

## Mobility Committee Meeting Transcript – 09/02/2015

Title: ATXN 24/7 Recording

Channel: 6 - ATXN

Recorded On: 9/2/2015 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 9/2/2015

Transcript Generated by SnapStream

=====

[2:59:53 PM]

Kitchen: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you all for being with us this afternoon. I'm councilmember Ann Kitchen, the chair of the mobility committee. We have a few items, just a few, before we start with the ground transportation and tncs, so we hope to get to the tnc discussion in about 15 minutes. So if you will bear with us we'll go through a few other items of business and we'll get to what I think most of you are here for today. First item on the agenda is approval of minutes. Councilmember Gallo moves that we approve the minutes. Councilmember Zimmerman a second. All in favor?

[3:01:53 PM]

Okay. The minutes are approved. First item we're going to go to is we're going to go to item number 3 which is discussion and possible action on a recommendation related to a proposed ordinance declaring the use of an engine brake or retarder to be a nuisance, et cetera. Councilmember Zimmerman, do you want to lay that out for us? >> Zimmerman: Thank you, chair kitchen. I think it's pretty straightforward. We're adding -- I think under state law we're allowed to extend up to 5,000 feet outside our corporate city limits for health and safety nuisances. We have a couple of constituents on ranch road 620 that have a real problem with the engine brake noise. So staff has come back with this ordinance. As you can see, part 2, section a, there's just a few words added. And extends to within 5,000 feet outside the city limits for an engine brake sign. Is there anything anybody to speak on it? Different we don't have anybody signed up. >> Zimmerman: I would like to make a motion that we advance this to the full city council for consideration. >> Kitchen: Do we have a second? Second? Do you guys have any questions or discussion? >> Gallo: I do just from the standpoint of being concerned that we've had an opportunity for industry to be able to communicate. And since this is the venue to allow speakers to come before us I'm a little concerned that we have not invited or had this information out to be able do have that a transparency standpoint. I would say if we want to move it to the full council then we would want to open it up for full conversation and allow speakers. >> Zimmerman: I would agree to that, absolutely. There may be a few people, but I think we could probably get that conversation in in 16 minutes, 15 minutes. I don't see that being a long discussion. >> Kitchen: You mean at council? >> Zimmerman: At council. >> Gallo: And if we don't

[3:03:55 PM]

have citizen communication at the committee level then we can allow the full opportunity for citizen communication at the three minutes apiece and unlimited people. >> Zimmerman: I agree. >> Gallo: Just as long as we make that part of the motion. >> Kitchen: With that caveat that we will allow citizen

communication at the full council, are you all ready to vote? Okay. All in favor of moving this item bank to the full council with a recommendation to pass it. Or do you want to move it back? >> Zimmerman: I want to move it and have our speakers. >> Kitchen: We'll just move it back to the council and take speakers there. All in favor? Okay. It passes. All right. That was pretty fast. So thank you all. We'll move on now -- we have an item related to the -- item number 4 related to the development to the land development code. I would like to push that bank to later in the meeting if that's acceptable to everyone. So we're going to move forward now with item number 5, and that's our staff briefing and discussion on ground transportation providers, including transportation network companies. So I'm going to make just a few opening remarks and to explain how we're going to proceed, and then we'll go forward with testimony. So I think I'll make a few remarks and then you can kick us off, Gordon. Just for myself, and if any other councilmembers would like to add anything. I just want to start by saying that I am very appreciative of and I do consider tncs to be an important part of our transportation system. Along with our taxi companies and limos and all our other ground transportation. We do appreciate what you contribute to the community.

[3:05:56 PM]

So what we're doing now, it's time now after the people program that started last year, it's time to look at how we might put into place some improvements for our whole community from the perspective of our job, the council's job, which is health and safety, looking at health and safety of ground transportation, including tncs and taxis and all the different modes for our city, to look at health and safety and to look at an equal playing field, which is something we talked about a couple of months ago when we started working with taxis. And it's not our role to choose any one company over another, it's our role to make sure that from the perspective of the city we're protecting the health and safety of the public. We may all have different views on what that means, but that's our role as a council. So the process here, I'm to explain the process and ask ourselves if they want to make any comments. I have put forth a document, it looks like this, that we have posted on our council message board, and it is -- I've titled it had proposed additions to the existing tnc ordinance. So it's just -- it is for discussion. It's a draft. It's a first attempt to put out something from the council perspective. It builds off the recommendation from our staff and has some additional items in it that reflect the kinds of things that we've been hearing. So there's there available to the public, it's on our council message board. So there's that. I'll go through that in a minute at a high level. Those of you who don't have that will understand what's involved with it. I also want to tell you that last month we received a briefing from staff and we laid out a schedule. And today's part of the

