

Mobility Committee Meeting Transcript – 04/01/2015

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Due to technical difficulties this meeting was joined in progress.

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>> Kitchen: Thank you, welcome. >> Hello. My name is Joseph, I'm a pedi caber for the city of Austin. I used to drive a taxi cab. And I am here not, per Se, just for taxi cabs, but for all operators that drive taxi cabs, limos, charters, pedicabs, electric low speed vehicles as an operator. We demand that the city either require Uber and Lyft drivers to be background checked just as we are background checked, and that Uber be required to pay permit fees just like everybody else who operates a franchise within the city. In other words, the pedicab companies, they pay the city for permit fees, the cab companies pay the city for permit fees, the limo drivers do as well as does the charters and electric low speed vehicles. We operators who operate those vehicles, we have to pay to have a background check, we have to pay to get our driving record checked and we have to go and get a cab license every two years. All of those are expenses out of our pocket that we pay to the city. Now, if you're not going to make Uber do it, I am going to personally start a transportation revolution and no operator in this city will ever pay this city another dime for a hack license or do any of the things that Uber and left do not have to do, period. >> Kitchen: Thank you so much. As you know, this is a new council and we really appreciate your input and we're starting to look at all these issues. So thank you for being here. So next we have David king. >> Thank you, chair, vice-chair and members of the committee. I appreciate this opportunity and I just have

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to say one more time go 10-1. I really appreciate this committee so you can focus on mobility issues and strategies for the city. And, chair, I thank you too for helping my neighborhood, zilker, start to work on our sidewalk needs and I appreciate you helping us with that. I just want to talk about the sidewalk fee in lieu program briefly. My ask is that your committee consider looking at that program to see if it effective and to see if there may need to be some adjustments to that. What we're facing in the zilker neighborhood where I live is we do have projects going on that generate those fee in lieu for sidewalks, but we don't really see a lot of sidewalks being built. I understand that there's just so much money to go around and it costs so much money to build sidewalks, but I think it would be good to look at that program to see if it's having the intended effect, how many sidewalks have been built from that and see how we compare to peer cities to see if the fee is consistent. What I'm hearing anecdotally is the fee itself is automatically approved through the process. And I understand that it's not -- wasn't set up to be an automatic approval. That the developer would have to justify why they should pay the fee instead of

building the sidewalk. And so zilker we've been looking at those cases to see why they're automatically being approved and providing input to the city staff and recommending that they not approve fee in lieu on certain of those projects. So I think it would be good to look at that part of the program as well to see if that's following the intention of the council and how that should work out. And the other thing I think corollary to that is it would be pedestrian crossings that would help facilitate pedestrian access in the neighborhood. There are several areas in our neighborhood and I'm assuming other neighborhoods so that would need to have a combination of Seahawks and safe pedestrian crossings like the flashing red lights where you stop traffic. So Barton springs it's hard

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to get out of our neighborhood to go to zilker park because traffic simply won't stop on that yellow sign that says please stop for pedestrians. They just don't stop. Then on lawn street exiting our neighborhood on to Barton springs pool, that's a very dangerous area too, but a lot of the neighborhood folks use that to access Barton springs pool. So I think that's another area that we should look at to see if we can do something there to improve pedestrian safety crossing that area. I'm not speaking necessarily about zilker, but I think some other neighborhoods have the same issues. I would hope that you would look at those programs and see what we can do to help the city. Thank you very much for your time. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Chris Nielson. And [indiscernible] Will be up next. >> Hello again. Chris Nielson with electric cab of Austin. I'm here to reiterate what I said last time. As we're moving forward with how to regulate tnc's, I feel like the taxi industry also needs to have a few of their regulations tweaked as well because right now we're pretty much just rolling out the red carpet for the equivalent of Wal-Mart that's taken out mom and pop here. Whenever our drivers have to run the gauntlet of getting the chauffeur's licenses which they should do, whenever another company can let them come in and frankly drive with a few clicks of a mouse it's just not right. We should be able to compete on a level playing field. Whenever we entered this market we had to fight for it and we fought for a long time. But we fought to be regulated, we fought to have rules. I guess really what I'm advocating for is just the same rules across the board. I don't feel that's unreasonable. Even the taxi cab taskforce came up with the issuance of their own shofars licenses as a recommendation and we don't see that on the agenda at all. I don't know how that got removed, but it was not removed by the taskforce.

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>> Kitchen: [Inaudible]. >> Whenever there was a taxi taskforce formed, I don't remember how long ago, it address this new market change, one of the recommendations that was come up with was the issuance of our own chauffeur's licenses similar to Uber and Lyft. Somehow it's not there anymore and that didn't come from the taxi taskforce to remove that from the recommendations. That's all I have. >> Kitchen: Mr. Woodley? Is Mr. Woodley here? And then Kevin [indiscernible]. >> Kitchen: Thank you for being here. If you want to go ahead. >> Thank you. I'm John Woodley and I'm an advocate for disability access. And I'm deaf, so I'm relaying on the closed captioning. I would like to speak about some of the issues with the public transportation. Right now -- on funding issues. We're not allowed to sign up for. I would like to see that we need to be able to discuss funding as a public issue so that sidewalk, which is over a billion dollar issue, needs to be addressed to get sidewalks on both sides of the street and make them A.D.A. Accessible. A lot of the bus routes are not accessible to people who are mobilely impaired. And as a result of the lack of sidewalks and A.D.A.

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Accessibility. The capital metro is denying people who are mobilely impaired access to public transportation, and the paratransit services. If somebody can't get to Normal bus routes, you have to sign up for the paratransit service, and the paratransit service they have some limits such as the three-quarter mile from the nearest bus stop route. And if you live beyond that, they will not pick you up even though you are in the capital metro taxing district. So they're a taxing authority that's denying people based on their disability access to public transportation. So -- another issue with the paratransit service is if your car breaks down or you get non-consent towed, a Normal person can buy a pass, get on a bus and go anywhere on public transportation. Whereas somebody with a mobile impairment can't do that. They have to wait up to 21 days to go through a background check that nobody else has to go through to get approval to even use the paratransit services. And the paratransit service is called capital metro access. I don't have prepared for everything we need to talk about but I'm trying to think of everything. Thank you. [Buzzer sounds]

[3:18:21 PM]

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Okay. Mr. Sinclair? >> Good evening. I am here because I'm concerned about street closures in general, and specifically as it affects a site on south first. >> Kitchen: Is your mic on? >> Hello. >> Kitchen: [Off mic]. >> I'll get closer. Sorry. The clients of mine are Leslie Moore and magdalena rude and they own property on south first and pfw owns property next to it. For the past year and a half or so we've been unable to move ahead on the moore-rude property because of the processes that psw has to go through with the city. In other words, we don't know where the access is going to be. We're pretty sure it won't be adequate and we're positive it will not be safe. For instance, our recommendation to our clients is to close four curb cuts because that's a dangerous, busy street. Curb cuts are the worst thing for an arterial. Maybe that's why we have so many. We've worked on a solution as of nine months ago or something. I think it was September we presented a solution to this, which was to do what psw wanted to do, close unnamed street, which is a narrow street, and we proposed to simply trade that and move it to the

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southside of the site, at which point our clients would have to give up some additional land to have the street and the city would have to back off of its width and standards and curbs and all that kind of stuff that's totally unnecessary in such a small place. What it does is move all the traffic to one intersection whereupon a light could be installed in a safe place. Coupland street is a candidate for a light, but it's apparently the visibility is not all that safe. Closing the curb cuts will go a long way toward making it safe. In principal, I think it's a bad idea to be closing streets on the advice of any one department in the whole city who looks at the whole issue and that's the urban design people that you have who are really excellent. I would never suggest that you allow a street closure that isn't sanctioned by the urban design. They're the ones affected. They're the only department that does. Some of them may claim they do, but I've been around awhile so I'm pretty sure it's not true. Anyway, it's just -- the grid is magical. It is what defines American cities as unique from other cities in the world. Anything we've done to compromise that as we've seen downtown and other places always results in a bad situation. Period. I could go around and collect a bunch of examples, but you probably know them yourself. So just as a matter of closing street. You can trade the right-of-way, that makes sense, that's fair. You might want to consider another right-of-way in that area, Christopher street, as access to open space. That will be another committee, I guess.

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But there are real good solutions to this problem, particularly with the safety issue. [Buzzer sounds] E the transportation aspects of the issue we will be coordinating with that committee and we can talk with this committee about how we take that up. Okay. That ends citizen communication. So now we're going to move on to staff briefing. >> Zimmerman: Like to make a motion that we approve the minute as written. >> Kitchen: Do we have a second? All in favor? The minutes for March 25th are approved. We'll move to the staff briefing portion of the meeting, which will begin with off transportation funding briefing. >> Good evening. -- Good afternoon. Ready? Okay. Good afternoon. Mike Trimble with the capital planning office and I'm here today with rob spillar, the transportation director, Howard Lazarus the public works director and Greg canally, the cf to go over the funding programs that we use for our funding programs and improvements. Let's see if we can get the briefing. Let's see if we can get the slides going. Okay. There we go. >> Kitchen: Let me just say for the public, I don't know if we've had the opportunity yet to put this up on the website, but we will be posting it. >> Great. So just a little background. Transportation outside of our major utilities like water and energy makes up some of the largest areas of capital spending that we have from the city, let alone

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the operations side. So that's pretty easy to imagine given our extensive roadway, trails, bike way network, sidewalk networks. So our needs always outweigh available funding so we have to be creative and look for partnerships and use a variety of funding sources to fund our transportation improvements. And so that could be multiple funding sources for a particular project or it could be different types of funding sources for different types of projects, depending on what the nature of the projects are. So we're going to expound on each of these. I'm going to start with some of the interagency partnerships. I'll hand it over to rob to talk about some of the grants and innovative financing. Hand it over to Howard to talk about the transportation user fee and our quarter cent funding and partnership with capital metro and end up with our funding and go bonds with Greg. A little bit about some of our interagency partnerships. We partner a lot with several agencies in the area that have responsibilities for portion of the transportation network. Texas department of transportation and capital metro along some of the major highway corridors. We partner with our counties, where there's mutual interest to have mobility improvements where transportation crosses multiple jurisdictions. And we also have improvements that we partner with capital metro for, for example, sidewalks that promote accessibility around transit stops and also infrastructure that supports our transit system. I wanted to show this map because I think this gives a good example of it's not just a great option to leverage funding sources -- resources amongst the different agencies that are involved, but it's really a matter of necessity. When you look at the transportation network that we have in the city and the region, really all of our agency partners need to come together to fund portions of this to have a greater outcome for our community. If we're addressing whether it's traffic issues, mobility issues across the city and across the region, everything is connected.

