up to speed and if you have any questions feel free to reach out to me. We want to make sure that we align with the Lamar beach master plan and the possible press letter street extension. For over 50 years we've been providing youth sports down at Lamar beach and we've managed these facilities by investing time, treasure and talent. We spend over \$200,000 a year maintaining the fields and programs on them. We serve the Austin community offering centrally located

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recreational youth regardless of ability, disability, financial need. As a partner of the city we serve over 5,000 youth from over 30 city of Austin zip codes. We are a great example of a public private partnership that services the community at a fraction of the cost, saving taxpayers millions of dollars. Baseball, softball, basketball, gymnastics, cheerleading, catch, running, lacrosse, a sample of the programs we offer both at Lamar beach and at exposition and infield facility. We are a strong support of the Lamar beach master plan and played a role in initiate be the resolution and plan in order to better serve the community. A year ago several stakeholders had concerns with the rapid speech at which the Pressler rode was progressing without adequate input. They had completely forgotten to reach out to Austin high and aid the adjacent land owner. We went to city council and requested a master plan be done for the Lamar beach park and traffic impact analysis be done before the Pressler designs were completed, share the findings with the public at a stakeholder meeting and return to city council with their findings before a final design was done. The city council passed a resolution directing the city staff to do a master plan and complete traffic analysis. The amendment we're requesting, why are we requesting this amendment to the time line of the improvements from six years to ten years? The six year clock for completing the improvements to the fields started in August of 2013. Shortly after signing that, we discovered the Pressler street extension. This would impact where we put the fields and do the improvements. We're extending to extend that time line from six years to ten years after starting the clock after the master plan and the road are either complete or the plan is abandoned. Why are we

requesting the amendment to the time line from 25 to 50 years? Because if we move out ten years, we'd already be at ten to 15 years of our 25 year

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agreement and we want to make -- okay. Thank you. Please consider our amendment at the next -- we would love timing as far as at the next meeting. >> Pool: Thank you, Melissa, for coming and making a presentation. We have you listed as a future agenda item with the April 29 committee meeting work with -- would that work with your time line? Staff, does it seem like that works for you? Okay, great. We'll plan that, thanks. Next is George kofer with hill country conserve any. Thanks for being here today. I'll go ahead and call up a couple other folks while he's coming up and put folks here to move through things. Michael F., heritage tree foundation, Zoila with heritage free foundation and I have two seeds for the twidwel. Thank you so much. George, welcome. >> Thank you, madam chair, councilmembers, I appreciate the opportunity to speak. Thank you in advance for your public service. This is going to be, I think, a very good asset for the citizens and the citizens -- citizens and city of Austin. I'm hear to speak very briefly on a couple of points. Hill country conservancy would like to be a resource to you, all parks, trails, open space issues. We've been in business 15 years. We have several formal partnerships with the city of Austin, including a formal partnership on the violet crown trail so that is my segue into the urban trails master plan. We're here in support of that. I commend the parks department, public works and transportation department. In my opinion, they've done an extraordinarily good job of creating the framework for a

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very vibrant, healthy trail network in Austin. We've still got a lot of miles to build and we're working on that but I think they've done a great job. Last but not least let me go ahead and plant a seed. It's time to talk about the next bond election. I think 2017 has a nice ring to it, and we have worked with many nonprofit partners, housing, transportation, everything on that bond battle ballot for the past 25 areas, citizen community, nonprofit community has done the apology. We have helped council craft those ballots and created the political action committees to get those ballots passed. A recent state-wide poll puts parks at 93% voter approval, ran dam -- not random, 800 voters stayed-wide voted 93% for parks. We immediate more parks. I think it's time to start talking about that next bond ballot. Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you, George. Michael F. >> Hi, Michael F., Austin heritage tree foundation. If you could put my slides up, please. I'm here today to talk about the trails projects. We as an organization have concerns with tree preservation vis-a-vis the trails. Urban wildlife in environmentally sensitive areas. I wanted to give you background for those of you who are new councilmembers, as far as what kind of is

involved with the trails and that issue. Going back to imagine Austin, it calls for a balance between connectivity, environmental protection. Trails is a green infrastructure, we want to use it in a establish way while protecting the natural environment, enhanced recreational opportunities but we need to protect environmentally sensitive areas, enhance stream health and ecosystems and habitats and most

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importantly we want to have appropriately scaled and located trails and protect our land along the creeks and floodplains in environmentally sustainable way. We also want to have a thorough process to engage the public and other professionals when we're designing these trails. Now I wanted to show some examples for those of you new to this issue of what a -- an urban trail actually looks like. It's a 12-foot wide, generally, can be wider concrete trail ask can with easements on the side very wide. As you can see oftentimes they come with motorcycle riders as well. This is the southern walnut creek trail, again, 12 feet wide easements, specifications as far as the easements on the side have changed somewhat as we've been working through the process and gotten the urban trails master plan approved. But as you can see, when you -- most people when they think of the trail think of walking through the woods and deer and walking on mulch and things like that but an urban trail is made out of concrete, is a different animal and really amounts to a road being put down through sometimes some of our more sensitive areas. We need to keep that in mind. Now, in the time since we've started this process, the watershed protection ordinance passed and has some specifications for where a trail should be built outside the critical water quality zone. As you can see here the trails ideally would be built to the left of this illustration and in the event that there's not any right-of-way available to the city there may be administrative variance granted to move it over into the right area. This like a lot of things we address brings up some conflicts. The areas through the watershed protection area are now subject - subject the city to

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what we call restoration, allowed to go back to its natural state in order to help shore up the creek banks. I don't know if this statistic is still valid but a couple of years ago I saw a presentation by the watershed department to one of the board and they stated that at that time -- oh, okay -- at that time that the -- give me one second to finish. >> Pool: Yes, please. Fine to finish up. >> We were losing creek banks faster than we could restore them and I don't know if that's the case still. And, finally, let me just show this slide here. These are some of the costs involved with urban trails versus other items we can build like sidewalks and so on. So that gives you some idea of the things that we need to consider as we're building these trails. Thank you. >> Pool: Mr. F. Have you made that slide show available to us?

We can put it with our backup so we can refer to it in the future? >> Sure. Absolutely. >> Pool: Great, thanks. Next is z.oila, also with the heritage tree foundation. Welcome zo.l.l.a. >> Thank you, Austin tree foundation, glad to be here, happy to be here. I wanted to talk about two things. First when you talk about the zilker cyclocross remember to ask about the short term plan because it's getting pretty hard and the short-term plan conservatives of doing soil [indiscernible] On the trees and needs to be done and hasn't been done yet. They're now on the urban trails master plan, so when we went to approval by council in 2014 to address our concerns there were disamendment made. Basically this is the medium for citizens to come have their concerns addressed, concerns with trees being removed, encroached, alternative routes, possible, maybe that's not a priority on that specific section of the trail. Many of the urban trails are to

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close gaps when there's no alternatives on the roads like on the bike streets but we may get into too much emphasis of trying to get into the greenbelt just for the heck of it, just to get close to nature but as you see getting close to nature sometimes implies destroying nature. We need to reach that balanced decision, is it really necessary, worth that much money. This is the medium. That's perhaps why you're going to have many people coming because that's what's part of the amendments. So the council committee was supposed to listen to the details like trail alignments, environmental aspects, trees, slopes, et cetera, community concerns, so on. While you're being presented to my taste I think it's an update, general update but too little detail. You're not really getting a flavor of what's going on. You're getting a picture, look at the picture on the right. That's what it implies. You're putting a concrete trail through all the trees to violet creek. The question to ask is how far away are you from the creek? Are you respecting the buffer from the watershed ordinance, critical environmental features? Where are the trees being removed, size, specialises, how much trees, what are those details? Are there any alternate routes. For instance in my mind I can see that Orange lying on the right as an alternative route. It could be or could not be but the question should be asked were there any alternative routes? What is driving the costs? Are they bridges you're building? Some of these trails are costing \$2 million a mile. The bike lanes cost 50,000 to half a million. Some of them are necessary, some may not be. Those are the questions you need to ask. If I look at the area more close up you can start looking at the trails. I'm not saying you should micromanage, start redesigning from this point. Let staff do what they're supposed to do but ask the right questions. Look at it in the details. So please ask that they come back with more detail. The more expensive part of the

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trails is costing the bridges -- crossing the creeks because you have to build bridges and armor the creek, armor means you take all the trees, everything. In Boulder creek they're removing several trees, I think 24 or maybe more, probably here crossing the creek. So -- is that necessary? Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you. And we have dors, Twidwell. >> Hello, council. Thank you very much for taking your time to listen to us. I'm dors Twidwell, will you at 301 seater brook court. My wife and I are on big walnut creek. I'm going to speak specifically to the north walnut creek phase two project. Phase two of the north walnut creek trail is a ten to 12-foot wide I am perrous concrete road with three bridges planned to cross the currently in the design phase. According to the public works manager the design is 50% complete. The general area covered by this trail we're discussing is bordered by north Lamar, oak brook drive, i35 and walnut creek to the north. As neighbors to the proposed trail and road we have supported it for decades. In fact it's my park day manager for our hike and bike trail within our neighborhood. We're looking forward to the enhancement to the neighborhood. However with the design half completed we're concerned over unanswered neighborhood questions regarding engineering design and costs related to flooding and erosion issues. Again, Richard Dwayne Dwayne has stated repeatedly he will 28 us details of the design at 60% completion. We're here today, my wife and I, to ask you for increased public

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input in this process. Current communication with public works has been problematic at best. At a board meeting in September 2014 Richard publicly stated that public works could not provide a hydrology study that showed the trail would not flood neighboring homes. I'll say that again. He said that currently public works could not provide a hydrology study that showed that the trail would not flood our homes. We were naturally concerned so we began learning about the process and attending a lot of meetings and learning how to speak quickly in three minutes. In a subject of an e-mail because Richard in September said, we'll know more at the end of February, we'll be at 60%. In a subsequent e-mail Richard responded back and said we're still studying and need 60 more days. The need to discuss these concerns before we get to the 60% or the 90% stage in a plan to me is crucial to making sure we make the correct engineering decisions basically before the jello sets and we can't make the decisions anymore and we've spent a lot of money going down a path literally we cannot turn back from. Again, my wife is going to have a few more details and proposed alternate plan that has been sort of dismissed within this process. We have had only one stakeholder meeting and one walk through that only had two members of the neighborhood at it. So, again, what we're asking for is increased public input and at least listen to our concerns. Thank you for your support. >> Pool: Thank you. And we program a specific update and status report on the north walnut creek trail today for the very concerns that you and your wife and others in attendance today have raised so staff is here and they are also hearing you very clearly. So next will be bunny. While she's coming up the next group will be bill bunch, Roy waily, Scott Johnson and Alan

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Rody. Thank you. Hi. >> Hello, thank you for the time to talk today. I'm bunny. My husband and I are on the board of the walnut creek neighborhood association. Like he was saying, we're very concerned about the flooding issue because we live next to the creek and we've seen what it can do. There are times where it is so powerful that you can't even hear yourself talk. It's so loud. It's very powerful. So we're very, very concerned about any changes above us, knowing that there's going to be more impervious cover built above us, already an apartment complex planned at north Lamar and the creek, north side of the creek. We're also concerned being this is a road open 24/7 what kind of emergency services will be available? We know police are understaffed as it is. Being this is a 12-foot trail do they have the equipment to get there. We're also under duress of extra traffic in the neighborhood right now because of the cut throughs and not wanting to go through the light at Braker so this will add to traffic. The most important thing to us is the preservation of this open space and this environment. This place has not been touched ever. It has 10,000 year old archaeological sites in it. There's an endangered insect species there, more animals and plants than you could possibly count. It's just beautiful and it's very hilly and very fragile because if you break it it will erode down very quickly. We've seen it happen again and again through city projects and through the neighborhood kids digging around. We've seen what the creek can do. It's very, very powerful. We would like assurance that's this is being looked at but most importantly -- this is our area here. Can you go on to the next one? The next one after that. Okay. This is what we would like to ask for staff to do. We are proposing to look at an

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alternative route. It's been kind of dismissed but we think it needs some serious consideration for many reasons. Once we think it would be less likely to flood our houses. We don't want to be the next onion creek incident. We really do not. These are our houses. We wanted to keep them. It would offer the same connectivity, probably better, you can get there quicker, faster, there's parking. It could be made Ada compliant. One road crossing that all of these trails crossroads. You can use existing trails already there and it's actually better than trying to build a board walk off of a steep slope in a very sensitive creek area. It couldn't disturb fragile wildlife and the archaeological sites that much. So we see there's a lot of reasons there to look at this and also budgetary reasons, I mean, to build a trail that's not as long as the other trail would seem reasonable that -- it may not be as intensive money wise. We know there would be a bridge involved, but maybe one instead of three. So there's a lot of questions there that we would like staff to truly, truly look into, especially so that we don't become another flood. Thank you. We appreciate it. >> Pool: You bet. Thank you so much. Bill bunch. Welcome, bill. >> Good afternoon, chair, council, committee members. I'm the executive director of save our springs alliance and want to talk to you briefly about the proposed mopac four line toll expansion and the loop that it would be part of. This map shows the river here, mopac up here, and then the proposed 45 that would connect it over

to interstate 35 about this is about the most open space environment and sustainability unfriendly project you can imagine. And it would impact the life