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So all of these agencies have a part in that and that's why it's not just an opportunity to stretch our city dollars and leverage the resources of other agencies, it is really out of a matter of necessity in how we look at our transportation planning going forward. >> Kitchen: Before you go on to the next category, could I just ask a question? You may want to go back two slides. The slide before. Okay. So these are interagency transfers. Is that saying to us that we get funding from each of these areas or is it more a

matter of we're putting up dollars and they're putting up dollars for particular projects? >> It depends. It depends on the types of projects and partnerships that we have. Rob may want to elaborate a little bit, but it could be projects where we are contributing funding from both entities. For example, we are contributing funding along I-35, along with txdot funding and we're leveraging that funding to have a greater set of improvements both short-term, interim and long-term improvements along the I-35 corridor. There could be different types of relationships. For example, some of the pass-through financing that we have and Rob will talk about some of those relationships, we're able to get more implementation of projects in the area. >> Kitchen: So the -- I'm sorry. >> IST going to say yes. The answer that I think you're looking for is money flows both ways between the city of Austin and these agencies. So not only do we get money from txdot, we participate in txdot projects where we make up perhaps the difference. Most often it's on right-of-way purchases. So these agencies really are funding partners. The point of the next slide with all the squiggly lines are those are really the projects that we're partnered with. And not only -- it doesn't always require a monetary participation on the part of the city. Sometimes it's just requires us coming to the table and bringing some of our expertise. I think one question

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that might be asked ask why does the city fund projects on state roadways or why would the state fund projects on what would otherwise look like a city arterial? Some of our arterials are actually state highways. Believe it or not, portions of Lamar and Burnet are state ways that they own and maintain in coordination with us with public works, for instance. But more importantly we know from various surveys when we test the public about their impressions about congestion and mobility, there's a lot of frustration about travel flow on our major roadways at the same time that there's continuing to be improving satisfaction about our signals. Not perfect satisfaction, but improving. And so then when we go back and ask citizens about which roadway were you thinking about when you were talking about our frustrations, is many times the state roadways. So in a sense the city's constituents as well as the region's constituents stuck on those roadways. All that to say is that's why we partner to get these projects done. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Does that make sense? >> Kitchen: Okay. Go ahead. >> There's a question coming, I see it. >> There is eventually if we get the mic coming at the same time. >> Back to the map with partner agencies and maybe I'm missing this, but it looks like it's color coded. >> Yes. Let me back up and go through the animation. I'm sorry. So the capital area metropolitan planning organization, we know CAMPO, is responsible for the six-county area that's in this area. Their primary responsibility and the executive director of CAMPO is here if you want to ask something, is for long range planning and coordination between the jurisdictions that are within that area. The shaded gray area is the city of Austin's city limits and E.T.J. But within there there are implementing agencies and so what you

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see is txdot, these are projects that are active right now that we're partnering with txdot on in various ways. And you see I-35 there, that's probably the most aggressive project that we're participating in in terms of actually having brought funding to the table to help develop the design. But on other projects, including 45 Southwest, we're a partnering agency. What that means is we participate with them to make sure that the data and the science is being done at the best possible way so that as the state and the region make decisions about that, we can help inform our public. There are projects as far west as 620 going on right now and 360. We know about that. As well as projects on 290 and 71. That are active right now. The blue lines here are the state-led projects where we're partnered with them in some way.

Like I said, it's not always financially that we're partnered. The next set are red projects and pink projects. The red projects are central Texas regional mobility authority. They're the regional toll authority and they're developing projects on loop 1 and the Y as well as 183 and the extension of 290. And so as you know, the construction on north mopac is underway right now. We participated with them to make sure that we had the desires of the community, some of the communities with regards to sound walls, and we're working with them right now to analyze what the best alternatives on mopac south are. Out at the Y, you will hear that there are two projects out there. One is an interim project that the city had a major funding role in with txdot. The Y at oak hill, that is. But then ctrma is looking at a final solution that may be a number of years off and so in the meantime we're you constructing improvements out at the Y to reduce congestion

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and then in long-term the final product out there will make that sustainable. Lone star rail. The city has been part of lone star rail for a number of years as an organization. As you know they're looking at the rail line along mopac, commonly called mopac, the up. A major element of that project is to relocate the freight out of that corridor to make room for possible commuter rail in the future. There is -- staff has believed there's great benefit in moving that commuter rail out of that corridor, into an eastern corridor, getting that freight that is on a private railroad out of the midst of our city, and then looking at ways to connect our city to the cities to the north and to the south. And then lastly, moveability. And they don't have a project shown here, but the city of Austin is a member of moveability and that is our downtown transportation management association that works to get people to think of a broader way to get in and out of our city. We're growing fast. Our grid is not particularly expanding in terms of capacity so we're working with moveability to find people that are willing to choose to get to that central core in a different way. So that areas that are maybe newly employed or future employed will have pathways into our city. Yes, I'm sorry, I just did it to you again, I'm sorry. >> Gallo: So the question would be if we have constituents that are frustrated and concerned about traffic on 360, and they come to us and they want us to fix it all, it sounds like that on a lot of these recognize we have partnerships on or we have lead players that it's really not us. What is our response to them in proposing and formulating a method to

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move forward on addressing those issues? >> So I think loop 360 -- excuse me. I think loop 360 is a good example. It is a state-owned roadway and state is leading an initial discussion to better understand what the community concerns on 360 are. You might remember we had a project out on 360, the state had a project out on 360 and it was not well accepted by the community. The concepts were not well accepted. So we stepped back as a region -- and I say we because we were participating in that. And we're approaching it differently. We're going out and trying to better understand what the needs of the surrounding community are as well as what the needs of the folks who might be using it as a parallel corridor. So what I would say is assuming their citizens of your council district I would tell them that they can communicate with the Austin transportation department and we will be advocates for our central texans in terms of that -- of citizens in terms of that partnership, meaning we will advocate what the terms of that are. I think the terms we can bring to the state and regional studies is an understanding of what our constituents, residents, believe is needed. You know, sometimes folks leading a study need to hear the same thing two or three times and from two or three directions to fully understand what's being said. That's just human. I think that's something that we as the city can help do is to bring that understanding. Long-term I think that if we're participating in these studies we may think about ways to

either fund or assist with the funding, and that gets into the financing. I'm using financing different than funding because funding is real dollars and financing might be a mechanism to help free monies to get to the final solution. Those have all been issues.

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>> Kitchen: Real quickly. So on this map, can you point to the ones where we're participating through -- where funding is a portion of how -- >> Where we're financially participating? >> Kitchen: Which ones are we financially participating in? >> Let me start on the west side and move east, if I could. The Y at oak hill, it is the red wishbone looking project there. Beneath there is a project that I would say is blue. And that's the project that's under construction right now. The city funded about five million, I think, of the six or six and a half-million-dollar project. Those are the intersections, the innovative intersections that are out there right now. We believe those intersection improvements will reduce travel times by as much as 50% through that interchange or intersection, but that there's a life-span for those improvements. So those will deteriorate and that's why ctma is now looking at a much bigger project. We're participating in terms of helping through the environmental process better understand the environmental issues and the community issues there, but not financially yet participating in the follow-on project. Moving to the central corridor, you see the purple lines there, those are the capital metro bus rapid transit projects. We participated with capital metro in terms of downtown, designating bus-only lanes and so those were funds that we expended both in the signal system as well as the designation of the lanes and the work that needed to be done there to make those lanes happen. We did have monies from capital metro flowing to us, but it was a bigger project than I think -- so it really was truly a partnership in delivering that project. On the yellow line, council last year did pass a funding mechanism that relies on the development improvements that might be generated

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from an investment in that corridor going forward. And that was last year that those were passed. So I would include those as financial issues. On a lot of the red ones, we have participated in terms of bringing right-of-way to the table. 290 being probably the best and the 183 as examples where we have helped acquire right-of-way in those corridors and brought right waive to the table as an in-kind donation. The I-35 project I think is one that I think really does represent a true partnership. The city, I believe it was through the 2010 bonds or 2012. It was 2012, I'm sorry. We brought about a million dollars to the table to restart an effort to design a replacement to I-35 that had been stalled for probably three or four, five years. From that has come the I-35 project that txdot is investing monies at several major intersections -- interchanges right now to rebuild and perhaps maybe actually put I-35 into a trench with the opportunity to run it into downtown. There are also monies in the 51st street interchange. That's a project on I-35 that txdot is building with our funding and that will straighten out the access to Cameron road up in that location. And then out on 71 you'll see the little blue line that sort of goes on 973. We contributed funds to buy right-of-way before that was the 71 express project. And since then txdot has come back and added funding to create the grade separation there, but the end result is that that dog leg, if you will, will be straightened out in that

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location. Those are the ones off the top of my head that I can point to. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. At some point it might be helpful to have a list, but that gives us an idea. >> If Mike didn't imply this, this is probably a 30,000-foot level presentation on funding. And so I'm sure there are funding tools and

streams that we might miss in our presentation today. If there are further questions, if you hear about something, we'll try to answer it today, but we can also get you further information on those things too.

>> Kitchen: Go ahead. >> >> Zimmerman: Thank you. On ranch road 620 on this slide can you talk about what's going on there and how much money from Austin is going in there? What's the dark blue for there? >> Yeah. So that is a study by txdot to look at what can be done on 620 and we have engaged and are participating in that in the sense that it's in our right-of-way. That is a fairly new study within the last 12 months and so we're just now starting to engage. Don't have funding from the city directly invested in that project because it's a new project. But we are spending staff time obviously to assist txdot in analyzing what could be done in the 620 corridor. We have been working with them also about improvements there at 2222 and 620. The county is also investing funds to try to figure out how we could reduce some of the short-term immediate delay in that area. >> Zimmerman: One other question. So I talked with Bruce Byron at length with txdot, the project manager. He tells me that when they look at funding -- we have a lack of funding and too many projects to do, but he says we look at safety issues, especially the number of fatalities in a particular area. Do you have a map that would show hot spots? Like with the slide you have here, hot spots that show number of fatalities, say are in the last one to two

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years. I know there are two people killed on 2222 like within the last week and a half. And when I look at this drawing, 2222, there's nothing. And it's a place where there are big safety concerns. People are being killed. So could you -- do you keep those statistics within your traffic department of fatalities? >> Sure. So councilmember, we get our fatality information directly from Austin police department. They're the originator of that data. We -- I'm not sure I could create a map right off the bat of where the density is. We do know where our high incident locations are. They're typically at intersections where people are being affected. Campo director is going to come over here and tell me that he does have that capability, I bet. But most of our -- what's that? We also have state data as well is what he was sharing with me. Thanks. Most of our incidents occur at intersections. That's where you have the conflict points. So we know every year we know the high incident locations and keep track of it by an intersection location. We are working to improve our incident information on a geographic basis know. >> Kitchen: Okay. All right. Do you want to move on then? >> I just want to add a backup to 20,000 feet, I guess. One theme, particularly with our transportation infrastructure, and our projects, and rob spoke a lot to this, is going to be phases, installments of funding. When we're talking about improvements along a major corridor, a lot of times we're funding initial phases. And you will see that theme come up again and again now that you're on council for projects that were funded for an initial phase or one or two phases in prior bond programs and then they're going to be coming up for subsequent phases. You will see later phases of a lot of the projects that we're doing, the corridors that we're working on coming up in subsequent -- Teed up for subsequent funding

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opportunities, including future bond funding as well. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> And that's really a new process that was really led by the folks along to my sides here. You know, used to I would tell you that we would go seek funding for the whole project all at once. That was really difficult when transportation projects started getting more and more expensive. It was hard to secure the whole value. And one of the things that happened, and it goes directly to grants, is when grants suddenly started to come available, especially with the recovery program during the recession, they were often for projects that were shovel ready. Well, if you've never spent money for design, you're not likely to have a project that's sitting there ready to be shovel ready. So it was really a shift in -- I don't want to say policy, but a

shift in approach to getting ready for transportation is I would tell you we now have albeit modest, a collection of projects that we're getting through design and we're ready to go should grants come available. And that's part of our strategy is to always have a set of grants -- grant-ready, shovel-ready type projects to go look for grants with. It's actually a strategy that I think we've helped the region move back to is to always have a sort of collection of projects that are ready to go should grants come available. I would like to tell you that we all have 20/20 foresight and are able to see grants coming, but sometimes they do surprise you and those that are ready can take advantage of it. I think that's where we try to go. With regards to grants, there's two principal sources of grants, the federal government is the largest source of grants. There's a range of departments from where those grants come from. You can see U.S. Department of transportation when we'll talk about in a further slide. But there's others, the environmental protection agencies has grants, housing and urban development, centers for disease control and basically every federal agency has grants that relate back to transportation, believe it or not. One of the major goals

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in the current transportation sort of thinking is to link health outcomes, land use outcomes or desires of the community with the transportation investments that are being made. Remember our interstate system was first funded under a federal military goal to get our ability to move our troops around. And so that is sort of the thinking that the federal government has returned to. There are also some private foundations, national foundations and local philanthropic agencies that often put out grants. Those are typically smaller. But sometimes of opportunity, and we'll be talking about one that's coming up. With regards to the U.S. Department of transportation there is a range of different types of grants, surface transportation program, highway safety improvement programs, transportation alternative programs, and transportation investment generating economic recovery or tiger grants. Throughout here you will see pictures attached to different funding sources, and those are projects that we've actually funded out of some of these types of grants. One of the things that we have to remember with federal grants is every agency has different requirements. So the requirements if you're pursuing a transit-related grant, the grant requirements under the federal transit administration are uniquely different from those of the federal highway program. So that's important because every grant comes with strings attached and requirements that have to be met. Okay. So grants are typically competitive. We're typically competing against other jurisdictions, not just within our metropolitan planning organization, which is the primary distributor of those grants, but also with other regions and other cities sometimes. There are often specific unique requirements for eligibility established by granting and

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distributing agency. One of the things that the Austin transportation department does, and I know my sister departments do, when we go after grants, we really try to strategize is the city of Austin in a good position to acquire that grant? Are we competitive? And do we have a project that is uniquely competitive for those grant funds? Because it takes a lot of effort to get ready for a grant. There are often unique performance and reporting requirements. So you will in fact find out -- I think it's on another slide -- that the previous council set a policy that we will not go after grants if they're under \$25,000 in value because often the requirements to manage that grant are not worth the value of that grant. So that's something that we often pay attention to. The other thing is grants often have a match, a required match. And the federal stated grant often is a 20% local, 80% federal. Local means anything usually that's not federal. So you can't take another federal funding source and match it against another federal funding source. But the other important thing is that just because the law says it's required at

20% to be competitive often, the industry requires you to go 50%. So halfsys if you will, on that grant. But they can be significant. Typically what the city of Austin does to bring that match to the table is we don't go ask for new money to be that match. What we typically do is find a project that we're fundly funded for. Let's just say it's a sidewalk project. And if we're going after a sidewalk grant, we will take some of those funds that are already dedicated for the project we want and expand the scope of the project. And so, for instance, airport boulevard you will satisfactory in a a -- you will hear in a am coulding meeting that we would like to use some of the funds that

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council identified for the project, airport boulevard, to go after a sidewalk grant to extend the benefits of that project further down the corridor. And so it's not that we are putting new funds up. We're often using funds that we already have identified for a project. And you will hear we always come to council to get that permission to do. Upcoming grant opportunities via campo, there is a recent call for projects. Or if it's not out yet, it will be shortly. There are two sources of grants which were the transportation alternatives program, alternatives /being/(ing)about alternatives to the single occupant or auto vehicle. And also the highway safety improvement program or hship. As you can imagine, the tap, transportation alternative programs, are for pedestrian and bicycle projects and so we will be coming to you with a list of projects that we already have funded, but for instance we would like to expand the funding on those projects to do more typically, either sidewalks or sidewalk and bike projects together. It is money that is dedicated or designated only for those type of projects. And so I know one concern of this council is that we're taking money that we might be using, for instance, for signals, and using on that. Sometimes we use signal money to build a signal, but we use that to match with sidewalk money that leads to that signal. So we're still achieving the goals that have been identified for that particular project. In terms of safety projects, those are projects that are on state highway roadways, so that would be like burnet and Lamar, for instance, where we are using approved safety techniques to improve the safety of those roadways. So pedestrian signals, signals, sidewalks, changes in the roadway.

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And those are typically a little bit more competitive to get because often the smaller cities in our region are in a better position to acquire those, but we think we can be competitive in the current call. The next step on those projects, they will be coming to you on April 8th. We will be presenting the proposed projects that we would like to pursue funding on. That is standard operating procedure is to come to council for authorization because in a sense we are asking you to pledge the potential of funding going forward. But we'll be bringing those proposals to mayor and council on may 21st, 2015. The applications, as I understand it today, will be due June 26th, 2015. Know that by doing that, that certainly puts all our cards on the table for our potential competitors for those grants to know about too, but that's the transparent and appropriate thing to do. >> Kitchen: I think we had a question. >> Gallo: I've got a question that we've been asked before. In our pedestrian and bike program, people contact us when -- because all of a sudden bike lanes appear on the roadways. And the question to us has been how do we know what's proposed? Is there a bike lane-sidewalk plan out there that's available for us to direct people to so they can see what's out there now. >> Yes. >> Gallo: What's proposed? What's needed. >> Yes. Yes. So we have an adopted long range bicycle plan as well as a long range pedestrian plan, and I will make sure you have access and know where those are. I believe they're on our transportation website for access at any time. Citizens are always welcome to dial 311 and ask for information and we can talk directly to engineers as well so that they know that. We typically -- now, Austin has had a very good track record on

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specifically with regards to bicycle facilities, following public works. When they repave a street and being able to add bicycle lanes behind the new pavement, simply because that gives us a blank slate to work on. >> Kitchen: And I think the concern is where is the citizen involvement in determination with what will happen with the streets that run through their neighborhoods? >> I would probably be staying a little bit, but I would be happy to answer. >> Kitchen: I was going to say this is a huge issue and one we may want to bring before this body to talk about in detail. >> I actually think we have an opportunity coming up. >> Kitchen: I think we have it on an upcoming agenda. Go ahead and respond. >> With both those programs we have a public involvement process where before that occurs we go out and talk to the neighbors along the street as well as to sure folks have information that we're working off the comprehensive plan and now it's time to implement this corridor and we have an opportunity to do it. So we do reach out. I'm sure there are folks that feel like they don't get the word. That always happens when you're in a busy, fast community, but it is our goal to make sure we communicate with the public. >> Gallo: I would like to make sure we have that on the agenda. >> Kitchen: Let's keep moving. We have a lot of material to cover obviously. >> I want to talk about innovative financing because it grows directly out of these partnerships. Financing is a partnership. The first one with txdot called pass-through financing. It's still a partnership with txdot, but it's still a successful mechanism that we use down in southwest Austin to accelerate a completion of an interchange that was probably 15 years away from coming. In a sense the city became the banker for txdot to accelerate the project.

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And txdot is paying us back year after year a certain percentage based on the traffic that moves through there. In the past the pass-through agreements has been 80/20,. That program has changed a little bit and in fact has not been funded by the state. However, I am always told by the local district engineer that if we have a good proposal to come to them and that they are in a sense open for business to talk about how they could accelerate specific projects, if we're willing to be the banker in those projects. And so that's just -- I just use that as an example. The project that we use this very successfully on and eager to get done were the U.S. At 29071 ramps. It was a 10-million-dollar agreement we used with financing non-voter approved debt and it was a 10-year pay back period. That project actually came in under 10 million so in that sense we didn't risk anything, but it could have flipped the other way and that's part of partnering is you have to understand that as part of the process. This could be a tool that we use in this region or want to use in this region as we think about some of these big projects going forward. What's nice about this, and Greg can elaborate on this, is because you have a pay back stream that affects your debt capability a little bit differently than just strictly borrowing money. Another innovative financing and I want to make you aware about, is this region created an innovative waive to keep money in this region and it was called the infrastructure bank. It was established in 2013 in response to a statewide funding call for shovel-ready projects. This is when in 2013 we realized we didn't have a lot of projects that were shovel ready and we were getting ready to lose access to several hundred million dollars as a region.

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In the past our region, our metropolitan region, had banked with other regions like Dallas or Houston, mostly Dallas. I'll be polite. I think we found that we didn't always get dollar for dollar back. We got a little bit less than a dollar back for every dollar we invested in the other mpo region. So this time we

created our own banking system with the mopac north express lanes. That project was shovel ready and it was getting ready to go out to the marketplace for private funding, which means they would have spent several hundred million dollars in interest rates over the life of that. With this funding we were able to save them significant money and what was that was able to do is they agreed to pay back into this quote, unquote, infrastructure bank for future projects. And I believe we invested about 100 million -- we the region in this. And they're paying back over time about \$200 million. What I think is interesting about this, and I don't want to pretend that I came up with this idea, but there are others that have been talking. Could a jurisdiction in this region bond against that payment stream so that we as a region could take advantage of that infrastructure bank >> Do two of wait 20 years to get the full payback or if we have another project could an entity borrow against it, use that as a payment stream so it doesn't negatively affect our borrowing capability but use that to accelerate transportation projects? It's just an idea, I think it's still to be tested by I think it's an opportunity. That fund is managed by distributed through campo so I think that's something to start to think about it it has not started receiving payback yet it will it will start next year once it's open. >> Kitchen: Okay thank you. >> With that I'll turn it over

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to Mr. Lazarus. >> Thank you very much. Appreciate the opportunity to spend a few minutes this afternoon talking about two somewhat unique funding sources, one of which helps us maintain what we build and the other is the unique partnership with capital metro. So the first of those is the transportation user fee, which the city established under chapter 1410 of the city code. The purpose of that was to provide a reliable source of funding for the operations, maintain and repair of our transportation network. The typical service or maintain things that we fund out of the transportation user fee revenues are pavement, sidewalk, curb, ramp, gutter, urban trail repair, right-of-way maintain, medians, trees, plantings, rob use it's for signs, signals, markings maintain and every now and then we have an emergency that we pay for and we use the funding until we get reimbursed. Most recent example of that would have been the Halloween floods where we had the money set aside in contingency and subsequently got reimbursed from FEMA. So there is an opportunity to maintain a balance in our transportation fund. I will point out that the transportation user fee is not the only source of funding that goes into the transportation fund. The fees assessed -- >> Zimmerman: Sorry. That begs the question so what is the percentage of the spending that's coming from the electric bills? What is the percentage? I presume it's not the majority of funding, but where would it lie, percentagewise? >> The transportation user fee, you can see on the bottom of this slide raises just under \$15 million a year. It's not a very big percentage as you look at the dollar value of capital funding, though. The last -- in the last bond, 2012 bond there was 140 plus million dollars for

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transportation prongs >> Zimmerman: That's spread out over I've, six, seven, eight years. This is annually, right, about 50 million annually. >> That's correct. >> Zimmerman: So this is pretty significant. >> It is. The benefit to having the funds available, is it does allow us to maintain what we have so we can maintain the pavements, make sure the signals work. We can replace marks and signage and ensure that the roadways we have serve up to the cpa capacity they're intended to. >> Zimmerman: A lot of people have asked me this over 15 years. In your typical city you have a property tax rate that's directly supporting these and it's weird that here in Austin we're supporting that through electric bills. Just seems really odd, you know? >> It's not part of the electric bill. The city has a centralized collection process that Austin administers but it's separate from your electric rate. >> Kitchen: I think the point is that it's a fee apart from property taxes. I think that's your question. >> Zimmerman: And that the fee --

you don't deduct it -- in some cases you can get a tax deducts, right, based on those taxes you pay but -- by the way I'm in the electric co-op, I don't get an Austin energy bill at all so -- I want to say about 40 to 50% of district 6 in northwest Austin, including parts of Avery ranch and canyon creek to the north they're not in Austin energy. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Keep going. >> The funds once they're collected you can see they're distributed into two separate funds. One is public works transportation fund and the other is the mobility fund that atd uses and each year as you go through the budget process you'll see from a service standpoint what those monies are used for. In response to a previous question I will tell you that the service plans from the public works department are in

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fact available on the website so that citizens can see where we're going to work in the coming couple of years. Then we've also broken down not only the operations but the capital projects by council district so that you can go see those as well. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Second item that I'd like to address is the quarter cent funding, a interlocal agreement between the city and capital metro, long history dating back to 2001 with most recent modification in 2010. It's a refund to the city that sales tax capital metro had collected. It's under \$140 million and we spent 113 millions and we have \$40 million committed to authorized work leaving us with \$21.8 million available for reprogramming for other projects, for our list of projects that we recommend that get funded. But that has been were those projects would have to come back through council and council would have the ability to reprioritize. There's about 220 projects that are in the quarter cent funding program. You can see that there are several different categories that they fall into. Any new project proposed has to meet the criteria shown and they have to be presented to the cap metro board for approval. With that I'll turn it over to Mr. Canally. >> Thank you, Howard. Greg canally, deputy cfo for the city of Austin. I'm going to walk you through some high level discussions about debt financing as it supports the transportation and mobility capital improvements part of the infrastructure. Obviously Howard talked about the need to maintain our infrastructure but obviously we need to continue to build and grow our infrastructure for mobility and transportation in such a growing region. I'm going to go back one slide if I can. We look at debt financing as it relates to transportation and