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source of our city, Barton springs. This is the recharge zone so you can see this massive construction that's planned would grow straight down the recharge zone and across this way, go through zilker park, through the lady bird lake park, right up against the nature center and the botanical garden, across the grown belt, canyon, requiring expansion there. And on south. And then right past the wildflower center where if we make mopac into a full freeway would cause tremendous noise and other adverse impacts there. Right there because mopac sort of stops at the south end with very limited access over to 1826 it operates today as a local commuter highway. If you add four toll lanes recently sprung upon us, it's been a long time understood that they were looking at adding one lane each way and you could squeeze a lot of that on to the existing infrastructure. Now they're talking about two lanes each way, four lanes. The impacts are, you know, much, much greater. The costs go out the roof on that. And this is all happening very quickly at campo. There's a public commented in a runs through next Thursday, April 2. There's a public meeting at Austin high school that mayor pro tem tovo is cosponsoring, but we'd really like to see this committee and the council step up. There's already on record a council resolution against building this loop piecemeal, which is how it's being done. And instead study the whole thing, alternatives to not having a loop, to keeping mopac as a local commuter highway, keeping I-35 traffic over on I-35 and focusing on improving

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I-35 itself. And opposing that, unless we do that sort of comprehensive cumulative impact study. The one thing -- you know, there's so many questions but I'll just add one last before I stop. This would be right on top of the hike and bike bridge over the lake. So this is their own drawing. They make it as pretty as they can, but, as you can see, it's not very pretty. Here is the existing hike and bike trail bridge right here. And then -- well, I'll leave it at that. Once you dump all that traffic on to Cesar Chavez, though, the only natural next step is you have to expand Cesar Chavez, taking water front parkland all the way to downtown. >> Pool: I think we have a comment from mayor pro tem tovo and then from my vice chair. >> Tovo: Yeah, thank you Mr. Bunch for mentioning the public meeting for those who are interested it will be on Tuesday, March 31, from 6:00 to 7:30 at the Austin high school cafeteria, being sponsored by the Travis county commissioner, Brigid Shea, and by aid and I'm also a cosponsor so that will be a good opportunity to hear more about the proposal. Thank you. >> Pool: Vice chair. >> Garza: I'm on campo and so is councilmember kitchen and Gallo. Feel free to send us information. >> Pool: Ific

editorialize real quick here with the way we're doing committees we can do cross-pollination among intergovernmental bodies that we all sit on and expand our reach and talk about issues in different areas so that we can be more comprehensive in how we look at things. I appreciate your bringing what on the surface may look like a mobility project but in fact it will affect our -- it grows across sensitive lands and right by a high school and some nature

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preserves and areas that without thinking about it we might not realize that these will be affected with the plan on that, on that route. So thank you for that. Mr. Whaley. >> Howdy, y'all. My name is Roy Whaley, conservation chair for the Austin rethial group of the Sierra club. Excited to be here on this launch of the committee and expect to be involved going forward and look forward to it being a two-way street. Sierra club is certainly open to working with everyone and want you to know that we are open to working with you. Want to mention real quickly that, like George K., we support the urban trails master plan very proud that Sierra club was involved many it. 20 years ago I was on the metropolitan trails and green ways committee and worked on planning the trail from north Austin to the lake. And feel very confident after going through the watershed protection two-year process for the -- increasing the setbacks, particularly, and eastern Travis county and east Austin to preserve the creek banks there and to eliminate the danger to our residents from water and erosion there and feel confident that if any environmental feature is endangered, if any people are endangered, the trail won't be built. The city manager is pretty solid. I encourage y'all to have a discussion and a presentation on that. Also have a lot of concerns about the impact that sh45 southwest will have on our great open space that we have put millions of dollars into preserving and the concern that by having a highway that we may

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not need because there are -- some of y'all are also on the transportation committee. There are other ways to deal with our transit problems. But we are concerned about all the work and all the money that has gone into preserving our open space. I am excited when it comes to open space about the idea of the 10-1 council and us having a more even distribution of open space in Austin. The aquifer is unique and precious and needs to be treated that way. There are a lot of unique and precious areas in Austin. And they all need to be protected. Do have a lot of concerns about the impact that it could have on our park, particularly the fly over at zilker park. The studies have not been done. We do not know what impact it will have on our park experience to have that much sound right there. And what it will do to take away the trails that we have as traffic comes off of the flyway from mopac and on to Cesar Chavez and whether or not we're imposing to lose space there and having to widen lanes there. Like Mr. Bunch

said we're told one lane each way, now we're being told two lanes each way. But we're afraid that it will be even more and so we look forward to working with you. Thank you very much for your dedication. >> Pool: Thank you, Roy. Two members of this committee sit on the mobility committee, vice chair Garza and councilmember Zimmerman and maybe they would be willing to take some of the questions you've had on the effect -- the accumulated effect of that extension south of the river back and have them aired either including in the mobility committee at campo and at cap metro or maybe not cap metro but all appropriate committees. >> Be glad to have those conversations also and everybody in town has the worst traffic in

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town. >> Pool: Right. >> Everybody. So except for 624 traffic just flies through and no one ever has a problem. >> Pool: Thank you so much. >> Everybody has the worst traffic in down. >> Zimmerman: I wouldn't go the comedian route. That wouldn't work. Took an hour to get through 622 -- >> And we need to address that so everybody has this problem. >> Zimmerman: Yeah. >> We don't want to ruin our bcp land up there but we do want to find that solution. We don't want to ruin our bcp land in southwest Austin but we want to find these solutions and those solutions are there. They don't involve destroying our environment. Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you so much, Roy. Scott Johnson. [Lapse in audio] >> Air quality first. While it's never thought -- the lead reason we're widening road or putting in new roads one thing that is clear if you want to says a summantal benefit that widening roads or building new roads improves air quality you have to study it and that is not being done on the roads we're building in central Texas. It's obvious to some people that when you reduce traffic congestion that you're improving air quality. Well, ozone is much more complex so if that issue comes before this committee, I'd ask you to ask the good questions about what air quality benefit, if any, is there when cities are in non-attainment, noncompliance with, they have to do conforming analysis, look at each roadway segment and decide whether that is benefiting or disbenefit to air quality and that could be the case when you're building nor roadway capacity because you're opening up more opportunities for development, longer distances from people where they live and where they work and play. Please keep that in mind. I'm here to speak more about what we called in 2008 the green events ordinance that was a

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niche part of the special events ordinance and that is somewhere lost in a department file somewhere. It is ongoing, I'm joking, but what we need to know is that back in 2008 some advocates and staff and other folks came together and said we need to educate folks in the community as best we can through special events to say how can we save water, how can we reduce fuel use, reduce energy use, and as

important as that is, how important is it so people can make better decisions through their day-to-day life. And right now the special events ordinance, hopefully will come back to you sometime in 2015. Sorry if you can't read this too well but there's a transportation piece, a water piece and there's a piece at the bottom regarding enforcement. And this effort is one that can pay dividends if we implement it and make it part of the special events ordinance. I'm hoping even though it's within the transportation department, office of special events is there, it's also been worked on by the office of sustainability. So as you're looking at the parkland issue and putting together the task force for those people for the impacts of parkland, please be aware there's an environmental impact. Related to that I'm always concerned about the idea that we sometimes hire -- we sometimes recruit the people who are the most prominent or most prominent groups, sometimes the most overcommitted people to be on these task force groups and some of them can't even make it through the months that the task force is together, let alone stay with the task force beyond the time the report is given to council. As you're making those appointments please keep that in mind, that you want to get people who can stay with it beyond the time when the report is given. Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you so much, Scott. Thank you for coming.

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And Alan Rody. And Alan is the last person for general citizens communication. If there's anybody else who wanted to say anything -- all right, thanks. Alan, thank you for coming. >> Good afternoon. I would like to recommend a better way to develop the Decker lake parkland that will allow Austin citizens to enjoy our park, memory for people and tax revenue to the area than the golf course project. The city of Austin would promote nature tourism and develop our parkland do highlight our natural resources we could provide more activities for local recreation and tourism. I suggest we capitalize on our resources. We already have a Dechert lake. The tall grass reserve, Indian wildlife sanctuary, 290 acres and create a nature-based park for local recreation, tourism and science education and research. If we had a hotel and conference center similar to the public private canyon eagles nature park we can provide more jobs for the local community than the golf course. We could build another lady builder wildflower center, farmers market to benefit the neighborhoods, playgrounds for the children, walking trails, bicycle beltway, more picnic tables, canoe, kayak rentals that all citizens can use and enjoy. We can have educational programs for children, adults like the zilker nature center, working with the expo center we can add additional rv and camping sites through the the year bringing more revenue to the area. Using a proven business model like the Rio grande valley's ec crow tourism industry we can produce vastly more business activity, jobs, sales tax revenue than the current golf course plan. Almost 100,000 winter texans or out of state visits visit each

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year contributing \$710 million to the local community. We can attract some of those winter Texans to visit the Austin area on their way to/from the valley if we highlight nature based recreation and tourist resources adding the Dechert lake to our national treasures, wild basin, wildflower center, 20,000-acre federal balconies canyon land, UT, Hamilton pool, Colorado river, Zilker park, Lady Bird lake, the list just goes on and on, we have so much precious resources here we can highlight and make money off of. I know politicians always want the revenue stream so this would be much better, much healthier than the golf course plan. Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you, Mr. Rody. [Applause] >> Pool: That is the end of citizens communication of all the signups I have. I have other speakers for specific items on the agenda. I think I would just say that the cross-section of comments that we heard hear today are an indication of the Progressive policies that Austin has fostered in the past. That's why we have a lot of great parkland. We need to take better care of it, and I hope through the budgeting process that's coming this year and in future years we'll be able to free up enough money to do some of the things that need done with maintenance and operations and sustaining our existing parkland so we don't have to turn too much to monetizing the parks. There may be some ways to do that, but that would not be the sole source of revenue for our parkland. I thank you all for your comments. Moving on to the agenda, we have

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no minutes to approve. We have a couple of staff briefings and possible action. I will be asking the departments that feed into this committee as the months go on to make a high-level organizational description of the work they do and how it intersects with council committee and this month we're hearing from watershed protection and we have Victoria Li the department director and I know you have staff with you. So the floor is yours, thank you so much for being here. >> Thank you. >> Pool: Turn on your mic there. There you go. >> Okay. Yeah, I do have my assistant directors here. I would like for them to stand up so that committee can meet them. In the future they probably will appear very often before you. >> Mayor Adler: We have Joe, pan -- >> Pool: Thank you so much, Mike P, Jose, Chuck is here and Jessica who is our committee clerk. Thank you for bringing your staff along today. >> Thank you. [Applause] >> I'm here to just provide a very quick overview of the city's organizational structure in how watershed protection department works with all these different departments. The city of Austin has over 12,000 employees providing various services. It is generally organized into six major clusters based on types of services. Public safety, infrastructure, development, community services, plus administrative and support services. You can see this on this org chart we tried pretty hard to

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fit it into the screen. And so I'm going to go over each cluster and brief you, very briefly describe how we work together to protect the city of Austin's watersheds. Under the first cluster, we have the administrative services. We work with the special events office to make sure we minimize trash or cleanups after an event. The government relations monitors legislative initiatives so we can timely defend the city of Austin's watershed protection efforts. Under the cluster of public safety, the Austin code department helps us to enforce our rules. For example, no repairs are allowed when the structures in a 100-year flood plane has been substantially damaged. We have a 24/7 spill response team who helps the fire department to identify potential sources of pollution and responds to wildfire prevention and recovery. The police department assists watershed protection with road closures during flooding events. They help our spill response team at the scenes of all toll accidents. They also provide assistance to our department on homeless issues, for example, alerting the homeless to move to safety during floods. The homeland security and emergency management work with us very closely during predicted or actual floods. Our flood early warning staff are part of the activation team of the emergency center. Under the cluster of community services, watershed protection

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department collaborates with health and human services department on toxicology and environmental pollutants. For example, tar sealants. We're very active in existing the colony park master planning process administrated by neighborhood housing department. And with the parks department, they are really our sister department, we do many projects together, almost on a daily basis. Here are some examples. Riparian restoration projects in city parks, maintenance of Barton springs pool for protection of endangered species, as well as the dog parks and scoop the poop program. Under the infrastructure services cluster, we rely on Austin resource recovery to prevent trash and debris to enter our storm drain and creeks. We work together on brownfield development too. And with the transportation department complete street policy implementation and particularly the green street element, such as rain guardians in the right-of-way. We also have led the city's involvement in the environmental review of mobility projects, for example, the state highway 45. With Austin water utility we work together on the acquisition and management of water quality protection lands. We also worked together on prevention and response to water wastewater spills. Watershed protection department is also engaged in the recent water resource planning efforts. The capital planning office assists us with capital improvement projects coordination and long-term capital investment needs and. And public works department does our project delivery,

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specifically project management in construction -- and construction inspection. Under development services cluster, real estate office plays an essential role in our floodplain properties buyout programs and an acquisition of water quality protection land. I want to give a shout out particularly to Ms. Junie palmer in the real estate department. Working with the sustainability office is a great cherish pleasure. We participate in the sustainability leadership team. We represented the sustainability department to receive an excellence in sustainability award by the international city county management association last year in China. For planning and development review department, we provide funding and technical support for drainage and environmental review and code next with emphasis on water resource and green infrastructure. And we have provided direct support to the aviation department's master plan for their stormwater facilities. Under support services cluster, the communication and technology management department we call ctm is central to the development and maintenance to our flood early warning city manager. So other than all the internal departments we routinely work with aisd, Travis county, universities, lcra, hill country conservancy and many other for-profit, nonprofit partners to protect city of Austin's watersheds. So welcome back before the committee if you would like to know anymore details about any of our programs. >> Pool: Thank you so much. Does anyone here at this end of the table have any questions for Ms. Li?