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mobility. We're really dealing with the general government credit or go bonds that you have heard in the big picture the city has other bonding abilities, revenue bonds, but that's usually done for the credits for Austin energy and Austin water utility. When we talk about transportation, we're really looking at debt that is supported by the property tax rate. So we really want to show you that with some context. The current property tax rate for city of Austin residents is 48.09 per hundred dollars valuation and it is the property tax revenue is collected, it goes into two buckets, roughly 75% or almost. Cents goes into the general fund operations and maintain, pays for public safety, park, health, library. The other 11 cents goes into our debt service despond that is what we use to service the bonds that we have issued. We issue bonds for 20-year terms, typically issue bonds once a year based on voter approved bond as well as other debt we can issue as well to give you a framework we're looking at the geocredit, general government credit. When we look at that there's three types of debt that are associated with the general obligation credit, public improvement bonds, bonds approved by voter do you remember bond elections, we also have certificates of obligations, long-term 20 year bonds issued really off cycle bond election needs for real property, as well as other issues that come up again. I think rob mentioned one of those back in 2010 having this ability that is enabled by stat constitute allowed us to partner with partner with txdot to get a major improvement done that otherwise would not have been done. It at

really -- I think rob, I remember as we talked about it at that time here in 2010 in

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this building was really a great give and get to be able to put, you know -- get that \$10 million up front in bonds but to get the it was a fantastic use of that debt instrument. This is short term debt we use to buy equipment and fleet and both transportation and public works do utilize this type of debt to help maintain their fleet to maintain the roads. We use this debt instrument. Overall we have about a billion dollars in debt outstanding, pretty low debt ratio compared to our national peers and Texas peers. We have a debt ratio of about 1.2 per our overall assessed valuation. We issue bonds once a year. We have cash financing abilities so we don't have to be issuing bonds. It's a lengthy process to go through involving rating agencies and making sure our credit, aaa, which is the highest credit any city can have, and we have, it's due to overall investments we make, as well as the fiscal approach we take to somehow the city and also the decision that's the city council has made in terms of property taxes and investments. The pledge is the full faith and credit of the city, the ability to leave leave very. This is going through the different bonds mentioned above, what takes voter approval and the term of the bonds. >> Zimmerman: Sorry. >> Kitchen: Go ahead. >> Zimmerman: I need to you back up if you could, please. >> Yes. >> Zimmerman: Very, very important point here. When you at these type of debits, voter approval, you have two listed as no. There's state law that authorizes these certificates of obligation? I'm not going to ask you to quote the state law but it's my understanding that was for

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emergencies, right? That the reason this borrowing mechanism exists is if you had a tornado that came through Austin and tore out a bunch of infrastructure, I have an emergency need, right, to borrow money and quickly rebuild. And the way this is listed, it just looks like, oh, it's a way to get money without voter disapproval I think that kind of misrepresents what's going on here. >> Again, it is it is enabled for cities to use this. The city has been I think a very good steward of the use of this certificate of obligation. In fact, again, in the case of the mopac 290 flyover this is actually not being supported. It is pledged by the property tax but not supported by the property tax rate. Transportation does not have its own credit. The city, general government was able to issue those bonds paid back by txdot we would not have been able to complete that project without that ability. I think issues do arise that I think the state -- again, in that case the state benefit perfected that greatly. Otherwise that Roth would not have been able to have been done. There are also things that occur for the ability to acquire real property that is not envisioned when you have bond elections, issues that come up. All of those decisions before issuing, acquiring any debt need come to the city council for approval. And also with certificates of obligation there is an extensive notification period we must notice to the citizens our intent to issue certificates of on obligation and that is an annual process we go through. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you. All right. >> Let me go back one. Just to kind of finalize, again, looking at our overall general obligation bonds, again focusing on our public improvement bonds, those bonds that have been issued -- approved by the voters, which is the vast

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majority of the debt that we have, certainly for transportation and public works it is the entirety of it. But for the -- those cos that we issued for mopac. Overall we looked back, decided to go back and look back in 1998. Certainly as the region looks at its mobility issues now and charts a path forward, I think it's -- we think it's important to look at the investments that we have made over, you know, not quite 20

years but getting on there. Overall, we've had bond elections about a \$1.5 billion in bond elections, general obligation bond elections, going back to 1998, of which nearly \$640 million has been dedicated to transportation and mobility. What you have here is just those buckets, spending buckets of where we've spent it. The vast majority has been on street reconstruction, which is really the works that happened to improve streets and street improvements, improving street capacities. We also have -- made improvement point I want do point out the discussion about the state highways, over \$42 million in investments in state highways. A lot of that dates back to the November 2000 bond election where at that time the city council invested in many of the large state highway projects, highway 130, mopac north and state highway 45 north to help, again, accelerate those projects. Voter approved bonds, just to show you kind of the scope of the investments that the city has contributed to the region. So with that I'll turn that back over to Mike who is going to wrap up. >> Okay. This is -- go ahead. >> Gallo: Would you happen to have this information available on a shorter time period so we see how this longer time period compares to perhaps the last two to three years? I'm asking because the state highways, that was going to be one of my questions

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, why are we doing this to fund highways but your answer was it's obviously highways helping congestion. I would be curious how this kind of changes -- or how this has changed over the last couple of years. >> Certainly we can get that and we have it broken down by bond proposition and by year so we can get that out to you in -- probably in a spreadsheet form is probably the easiest. >> Gallo: Thank you. >> Kitchen: That would be helpful. >> We'll get you a full summary of all of this. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> The other thing I'd like to do if we can, categorize it. I think our earlier investments has right-of-way, which has been traditional and we've moved a new variety where we're funding the construction of an improved interchange to provide better connectivity to places so we'll try to do what we can with that. >> Kitchen: On a time check it's 4:15 so if we could -- if it's -- the pleasure of the committee if we can wrap this up quick we can get to our second briefing, a shorter version of our second briefing before we start our public comment period at 4:30. >> Real short. We're pretty much on last slide, slide on climatic. Working across multiple jurisdictions, obviously having collaborative partnerships driven approach to working with our partner agencies to make these larger improvements in our area to deal with traffic congestions, mobility, other issues. And the other point I want to make too is because we're making such a substantial investment in our transportation infrastructure one of the things we're trying to also look at, what other types of infrastructure and capital improvements can we couple with these transportation improvements so we can leverage across different types of infrastructure categories. This is where we're making significant investments along some of our major corridors so we want to leverage other types

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of improvements, whether that's drainage infrastructure, housing, other types of things that make sense to put together and particularly when we're talking about, you know, transportation, housing, you're talking about dealing with some affordability issues there. Again we'll be looking for opportunities going forward as well. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. I want to thank staff for putting this information together. We'll have more questions as we dive deeper into each of the funding areas but this was a good overview for us all. Thank you very much. We're going to turn now -- we have about -- let's take a maximum of 15 minutes. I don't want to start the public comment too late. But we're going to start with the regulatory -- we have a briefing item from our last meeting last week we asked for a matrix that would compare for us the regulatory framework for the different types of ground transportation so we

could see the requirements and how they might differ between tncs and taxis and other types of ground transportation. So I think we have information in our packet. >> Yes. Good afternoon, madam chair, councilmembers, Carlton Thomas, division manager with the Austin transportation department. That is correct at the last mobility committee meeting we were asked to provide several pieces of information for the committee. We have responded by assembling a binder. Y'all have been provided a binder that includes information, including several grids, providing information that was requested and additional information that the department feels could inform the committee on not only the current issues as they exist, but as well as providing some history on several other issues related to the ground transportation industry here in town. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. And I don't know if you want to -- I don't know how the committee would like to go through this, but we have a grid

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which gives us down the left side -- I'm reading this out because I'm not sure the public has this available, but down the left side we've got the different components you might say of regulatory scheme. Do we have that to put on the -- do we have that to put up? Okay. And then across the top we've got tncs, taxis, limb mows, charters, cabs, shuttles, airport shuttles, elvs, horse drawn carriages. You guys tell me. I don't know if you have a way to present this but because of our time we may have specific questions. >> We do believe if the committee had questions we're more than willing to answer the questions. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> That you have. >> Kitchen: Okay. What's the pleasure of the committee? Would you all like to start asking questions on this? Go ahead. >> Zimmerman: If I could just ask a couple of questions about the definitions. Ground transportation, vehicle, safety inspection. Everybody except the tncs show that so could you explain why that is, if it could be eliminated. >> That's an inspection conducted on vehicles used to provide transportation services and it extends -- it's a lot more exclusive than what would be inspected with a Normal Texas motor vehicle safety inspection. It ensures if there's a compartment there's a separator in between luggage and passenger so if there were an accident or something, it wouldn't be more severe. There are a number of things that are inspected in the ground transportation vehicle inspection as opposed to to the state -- >> Zimmerman: Everybody is familiar, right, with state motor vehicle inspection. So who does this inspection?

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How much does it cost and who does it? >> So it is conducted by a third-party, the city contracts through the bid process. It's currently being conducted biography automotive and the cost is actually part of the permit cost that the operators pay. >> Zimmerman: Okay so you don't have that cost broken out so I know what that is? >> It's somewhere near \$28.75. >> Zimmerman: Like 30 bucks, okay. >> Kitchen: That's an item if I heard you correctly -- I see a line right below it there's also the state motor vehicle inspection so that appears to be required for -- required of everyone, I can it's not applicable, like petty cab but the ground transportation vehicle safety inspection is required of everyone except for the tncs; is that correct. >> That is correct. >> Kitchen: Okay. Go ahead. >> Gallo: So what is included on the ground transportation vehicle safety inspection over and above what would be inspected on the state motor vehicle inspection? >> Fire extinguisher, the door handles have to operate properly, tires, windshield, things that -- it's quite an exhaustive list. It's probably about a 50-. Inspection. >> Kitchen: Maybe could you provide that. Would you like that information? >> Absolutely. >> Kitchen: Did you have another question? Y'all jump in if you have questions. I have a question about the -- I think I'm familiar with this but just to make sure that I'm clear on the regulated fares, so I see that there's no regulated fares for tncs but there are for taxis and limb mows, sedans. Can you just explain what that encompasses when it says regulated fares? >> So for limousines, limousines are required to have a

minimum

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fare. The city has established the floor, but, however, they can charge upwards any amount that is not regulated with the city. If you look on the next page in your binder, it would -- it includes information on the taxi fares and how they're regulated. >> Kitchen: Okay. Okay. All right. And I'll just keep asking questions. Y'all jump in if you want. Also going down the list, I think we've heard comments about this from folks that have spoken to us but I just want to verify. The chauffeur permit, so if I'm I'mreading this correctly, that's another item required of all ground transportation with the exception of tncs; is that correct? >> That is correct with the exception of operators of vehicles of 16 or more. They can operate those vehicles with a commercial driver's license with a passenger endorsement. >> Kitchen: And I know we've had some briefing on this and also some testimony about this but could you remind me again what's involved with the chauffeur permit in terms of the cost for the driver? >> So in order to secure a chauffeur permit here in the and I, the driver has to provide a copy of their criminal background, their driving history, and they must also submit to a test where we basically test for their knowledge of the city, how to read a map and landmarks in the city. >> Kitchen: Okay. What's the cost for that? Is there a cost to the driver for that? >> It's a \$20 cost and they -- if successful they're issued a chauffeur permit that's valid for two years. >> Kitchen: Okay go ahead. >> Zimmerman: I have a question on the criminal background to the city. I think the tncs would strongly disagree that there's no criminal background check. There's -- that's a major point of contention.