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Sure, councilmember Zimmerman. >> Zimmerman: Thank you. Ms. Lee, we've been -- we had some conversations regarding wildfire mitigation and prescribed burns and if you could take a couple of minutes, I'd like to understand how Austin water and the watershed department -- are you guys still doing wildfire mitigation or prescribed burns? Could you tell me a little bit of the background about that? >> I think the burns controlled and planned by the water utility department. It's not by watershed. >> Zimmerman: Okay. So I had heard there was some watershed involvement but there's not? It's just Austin water utility? >> Yeah, we help whenever there is a wildfire in how to manage the debris and aftermath and the pollution. >> Zimmerman: Not prevention or mitigation but the aftermath? >> Yeah. >> Pool: I see Willie Conrad came to the table. To have in information you could help us with, sir? >> Willie Conrad, manage the wildlife conservation committee. Austin water utility has a prescribed burn program. We typically prescribe burn a thousand, 2,000 acres a here year as a land management practice for lands we manage. We also serve to help mitigate fuels in some cases. We've had the program ongoing for about ten years now it. It's a very successful program. With respect to wildfire prevention, we participate in along with watershed numerous other entities in the city and the county in the Austin task force, I served on the leadership team for the development of the Austin Travis county community wildfire protection plan, a very strong science based document that looks at wildfire risks in our

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community and approaches on how to mitigate those risks. I'm sorry, I'm kind of horse today. >> Pool: Thank you. Vice chair Garza. >> Garza: Those prescribed burns, are they done by firefighters? >> We have our staff that works on the prescribed burns as well as they're staffed by Austin fire department employees. Austin fire department works on the suppression and escape but we work on the suppression end of it. Our staff does the natural resource planning prescription development for the plans and then we participate in the execution of the ignition. >> Garza: Okay. Curious why that's not totally under the fire department. >> Nomics. Again, prescribed fire is not a fire fighting practice. It's a land management practice. If you look at Texas natural resource code it's described under the natural resource code as a land management practice. >> Okay, thanks. >> Tovo: So just to summarize, the firefighters -- the fire department are there to help to manage the actual fire, but it's your staff who determine which areas, and as you said, the natural resource piece of it. So it's a collaborative project. >> We had a collaboration for years. We had a mou that governs how we do it. Austin fire department and help staff and every one of the prescribed fires. >> Tovo: I appreciate that level of clarity. I do hear concerns in the community and I have to say there are firefighters there doing the fire piece. It's planned, organized, and the area is identified through our wild life. >> Of our programs, yes, ma'am.

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>> Tovo: Okay, thank you very much. >> Okay, thank you. Any other questions? We'll move now to item four which is -- thank you so much, Victoria and Willie. The status report on the pasture land. While staff are preparing for that, for the presentation, I would like to bring up -- David king had indicated he would like to speak on item 4. David is here -- all right, here he is. All right, hi, welcome. Good to see you again. >> Thank you chair, vice chair, committee members. I'm David king. I live in the zilker neighborhood. I want to say a few things about the master plan. We need to keep it away from the critical root Zones of the trees. You would think that just makes sense and I hope they're taking that to make sure the trails are routed away from the trees. We learned from the cyclocross event how easy it is to damage our heritage tree roots. A road essentially going through the urban areas would create an opportunity to harm the tree. I hope they take good care. And it strikes me having 12-foot-wide concrete trails going through the urban core of our city here. I know we need the trails. I'm not against the trails. It just looks like it's inconsistent to have that much concrete going in the urban core of Austin when we already have problems of flooding from too much impervious cover. So I hope we can get a good balance between and use the materials to minimize the impervious cover impact from the trails. We do need the trails. I'm for the trails. But I hope that we can do it in a way that really minimize the impervious cover impact. And also optimize the trail routes. As you just heard from an earlier speaker so that they are -- that they have the critical environment areas much less. It keeps the costs down and it

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makes sense. So I hope we're looking at the routes themselves as well to see if we can optimize those so we get a good balance between having the good connective trails in our urban core and minimizing the impact on the environment. Thank you very much. >> Pool: Thank you, David, so much. When we have the presentation, maybe staff could speak to the balance that we have in the urban trails, the master plan with the paved trails and the more nature path undeveloped or unimproved trails would be great. >> Are there any Mr. Speakers? >> Pool: No, you're on if you'll introduce yourself. Feel free to speak from there if you don't want to. >> I don't mind standing. I'm nadya Barrera, I'm the public trails programmer. I love to talk about urban trails >> Pool: Thank you for being here. >> I love being here. Here's my agenda of the presentation. I'll give you a brief overview about the urban trails and I'll talk about the urban trail plan's requirements. Then I'll talk about project updates. We have specific projects I want to tell you about. And finally I'm going to end with seeking a recommendation. I want to let you know that I thought be on the April 23 council agenda. I will be applying for -- I hope to apply for federal funding to complete and construct one of the trails. And the application requires a resolution from council for me to be able to apply. So I will be seeking that recommendation from council later on next month. If I can ever get -- sorry. Okay, thanks. Urban trails, as you heard, they are in the network in the abilities. They are all-weather trails so it allows people to roll on them when it's wet and it provides

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accessibility for people in wheelchairs or scooters or roller blades. So it's definitely for a variety of uses for biking and walking and other uses. These seven bullets you see, though, are directly from the plan. So these are the goals of the plan. I want to, you know, pull your attention to number six and seven, which state that urban trails should be contact sensitive, environmentally sustainable, and not only preserve but also improve upon wild life habitat. Which means we have to coordinate with the watershed protection department, we have to coordinate with the parks department. We coordinate with the water utility in the bccp. So it involves a collaboration from all of the different departments. Prior to the master trail being passed, we had different departments doing trails on their own. So this plan provides us a vehicle and allows for the collaboration to happen regularly and gives us a specific flow for implementing trails. This is taken again directly from the plan. I'm going to start on the left and work our way right. As an urban trail is identified in the plan first, the first bullet you can see there on the left, we would identify funding for a preliminary feasibility report. We hire a certified wild life biologist that does an analysis of the proposed trail location. We were able to include it all in the plan. After that report, we had preliminary engineering meetings. We are required to have meetings with those who are going to be within 500 feet of the affected

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area. We have two meetings and two open house meetings to get feed back on the proposed location of the plan. These are in the feasibility stages. The next step is to identify the per using the feedback. Then we go through the permitting process. I want to draw your attention to the next little bit, the 36% design. Many of the projects today are at this stage. We're here today at the council meeting to present these projects to you. Let's see. I want to make sure I'm hitting all my -- so I do want to note that some of the projects happened before the plan was passed. So we are kind of filtering those through and we have to retroactively go through this process. So this is a little bit of an animation. This is the entire -- all of the trails that are proposed in the plan, over 450 miles. We -- this would take, you know, 100 years for us to build. So this is just a conceptual plan that kind of gives us an idea of how to connect people with places. I know it looks like a bunch of jumble on your paper there because it's animated so you can draw your attention to the screen. This is 27 miles of what we consider urban trail. Next I'm showing you -- the pink doesn't pop out as much as I like, but it's 60 miles of what we consider a tier one trail. Tier one are those trails with the highest priority. These are the ones that the city is actually pursuing to construct. Many of the projects are identified today. But we are -- these are the ones that we hope to build within the next 5 to 20 years. So these are the current urban trails that are under construction. There are six of them that I'll be talking about. I'll mainly talk about number five there. Northern walnut creek trail, phase one, you'll hear later on today. From the north to work my way down.

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Perishing trail is in collaboration with the watershed protection department and connects the Miller neighborhood to mlk boulevard. Next, shoal creek trail from 15th to 24th, they're doing the stream bank restoration. Also with the parks department. So we worked with those three departments to improve the location. Shoal creek from 3rd to 5th street, completing a gap in the existing trail, the parks department, the watershed department, and the development on that section. Because it's near the Seaholm development. And mope pack mobility bridges I will talk more about later in my presentation. I have an issue with my clicker. There we go. Urban trails under design. So it's approximately 12 miles. Again, starting from the top, northern walnut creek trail phase 2 is under design. You'll hear more about that later. The shoal creek pickle connector connects the terminus of the shoal creek boulevard to the campus. You can go all the way up to shoal creek boulevard and go to the domain and everything up there. Getting an unseparated path, that would be great, Austin manor trail phase 2, the upper boggy creek trail and pedernales connector. Country club creek trail connects Mabel Davis park to Burleson road. The violet crown trail is something I'll be talking about in my presentation as well. And the ybc trail is the Wyatt oak uphill to Barton creek. It's approximately five miles but very preliminary stages of that trail. That will connect the A.C.C. Pinnacle campus to the mow pack mobility bridge project. Okay. So

once we have a all of the existing projects that are existing today plus the design plus the ones under construction we have approximately 45 miles

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of trail. So we hope to complete those in the near future. So the first project I'll be telling you about today is the mow pack mobility bridges project. This project has happened in accordance with the tx-dot and this is kind of an overall map. And it -- the map here that you can see on your screen extends from bar on the springs road to A.C.C. Pinnacle campus. And I'm going to zoom in, which is what you can see easier on your paper copy there. So there we go. This project connects tuscan terrace to Gaines ranch loop. These are smaller streets that you're probably not familiar with, but they are -- they have an existing -- so the tuscan terrace has an existing sidewalk along mow pack. So we're doing that and building two bridges over 360 and an additional bridge over Barton creek that will tie in to Gaines ranch and go along southwest parkway. The interesting thing about this project is we're coordinating with tx-dot. Tx-dot is managing the construction for us. One of the added benefits is they're able to remove the shoulder of the southbound vehicle lane and add an extra vehicle lane for traffic when they move the shoulder for the bicycle and pedestrian rates. They have the capacity of southbound mow pack with this project. It should be complete by spring 20616 and I have listed there the various funding mechanisms by which this project is being completed. So here's a rendering of that project. And this is over Barton creek. The next project I'll be talking about is the violet crown trail. >> Pool: Can I ask a quick question. Looking at the rendering, it looks like there's no new borings into the aquifer there. It's all based on the pylons

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that are in place? >> No. You can kind of see separate columns. >> Pool: They're separate columns? Okay. >> Mm-hmm. >> Pool: Looked like it was cantilevered off the side. >> I'm Chad Craiger, the general manager of public works, this project was going to cantilever off of the existing columns. Through research in the preliminary design and bringing some folkings out of tx-dot of retirement, we found this bridge could not take the load of an additional bicycle bridge. So because of that, we worked very closely with the engineers add well as the environmental stakeholders in Austin to come up with a foundation that's very sensitive in the environment there. They're micropile foundations. What they are is a bunch of little foundations that sets up a massive foundation and allows them to go much shallower, twha they use for the windmills or turbines in west Texas. This is the first time we're doing that but it's an important context for this Barton creek area. >> Pool: Yes, councilmember Zimmerman? >> Zimmerman: Yes. You don't have to be an engineer to figure this out. Take a look at the scale drawing,

the astonishing the lowellding this thing could take because the concrete reinforced steel beams on the green part of the new construction. They're about the same capacity as the ones supporting the -- >> They are. Most of this -- we are the micropiles are in the ground in the next two weeks. All of the construction with the exception of a few small trucks to get workers down there will be done at night from the bridge just to be extra sensitive to the environment there. So concrete poured for the columns. The beams themselves will be lower from the top. And we have worked very closely for years with the stakeholders because we recognize the significance of this area. >> Zimmerman: But the design loading looks tremendous like it could handle an 18 wheeler. >> The main load is the wind load. It is 70 feet tall.

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>> We're not seeing how high off of the ground. >> Not a little project but a fantastic way to get over a barrier we've had for decades in this area. >> Pool: I might suggest to my committee colleagues to go down and check it out. >> I would be happy to schedule a tour if anyone is interested. >> Tovo: Do it on bikes? >> Not quite ready for that yet. Still a construction site. But I would be happy to take everyone down there. >> Pool: Southbound on the mow pack if you're daring enough. >> Okay. There we go. So the violet trail is a partnership with a hill country conservancy. As you can see here, you don't have it in your copy paper, there are multiple different partners working on the completion of this trail. The urban portion is the portion from u.s.-290 to the lady bird Johnson center. There are other sections of this trail that will not be a concrete trail. They will be a nature trail. So, for example, it really -- the violent crown trail begins at zilker park and takes advantage of existing green belt and continue down to Austin water utility conservation lands but it will not be what is considered an urban trail. So the section that I'm talking about today is this little section here from convict hill to the Hampton library. And zoom in here - - we will begin -- we have to begin construction in September of 2015 and be complete by summer of next year. We are actively completing a preliminary engineering report for the section from Home Depot boulevard to the Arbor trails development. And as I mentioned, there are other sections that would be constructed by other departments within the city. And the hill country conservancy. The next project I'm going to

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tell you about is the country club creek trail. >> Pool: Hold on. We have a question from vice chair Garza? >> Okay. >> Garza: Back to the book, sorry, the previous projects, is that -- are those like the red and the yellow? Is that sidewalks? So is it -- are we putting down more concrete, basically? >> Which section? >> Garza: Like the red. It says the existing sidewalks and then this red. >> Yes, it will be a bridge and kind of like a wide sidewalk. So the existing sidewalk is there today. And you can see it ends at

tuscan terrace. And then we're tying in to that existing sidewalk. >> Garza: So we're adding more sidewalk? >> Right. Yes >> Garza: All of this is adding impervious cover. >> Right. And adjacent to mow pack and it will be bridges over loop 360. So you'll actually be able to -- if you're going the mall and you're going on -- on 360 towards Barton creek square mall, you will see a bridge over and adjacent to mow pack and we plan on doing some creative art there on the bridge. >> Garza: Okay. And the violet crown is that also? >> The brand? Yes. >> Garza: Impervious cover? >> Yes. >> Garza: And that's because it's for bikes or? >> For all ages and abilities, yes. For people in wheelchairs and people that are using -- yes, go ahead. >> Chad Craiger one more time. One thing I wanted to point out is that our urban trails are standard width is 12 feet hard surfaced. The reason for that -- this is important, is that what we found from talking to stakeholders all over Austin as well as looking at best management practice from around the world, the average person really wants a hard surface. Because if you're on a bicycle, if you're using anything with wheels, it's much better. And we've also found that when