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Is somebody here from the tnc that could speak to that? I see a hand in the back. >> Kitchen: Why don't we. >> Zimmerman: Maybe later? >> Kitchen: We've got a public comment period, if that's all right with you. >> Zimmerman: That's fine. >> Kitchen: But your point being, councilmember Zimmerman, is that is it that the criminal background check is done by the company? Is that's what's done? >> The difference is an applicant for a chauffeur permit must secure a criminal background check themselves and provide that criminal background information to the city. >> Kitchen: Okay. So anything that relates to tncs is something that the tnc company might do themselves? >> That's correct. >> Kitchen: That's the difference I think. Did you have a question? Okay. All right. Let's see. Then the permit cost, what does that relate to? >> Each vehicle that is permitted to operate as a ground transportation vehicle is assessed a permit cost associated with the type of vehicle that they use. So for taxicabs, each taxicab permit is \$450 a year and with limb mows and sedans if it's a sedan-type vehicle the permit is \$350, however if they use a stretch vehicle, that permit is \$400 and other costs are across the board. >> Kitchen: Okay. Are these fees that the drivers pay or the taxicab company? >> So the holder. The company would pay those fees for vehicles to operate under their umbrella. >> Kitchen: Okay. And when you have -- when there's a zero there under tnc does that mean there's not a permit? Is that what it means? >> There is not a permit. The city is unaware of how many vehicles are being operated as tncs. >> Kitchen: Okay. Do you guys have other questions about this grid? >> Zimmerman: Just one other question, I guess. It's just hard to tell. When I see the \$450 taxi permit

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cost, I'm just thinking, well, what is the value? I'm having -- I'm struggling to figure out what the value is to the Austin people who use the taxicab. Because I guess there's stuff that's going on that's not on this sheet. This is just a summary. So I -- >> Correct. When the fees were established the things that the city

looked at in terms of establishing a cost associated with that fee were how much would it cost administratively for us to process that vehicle, inspect the vehicle, the cost of the inspection itself, the \$30, that's also factored into that. And enforcement. Those things are all factored into the permit cost. >> Zimmerman: So there's a fixed cost. In other words, if a taxi takes one passenger per week or if they take, you know, 20 passengers per day, the fee is the same? >> That is correct. >> Zimmerman: Yeah. >> Kitchen: Go ahead. >> Gallo: I have a logistical question. So I think I heard you say that the permit fees or the permits are not paid for or issued to the drivers, that they're issued to the companies. And then I guess the companies distribute those. So I have do questions because -- did I hear that correctly? >> That is correct. >> Gallo: One question would be if a driver moves from one company to another company or moves from a taxi to a tnc -- well, that's assuming that Tennessee had permits, which at point they don't, but moves from one taxicab to another, it sounds like the permit would not follow them and the new company would have to acquire another permit for them. Is that how it would work. >> That is typically how it works in categories other than taxis. Permits are not transfer and

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will always remain property of the city. When the city issues the permits we do issue them to the company that is authorized to operate and provide background transportation services. However, if you have certain categories such as the limousine scene or the charter services that can add or drop vehicles at will, so add four vehicles in January and drop six in March, the sax permits are fixed. So the number that is -- established at the beginning of the year will be that same number three December. So if a driver left the taxi company that had 200 permits and went to another taxi company, they would rely on that company having an available permit for them to operate. >> Gallo: So -- I'm coming to this from a background of the real estate and mortgage business where an individual actually gets their own license to do what they do. And then they're allowed the mobility of being able to move between different companies that end up sponsoring them who they work for. So it just seems like it's kind of a stagnant process to offer individuals the ability to move from company to company with how it's set up. >> So there is a difference between a license and a permit. The driver does maintain their license as long as they can seek and establish sponsorship, that license issued to the driver can transfer to another company. However, the permit is the device that we use to affix to the vehicles that have been associated with a particular fleet, and that vehicle permit is not transferable between companies. >> Gallo: So the drivers have licenses, which I don't see listed on here. >> It's a chauffeur permit. >> Gallo: Got it, thank you. Then the cars have the permits? >> Absolutely correct. >> Gallo: And the cars are owned by the companies or individuals? >> There are different models. They have -- you have some companies that own the vehicles

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and then you have some drivers that are owner operators. >> Gallo: Okay. >> Kitchen: I think you have a second page I'd like to go over for just a moment if it's possible to put that up. >> Gallo: Thank you. >> Kitchen: And then I appreciate everyone bearing with us. We'll move on from this shortly to our public comments. But just want to take a minute or two to make sure I'm understanding the next page. >> Is the next -- >> Kitchen: Next page is that taxicab regulation versions tnc agreements. >> Okay. That's fine. Yes. All right. So I think this just -- I had a question or two on the cost for the permits. So that 340,200, that goes back to the total cost? >> That's 756 permits at \$450 per permit. >> Kitchen: Okay. So that's the total for all the taxicabs, not per company? >> All taxicab companies combined. >> Kitchen: Okay. Then the zero, that relates back to the fact that there aren't permits for tnc? >> That's correct. >> Kitchen: So the city is getting approximately 340,000 from taxicabs and nothing from tnc? >> That's

correct. >> Kitchen: The fare requirements we already talked about the airport requirement, can you explain that? >> So Perla Compton from aviation described that to you. >> Kitchen: I think she did last time. Does that just mean there's a dollar -- dollar -- >> There's a dollar per use so

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for each trip that originates at the airport, the drivers incur \$1 charge. >> That is correct, ground transportation manager. And what we charge the taxicabs is \$1 per trip and that's only picking up. >> Kitchen: You're in the process of negotiating with tncs; is that right? >> Yes. >> Kitchen: Other questions? Go ahead. >> Zimmerman: One question, yeah. Can I ask a quick question about that. Maybe this goes back to engineering and technical stuff but being an engineer, I design stuff. I know that civil engineers when we design an airport it's for a certain number of passengers and we make the presumption that a certain none of vehicle trips are going to go through say the baggage area claim pickup, right? So what I'm struggling with is understanding, you know, why there's this additional \$1 surcharge? We have designed that airport and the concrete and the reinforced steel and grade foundation underneath it, it's designed to handle millions of trips, whatever it is. So I don't understand why this \$1 per trip is even being charged to the taxicabs. Other than it makes money for the city, I don't see a justification. >> They get it back. >> Zimmerman: That's not a good justification for me is making money out of people. So I guess it makes money for the city. >> That would have to go through -- I would have to refer to my director but he's not here. >> Zimmerman: I guess that would be part of the budget discussion. >> A lot of it has to do with infrastructure. >> Zimmerman: Would it be part of the budget discussion. >> Kitchen: I would think so, yeah. Okay. Other questions before we move on to public comment? Anybody want -- okay. All right. We're now going to move to the public -- thank you very much for putting this together. We appreciate this information. So we're now -- go ahead. We do have a question. >> Garza: Sorry, Carlton.

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The peer city comparison chart where it says Austin and it says reporting requirement and it says yes for Austin, are those the requirements -- I mean, I understand that we have requirements, but my understanding is that they're not -- they're not reporting as we would like them to be; is that correct? Wasn't there likes an ag opinion that's pending? >> The ordinance that enabled the tncs to enter into agreements with the city set out certain expectations for reports. If you go to the next section, that details the information that was requested of the tncs. It's under the tab data requested per tncs company agreements. >> Garza: Is it the following page? >> Yes. I have two pages of -- two pages of tnc comparison and if you go past that second page of tnc comparison there's another section that's labeled data requested per tnc agreements. >> Garza: Am I missing that? I don't know where that is. Sorry. I have this side and this side. >> So after this page, there's another page. And -- >> Garza: What tab is that under? >> Two pages past the page you're looking at. >> Garza: This was you had of my binder so I don't know. >> You have a binder. >> Garza: Yeah. He said it's in here. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Do you have a black binder up there? >> Kitchen: Yes, she does, mm-hmm. >> Garza: Okay, I see it now. So there's two highlighted, two and three?

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>> Those two highlight ready the only two pieces of data we received from both Uber and lift. >> Garza: I thought there was something about the pun% growth that -- I thought there was a pending ag and they instead was proprietary information they didn't want to give. >> The information they did provide they

have both indicated it to be confidential. So that it has -- began the process of seeking an ag ruling to determine whether in fact the city of Austin has to suppress or can -- >> Garza: It was regarding these two or three? >> It's regarding, yes, the complete set of information, I think they provided the city. >> Garza: Okay. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Okay. Do y'all have more questions? Trod move on? Okay. Thank you very much. All right. We're going to start with -- now our public comment today is on the proposed changes to the taxicab ordinance and the related franchise renewal agreements. That's what we'll be hearing on today. I think it's -- let me see if I have the will of the committee. I'm not expecting that we will take -- make decisions today, okay? I'm seeing nods. But that we will make decisions on what our recommendation will be to the full council next week, not today. Today what we want to do is hear from everyone and ask questions. So -- okay. All right. We'll start with ed carbo with yellow cab. I'm sorry. Go ahead. >> Gallo: I just wanted to apologize ahead of time I'm going to have to leave a little early before all the speakers are finished and I promise I will watch that on TV to make sure I hear everyone. We have a town hall meeting scheduled in district 10 and I will need to be across town at 6:00 and as we now how traffic is I'm going to need a little

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drive time so I apologize to the speakers when I will not be here. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Kitchen: Ed, I understand that you're with yellow cab but you're here representing the franchise holders and cab companies. >> That is the case. Actually I'd appreciate it in the owners of the other two cab companies could step forward in case we get to a q&a period and you need to ask some questions of them jack okay. >> All right. Thank you all for your time today and consideration of these issues. I want to start off by saying first and foremost, you know, as all of this shakes out, the thing that we have to take into consideration are the consumers and their needs but also equally as important are the drivers, their well-being and conditions as service providers. I know Austin is dealing with a situation where income disparity is a big deal so that has to be factored into any decisions we make about transportation services. I would like to say that gross revenue per driver for our fleet is 5% more per hour, including subsidies and -- more per hour than the tncs, including subsidies and promotions based on the information presented to you last week by staff. And that's taken into consideration the venture capital money they've raised to buy the market. Lease fees are 6% less and that's a fact. For any driver thinking about driving you're going to pay less driving a cab. The typically icd makes about \$14 an hour after expenses and I can show you guys how we worked through those Numbers. Reasons to not deregulate we have to take the Moscow example into consideration. I know councilmember Zimmerman presented information about his experience of two weeks in Moscow last week and I think the reality in Moscow based on some research that I've done is they deregulated in the '90s and if

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you'll read the highlighted portions of that it's the last page of 169 page report, I won't bore you but that didn't go well and they're now going back to regulation. They had severe service issues, you had the mafia and the Russian mobbing running cabs, gang wars, turf wars, kidnaps, rapes, certainly not what we want for Austin. So the Moscow deregulation example does not work. Consistent historical perspective also tells us that dedecreasing not work. Service, safety, income for drivers goes down and I'll share some examples. Historically, I know staff talked about Seattle, same thing happened in Indianapolis. Many cities that have deregulated went back do regulation because it's the best way to operate in this space. I was reading an article today about Montgomery county in in Maryland and their presentation -- I'll source this information and get it to you, is that San Diego taxicabs showed a 30% decline in income after deregulation, uberrer and Lyft drivers in Minneapolis are complaining with

oversupply of drivers and limiting ability to earn in Minneapolis, too few cabs creates a service problem but too many also creates a problem for drivers' earnings and income. The reasons that the industry is regulated is to present and create access for all. The city charter talks about that. There's a mention in the charter to impose reasonable regulations to ensure safe, efficient and continuous service to the public. Director Spillar's memo to you guys last week, interests of the city of Austin is to ensure publicly provided ground transportation services are safe, reliable, reasonably priced and available equally throughout the community.

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Some of the recommendations that we have on the cab size are taken a chainsaw approach when scissors are needed, for example, circling for all drivers in wheelchair accessible vehicles to be employees, we're actually up in terms of percentage of service to that community, up 45% and serving that community better. So I think some of the approaches that the staff recommendations present are taking a chainsaw approach when scissors are more appropriate. There's an ordinance to change the respond to request conspirator service and I think that would dramatically improve service to all and that recommendation is actually presented to you. And I think that's the first step as opposed to the chainsaw approach. Without franchises you would not have city-wide service to answer the councilwoman's question, the reason the permits are not given to the drivers is what you end up with is this tnc model where they serve specific parts of town and everyone's district on that council not receive service. Drivers would not invest in wheelchair accessible vehicles, that community would not receive service. I think a question we have to ask ourselves is what's the percentage brokerage of all other transportation service providers in the city of Austin. And that includes charters, limb mows, shuttle, petty cabs, tnc, cart and go because all of that impacts drivers and the industry. I think we have to answer questions before we make any conclusive decisions. By the way all of those drivers are licensed, as you can see and all go through the fingerprint background check, to answer the question about the fingerprint background check the last page in the information I presented talks about how insurance -- excuse me, realtors have to get the state fingerprint background check because if it's not a ten-point fingerprint background check the tnc checks conducted

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you don't have -- ask dps you don't have access to the criminal records in Texas. So you're doing a public records check and not a background check. Everybody else has to do it. It's not a barrier to entry. It's a safety issue for the consumer. Every city in Texas does it. They do it in New York, they do it in Chicago. Why does Austin deserve less? So that's part of the conversation I think we need to have. Currently in New York it came out that there are more tncs than there are cabs. They just went over that hump. In San Francisco -- [buzzer sounding] >> Kitchen: That is that the six? >> That was six minutes. >> Kitchen: Six minutes, okay. Let me ask you a question. That was six minutes, right? I should have explained this. Since you're representing other cab companies we extended the time. Could I ask you a question? Did you finish your thought and then I'd like to ask you a question. >> Certainly. I'll try to wrap up quickly. In San Francisco there's a significant reduction in wheelchair service. They're down 66%. Information that was put out by the sfmta. We're up 45% in Austin. I bring up New York and San Francisco because the tncs have been operating there the longest. Aware going to end up with more tncs than taxicabs and a significant reduction in service to the community because they will not be able to provide the services we say are so important because essentially you're raising costs for cab companies and Los Angeles allowing all of the revenue to go to tncs. >> Kitchen: I have a quick question and others may too. There's a set of proposed -- a recommendation -- of recommendations from our transportation staff about the

taxicab ordinance, and so -- those relate to hours of duty, the dispatch acceptance, the service performance measures, credit card acceptance, green vehicle incentives, actual

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calculation of the number of permits and an increase in the permits. And the need for specialized taxicab permits. Now I was wondering if you wanted to comment on any of those in particular. Do you or the other taxicab companies have concerns about any of those proposed amendments? >> Certainly there are concerns. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> I'll refer back to the approach, you know -- I think some of the recommendations aren't necessary. >> Kitchen: Because you had mentioned earlier something were -- >> In you implement some simpler solutions. I think the most complicated part of this is you have to start with the level of fairness. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> It's going to be really difficult for cab companies to run the operations that live up to these requirements. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> With an unregulated entity or more than one unregulated entity providing the same service. So it's a challenge and there's certainly conversation that's need to play out. I think if you level the playing field and there's a consistent set of rules across the board, all service providers can live up to those responsibilities. But I think it's going to be quite a challenge to get your taxicab companies to continue to do more with less while, you know, there's an option to do less and make more. >> Kitchen: Okay. Does anybody else have questions? Okay. >> Zimmerman: I appreciate the work did you there. >> Certainly. >> Zimmerman: In Moscow but I did live for ten months in Kiev Ukraine. I think the level of lawlessness in east turn Europe is higher than here. You wouldn't know if you hadn't lived there. The mafia and police and government are very difficult to distinguish between each other. I was smart not to use the official government taxis because I had a better chance probably of being ripped off or stolen from because, again, if something that's me in an

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officially marked government cab, the mafia protects the person who is committing violence against me. If I go with an unregulated, unmarked private taxi and something goes wrong, there's a much better chance I'll get police help. It's counterintuitive what's going on. But I want to speak to your point about the regulatory burdens that placed on the taxicabs, particularly an obligation that you have to have a certain set -- certain number of vehicles for disability. Right? That's built into the contract. Of course it -- a vehicle that can handle handicapped passengers is what, I don't know, four times more expensive? How much more expensive is it to pick up a passenger that has -- >> About 40%. >> Zimmerman: About 40%. So I can relate to your concern about that, that there's no requirement for tncs to pick up wheelchair accessed people but if I had to make a decision and we're going to have to make a decision at some point, I'd like to see everybody regulated less, okay? I'd like to see everybody regulated less. As a final point, I think that the business model -- I have done looking into this. I think the business model for the taxis and the way the permits are done, the way all that is done, this didn't exist. This is very, very important. The modern smartphone with gps, there was no gps, right? A generation ago this doesn't exist. And the whole idea of Uber and Lyft as a superior business model, it's based on technology that didn't exist when these franchises were put into place. >> If I can respond. >> Kitchen: Your inspect well-taken but I think we're talking about the regulatory scheme here and I think that the point that you're making to us is an equal playing field, you know, if I'm hearing you correctly, which I don't think you're disagreeing with, if I'm understanding correctly. So we're going to need to move on. >> If I can address that with

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two quick points. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Austin is the first city where all of your can companies actually have the technology. So this is not a new technology and it's not available to people. Subsequently, from a electrician standpoint, I don't disagree with you that some rules may need to be stripped out but I think you have to answer the question about privilege and access. The reality is that this is a public utility, the city has dained it such and everybody should have access. If you don't have certain rules in place you're mortgage going to have access for all and I'm talking about people that need wheelchairs, people that look a certain way, people that don't have certain okay? >> Zimmerman: You lost me there, public utility, Austin energy, water utility, those are public utilities, taxis, no. They shouldn't be considered public utilities. >> Kitchen: This is an interesting discussion. Thank you very much for -- I think I'm -- I think we're hearing the concerns, if I'm hearing correctly from the taxicab companies in terms of an equal playing field. So thank you. So Mr. Passmore, Dave Passmore. Is he here? Okay. Here he comes. And just so y'all will be ready, after him we'll hear from David witty. >> Hi, good evening, councilmembers. I really appreciate today this opportunity to speak with you in reference to the taxi drivers and the taxi industry it thanks for the time you have allotted me to speak to you today and I will briefly go over some of our summary and just ask some of my other board members to come up and join us and show in support and present in their part of the issue.

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>> Kitchen: Mr. Passmoor you're representing the ataxicabs association of Austin. >> Yes, thank you, I'm the president of the taxi drivers association. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Once again thanks for the privilege to speak to you today. The tdaa is a membership base of -- membership organization based on 450 taxi drivers here in the city of Austin and that the drivers are the people who actually help to make this industry. We are the ones that are providing the service to the citizens of Austin and doing the work. Most of Austin taxi drivers work approximately around ten to 12 hours a day seven days a week. Oftentimes earning less than minimum wage. We heard a few minutes ago we're making \$14 an hour. I would like to use a magnifying glass to look at that. Thank you. We pay a lease to the franchise on a weekly basis. The company I drive for it's \$408 for a 12 hour shift while the purchase of the permit through the city to the franchise is \$450. We see basically an increase of 51% -- I mean a 51 week profit after the first week of payment to the franchises. Now, that said on a 12 hour shift, the last three years, Austin taxi drivers lost over 30% in income. Some of that loss is due to fall in business and some of that cost could be attributed to increase in operating costs for drivers. We have experienced roughly around two to three lease

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increase over the last three to four years, and there was not an increase on the meter to offset that for the drivers. Currently the transportation department and the city has an agreement, if the gas prices are up, there's an increase -- an increment gas -- gas increment increase and if the prices go down there's a reduction of that also. Now I would just like to refer to my notes as I could be a lot more clearer. As I said, we have lost over 30% of our income to increase in lease and fall in business. We have reached out to the city on numerous occasions for the urgent need of releases. We have gone to the Austin transportation department with pleads for help and proposals that we have. Last Wednesday, after attending this first committee meeting, when staff presented their proposal of 100 permits for each franchise and 105 permits for a new franchise, I was a member of the task force coming to panel, also a member of the tnc panel. There was no discussion in that package over the four photos we met about 100 permits for each franchise. That was a shocking news to me last week, sitting here. So with these

committees set up and task forces set up to look into taxi franchise, I'll just say briefly what the purpose of the taxi task force was. The purpose of the taxi task force was to vet the franchises, not the drivers. The franchises. And performance measures. Now, I have yet to hear a full report on what their proposals are and, like I said last week, it has been the first time that

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I've ever heard anything about 100 permits. I can tell you what I heard in those meetings so that you don't realize that I'm not suffering from amnesia. Transportation department had made a recommendation to do away with the formula and to use the existing number of permits, which is 756 and allocate 10% of 75 permits. And each franchise would get 25. Out of that 25 -- how did that 25 permits grow from that time of the meeting to last week's presentation? I'm not aware, wasn't made aware and I'm still waiting to hear some Morton. I'm not here to disrespect anyone but being a part of this group and taking time off from work to represent the drivers, to go in and hear one thing and to come back here when you are going to make a presentation to council and there's additional numbers and information provided, it also should be provided to the representative of stakeholders that are in these meetings ahead of time. The 105 permits for a new franchise, I don't know where that came from either. That was never mentioned in the task force meeting. And if you are willing to ask anyone else who has been on that committee if they could provide with you that information, I'll be gladly waiting to hear that. Now, I was very angry and saddened because in the entire proposal there was not one word of any reference to councilmembers now mayor pro tem tovo, friendly resolution -- friendly amendment to councilmember Riley resolution 25 for allowing the tnc to

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operate. There were eight items on that friendly amendment and I didn't see one in the mobility report, and I'm wondering why is it, as I asked last week, that our issues are kept silent and why is it that we are always just left behind as our issues don't count? I mean, if they don't count, then probably being a part of the panel and, you know, going to meetings probably is not something I should be doing. Because as I said we represent over 450 drivers. We have probably around 11, 1200 drivers in Austin. Most of the drivers will join the union, but are afraid of retaliation. As we have presented to you earlier, and I do have some documents here I would like to leaf with the committee. I realize the chime went up so maybe my six minutes went that quickly, but I would like to leave a few copies for each councilmember as to what our proposal is, I'll ask one of my board members, Mr. Antonio roez and vice president do come up and submit our proposal, if I may approach >> Kitchen: And both of them are signed up for speaking. So we'll take them now if they would like to. >> Hello, councilmembers. >> Kitchen: If you'll proceed. >> Thank you very much. My name is Antonio Rojos.

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I have been driving a cab at Austin cab for five years now. I'm here representing tdaa as well. What I am here is to urge the city council consider a driver co-op. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> The driver co-op taking into consideration those permits that have been mentioned, and to recognize that this is one of the best ways to make driver income and get customer, passenger quality. This is brought on because of the fall in income, especially affected by tnc's as of late. We've had falling income for several years in a row now, and we know that in other cities the driver co-ops have been the factor that helps both of those things adjust. We have had extensive contact with other driver co-ops in the U.S. Seattle, Philadelphia, Denver, many cities. And this is what we look at as a reasonable way to get driver income at a decent,

liveable wage. We have several ways to get our income. The primary way is through the regulated taxi meter. We get it directly from the passengers. We are regulated, but we

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have to give to an unregulated terminal fee or lease to the company. That's where the majority of our income goes. And as I said, it continues to go down since the invasion of tnc's on our taxi industry. We propose that with our tax driver co-op we could charge instead of the 250 to \$400 that we are charged in terminal fees by the franchise a week, about 20,000 a year, about 75 to \$150 a week to each driver. And I would just like to close using myself as an example. About three years ago I was bringing home weekly about 600 to \$700 a week. [Buzzer sounds] Now I'm bringing about 350 to 450. And that's a 30% drop. Thank you very much. >> Kitchen: Thank you. David, do you mind having him go -- why don't you go ahead and then we'll have David after him. Go ahead. >> Hello. Thank you, councilmember, for letting me to have an opportunity to speak before you today. I agree on all what my friend says about co-op -- >> Kitchen: Could you go ahead and identify yourself for the record? >> My name is [indiscernible], I'm the vice-president of the taxi drivers association. I agree with the co-op situation. The co-op is a model that

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has been -- start setting up in all majority of the United States in major cities, like Denver, San Francisco, Seattle. And it is an new economy model for the taxi services now and we would like to have that opportunity here. We've been asking for permit in a different way for five, six years. We make only sometimes -- legacy permit sometimes, permit for the drivers, but this time since we're surprised with the recommendation proposal of the staff, we ask for this co-op. Besides that, we have -- if co-op is allowed here in Austin, is only four or five, 400 or 5 permit, that doesn't cover all the drivers. So about # hundred, # hundred drivers remain still under the franchise for we have another proposal for the remaining of the drivers, which we call it the lease cap. This is not new. We've been asking lease cap for the last five, six years. Lease cap is -- I heard a lot about regulation, about fairness here. I liked it. And also the drivers want that regulation and fairness equal with the franchise and for everybody. For example, the permit when it's given to the franchise, it is obligated they pay \$450 for just one permit, but once they go to the franchise they have different standard. Some, if he's a terminal fee, start from 250, some 255, some 315. If they're double shifting it can go to 408 per shift.