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you use a soft surface, you have decomposed granite. What happens is if there's a rainstorm, all of that decomposed granite washes off in to the watershed. Maintaining decomposed granite is extremely expensive. Six times more annually to maintain that versus a hard trail after some construction impacts and we're careful, it's armored so there are not anymore environmental impacts after the construction is complete. So we intentionally put down a hard surface trail for many reasons, for users, for the environment, to maintenance. >> Pool: We have different types of trails. >> Yes, ma'am. >> Pool: We have urban trails. Specific urban trails are defined as the ones that are improved, the 12-feet-wide. And we also have a trail system that has unimproved or less improved nature trail for the kind of walkways where you have the pervious cover, what you might find when we were kids going through the woods. >> Yes, ma'am. >> Pool: It may be we won't hear a lot about that in this particular presentation because we're specifically focusing on the trails that are improved so that bikes can go on them. And I know there's a very involved collaborative effort over the number of years with the bicycle community to make sure that we are able to commute more south, east, west off road and on these kinds of roadways. >> Right, baultz one of the things we found in the urban trial master plan is the number with one place people want to ride a bicycle is off of the street, slight. >> Pool: Where it's shady and not as dangerous. >> We progress with different material types. We're looking at pervious surfaces. There haven't been any yet that have not important issues with maintenance. But every year, we're looking to do that. >> Pool: Great. >> Garza: What is weight be considered? >> Decomposed trail for the most

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part. That's for most sections. That's a pervious surface. It allows the water to go through. But the reality is as you compact the decomposed granite, it's harder than regular soil. The parks department is careful of that. But with the exception of the board walk and the places that wash out, that's a decomposed granite trail. >> Garza: Not considered part of the urban trail infrastructure? >> Not considered that for urban trails. It's a hard surface like we mentioned before. >> Garza: Thank you. >> We also call them mobility trails, right? >> Pool: It's also an important point of this. >> Zimmerman: Design life, you engineer these things with the design life. 30 years, 50 years, what's the design life? >> 40 to 50 years. >> Zimmerman: 40 to 50. >> Pool: Thanks. >> Sure. Let me see, I was talking about country club creek. This is a project that's been around for a decade. It connects the data, part two of the Roy G. Guerrero park. We just finished our report, we had stakeholder meetings this past winter. The stakeholders unanimously decided they would prefer for us to begin section one, the southernmost section that connects Mabel Davis directly to Burleson road. It's about a half a mile. Half of it would be on the road, which would mean we would be constructing a sidewalk. And the rest of it is in parkland and in the Austin energy easement. We hope to begin design -- or have the design complete by may of this year, construction to begin fall this year and it be complete by spring of next year. Again, we'll be working with the parks department to complete subsequent sections of this trail. So upper body trail.

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This red line is the red line trail. It's about 30 miles. And it connects lay by -- lady bird lake all the way to the station. We were talking about this tiny little square. Having technical difficulties. I think this thing needs batteries. I cannot -- sorry. There we go. Okay. So it connects 12th street to the mlk station. We will be including one new creek crossing. It's about half a mile. The Meredith family has donated an easement for the trail and it's at 97% designed and currently seeking funding for the construction of this trail. Again, we've worked with the watershed department, the planning development review department looking at -- we walked the trail with an arborist to discuss any trees that need to be mitigated. So that is that project. Any questions? >> Pool: You sure can. Ms. Rivera. >> Ms. Rivera: -- >> Pool: Turn your mic on, please? >> Ms. Rivera: Can you explain what has accounted for the flooding that occurs regularly down the creek since the trail is going to be right there? >> Right. I do not know the answer to that question, actually. >> Ms. Rivera: Okay, I didn't mean to put you on the spot. >> It's okay. As part of any watershed requirements, we have to follow watershed requirements. It can't have any rise. It can't be .01 of an inch. We have extensive models when we work near a watershed. We get approval because it recognizes the impact that the

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watershed has. So for this project for down's field, we are in the 100-year flood plain because down's field is it in that flood plain. But no adverse impact with different mitigation measures that we've done as part of the trail project. >> Ms. Riviera clts I was more concerned with the future of the park itself. It floods every 100 years -- it's more like every five years. I was concerned it might be washed out. >> It does. We recognize there will be trails all over Austin, at times, in big events, they will be underwater. We design appropriately for that. >> Thank you. Thank you, chair. >> Pool: You're welcome. >> Okay, the last one, Austin to manor trail phase 2. So to orient you. The southern walnut creek trail at the bottom left hand corner begins at go valley park. It extends three miles. Innocent the phase one begins through Daffin lane and Walter E. Long park and ends at lyndell lane. This finishes this trail from the lane all the way to Ben E. Fisher park. The length of this section is approximately three miles. I wanted to spring your attention to some of the Poe terrible connections it would make. It would connect to the manor expressway path, Parmer lane, and the creek trail, a proposed trail by Travis county. The new manor high school directly in this vicinity. This addressed three low water bridges along an existing rail line. It's cap metro right of way. So we're skirting the outside of cap metro right of way.

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We hope it will be complete by next year and seeking \$6 million in federal funds to work on this trail. We're trying to seek a local match for the application and using existing design and preliminary engineering work as our in kind match. So if the trail project were funded, it would bl complete by spring 20618. I they that's all I have. >> Pool: Let's see if anyone as the dais has a question. I have one resident who would like to make a comment on item four. Come on up. Any questions at this point for nadya or for Craig? Thank you so much. If the committee could get -- I think we all love maps. And do you -- I bet you have maps of each of the different sections specific to the districts that we're all representing? >> Mm-hmm. >> Pool: Maybe provide us with a master, one map, a fairly large one that we can see. >> Sure. >> Pool: And more specifically to the different districts. Does it sound like something y'all would like to have? >> It is. I don't need one. There's nothing in district six. Not even close. You want to go back with the map. Look with all of the -- >> Yes. >> Zimmerman: Nothing is close. It's really strange. We have so much open space. There's more open territory in district 6 than any other district. So common sense. There's nothing in the way. And the beautiful open spaces here. No trails. >> Pool: That might be something that we should address. >> What I'm showing you here is the proposed network. Everything, and I think that there are definitely opportunities in district 6. I would be happy to discuss that further. For recommendations, for example, if you think a tier 2 trail should be raised to a higher priority, it's something we would be happy to discuss.

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>> Zimmerman: There are several tier 2 trails in district six. The red line trail is one large one. But when we worked with stakeholders in the urban trail master plan, it was determined what was a tier 1 trail based on stake holder input at the time. Keep in mind, these lines are not exact ape linements, but really a way to get from one point to another. So we don't know exactly where it would go. But the overall network does represent Austin fairly well. >> Pool: I think the other point is the city has grown outward from its core over time and there are some parts of town that are newer, relatively speaking, than others. And there may have been available land in some parts of town that were more -- that were easier to make trails than others as well. We should keep in mind -- maybe there was some information on when a trail was begun. Some of these are very old. >> I wanted to mention that exactly. This map is come prized of recommendations from economisting neighborhood plans from the parks long Wang and facilities plan and from our master plan. Any of the trails, even Roy can tell you. The ones he worked on in the '80s and '90s, that's what informed this map. >> Pool: To the extent that parts of town haven't had neighborhood planning or processes, they would be missing from here. They didn't have the input avenuings, I suppose, to request those amenities. The council is very aware of the deficits. This is a particular one in 6. Thank you so much. Was there anything else you want to say about that? Councilmember Zimmerman? >> Zimmerman: No. >> Pool: Great. Roy. >> I apologize. I apologize when I turned in my sheet earlier, I only handed in one instead of both. So thank you very much.

[3:31:00 PM]

I did want to say that from the beginning, what Austin Sierra club is reporting, that there is part of an alternative transportation system. The highway transit system back when I was a kid, we went for a Sunday drive. They were for recreational purposes. Now no one goes for a Sunday drive. So while the trails are primarily for transportation, they are also for recreation. And they were family enjoyment and letting everybody get out. Also, we were uncomfortable with the surface also. Until we looked at the cost benefits of it and the fact that the maintenance would be that much simpler. And then how it allows members of our Ada community to get out and enjoenjoy parts of Austin they would not be able to enjoy otherwise and nay were pleased with the transportation system that was being set up not just for the safety of getting around, but for the enjoyment of getting around. I'm excited about the trail. The sidewalk along Lamar is a major thoroughfare for a cyclist. It's like our freeway. But not pat 24th and Lamar where I got hit, again, by a car the other night. And after that is finished, that will put people underneath the car traffic bridge. And it will be a safer way for us to get around. Of course, by the time all of this is done, I'll be using training wheels or three-wheel cycle. But it's exciting to see that this is going to be a part of

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our choice that we get to make. To councilmember Zimmerman's question about the open space in district 6, most of that -- much of that open space has become this part of the bcp. Sierra club does not support putting trails through the bcp. Either these trails or recreation trails because that is set aside for a specific purpose and not as part of our transportation system. We don't support putting roadways through there. We don't support putting bikeways through there. Thank you very much. >> Pool: I'll make one comment. When we have the presentation on walnut creek trail construction, the aspect of the Ada trail played an interesting role in the development up there. That plays out further. Thank you, Roy. And in the interim, I got one last card for item number four which is for nadya and Craig. Thank you so much. You might hang out if there's some questions. >> I would like to make a real quick comment. One thing that was not mentioned, boggy creek trail, trees will be removed. From Austin to manor, for that little tiny section, there will be 25 trees removed. Some of them are for legacy. How many are protected trees? How many heritage trees? How many are getting a variance? So it's okay to have this for recreation and for what price? Are we willing to pay the price of removing heritage and protected trees and also trees 50 meters or larger, they need to be protected because they grow very slowly and we're moving so many for the drought, that's why the request for the plea to redo it. So now they have a plan to remove it.

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We have to deal with the leftovers from before. They said they did not want the requirements to suffer. They didn't want the trees to be removed. I think everyone is in agreement of that. >> Pool: We have us removing two heritage trees and two protected trees and mitigating for the trees. We understand that shade is important for the trail experience. For the Austin to manor trail, we'll be removing no heritage trees. We're trying as best we can to avoid trees at all costs. We're building sand bridging which is the root zone when we can. It's very important. >> Pool: Can you explain why the trees in the boggy creek are the first ones, why those were targeted during that? >> The boggy creek trail connects to an at berry crossing at the mlk train station. Anyone there can see whether there's a future trail. At the end of that platform, the cap metro building train station happens to be a heritage tree. There's no way we can avoid it. We have to connect to that. That was built years ago. It was not in the best condition. We walked the area several times with the a city arborist. We actually changed the alignment of the trail to avoid as many trees as we could. Many of the trees that's been mentioned are -- they're way under the protective or invasive in that area. All of the trees we're impacting, we're on the watershed department on saplings in the area. We care about the trees. We do all we can. We appreciate the comments as we move forward with every alignment and working with her to do the appropriate thing. >> Pool: Thank you so much. Thank you, all. We'll move to item number five if there are no other questions on four.

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And I have three people who are signed up to speak on this. On the walnut creek trail construction. I'll go ahead and take -- I have five cards for comments, which is great. So I have Kate Hamilton, who lives in walnut creek, Hornberg, Eric Harris, Charles rear, and meg Davis. And -- all right, hi. You must be Kate Hamilton. >> Yes. >> Pool: Welcome. >> I didn't realize y'all have technology here. So I put pictures on a tab let which I can -- if you all want to swipe through them, you can find them really easily on Google. >> Pool: You know what, we can't quite hear you just yet, meg. If you could get a little closer to the mic. And if you have more that you would like to share, you might share it to jessica.coronado@austintexas.gov . She will make sure we all will get that. >> I can go to the dropbox. >> Pool: However you guys work it out, it's fine with me. It will be great to have it as part of the record. Thank you. >> So, thank you for your time, Kate Hamilton. I've lived for ten years now at cedar brook. We are -- the last time I measured, we're 200 feet from the creek. And we're on two feet above the creek. So it's basically the creek and then there's a long flat area, and then there's us. So the one thing I ask you to remember when they tell you that they're not worried about flood and mitigation and they've done all their hydrology, one, we live in the 10-year flood zone. I asked the city, I said how do I know my house won't get flooded. And they said we did this whole thing with all these very

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complicated algorithms and math and stuff and we're pretty sure your house won't get flooded. I said, how do you know? They said, well, we wait until it rains. The second thing to keep in mind is that they have marked the trees on an empty lot 200 feet between the creek and my house where the path is going to run. Twice since we had that meeting, it has been underwater. So you think 12 feet wide impervious, close to 400 feet, that's a nonimpervious area that's twice the amount of impervious area of my house, there's no way my house is not going to end up underwater. The math just does not add up. So the next thing I wanted to segue into is I do not actually have a problem against bike paths. I grew up in the D.C. Area. I spent most of my days with the exception of when there was snow, all the rest of the time, I was on the bike path. George Washington memorial bike trail. Look it up. This is how you do it right. Because I don't know what's going on with how bike trails are done here in Austin, but clearly they're designed by people who believe that we who ride bikes should be punished for not being in cars. So there's several points I want to bring up as a biker who likes to go fast -- that's an important detail to remember. First thing is, the width is conducive to vehicles. There should never be a risk that I should come around a corner and run into an SUV when I'm on a bike path. And 12 feet wide, there's no way we're going to block vehicles because with the Ada, you can't necessarily do that. I'm kind of worried about that. And why is it that you have to have 12 feet wide when every other bike trail I've been on in other cities is six feet wide. I know everything is bigger in Texas, but come on, people, this is a little bit much. The second thing is if you look at walnut creek, a lot of it is

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straight shot. What happens when it's a straight shot is you gain speed. And if I hit somebody on a bike and I'm going 25 miles per hour, one of us is going to the hospital. 25 miles per hour is awfully fast and it's not that hard to hit it on a bike and when it's one long straight shot, not a problem. >> Pool: Thank you so much, meg. We might be able to answer some of the questions that I heard you asking. >> Okay. >> Pool: The width and the roadway. I think their -- the term roadway doesn't actually mean that it's a road. And we shouldn't have any SUVs on the bike trails. It sounds like you're telling me that you've seen them, but that's happened. And the 12-foot-wide, I think that's an Ada compliance stat. And we -- nadya or Craig. >> We were told at the last meeting it would be six foot wide? >> Pool: Okay, Craig? >> The reason for the 12-foot standard is that most cities in Texas are -- around the country, they had a 10-foot standard. While that's okay day one. What happens in ten years is it's just too narrow. So all of them wish they would have gone to a wider trail in the beginning to accommodate the users. Six feet wide if you've been on a sidewalk, that's fine on a sidewalk. But we want a place to walk or have a wheelchair or a scooter or bicycle and feel comfortable. So it needs to be wider for the appropriate Numbers of users that we expect to see on the trails in Austin. >> Pool: Again, the Ada compliance factor? >> The Ada compliance -- for the Ada, it doesn't need 12 feet. In general, it has to be five feet for a sidewalk. We're doing it for all users, whether it's the Ada. The Ada comes in play when you talk about the slopes, going up and down, if you will. But as far as trails, mainly because it's best management practice for the users, if you have a skinny trail, fantastic if you're hiking but if you ride a bike and you have a bike

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trailer with kids in the back, it's difficult to do that. And it makes it for a safer trail wider especially around the corners. >> Pool: Thank you. Thank you so much, Ms. Hamilton. I hope you'll be safe on the trails, please. All right, thank you. Mr. Hornberg. >> Actually, Eric is going to speak first then Charles and -- >> Pool: You bet you. So Eric and Kernan, are you going to speak at all? Maybe later. Y'all just tell me who's going to be next, then? Hi. >> Eric. I'm on the -- can I pass some paperwork out? Wasn't sure about the format. Didn't know if that would get to y'all ahead of time or not. Got control of the presentation. Thank you. We're here out with the billwood neighborhood association. I'm on the board. My area is park and green belt and trail issues. Our president meg Davis is here Mr. Hornberg is here. Charles roo with Austin ridge riders here. We have a couple of neighbors in the crowd. Balcones park is on the west end of the northern walnut creek trail phase one project and it's in the watershed association's boundaries and Millwood is across the street and abuts the park across the street. We're here because we're really concerned with the completion of this project being delayed yet again. We have a sign in the balcones trail head and they installed a couple hundred feet of trail in balcones park. And there's a huge gap missing between us and walnut creek

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park. The whole park was designed to go from balcones park to walnut creek park. 3 1/2 miles of 10-foot-wide shared use trail. The project was perceived much longer ago, but the construction started sometime in 2009. It was halted in 2011 due to issues between the contractor and the project management. They basically just stopped and walked off of the job. This is after they cleared tall way the balcones trail head to mow pack. The environmental controls were left just to the winds of nature. The project is redesigned or rebid and the contract was awarded in 2013. The completion of the entire project was recently scheduled for November of 2014, last fall. However, the development permit hasn't been secured to complete the project, so the project was initiated to be done under general permits within disputed areas. So a small section of balcones. Jumped down to mow pack, did a section there. And started working in walnut creek park. They've had walnut creek park, sections of that closed off for over a year now. The mountain biking community has built a lot of those trails. It's just sitting by waiting for them to finish. I've got some exhibits a little later showing what's been done and what hasn't. But there was a miscue in the section of the park in the trail in balcones to require a 14 foot section of the trail because it called for them to go down one of the steepest slopes in the park which required the Ada grades. The neighborhood met with public works and we felt there was a

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viable way to get Ada access within the park, but they looked at redoing the sidewalk within the neighborhood to meet Ada standards and just abandoning the section within the park. We didn't feel that was the right thing to do. But it -- and after some negotiations the city of public works agreed to redesign the section of park in the trail and put a switchback in to get down the grade without the 14-foot fill section. We had a meeting. Looked at alternate trail designs. Then no further communication until earlier this year, we were told that the project was actually going to be put off because of a sewer line project that is going to be done in the project vicinity and because of a listing of the salamander which there's a perennial spring in the park that's the habitat for that endangered Spee sieze. We don't feel there are ways to overcome these issues and get the project back on track. We can outline those in a minute. We wrote a letter to the parks director asking for a meeting and explained our concerns and how we can get the project moving forward before 2017, which is the new completion date. We got a response from public works that basically said, no, you know, no need to meet. This is the way it's going to happen. So we're here to ask for some help, to get this thing done right. And, you know, there's some great presentations earlier. We're fully in support of all of the goals. But this is where things go wrong. During construction, permits are an issue. Things are overlooked. Neighborhoods aren't consulted in a

timely manner and the wheels come off. And it's time to roll up our sleeves and get it working again so we can get our project -- get our park back, and I'll show you our issues of concern -- delay.

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The overall project is the -- the procedure has been -- progress has been frustratingly slow. Ten bridges planned, the paperwork says 9 but there are A and B bridges in there. Three have been completed. One is 3 1/2 miles of trail originally planned, only about a mile has been constructed and 2500 was under that first contract when the contractor walked off of the job. And that section of the trail was not complete. It was paved but the contractor pulled off the form lumber leaving dropoffs along the trail. Leaving environmental controls and waste chemicals on the site. A third of the park has been unable to use for over a year. The existing trails have been disrupted in this time. I've been living in Millwood for 20 years. The trails existing in the area, one of the reasons I moved to the neighborhood. I've been able to ride from the neighborhood to Walnut Creek Park all these years using back roads, combination streets and back roads. I have to find a new detour every time I go now because of the construction blocking things off. The delay in Balcones Park makes no sense. The service of the community has been waiting for five years now. The reason for the delay is the endangered species listing and the sewer project. They wanted to include 35 feet of trail in a sewer project but only 400 feet of the projects overlap. I can show you on the exhibit. It exists on the existing sewer construction and there's trails that could be rerouted for trails to be used. If we can get 85% of the trail built now and only have to wait

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for the last 400 feet, we'll be better off, the healing and the restoration of the park can begin that much sooner. The watershed and the trail construction area where it will occur, it bypasses the spring where the Salamander is found. It's curious that the Salamander has been brought up because a couple of weeks ago parks went in and put new asphalt millings down in the creek bed below the spring where it lived. It's been removed and it required vacuum removal. There's no certainty that the project would be initiated in a timely manner and if it will ever be built. Further issues of concern are safety. The completed sections of the trail are largely isolated from the intent of users. Has a lot of camps and illegal dump sites. The neighborhoods have been cleaning up this park in anticipation for the trail opening. Delaying it for another four years, those areas are going to revert to areas of illicit activity. >> Pool: If you want to finish up, you have another -- >> I'd like to defer my three minutes. I would like to point out on the agenda item one it would be confusing because it said that people would be allowed three minutes to address items not on the agenda. We were not under the impression that we needed to get enough folks here to -- >> Pool: How long. >> I can speed it up. I can go to the exhibits and illustrate some

points. >> Pool: We're looking at our clock which is how we kind of measure everybody and staff has a presentation and I think at the end of your presentation I'm hoping staff will be able to specifically address some of the concerns that you're raising.

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And if they can't do them here today, we can convene a meeting afterward to have some more specific conversations. But I think it's helpful you all are here today to raise the issues for the committee. Go ahead -- you think five minutes, you'll be able to finish up? Okay, thanks, Eric. >> This is an exhibit. This is the balcones park to mopac section. This is the 10-foot shared use path. In yellow, the Ada use sidewalk. So you can see in balcones park on the left-hand side, there's a section of trail that basically takes us to where there was an existing sidewalk, albeit not Ada compliant which now the blue line is the original path through the park. The purple line is basically the proposed switchback that's highly idealized, of course, to get down the slope. Basically you're traversing from -- you're traversing the balcones discontment. You're going from the jolly well plateau to the balcones fault zone to a lower lying area. That's why it's a steep area. The perennial spring is with an arrow. A bridge started to be constructed under the first contract, that was abandoned. The red section, there was a dogleg and section done to get across mopac. Proceeding to the east towards past mopac, the yellow dash line is the section of trail that was built by the original contractor who basically walked off of the job in 2011. The blue line continuing to the west is uncompleted trail. That area has been cleared. One bridge is under construction. Three more bridges to be completed to get to metric boulevard. Past metric boulevard, we go through a park that's used by a

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lot of the apartment dwellers in the nearby apartments. Trail continues and then it enters walnut creek park where the trail has been cleared with only the sections in red completed with over a years work. This is what we've seen with the two completed bridges shown and the parking lot which was paving on an existing unpaved lot. Back to balcones park. This is an exhibit of the proposed sewer line. The sewer line is actually sort of in the bottom of the page where the outline is on the plan sheets. The blue lines are the continuation of the trail of the balcones park trail head, plus or minus 1800 feet and the other connection is to the mopac trail connection. The dark shaded area circle in red, that's the area of project overlap where the construction crews will need to get down to the creek area and follow the creek down to a manhole to access a manhole where that waste water line is going to tie in. I should point out I'm a civil engineer. I am former city of Austin employee. So I know how these projects are supposed to be done. And I can see that this isn't going the right way. This is an exhibit relative to trail user safety.

This is some of the stuff cleaned up by the neighborhoods. 2013 silt fence abandoned by the original contractor. Transient dump, camps, all matter of junk and debris were cleaned up from the park in anticipation of the trail moving in to that area. The next year, we moved further underneath mopac. Again, a number of dumps cleaned up. Not as much construction debris because the project -- the section of the trail has just opened up.

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Just to the south, last -- first weekend in March, we cleaned up some more -- there's sidewalk closed barricades from the project that got away from them when the water came up. Role of tx-dot material from the project. Several camps were cleaned up from this area. This is an area that basically has a dead end trail unless it's completed and there aren't going to be many people using it. The neighborhoods are anxious to get out there and reclaim this area as public space. And it's not going to happen if we're going to -- if the area is going to revert to criminal activity. It's not a place where you want to take somebody right now. This is an example of what the park looked like for the past this is abandoned. The safety fence gets pulled off. It washes off in the storms. Ends up in the creek. There's mulch shock netting. It gets washed down the creek. The trail was clear all the way to mopac. People are using it. >> Pool: Eric, thank you. Do you want to wrap up. We do have the full packet and it's quite extensive and there's a lot of really good information in there. Our committee has a hard stop at 5:00. >> Okay. >> Pool: We have the presentation from staff. And I think that our conversation will continue in maybe offline forum where we can sit down and go through all of these things. But let's see how Marty, this is Richard Duane here? Let's see what you have to say

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and we might be surprised. Maybe there's >> Just closing remark, I didn't talk about ridge rider, a lot of us are after individual mountain bikers, they built a lot of the great trails in walnut creek park and they need restoration and it seems like the restoration criteria are either not being followed or folks are unaware of that from the city's side and we'd like to bring that to your attention, get them to address those restoration concerns. Thank you. Thank you for your time. >> Pool: How are you Marty? Thanks for being here. >> Doing well Marty stump, parks and recreation department, manage the capital improvement program for parks and rec, here with Richard Duane and Carrie assistant director social security well. We're here to answer questions and respond to citizen concerns about the overall project. I did want to start the presentation with sort of a broader view of the walnut creek trail city manager, kind of narrow in, zoom in, and then provide some context for the conversation here because it has been a long-term project and phased project over a number of years. As Mr. Whaley indicated 20 years

ago, kind of a vision plan prepared for the walnut creek district, Austin metro trails council really part of a -- excuse me, kind of a broader look at city trails and of course this project predated the urban trails master plan. I went one slide beyond. Back one slide, please? My backup button is not working here. Okay. So really the overall context and there's a lot of conversation here about where

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the trails are and kind of the geographic alignment in the vision planning done years ago really envisioned a had you been and spoke network when you think about lady bird lake lake and butler creek lake, they correspond geographically with the creeks but natural trail areas for to follow. Walnut creek trail city manager follows that model of a spoked trail really intended to connect neighborhoods and parkland to the north down into the urban court at lady bird lake. So the project was -- had a vision plan, master plan overall and obviously there was land acquisition and easements and procurements and a lot of planning and physical work to be conducted in order to build the project in phases and so I want to speak hear really quickly in terms of the phases of the work sort of in the order of completion. And a lot of conversation about being transportation routes but also a public health public, provide for active recreation, nature contact, so really ultimately these are multiple outcomes for the trail, the trail city manager. In terms of order of construction, we completed the southern walnut creek trail section here this past summer and there that was a seven-mile section completed. This trail is a 10-foot wide section. As Chad indicated national best practices, astro standards in terms of trail, trail speed, those sorts of things so we design to that ten to 12-foot one as a standard. Projects are complex, obviously in the green belts, there are creek, creek crossings, challenging terrain, construction access is a major challenge for these projects as well. It's not like it's just a very cohesive and comprehensive site, these things are linear in failure so access is particularly challenging leading ultimately to the project cost and complexity and of course the