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For the percentage of return is from 2800 to 4700%. This markup, where in the world is found anywhere this kind of markup, over a thousand return or two thousand, three thousand return? There's nowhere. So what the drivers get is always regulated by the city. We have meters. Our meter is adjusted once a year, twice a unique depending gas, everything. So we want the franchise to be regulated too. What they charge us. You know, if what we get from the customer is regulated, why the one we give it to the franchise is not regulated. [Buzzer sounds] The one the franchise give it to the city is regulated \$450. And another one is the due process, a lot of drivers get fired for no or little reason where many cities in the United States have a due process, third parties that see the legitimacy of the firing and see the evidence. And in Austin there's no reason anybody can fire you any time, so we want this due process to implement it for us. The last one, I don't know if my time is gone, the elimination of the sponsorship of city permit. You know, the city lies -- the licenses belong to the city, the same as the permit. If the city gives the license, why we have to have -- get sponsored through the franchises. All they do is sign on it

and our background criminal, everything is checked. So we want the sponsorship of the license to be dropped

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because if I get the license, I should be able to go drive for any company I want. And that is one of the things that we want. And also, the franchise renewal -- I know the time is -- >> Kitchen: Yeah. >> You don't have to renew for 10 years. You are new council. You can state it, you can renew it for three months or month or year until you figure out what is going on. >> Kitchen: Yeah. And if I'm hearing you correctly, you're referring to the time period during which we renew these franchise agreements with the tax cabs. Thank you. Did you have a question? >> Zimmerman: Before you go I have a question. When I mentioned a few minutes back about the business model of the franchise owners for the taxi franchises being sleet, what you're -- being obsolete, what you're complaining about is what I'm talking about. 40 or 50 years ago this didn't exist. >> Exactly. >> Zimmerman: So a large part of what you're paying money for is dispatching, right? Somebody picks up the phone and they call a taxi company, then the taxi company relays that to you and you get your business. >> Yes. >> Zimmerman: This is a very important point. And now people are not using land line phones anymore. They don't want to phone the tax company. Everything is done directly. This is a game changer regarding the business model. What I'm hearing a complaint from you is this \$400 a week is outrageous. It's outrageous and it's bankrupting you guys. >> Yes. >> Zimmerman: Is that fair enough? [Applause]. Thanks. >> Kitchen: Our next speaker is David Witte.

[5:11:30 PM]

>> Good afternoon, committee members, my name is David Witte. I'm a member of adapt of Texas. And where a grassroots disability rights organization who have been working on, amongst other issues, we've been trying to get accessible taxicab service improvements in Austin since 1994. So for 21 years adapt has been making efforts and deals with the city and with the -- well, now it's been four different cab companies over these past two decades. We're still here trying to make improvements. Generally overall we're supportive as an organization of the city staff's recommendations for proposed amendments to the taxicab ordinance. Two of them are particularly important because they may result in the greatest number of improvements. I just want to go into a little bit of history. In 1994 wheelchair accessible taxi service was allocated three and a half percent of the total fleet. Over the years that's improved and the Numbers have increased, the percentages have risen. Now there's a recommendation to have wheelchair accessible fleet requirements of 10%. None of that will improve chair accessible taxi service if cab drivers don't accept trips from wheelchair accessible services. The requests come in, they don't get dispatched currently, and the dispatcher tells passengers who are -- customers, potential passengers, that they can't find a cab with wheelchair access or that there's not one that's willing to accept the trip. One thieves proposals that -- one of these proposals that the staff's recommendations are is to mandate that the closest cab of any kind pick up the closest passenger as determined by gps. That applies to every passenger, not just passengers in wheelchairs or mobility needs. So that's a great improvement.

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Another great improvement for us is that there will be a requirement to maintain an average response time of within seven minutes of the franchise's average response time for non-accessible service requests. That's request great. It's not equivalent service which we've been seeking for over 20 years as

required by the A.D.A. The city has kind of not really paid much attention to what the a.d.a.'s equivalent service requirements are. But the main thing is that even though there have been service requirements from the city for wheelchair accessible taxi service for these two decades, even though there have been allocations, special permits allocated above and beyond what the formula allowed for additional wheelchair accessible services, the city of Austin has failed to realistically enforce assessment of administrative fees or revoke any permits for wheelchair accessible cabs that have been sitting in the garage for over a year. Not even out on the street. So it has never happened that the city has revoked permits for underperformance for two decades that I know of. [Buzzer sounds] By the way, this device exists today. I have one in my hand. I can't get a ride. Even though I have a smartphone and a credit card, I can't get a ride. The only way I can get a ground transportation service provider right now today is to call a cab. And maybe I'll get one in two hours. I might not. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Is there anything that you would like to add in terms of recommendations that we don't have from the staff that you think we should consider to improve accessibility? >> I think it's real important to understand that accessibility is something that the community should work towards because breaking it down by a one dollar figure by personal of 40% -- adds 40% to the cost, that really doesn't

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recognize that when -- that costs should be borne across the entire service industry. That the costs for access are really something that everyone deserves to have. And that everyone should bear. And I will bear for roads as part of my commitment to the city of Austin and I'll pay taxes, but I don't drive a car. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Any questions? Anyone else? Thank you very much. Next we have Becky molar. And then after her we'll have Solomon casa. >> Thank you, councilmembers, my name is Becky molar, I'm the president of the Texas afl/cio. I want to be here today to urge you not to rush to policy with that thought. To think that we're going to do a 10 year agreement with technology changing, councilmember Zimmerman, as you said, I think that is a rush to policy that will not be borne out as good policy. We need to look models, like they have in Pennsylvania with co-ops. We need to look at the structure of the taxi industry and how it has changed over the years. What it is today. Does the taxi industry value workers? Does it provide income of quality in the community for our drivers? And we've heard today that it does not. Does it make the city of Austin look compassionate on the many issues? The city of Austin tries to make sure that in other businesses the employees are treated fairly and paid adequately. Do you do that with the taxi drivers as well? As do you some of the other companies that are doing business in the city of Austin and for the city of Austin? Drivers deserve no less than what you ask other employers to provide for their employees? Thank you very much for your time today. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: After Solomon

[5:17:35 PM]

we'll have Chris Bailey. >> Excuse me. Could I speak afterwards? I was told that the taxi franchises had only one representative and -- >> Kitchen: What is your name? >> Joan cabeli, Austin cab company. >> Kitchen: After Solomon. >> Good evening, my name is Solomon casa, president of lone star cab company. Lone star cab company is one of the smallest locally owned taxicab company operating with 108 fleets, including five wheelchair accessible vehicles, a 24/7 service for the entire city of Austin. In the course of our operation we have challenges that we face and continue to face especially when unfair competition is looming over us. The company invested in technology and cutting edge dispatch equipment to stay ahead of our competitors and above all providing a safe, reliable service for the citizens of Austin. Our service is available 24/7 for those that book online, call from a land line, use cell phone whether smartphone or not, pay cash or credit card, use wheelchair accessible service or use

service animals. When it comes to technology, the cab companies are considered as lagging behind, which is not accurate. I can speak for lone star cab capability compared to tnc. We have been using the smartphone app called curb that is similar -- a better function to Uber and Lyft. Curb previously known as taxi magic, is a nationally well-known technology network company like Uber and Lyft. And like Uber and Lyft, choose to provide its platform through registered

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and licensed taxicab companies throughout the United States. Curb users have an access to 24/7 service. They have an option to pay by credit card or cash. They use wheelchair accessible vehicles. We like to deliver our technology with 108 vehicles while our competitors Uber and Lyft have the advantage of responding to calls with unlimited number of vehicles and deliver faster service. We welcome competition, however, what we are facing here is unfair competition. All the three cab companies follows rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are in place to protect the public for safe, affordability and reliable services. Without leveling the playing field with the tnc, renewing our franchise creates hardship and will -- we'll face continuing operating service. I have one concern regarding the staff recommendation and increasing wheelchair accessible fleet. From the current six to 10% and all those vehicles will be owned by the company. This would create a burden on small companies like lone star. [Buzzer sounds] If the tnc's sitting on billion dollar cash are not willing to provide and are still operating, why do we do? Finally I am asking for your consideration of leveling the field so our investment and our workforce continue to provide safe, affordable and reliable taxi service to those who need it. Thank you very much. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Good evening.

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I'm Joan cabeli, representing Austin cab company. Our company was founded as Harlem cab company in 1943. Our family purchased the company in '84 after the death of the Harlem cab owner. We provided the first wheelchair van service in Austin. We provided the first contract with capital metro for wheelchair van service. So that's a little background, but with humility I would like to suggest that the mobility committee not be too hastety in making recommendations. This field is much more complex than at first glance. There are many interested parties and there's a need to balance out these interests. I do, however, pretty much support what the city has put together. We went to countless meetings. And I would say for sure that the 100 permits, additional permits were mentioned at the Texas taskforce. And the city of course in its wisdom selected some of the recommendations from various parties, but there was no vote because how can you vote when there are different Numbers of people representing different interests? So I wanted to sort that out a bit. So why are franchises important? Really it important to have franchises. Why did all these cities that deregulated go back to franchises? We run interference for the city. This saves the city a lot of money. If you go and get your own

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permit from the city, the city's bureaucracy is going to expand. We deal with all sorts of human and social issues with drivers. We're saving the city from that. And also we hold is the city not responsible for accidents, many of which are very serious and very costly. We're self-insured, at least our company is, and most companies in the country are because who wants to ensure a taxicab -- insure a taxi company? You know there's always going to be something going on. We get a little -- it's -- well, we call it a bond, but it's a sort of deductible that the drivers save up \$25 every time they come to pay. And that is used as a deductible in accidents. But we have -- we have put out a whole lot of money for accidents that were

not our fault, but the driver's fault. We are insuring them. [Buzzer sounds] And most of our drivers are independent contractors. And this means it's very difficult for us to say you do this at this time. Mr. Passmore himself of the drivers' association made a passionate speech at one of our meetings. He said that we are drivers, taxi drivers because this is an industry where we can do what we want to do, when we want to do it. And yet there are times when we don't have enough drivers. And that is why the request for 100 permits. >> Kitchen: Thank you, and -- >> And also the 100 permits will make us a little bit more competitive with the tnc's. They could have a thousand,

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two thousand additional cabs out there right now. Finally, in terms of -- I'm sorry to be so forceful, but in terms of technology, our company is going to be having the same curb, a new dispatch system, where we have a better app system so we're going to be matching. We have an app already, but we're going to have something that is super that will be very competitive with the tnc's. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. Chris Bailey. >> Thank you, councilmembers. I'll start with last week councilmember Zimmerman you had suggested that possibly some of the stakeholders could have some extra time. Joan very clearly explained that this is literally a hornet's nest that's being dealt with right now. The real problem is that Uber and Lyft came along and they were pretty much allowed to get their ordinance exactly as they wanted back in October, November, whenever it was. And so that set the precedent for the unregulated industry versus the regulated industry. Now I look at what I'm speaking on right here is this particular amendment at the top of the page I feel so bad for him, Carlton Thomas, his name is right there at the top of this, and he was in the tnc meetings as I was a member as well, and what I found is Carlton is actually this excellent mediator. He's done a good job in helping bring the different groups together, but he got cut off at the knees because councilmember Riley, who I appreciate in his efforts and everything he's done for the city, proposed this ordinance that allowed Uber to come in pretty much unregulated. So we find ourselves in this position now of all the stakeholders pretty much a huge cannon pointed at their heads and we're worried about going out of business