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time line. We're very pleased with the performance and the result of the southern walnut creek trail section. Again, that was a section, the first phase of the overall project completed last summer. Next in sequence in the trail section that we're speaking of here, more specifically is northern walnut creek trail phase one. That's the 3.2-mile section we're talking about, multiple trail heads, bridges, creek crossings. Funded in part with grants matching by city money typically bond money under the parks trail program. Original construction started back in 2010. The original contractor was released, time delays inherent to the complexities of that, the contractor being dismissed from the project, project had to be reengineered, repermitted and actually rebid in order to bring a new contractor on board. So the

inherent time delays there impacted outstanding permits, tree surveys, those sorts of things, which did interact the project from an overall schedule. One thing I did want to say about these projects, very much a partnership between what we call the sponsor department or owner department, public works is the managing department. Chad, Nadia and the folks in public works as well and bike and ped program are very much engaged. Very much collaborative in the operations and maintenance moving forward through interdepartmental agreement. Public works maintains the concrete trail, infrastructure, bridges and trails whereas the maintains responsibility for vegetation and those sorts of things. This particular project as we talked about had issues and challenges we spoke of. The contractor obviously being terminated and the necessity to go back through the process in

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order to bring the new contractor on board. So work is very much underway today. I will let Richard really discuss in greater specifics the project sequencing and some of the things that we're seeing in terms of work completed and other infrastructure and temporary facilities that were in place that are a constant common issue for us to stay on top of. I do want to commend Richard for really keeping the shoulder to the wheel on this project. It has been a challenging project and we appreciate public works and the work they've done moving it forward. Parks department has been responsive to -- when we're notified that there are measures in the field, things that need to be cleaned up, so forth, I do know there's a lot of coordination, collaboration to be as rapid in our response to those while we're in process with the new contractor. >> Pool: Real quick question for you, Marty. Can you explain the partnership between parks and recreation and public works, how the work is targeted, who does what? Parks doesn't build the trails; is that right? >> Correct. So these are projects that outside designers are procured, engineering services through either an rfq or rotation list method so the design is procured and then the construction services are bid to an outside contractor for construction. Projects such as these at this magnitude, the parks and recreation department hires a public works department to manage the project through an internal service agreement. So we have expert help by Richard and his staff. I did want to say that the initial project when this project was launched many years ago under the first phase, it was a project that was being self-managed by the parks and recreation department. So Richard and public works did engage with the project midstream or toward the tail end of the first contractor sort of defaulting on the work. I did want to point that out. Parks and recreation department does manage a number of their

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own cip projects. Projects of this magnitude and type as we move forward are managed by public works.

>> Pool: Thanks. >> Okay. And I did want to we'll return to the discussion here of the phase one project. Can we go forward one slide, please? Yeah. So phase two is a project currently in design. I think we heard some comment, discussion of this today. It's the next phase of the trail. These three phases do not ultimately complete the entirety of the trail project. There remain areas to be infilled in the future with further land acquisition, describe and construction as we move forward following current easements and necessitating some additional land acquisitions so forth. So ultimately years from now there will be a contiguous trail from up north up in balcones district park down to go valley park and ultimately connecting to lady bird lake. So with that I do know we want to respond in specifics to some of the comments and concerns. >> Pool: Let's talk just a little bit about time line. I know that was of paramount concern for the neighborhoods. I see on here that you're talking about phase 2 design and permitting phases in progress and that completion is June 2015 and given the delays that have -- you've accrued over time, how long was the gap between when the first contractor left and you were able to engage a new contractor? How much time was lost in the project at that point? Do you remember? >> Was it -- it was about a two-year period of time, Richard? I don't have the calendar dates in front of me from that period of time but it was well in excess of a year, probably closer to two years of down time on that project, northern phase one. >> Pool: Under Normal circumstances would that

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information be conveyed to the neighbors who are interested in -- and have been a stakeholder in the process? >> Yes. >> Pool: All right. And would the -- any of the departments involved speak at a neighborhood association meeting or engage in a list serve distribution for information or anything like that? That might be helpful going forward to keep neighbors more up to date on things that are going on, kind of like what is happening with the big road projects, you know, you even have a newsletters that sent around so people can know what has been completed and what's upcoming, where the delays will be and, you know, if they need to take detours. Did you want to say something. >> Assistant director of public works. Thank you. Yes, absolutely. We are very open with the affected stakeholders about project delays of this type. And I believe we had a couple of neighborhood meetings. I myself attended one but I believe there were several others I did not attend. And we do have an e-mail distribution list for this project, and we did send out updates. It was consistent with our Normal type of communication plan. I know that there were definitely feelings that we could have done a better job than that and we certainly want to do better and, you know, communicate more. We certainly communicated a lot and felt like we were answering the questions, but I understand that we could have done more. >> Pool: We might even get some more e-mails here today and have some more direct connections. Let's see. >> Zimmerman: While you're thinking about that I couldn't help by go through the photos

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and think, you know, if the city weren't managing this project, I could get an eager code compliance investigator over here to probably uncover a hundred violations for this kind of stuff. This is the kind of thing that people complain about because the city, the photos that have been provided here, some of the unsafe conditions, private citizen does that, they're in big trouble. The city does it, I mean, people complain, but nothing gets done. So I would really just caution you to -- we have to use the same measures, same standard against everybody, right, is this these kind of things would be a serious code violations for the average person, but it doesn't seem to be that big a deal for the city. So I think I sympathize with your problem here. >> Pool: So what I think I'd like to suggest is that I will meet further with the neighborhoods involved and I'd like to see if we can have a plan going forward, you know, increased communications and maybe face-to-face meetings and a walk through on the site and some discussion of specific aspects of the trail that I think were not planned in the way that the neighborhood had expected them to. So there had been some deviations from what they were told or what had been expected. Any folks have anything that you'd like to -- yes, meg. >> Quick question. We had been in communication and I think the time line we were doing was October -- [off mic] >> The time line mentions January 2016 and I don't know if that was just a -- we sped it up or -- >> I'm not sure. >> Is that the case, Morgan? >> Phase one is clarifying it cuts off for this one section and actually removes the problem area from balcones park that is the issue, or one of the issues we're trying to [indiscernible]

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So we're trying to find a way to speed up the timetable for the wait wastewater plan because we feel it's a lot quicker than April 2017, which is the completion date, until 2016. >> Pool: Exactly. What I think I'd like to do at this point, because we are looking at a clock and I have some more items, if I could ask the 776 you to convene and -- the 76 you to convene, staff can make note of the issues and work to address them. Does that work for y'all? >> Are you closing speakers for the session? >> Pool: I am, yes. I thought everybody had donated their time -- >> No, I never -- >> Pool: I'm sorry. I'm a citizen in the neighborhood. >> Pool: Sorry, sir. What's your name. >> Mark fisher. >> Pool: I thought you didn't want to speak. >> I was going to speak after the city but I see this is an opportunity for them to consider. I have slides that will further illustrate what might be considered compliance issues if it was not a city project. I will move very quickly. >> Pool: Thanks you can join the confab that may end soon. >> Maybe my first issue as that powerpoint comes up. I do want to say, federally first of all thank you very much. My neighboring is mark fisher, multidecade user of the park and I've seen a lot of what I call the degradation of this project. I just tell to you advance or . . . So, again, thank you and I really am hear -- I'm going to being a lot but I'm hear to take advantage of the 10-1 process and see if we can advance in a positive way. First off on trees we've heard quite a bit about heritage

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trees. This is a picture I took yesterday of one of the swabs cleared in '09, and this is a question my daughter has asked twice now, first time when we cut this swath and there was no pre-cut inventory of the trees taken. I don't know of any restoration issues done. The second phase put in the new sidewalk, took additional trees downstream of the main park of balcones park, again the question why are we cutting all the trees? Supposedly for a plan that hadn't been able to be implemented. I'd point out that this project bears the claim of being an American recovery, basically translates to shovel ready. I think all we're shovel ready for -- tried to get quick on a lunchtime development of a powerpoint. Anyway, is really degrading of the park. There have been multiple instances, two complete separate situation where's full bmps fences have been constructed and deconstructed as part of the project. Bit about. You can see the amount of erosion. This has since been mulched, you can see this is the kind of managements that been going on. I'm probably less flattering and that's why I'm here as a citizen because I'm less flattering of the communication and the process that the city has implemented in implementing this. I've had countless what I would perceive as very arrogant responses, nonresponses and dismissive responses in terms of

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trying to advance citizen concern of these kind of compliant issues. Specific to this I was told we have all our permits. Asphalt, Eric mentioned this, I do want to give kudos to the endangered species expert that came out, facilitated this being vacuum cleaned out. There's a cost issue. You paid to put it there, pay to take it out. Why would a city of Austin employee put asphalt in a creek bed. That's a violation. Issues there. Another example of paying to do something, paying to undo something. This is probably the biggest motivation that brings me here today. What you can see in the foreground is the terminus of the sidewalk project that we talk about completing phase D I don't know how you describe it but completing the second of phase one. You can see in the background the long existing sidewalk of the neighborhood. It's particularly puzzling to me because this whole project was about connectivity, Ada compliance. I have serious questions if that's an Ada -- well, I don't really have questions but I pose it to you that is this the city of Austin's Ada compliant sidewalk trail building structure? I don't understand why this may be by my pace, 20, 25-foot section of concrete couldn't be done. I was given assurance it's would be done by the end of fiscal year -- well, August of 2014. This was taken yesterday. As I said, I'm trying to punch a new button and restart this thing. This is sort of a golly, gee, what if idealistic picture. A lot of trees killed. In terms of sustainability can we figure out a way rather than haul this off and bring back mulch tomorrow to use it on-site. >> Pool: Thank you, Mr. Fisher. Please do leave us your slides and everything. There's a lot of questions to be had. I see someone signaling. Thanks. On the asphalt?

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>> Just in general, chuck, city environmental officer, these are the kind of issues I can engage in, I work with the public works department on a regular basis and I'd be happy to engage on this >>

Pool: Would you work with the neighbors and have a sit down and inventory the issues they're

concerned about and then back -- >> I'll work with the project team and work on those issues. >> Pool:

Thank you all. Is there anything else anybody wanted to say on this item? Were there any questions? All right. Thank you. I appreciate all of you. And this is just one indication of how complicated and complex

and sophisticated these projects are we engage in across the city. Lots of moving parts. Thank you all for your time. Thank you, Marty. >> Sure. >> Zimmerman: I guess, when we started off we had gotten an

update, right, on the trails and a lot of really impressive looking photographs and slides and so I wasn't ready for what happened with here's what happened with some of the trails that were started earlier

that had kind of been aborted or problems that happened. I wasn't prepared for that. So thank you for bringing that to our attention. Just to point out, maybe a little difference in my background, I grew up in

the home building business and we did small residential family houses, but still same problem of

contractors walking you off a job, unforeseen complications and problems. This is part of, you know,

what you have to go through with these large, complex projects, right? It's a risk that we face. When

you're looking at the future master plan, these kind of things happen in the future. So the bigger and

more ambitious your plans are the more potential problems you have. So. >> Pool: And more reason to

have really good, clear avenues of communication that go both ways so that frustrations don't

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build up and we can help see the light at the end of the tunnel. So I thank you all for coming down and everybody for taking the time. We will return to some of these issues in future committee meetings. But

for now, I will note that we have no public hearings and we're down to two committee members, which is okay, we can still continue to meet. We don't have any action planned for this meeting. So we do have

two items for a total of ten minutes of education. Special -- the impacts of special events on city

parkland, specifically the cyclocross impact on zilker trees. I have a couple of folks signed up that want

to comment. David wanted to say a few things. Did you want to talk before the presentation or after? >>

I'll wait until after. >> Pool: Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody, for coming. >> Hello, Cora for

the parks department and we will be very respectful of your time. We realize you've had a very

challenging agenda today. You asked that we provide a very high level educational briefing on the basket of special events on our parks and we want to tell you really quickly what you're going to hear about and

invite us back to talk with you more. >> Pool: Sounds great, thank you. >> Jason morrow, who joined me,

sales and events manager and he oversees all of the contract related 90s our department. He's going to

highlight really four areas one to give you a really high level perspective of our events metrics, Numbers,

types, venues. We'll talk a little about our guiding policies and practices. He'll talk a little bit also

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about how we review event requests and the approval process and then a little bit about our compliance and monitoring tools. So with that I'd like to turn it over to Jason Maurer. >> Good afternoon, councilmembers, board members. Continuing from where Cora introduced me, we want to start into the big picture. There we go. So I'm going to talk a little bit about some of our event metrics. In a typical park year, citywide, we have over 150 plus citywide events either annual, special events which are ranging 1,000 plus people per event or recurring series. And that is, again, from all corners of the city. Specifically he at auditorium shores, zilker and festival beach we have a total of 38 events, seven at zilker, 13 at auditorium shores and 17 at festival beach, which make up a total of 77 event days and in addition use 164 days for setup and take down in the parks. In a given year that brings about 1.2 million people through our park city manager specifically for events and attending events or public festivals or food festivals or some of our cultural or social events such as trail of lights or fourth of July. Specifically kind of drilling down from there, those events bring in approximately \$1.6 million or more in general fund revenue per year and that is general fund revenue to the park city manager. Of that a large component from those special events is approximately \$1.3 million, which is ticket remittance which we get for special events that charge admission to the public. So of that 1.3 million is

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dedicated to park maintenance and goes into the park general fund budget. Continuing on, just to highlight some of our events by classification, we have a number of festivals such as the hot sauce festival, Austin pride, some of our cultural and holiday events I mentioned are sink codemaio, coal tick festival did he, south by southwest oraustin city limits and regge festival and specifically food festivals, veg Fess, Austin food and wine and hot sauce festival. We kind of complete out the classifications of events by athletic events, capital 10,000, handful of triathlons, both downtown and at Walter long so we really have a service area which is a wide range of types of events but what we know how we definitely cannot serve everyone and there are certain areas we still have not been able to serve in terms of types of experience that's part of the conversation we're having today and the task force will take up. Those venues that we talk about most commonly for special events are Walter long, brush square park, which really holds very small events, not necessarily a special event menu, rubble republic square park, zilker park, auditorium shores, festival beach, peace park. And those really kind of are the 50,000-foot level of some of our basic metrics when it comes to events. When we talk about governing policies and codes related to events, obviously for parks specifically that's chapter 8 of the Austin city code and we have several additional items which are in our parks inventory alone, which are the board policy on special events,

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general reservation policy for the day to day items such as picnic rentals or sites or some of our facilitates where people have family reunions or weddings and also have our park special event policy. In addition we work with the Austin center of events and serve on that team, which is a composite team of all of our brother and sister departments and in numerous numerous areas that monitor, inspect, regulate and go through the permitting process and we have a number of other codes that come into play when it comes to events. Just highlighting some of those special events policy items, the parks board policy is where you will find set some of those initial limits by policy adoption on zilker and auditorium shores, we've had recent whacks the holly shores area master plan which created a separate regulation, kind of dedicated to the festival beach area. That, again, is part of the discussion we're really looking forward to having with the upcoming task force. Just to highlight we have kind of spotted policies right now in various areas but that's a topic we look forward to engaging in. Then when we talk about the application process for events, the majority of parks events are what we call annual, which means they have been in the parks city manager for recurring basis, a minimum of three or more years. We do have events that are 20 years, 30 years, even 80 years old in terms of recurrence in the park city manager so we have a depth of not only types of events but also in terms of longevity and the parks city manager. Those events get standing recurring reservations in the parks, which means they really start the day after they're done, the process starts for the next year, and for those events that we're tanning about today, big events, that is through the Austin center for events citywide application. That application typically starts immediately after the event so we'll be working by south here in the upcoming weeks

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to start the protesting for next year, similar to kite festival which we finished and this weekend we have urban festival. Definitely a rolling cycle. The bottom line is we really do not have a lot of capacity right now for new or other events come into the city manager because those slots and parks are held right now by existing event organizers. The process continues after receiving that application through citywide event meetings. That's with the Austin center for events. We hold regular meetings every single Tuesday and organizers come in with their recurring events and this is also the same form with new proposers if they want to do a new street festival or something come in and the citywide team vets those for a myriad of concerns, health, fire, policing, transportation, tab, sometimes the state preservation board is there, parks is there as well. And so we have the initial kickoff for those meetings at that forum and continue the planning process through individualized meetings sometimes police will need to drill down on item. Sometimes it's specific to the park. We also then engage at our bigger events

a stakeholder process where we invite the neighbors into the area. I'll use acl as an example. We hold three or four various meetings throughout the year going into acl and in addition closing out a large festival where we bring the folks into the forum, discussion with the event organizers to ensure there's a face-to-face discussion on what worked from last year and how we go into the new year capturing the successes, challenges or opportunities we have and use that moving into the upcoming planning cycle. The remainder of that process is completed by the organizer, by what we call permit completion, which is the host site, which for the city really is either a street or a park when we're talking specifically about city events and where most of the events are held, we go go

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through a process of coordinating with all the different departments. You'll see the last slide put it up for supply purposes, there's two pages worth of checklist of items and that is just a very high level you should be looking at this, and it is extensive and we have to work through ensuring all these various agencies have come together and planned and got together in terms of the final items due. Once all those are submitted the final permit is completed, and then we round that out by making sure that all the payments and deposits have been made before the event permit is released. Talk briefly about event compliance and monitoring. Some of our compliance or monitoring tools we have now of course standard insurance requirements that are set forward by our corporate risk management office. Those are standard across the board. We also do preand post event walk-throughs at the site with the site plan to kind of document the pre-and post conditions and then we also have not only operations staff but add auditor yum shores and zilker our turf management staff because we have new grounds established there and also the events team out there during all of those events and spending a lot of late-night hours watching and looking for things that are going to be a problem or noting any compliance issue and doing what we need to do to make sure those are corrected, if they're a pard item or you health if there's a health issue or police or fire, making sure that activities are being rectified if they're not going the right way. Finally with each of our large events we do a close out or post event report, also part of the post event site walk through. We make a specific action list of items that are at the burden of the organizers to complete as part of their permit for the city. So when we do that and capture anything from something needs to be power washed for there's a requirement for raking mulch in areas those are at the burden of

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the organizers and we put together a punch list and a set of notes and use that for future events. And with that I will go ahead and skip forward just to highlight quickly, at the back of your packet but this is

as far as I could zoom out this is the line item of pard, I zoomed in as close as I could and send this to you directly if you're interested. These are some of the variety of items that each land owner is looking at or should be looking at for the variety of events. I will note that we've done a couple of additions recently, added additional notations in this planning checklist for organizers to make sure they're doing their due diligence when it comes to true trees and also been fortunate enough and thank or pard forestry team, updated a set of guidelines for turf access, included tree protection items in that. We've got that live ready to go now. And we've also included that in our checklist. The final thing we're working on with the and iwide deem is updating the citywide application now that we're kind of through a very recent event, all been busy with we're going to try to reopen that application and add some tree-specific items in this to trigger that automated transmission of an uploaded application by an applicant to the affected party. So the city's forestry will be able to get that. In addition there's other agencies have been want to go update since that citywide application has been in place about a year now. With that we'll entertain any questions you have >> Pool: Is something different doing the cyclocross presentation or are you doing it? Great. I think that this presentation that you just made here will be a really good introduction when we get the parkland events task force going, mayor pro tem tovo has sponsored that resolution.

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Did you want to make any comments? I'll note while she's preparing that a little later when we talk about future agenda items we'll be discussing the nominations that this committee will make to that task force. That will be on next month's agenda. >> Tovo: Thank you very much, chair. I just want to say thank you for the presentation. I agree this is a very helpful overview of the different activities. One quick he question. I think we could spend a lot of time asking follow-up questions but I hope our task force will dig into some of those issues and get great information and make good recommendations for how we might move forward on our events policies. You made a passing reference to Walter E. Long and events there. Are there many events out there? >> We do have -- >> Tovo: What kind of events. >> Athletic community out there, it works well for triathlons or those type of events to park at the expo center because there's no parking at Walter long and they can bus the participants over to Walter long, run through those secluded trails over there, swim, use that portion of the county road to do their bike on. So we do have probably I'll need to get you the official Numbers, I want to say one to ten events in that community a year but it becomes restricted there because we have to coordinate closely with the excision center, for example, when the road rodeo is going on we don't stand a chance of doing anything out there physically or logistically, there's only so much parking available. >> When you compare the events that are coordinated under the expo center we've got quite a variety of types of experiences that the public can enjoy. And that relationship has been in place for some time. As you know we're doing a market and feasibility study for the Travis county expo area and we're looking at opportunities in the future of better serving the community. >> Tovo: Great, thank you.

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I was aware of some of those events but wouldn't have guessed there's so many. Good information for us as we consider that area. Thank you. >> Pool: Just to make a comment about the different parks we have around town, different places where we have events, one of the things I'd like the parkland task force to look at, what other parks would be welcoming to different events that maybe they hadn't thought about it in the past or maybe a little bit of improvement might make it possible to spread the wealth around especially if we're maxed out on the number of permits we have currently for any activities. Either chair of parks board or environmental board have any comments on any of that? >> I keep forgetting, I apologize that I forget to turn this on. >> Pool: That's okay. >> I wanted to comment on the new master plan for festival beach. One of the things it's asking us to do is remove the fence around the pavilion and reduce the number of events because the neighborhood is tired of the 17 events so they certainly don't want anymore. That's also the midwest message we've gotten from zilker neighborhood. The ones that we already have feel overwhelmed and overloaded and so I'm concerned what direction we can go. In fact I've been thinking and mentioned to director Hensley last night, you know, I'm thinking we need to go and buy some space somewhere that we can turn it into a special events center, where it's not parkland, it's not use Ford anything except special events all year long. >> Pool: Kind of like south park meadows used to be? >> Yeah, kind of. Just a thought. >> Pool: Anything to say? >> Not right now. >> Pool: One other question before we move on to the cyclocross, you mentioned mulching of the trustees, have you received information and resolution from the heritage tree ordinance folks, as far as the treatment of the trees generally? I know we'll dig into it more specifically at zilker park with cyclocross but in a general sense are you working with those?

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>> When we bring Lara forward we'll be able to talk about it more. >> Pool: Great. >> We are expedite the affective force that's coming forward and it builds on what chair lady Riviera was mentioning in terms of that balance of how we plan for our events in the parks. We didn't get a chance to delve deeply memo it when we had the policy discussion with the parks department but one of the things we talked about and we're looking forward to is working out a balanced approach to planning events. There are about six years I think that are worth contemplating in the work that the task force will do. One obviously our parks city manager is one of the most popular park systems in the country and we're feeling it, experiencing it, and obviously the neighborhoods are having to live with it. As a parks management city manager, we have to be concerned with multiple user needs. And so when we talk about looking at -- and working with you to develop a balanced approach, we'd like for us to at some point along the way have a discussion about a balance between public and private partnerships for

events on parkland. Secondly, whatever the recommendations that may come out of this work, we feel we're obligated to ensure there's a diversity of event experiences that happen across our parks city manager, not just downtown, but in the outer areas. Could we get a little better at decentralizing some of our event experiences and what should that look like? And what do the neighborhoods have to say about that? Right sizing the events for the venue of choice, of course it's our daily effort to try to match events with the anticipated Numbers of people who will be attending. But you have to overlay that with what are the most popular

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areas to host an event. So right sizing. And then looking at sufficient neighborhood protections. That's very important to us as well. We have been the keeper of the range of events and number of event days that have been dictated by policy. However, if there's a need to change it, we definitely want to be a resource to the task force and looking at that because at the end of the day, it has to have sufficient neighborhood protections. And so we were sharing with a couple of the neighborhoods before that when you tell us that it's 25 event days, we try to hold to that. And so in having a communication with perspective event organizers, they're interested in the how, what if, so neighborhood protections are important to us as well. And then serving a variety of user groups. We're going to have a conversation in a little bit about cyclocross, but the bike community of course is one of the user groups that we don't serve a lot within the parks systems. So when we look at those different user groups, who are they and what are their needs across the board and across our city manager? And then downtown versus district based event planning. I just wanted to take advantage. So thank you. >> Pool: Sounds like we're aligned on a lot of topics there. Thank you both very much. Any other questions for either Jason or Cora? Okay. Thank you. And I'm sorry. Mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: One quick comment. I really like the way you laid out those points, and I hope that you'll have an opportunity to do that early on to the task force as well. I think that would -- the presentations really that both of you made are just very important I think for that group to set the context. >> Thank you. >> Tovo: What we've really charged them to do so thank you for articulating that so clearly. >> Madam chair, I think the next item was about the impact of the cyclocross. >> Pool: Right. >> So we'd like to invite Lara

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snoop that's fine while you come up David would like to speak on item 7. >> Thank you very much. >> I'm sorry. >> Thank you very much. Is this mic on? Thank you. My name is David king, live in the zilker neighborhood. I almost said I live in zilker park but that wouldn't be so bad. But thank you for taking up these items that are so important. I appreciate you jumping right on them. This is your first meeting,

right? >> Pool: It is. >> So thank you very much. I think, what we're talking about here, the impact of the special events, the roots of the problem are really the lack of funding for parks. So this is a strategic for the parks department to try to fill in those gaps. I'm sure that they would not necessarily want to go for all of the commercial use of this parkland except for the fact that they have so little funds to work with. So let's try to help them out by -- and relieve the pressure to put more events on our parkland and reduce the ones we already have by finding other alternative funding sources for parks. So what I would ask is that we move to increase the parkland dedication fees for new development and let that -- that could be plowed back into our parks, increase the rental fees for the use of parkland as soon as possible, let's go to market rates. I'm not saying use that to go ahead and justify more events but the ones we do have make them pay their way and the money goes back into the parks budget instead of the general fund. We can create a transaction impact fee which I know is a thing for another committee but relates to this because the general funds are being used to make up for the lack of a transportation impact fee. And those same general funds could then be made available to parkland if we had transportation impact fees and make development pay for itself as we go along. So parallel to these issues of impacts of events on our parkland we need to address the funding issues as well. So in terms of the impact on parkland, Zilker park was mostly partially or mostly closed for

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141 days, pardon me, between late September 2014 and early January 2015. So, you know, that's -- that speaks for itself. What more can I say? Regular park users, you can imagine how it really disenfranchised them during a lot of that period of time. I'm not blaming the parks department. This is what we have to deal with here. Then looking at our urban park space, we only have a finite amount. Buying more land in the urban area for parkland, that is probably one of the hardest things that could ever be attempted. So yet at the same time we have more people moving into the urban core of Austin. That's why you see even at on a Saturday at Zilker park it looks like there's a special event going on. That's one reason, because we have thousands of people. Our density strategies are working for the urban core. Those folks need a place to go, and we -- so we're squeezing more people into a -- the same amount of park space. We really have to look at that too and these events do crowd out the regular park users. So I think that we need to look at some general policies from the council on how much of our parks budget we're going to allow to be funded through commercial use of parkland. I think that -- we really need to look at that because the strategy of events really is like I said earlier to generate money for the parks. And then the -- you know, relating to the Walter E. Long park, point about events there that are already happening there, if those golf courses go in, then you can just imagine that there's going to be a drive to have more events out there to help pay for that -- the golf courses. So I would expect to see more events occurring there at Walter Long. I think we need to look at that project too and see if there are any special events tied to that project as well.