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because now of the existing regulations. So what I propose is the problem that we really have is that the bureaucrats, no offense to you guys, should be cut out of the entire equation. In the list -- this is really the only way you can move forward with something as an end result. So on this list you have each of the different people, the tnc's, the taxis, the limos, I'm with the elc community -- >> Kitchen: Can you -- elc? >> Elsc. The electric slow moving vehicles. Between the two of us we have -- we're the larger fleets. But anyway, if you work with each of the individual stakeholders to craft ordinance changes directly to their section -- I'm 13-2-332, I think, is where my ordinance would fall in. The taxis -- this right here, this essentially what's being proposed is it's more regulation directly on the taxi companies. It should just be thrown in the trash. They're doing the best that they can with staff, but there is nothing that they're ever going to come up with that's not going to just, for lack of a better word, piss absolutely everybody off. And so if you would work directly with us on each of the sections, the code that applies to us, we'd love -- nobody is sitting here saying Uber and Lyft should be banned from Austin. Maybe there are some people saying that. I'm a free market guy. Councilmember Zimmerman, I -- I respect a lot of the points you make, but with what we have here we're not moving towards a free market situation. We're moving towards corporatism where you roll out, like Chris Nielson said earlier, the red carpet for a Wal-Mart like organization to shut down all the small business owners and let them come in and have everything. And that's just the wrong approach. So I would encourage all of you, I would like to meet with all of you. I have sent all of you an ordinance that hopefully you would be willing to sponsor for my particular

section

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and hopefully you would stop working with them and start working with everybody here. I think that is where you will find your viable solution on this. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Did you have a question? >> Zimmerman: Yeah. Do you have a copy of your ordinance with you? >> I've actually -- I've e-mailed to you guys. >> Zimmerman: What's your last name so I can search for it here? >> Baileyly. Chris is spilled Kris. I've talked to members of your staff and you guys are so busy with so many issues. >> Zimmerman: We have a lot of stuff, yeah. >> I know. And I think, councilmember Zimmerman, my meeting with you is coming up in a month or so. I could go down a list of all the councilmembers. But yeah. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. >> Zimmerman: I see it came in Sunday. >> The red line ordinance. All the stakeholders, I'm going to sit here and say I'm going to support what ed is trying to do in his ordinance changes. And I think what you have is a united front and really all of us are going to support each other's ordinances. If you leave this to staff to do they'll cherry pick what information you get and that's going to really put it -- a bind on the whole situation and make everybody upset. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Zimmerman: That's why we have these public forums. Thanks for coming. >> Kitchen: Michael elder. And after him we have Hannah rittering. >> Good afternoon. My name is Michael elder. Normally I come with a prepared speech, but today I'm going to just do it off

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the cuff. I want to start by drawing your attention to city council resolution 20140515-025. This was the resolution that started the updated -- that updated the taxicab taskforce. Of the proposals, the bullet proposals further down on the list, almost all of them have been ignored. Particularly universal dispatch, that's not going to happen because the cab companies don't want it to happen. Also, fees, caps on terminal fees, back to the bullet points, that's not -- cab companies don't want that. >> Kitchen: Let's stay on the page that's -- >> Yeah, stay on this page. I first started driving a cab in 1985. I'm currently not driving a cab. And I won't go back to the industry because I feel it could be a conflict of interest for what I'm doing. Parse in 30 years I have noticed abuse between the cab driver is told what he needs to do by the law. The cab companies are told what they need to do by law. But there is no law protecting the cab driver from the cab company and that's where the abuse occurs. It has been occurring for 30 years that I know of. [Applause]. The cab companies have a captured committee in the taxicab taskforce. If the cab companies don't want it, it doesn't happen. I would also like to draw your attention now to a speech I gave to city council on January 29th, the new city council. If I could bring that up, please.

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That will work, either one. This is a proposal that I made to change the taxicab ordinance, a very small section. The cab companies want more permits, but they can afford to send cabs off on wild goose chases for ghost calls. So I don't see where they need more permits if they can afford to squander the resources they already have. Basically what I'm asking for is better customer service. But the cab companies are not in business to give service. They're in business to make money. And they make money by leasing cars. [Applause]. And as long as they're allowed to use these cars any way they want -- [buzzer sounds] -- They don't really need anymore. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. Hannah rittering. And after Hannah we have Joseph ilely. And Mr. Iley will be our last speaker unless we have someone else. >> Good afternoon, my name is Hannah rittering and I have been an independent owner-operator, independent driver and then owner-operator with greater Austin transportation, which

is now yellow cab, used to be American cab, for 28 years. I have been earning my living for 28 years on the streets of Austin. And I'll get to it later, but the criminal background check is in the ordinance because of something that I caught and it's in there because I lobbied for it and it took me five years to get it in there. Mr. Zimmerman, this is a communications device. It does not fundamentally alter the nature of the service that you summon by using this device. But it is very important when you leave it in the

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back seat after taxicab that you have a phone number that you can call and someone who can track down which vehicle you left it in. You would be amazed how many people leave their phones in taxicabs. One of the issues that we have, Austin has grown, it is very busy. We have large events. One of which would swamp New York City. I'm not sure really what the solution to that is. But I do have to tell you that there's some weird phenomenon that happens, which is that Wells Fargo bank, for one reason or another, expects me to pay my mortgage all 12 months of the year, not just during football season and south by southwest. It would be great if I could approach them and say, hey, sorry, it's July. Not making any money this month. This is a modern technological communications device. It doesn't mean that the people who are using it aren't providing taxi service. It's somewhat like saying in 1904 we're not providing taxi service because we have horseless carriages. You're still doing the same thing and should be subject to the same rules. We serve all, all of the citizens of Austin. We take poor people from the laundromat to the projects. We take granny home from the grocery store and the hairdresser. If you want your child picked up from school and you can't find anyone else to do it and something happened to your car, you can call the cab company and I can assure you yellow cab does not send just any driver. They have certain drivers that they know can be relied upon to safely pick up a child from school. Who are you going to do

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that with Uber? We take any form of payment, cash, credit card. We don't take checks anymore. That's been a problem for a long time. And some of us drivers actually will take payment in kind, in a swap of service. One of my friends -- [buzzer sounds] -- Takes her ophthalmologist to the airport and gets services in return. I also was the -- I am the former chair of the airport advisory commission and so Mr. Zimmerman, the other thing is all private entities earning money at the airport pay the airport for that because the airport has to do maintenance, it has to maintain the roads, it has to have security, all of that. Even the off-site parking areas pay the airport because they are using their vehicles to run around on the airport all the time. That's a completely Normal thing. The other thing is the city inspection you should know is partly because it's the number of miles that our vehicles accrue, way more than your personal car. And it is always scheduled six months opposite the state inspection. So that our cars get inspected twice a year. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. We appreciate your time. Thank you. [Applause]. And the last speaker is -- there's one more. Okay. So we'll have Mr. Iley and then after him we have one more picture and that's Stephanie trend. >> Like I said earlier, I want to reiterate that background checks and inspections, and stuff, they valuable to apply across the board, including the tnc's. And if it doesn't happen I'm going to get operators to stop paying the city for these fees that you're charging us that you don't charge them for the tnc's. Secondly I want to make the point that I'm also

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a victim of what the tva had brought up earlier of wrongful termination. I was terminated for having a no-fault accident. I am currently driving a pedicab now. I'm happy with driving a pedicab because I've lost weight over it, but the whole reason that I'm here is to inform you that I have been an observer of the tnc taskforce for taxi -- for the taxicab taskforce. I was an observer as was Mike elder, and we both conclude that the taskforce was a total fraud. It didn't cover all the things that were supposed to be covered in resolution 25. The city said that certain things just didn't quite measure up. For instance, how are we going to pay for universal dispatch? They couldn't figure that out, but yet they used the same idea to come up with tnc's. Secondly, when it came to the proposal of legacy permits, which I am the proponent person who helped write the thing for legacy permit, they said we don't have anything like that anywhere else in the United States. Well, guess what? What do you think co-ops are? They're legacy permits, just another name for it. Cab companies don't want legacy permits either. Anything that takes the power away from the cab companies, they do not want it. The power comes in them having the permits. As long as they have the permits, they have the control of the industry. There is only one city in the northern hemisphere of the United States and Canada that has got it right, and that is Toronto, Canada. What they did, they took all the permits away from the franchises and gave them to the

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drivers. They also made some stipulation that I know some drivers here in Austin would not agree with. They made all those vehicles wheelchair accessible, every single one of them. And Toronto, Canada, the drivers control the permits, not the franchise. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. [Applause]. Our last speaker is Stephanie tren. >> [Inaudible - no mic]. >> Kitchen: I'm sorry, just a moment, sir. Let's hear from her and then -- okay. >> Good afternoon, thank you for letting me speak. I know I didn't sign up in time. My name is Stephanie tren and I've recently started working with the taxi driver association and I do not envy you because I recently had to learn all there is to know about the taxi industry in Austin, and it's a lot, which is why I wanted to talk to you about franchise renewals. You're talking today about things ranging from deregulation to adding 300 permits and this is a lot. And also to add in the idea of balancing things with the tnc's. This is not the time to renew franchises for 10 years. Please, take the time. You can renew the franchises for six months, for one year, to buy yourself some more time to really evaluate how everything should work in Austin. Take more time to evaluate this and set standards, set standards for the franchises. Should these franchises be renewed, do they deserve to be renewed and set standards for how many permits we need in this city. 100 per franchise sounds like a nice round number. I don't know where it comes from. And so anything that you do, make it methodic and

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give yourself more time to think about the whole entire system and how you want the taxi and ground transportation industry to look in Austin. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. Okay. I believe that that's everyone that signed up to speak. I couldn't hear what you were saying, the gentleman in the back. >> I was saying that [inaudible - no mic]. >> Kitchen: We can take another speaker or two if someone else who didn't sign up wanted to speak. Okay, please come down, sir. >> Good evening. My name is [indiscernible], a taxi driver. I've been driving taxi on and off for almost now four years. The point I'm trying to make in here, in front of you, is that the previous city councils create something that the market is actually unfair. And now you guys come in as new and you're trying to figure out what you're going to do. So the renewal that people were talking about, that is actually the franchise need to be renewed for 10 years, that is businesswise, it is not a good idea to do it because when you're going to

renew it for 10 years and you find that there is flaws in the middle of the road, there is no way you can back away from it. So I don't think you have to do right now. You can give yourself 10 months or something like that, six months to do it. Another thing is -- we want to do is the previous city council created that -- the taxi business that has to be regulated, so it's just telling like the four season you have to operate with demand and supplies so you can charge anything you want. And then 10-1 said you can't do that while you

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are doing the same business. That is the mistakes the previous council does and now it's in your hair, how will you deal with that with the tnc. What Mr. [Indiscernible] Was saying that our income increase by six percent. I don't know where is that data came from. Because we have all the thing he just mentioned that is actually affected our income. And now our income increase by that, it doesn't make sense because we have 3,000 vehicles for Uber. We are actually taking in our income. And our income increase? It doesn't make sense. What I'm trying to say here, the last one, is that what we want as a driver. If we want our income to come up, this appointment of 400 taxis you want to give permit, give it to the drivers. They will serve the community better than giving control to the franchise. If you don't want to do that, then the city have option to come up with a universal dispatch. This universal dispatch, it can go all three franchise. Whoever close there, whether it's lone star, yellow or Austin, they can pick up that person. But if you're going to wait for Uber to come and pick that person, probably will take time, seeing the traffic going on around here. So that thing is not a good idea. So I want you to consider that is actually universal and the co-op for the drivers is the best way to go. Thank you. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. Okay. I would like to thank everyone for being here. Is there anything that -- okay. All right. Thank you all for being here. We appreciate you coming and letting us know your concerns and your

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experiences. We will be taking all of this into consideration and being -- and considering everything that you all have said as we move forward thinking about this. Does anyone want to say anything? Previous okay. Again, thank you. And we appreciate the perspectives of the taxicab drivers, the taxicab companies, the adapt community and everyone else that's impacted. Thank you very much for coming. Do I have a motion to adjourn the motion? >> Zimmerman: Motion to adjourn. >> Kitchen: Okay. The motion is a-- at 5:48. Thank You.