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Thank you very much. >> Pool: Thank you very much, David. I think the traffic impact fees, mayor problem, is that part of the resolution on the parkland events task force. >> Tovo: Couple of the things related to it, you had to say, Mr. King, the task force will consider -- look at best practices and other fees and other cities and consider whether our fees are appropriately set or whether they should be increased. The other piece of that is we've asked them to weigh in on whether the fees generated by events should stay within the parks and recreation department budget rather than feedback to the general fund as they do now. So more direct relationship between those events and the maintenance of the parks. >> Pool: And those findings will jump start our conversations during budget on where we go with decisions on those. Thank you. All right. So cyclocross. Let's end with a bang here. And donating controversial at all. So who all do we have, Cora? >> I'd like to introduce Lara Schuman, she's going to drive the next part of the [indiscernible] >> Pool: Little red buttons on? >> Whoops. >> Pool: There you go you. >> So I'm the acting program manager of the parks and recreation urban forestry program. Thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate the opportunity to talk to you about the care of our park trees. I have with me one of the foresters in our program, specializes in the protection of trees. And Michael with city orbis arborist office also joining us. I'll start off with a few pictures what have happened at the event. As I'm sure you know, cyclocross was a very large off-road bike race. Occurred in the first couple of weeks of January of this year. We did work with the event organizers and the builder of the course prior to the event to let them know what the rules

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regarding trees. I actually went out myself and measured trees with event organizers and showed them what a half critical root zone looks like and told them to stay out of this area. Unfortunately, not only did they goad and build the course within the half critical root zone of several of our trees, at some point they brought a car in obviously this was not permitted. It was a Volkswagen commercial production, I believe. So this was not something that we were aware was going to happen. We did walk through the course with them every day during the event to try to get them to reroute and move it. We were extremely concerned about the impact this was going to have on our trees. This is a picture after the course was cleared away and you can see that the route was very close to trees and because of this has created concerns about the health and long-term health of the trees. Just for a second, if I can get my technical stuff to work -- come on. Could you advance for me? Thank you. Okay. So the aftermath we walked through the course. We identified the trees that we felt had been impacted. These were direct impacts by the course running through the critical root zone of the trees. There were 57 trees altogether impacted. Regina created this map through gps and identified the trees. I believe there were 23 of these that were heritage size but my Numbers might be quite off on that or little off, I apologize. I think I need

to advance again. Thank you. So in order to understand how this impacts trees I think it's important for you to know how tree roots grow, why we're concerned about this.

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So tree roots grow very wide and very shallow. Tree roots need oxygen and they find this in the upper -- usually only foot of soil. So consequently, the tree roots are shallow enough that they're easily damaged. Soil particles -- can you advance me one more time? Thank you. Soil particles you can think of as kind of uneven building blocks that don't fit together well. Because of this they create little spaces between the particles where air can hang out and water and the tree roots can grow in this area and get all the air and water they need to grow. What happens when there's some sort of soil compaction, occurring from something like a couple hundred bicycles rolling over the roots, definitely from a vehicle, from materials being stored, even from foot traffic, heavy foot traffic in the park, those particles are squashed together. Then the air spaces are squashed out. Those fine roots can be damaged or destroyed in that. That's why we're so concerned about this. That can be very harmful do trees. Trees work in a very long time scale compared to people. So we're not really sure what will be the long-term impacts of this. We do expect there to be some root loss from this. We know some of the roots were actually exposed during the race because it became muddy and the tires were directly riding and pushing the mud away from the roots. And some of the roots were actually broken in that process. So what we've done in addition to putting together the map and the list is we created a remediation plan to have usa cycling repair to the best extent they can the damage caused by this race. So we have the plan in your packet if you'd like to look at it in detail.

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Basically, what that consists of is using a technology called air spade, which is basically an air tiller. It can breakup soil particles without impacting tree roots. In this process, we'll have them incorporate down to 6 inches in depth organic matter, basically come post, not only further help to alleviate that compaction but as time goes on break down and add nutrients to the soil and help continuously repair that soil compaction. And then to apply a layer of 4 inches of mulch. They might have had three, sorry, on top of that to protect the soil against repeated new soil compaction. Of course once you fluff the soils they're easily recompacted. We also will require that the area be fenced off with just a short chain fence. We can't keep people out but we can at least discourage them from getting into the area to help prevent the soil from being recompacted for a term of one year. During that year we will have supplemental water supplied to the trees to help them minimize their stress. Trees get stressed just like people and they're more likely to get -- it seems odd but if they don't have the proper water uptake capabilities or

nutrients they can be more open to bugs and disease and stuff like that. >> Pool: Honestly, it doesn't seem odd at all. They're an organism. >> Living organism, exactly. >> Pool: Respond to the same sort of environmental stressors that we respond to. >> Right. Parklands are very stressful environments for trees because they have a lot of people in them all the time. Michael do you have something to add to this? >> Thank you, Lara and councilmembers, it's an honor to be in front of you today to talk about such a valuable resource

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to our citizens. Our trees and what they do for us in our daily lives and enhancing our experiences every day. It is an unfortunate event that -- the city arborist office is involved to ensure that we have the same compliance as we do for private impacts and private construction jobs as we mentioned earlier there was a sentiment to make sure the city is held to the same standard for our projects. So we're involved with issuing permits and ensuring that this care is going to be -- the trees will receive this care in adequate time. And so there has been a permit issued for ensuring that the trees get care. I'm in a different department, and so my role here is much more of a regulatory approach. Lara and the team at -- in park forestry has the expertise and employees to oversee the type of mitigative work and even to perform it in -- they have the expertise to perform it on their own as well. >> Pool: Thank you. >> Thank you. >> Pool: Are there any questions? From our environmental board or parks? Water, wastewater? Any from our commission? Mary. >> We have -- hello, hello. We have a committee that is looking at this in the environmental board, and we met this morning and the staff came and talked with us about it. But we are -- we have ongoing concern about it and will come monitoring it. It's something that's part of what we do because the environmental board has to build Hartage trees on a regular basis, that's part of our purview, so to have more

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information and continuing information is really what our goal is on our board. So -- >> Pool: Thanks, Mary. >> You have backup here. >> Pool: Thank you. >> In dealing with this. >> Pool: I think the information you've provided us here could also probably be used for the parkland events when they're looking at trying to evaluate the kinds of events that we will allow shall -- >> Yes. >> Pool: You know, put red flags around the ones that have done damage to our environment to our parks environment, and we can make some provisions to make sure that doesn't happen again. Mr. W. >> Yeah, chuck city environmental officer. I also wanted to mention that Jason and I have been talking and we're going to look at the process as part of the special events task force and the work that's gone on there to look at environmental issues, not just trees but really all environmental issues that might be associated with

large events in our parks because we've got a very substantial amount of environmental features in a number of our parks and will start looking at that Hol holistically. >> Pool: I think you have folks in the audience really happy to hear that and tology work with you. From all the negatives that accrued from the cyclocross experience, I think if we can take away a learning experience from it, it's that these are precious resources and we can't replace them. And it does take a while for damage to show on trees, especially live oaks. I mean, that's their very nature. So I think we will all be mindful of that and work in ways to mend them. Are there any other comments from the dais at all? I do have David King and then he can speak after Mayor Pro Tem Tovo.

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>> Yeah. I still have questions about the level of permitting and review ahead of time but I think given the time I'm going to leave those for now. What most interests me at the moment, begin the level of remediation that you're describing are all of those costs being borne by the event organizers. >> Yes. That is our desire. And that is the way we're going forward. We're working with them right now to implement this plan and get the work started as quickly as possible. So that will be USA Cycling footing the bill >> Tovo: I'm glad to hear that and look forward to getting more details if there is long-term damage if that is also being factored to the costs being allocated to the permit or organizer. Thank you. >> Pool: I had promised everybody we would end at 5:00. I have one speaker and another one that has just now signed up. David, would you like to make some comments and then Soila, if I may ask -- just one question, all right. Then I want to talk a little bit about future agenda items. David? >> I have one more thing I would like to put in hear. >> Pool: Mary Gay. >> We're talking about the U.S.A. Cycling group footing the bill and doing the work. They have not completed their process with the contract and they have not begun work yet. And time is passing because the longer we have between what happened and fixing it, the harder it's going to be and we're about to go into the season where we've got lots of people using the park in the summertime. >> Pool: I think that is a really good element to highlight. It's not just the money and the willingness to make the repairs, but it's how quickly they are done and are we sufficiently comprehensive in our assessment of the damage to we can give it all to them. Councilmember Zimmerman? >> Zimmerman: What's to stop them from just

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leaving? If them I think I would look for another place and not come back. >> Pool: They don't won't be back. It was a one-year, Austin off event. >> Zimmerman: Why would they want to pay us if they're not coming back? >> Pool: Goodwill. And I think they agreed to redress -- >> And the signed agreement. >> They agreed to do it. >> Relationships and reputation and that we probably will keep knocking on their

door. >> Zimmerman: They're not here, right? But they would probably say that somebody should have given them a path that would be safe. Would that be their objection or their position? >> We did work with them and tell them what the requirements were and they did not follow our directions. >> Pool: And you found that out after the rains and went out and had to redirect them on the pathways and that made it even more expensive and problematic for the whole event. >> You actually found it out as you were going and y'all were monitoring it. I want to speak up for the staff because they were really trying hard to get this thing taken care of. And they didn't comply with it. >> Exactly. >> Pool: David? Quickly. >> Can I make a real quick comment before David? I was going to say that that's an ongoing problem. Even if we develop a really good working relationship with a long-term partner there's always the possibility that the work might not get done timely enough. So that I think is another element that we need to take into account when we're looking at all those special events. >> Thank you. And just building on that comment, one of the things that -- I'm very happy that the parks department sat down with us and Zilker and Barton Hills neighborhood. As we did a really deep dive into this cyclocross event with them and we came up with a good list of improvements and lessons learned and for all of us and look forward to working through those and appreciate your time on that and your commitment to that. And one of the things that we might want to consider going forward is to require a bond to be established upfront

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so that we have some level of protection in case we do run into a problem with them being able to pay for any damage after the event. The other thing is that I hope that the cyclocross event doesn't come in and ask for fee waivers. I would be very surprised if they did, but if they do, I would hope that the council would say not just no, but you know what no. [Laughter] And the other thing, one of the lessons -- one of the lessons that we learned about the cyclocross event is that it was never brought before the parks board. So looking at process improvement going forward, I think that that should be one of the things that we look at is that these events, especially the new events that have -- we've never held before, they should definitely go and be publicly vetted with the parks board. And I'm glad to hear about the plan to protect the sensitive environmental areas. I was just surprised to see the track going over these limestone outcroppings. I know they want it to be a tough track, but those are sensitive environmental areas of our parks. And then also going forward that they protect the trees on future events, the ones that we have right now where the soil gets compacted on the protected and heritage trees right now with existing trees. There should be fencing around it to prevent them from getting to critical root zones. And the permitting process. Maybe we should follow the process that's used for land development projects and look and see if we can learn from that process as to how to make sure we're covering all the bases for events on parkland. Thank you very much for your time. >> Pool: Thank you very much. Zoila, tell us your question. >> Thank you. Dr. Maxwell asked already, but two things. We would like to ask the Austin heritage tree foundation for Zilker. We didn't know about the race. We had

watered and mulched those trees from 2011 to 2014. Imagine what a shock it was to see that. There was notification

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to two neighborhoods, but they should be increased to the stakeholders and we were stakeholders. Second, what really should happen with his question was right now the event organizer, he signed a contract for the city that says he's obligated to pay for any damage. But that deadline keeps on passing. I think he may not pay for everything. So really there should be another deadline set by the parks department, by Cora or Sarah and maybe the committee can put some pressure on them by saying we are the council and we want these trees to be taken care of. >> Pool: We can make some kind of postponement for late payment. We would have to check with legal to see if we could, but those are really good ideas. >> Before they walk out. Because then it's a legal problem. >> Pool: Thank you. And I thank all of you. Any comments before we move on to item 11? Okay. So thank you, everybody for all of your help and assistance and input on this inaugural meeting of our committee. We have a number of future items. They are listed on the agenda. Doesn't mean that they will all be next month. We will be timing them all. And I will mention one thing about next month, there is a policy forum on the next Wednesday, the regular meeting date for this meeting. We are pushing to the fifth Wednesday, but then so is the mobility committee for the same reason. And we will both be using this room. This committee will convene at 2:00 on the 29th of April. The mobility committee will follow right on us at 4:00. And I -- a couple of the committee member share, so we'll just be swapping out two councilmembers and staffing. And I will take any further discussion put through email or phone for any items that people want on future agendas. I'll be working with Jessica Coronado, thank

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you so much. And Victoria Lee for staffing this for me. I really appreciate Mike. And my staff for being here and helping pull all this together. We've got a lot of interesting work ahead of us and there won't be any meeting that lags. I'm sure we'll always have jam packed agendas. I thank the three chairs of our citizen commissions for coming, Darryl, Jane and Mary gay. I really appreciate you being here. As I mentioned before, you are welcome to be at all of these and please input as you see appropriate. And as a resource for us. >> Thank you. >> Pool: With that -- >> Zimmerman: Motion to adjourn. >> Pool: I think we are done. It's 5:08. Thank you, everybody.