[3:07:57 PM]

schedule is to hear from the public. It's not the only time that you will get a chance to weigh in. It's the first time for this public hearing. So that's what we're doing today. We do not expect to vote today. We want to listen to you, to all of you from your different perspectives and hear what you're thinking. So that's what today's about. There are additional opportunities for public hearing past today. For example, you can always contact our offices, you can call us. We will have a meeting in October. Our expectation at that time is perhaps more limited testimony, but we'll consider what kind of testimony, if any, we're able to have in October. And then it will come back to the full council because our role as a committee, mobility committee, is to -- it to bring forward recommendations to the full council. It's the full council that has the authority to adopt any changes, not our committee. So that's the process. What we're going to do today with speakers is we do have a few what we call invited speakers, and those are the companies and some of the interest groups, for example, adapt, that will speak first, and then we'll start

calling people from our sign-up list. We do have some other items on the agenda that we have to address today, so we will finish all of our public testimony no later than -- no later than 5:15, I believe. I think that should allow plenty of time for folks who have signed up to testify. If we get to that point and we still have folks wanting to testify, we'll talk about how we'll deal with it, but we do have a hard and fast stop at that time. So I'm going to briefly -- before I briefly read through the proposed changes, is there anything my fellow councilmembers would like to say? No? I'm going to read through -- I'm not going to read through all these proposals because it is available to you, but I'll give you the gist of it so you'll

[3:09:58 PM]

understand the different subject areas that we're looking at. The first area is vehicle safety inspections and background checks. And this relates to some additions to what's in the existing tnc ordinance, the primary addition being some additional safety inspections for the vehicles that makes it comparable to what we do for taxis and other ground transportation. And then also looks at d.p.s.-certified criminal history, which again also makes it comparable for what we do with -- for drivers for other types of transportation. And there is an existing criminal background check right now under the existing tnc ordinance, but this makes it comparable to how we do other drivers with the D.P.S. Certified criminal history. Second area is operations. And that has to do with prohibiting loading and unloading except at a curb and not in an active travel lane. That's a safety issue for our road. Then a chauffeur's license. From my perspective I think we need to talk about permitting a vehicle after going through vehicle inspection and background check, and also a chauffeur's license, which really only just adds a written driving test. Driver identification. Currently drivers do have identification on a tnc app. This would be in addition to that to require some kind of physical document in the car with regard to driver's identification. Accessibility is another huge area that's critically important. That's an area that's going to require further discussion. We want to hear from everybody how we can make sure that we are working towards accessibility. I know that the tnc companies and the drivers have been attempting to do that so we'll have greater discussion in that area and then look at how we can become comparable to perhaps the same requirements as we have for taxis and other ground transportation. Insurance is another area. I won't go through those

[3:11:59 PM]

details. Insurance, dynamic pricing, which is allowed under the existing tnc ordinance, so we need to talk about that. As with all vehicles, we are proposing a fee. The previous council's ordinance required that a fee be set for tncs just as they are for other ground transportation. The previous council did not actually set that fee so that is up to us to discuss. There's a proposed approach which is a required fee at a dollar a trip. That's a proposed approach. And an item that we need to -- that we need to discuss. So reporting requirements, again, reporting requirements that are more comparable to what we require of our taxi companies. P joeio fencing, which -- geo fencing, which has to do with pickup and dropoff locations during events. So again comparable to what we do on other ground transportation. And finally, trade dress, which is an emblem displayed on the vehicle for identification. So I'm going to stop there and see if -- Mr. Durr, if you would introduce yourself and see if you would like to add anything. >> Gordon durr, Austin transportation department. We briefed you last time on the recommendations of staff. One issue we didn't really lay out for you is the fact that the current ordinance was an interim ordinance. It only set up a 30 day window for companies to apply for operating authority. So the recent companies that have come to town, there's no mechanism for them to begin operations. So at the very least within the discussions we're having on these we need to fix that, take it from the interim ordinance to a permanent

ordinance. So there is some action that's needed and all the other issues are, of course, on the table too and we have staff here if you have questions. We have staff from transportation department and from the airport if you

[3:14:00 PM]

have questions in that particular area. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you. Shall we expo with testimony or do you -- shall we proceed with testimony or do you guys have questions you want to ask right now? >> I guess I appreciate you laying this out and I like the format of what you put in here. I guess I want to start off by saying any fees that we talk about have to have some, you know, measurable benefit. And what I'm struggling with understanding is why we need to do anything additional to what we have in the ordinance now. Do we have any evidence that there's a health and safety problem that needs to be solved? >> Kitchen: You know, councilmember Zimmerman, that's a question that requires a longer answer. And if you don't mind could we hear from the public first? And then just to answer your converse question, the existing ordinance requires a fee. So if the council does not want to move forward with that, we would just take that out of the -- the existing interim ordinance has -- requires a fee. So if we move forward you have to take it out of that. But I appreciate your question, but if you don't mind let's go forward. >> Zimmerman: Sure. >> Kitchen: We have some invited testimony first. We start with Adam blinket representing Uber. Adam, we have you down for 10 minutes. His presentation will be 10 minutes. We can ask questions and answer. I would ask my fellow councilmembers if we could -- we have about five folks that are invited testimony. If we just hear from them and then do Q and a if that's all right with you guys. >> Zimmerman: Okay. >> Thank you for having me today. I'm Adam and I'm with Uber.

[3:16:00 PM]

I'm pleased today to report back on the state of tncs today in Austin. For background as many of you know, Uber is a technology company that connects riders and drivers at the tap of a button. Uber X, our low cost option, allows driver partners to use their driver cars to give rides in their spare time. A typical Uber X ride is more than 40% cheaper than taxi. Every ride is covered by one-million-dollar commercial liability policy, more than three times what is required of Austin taxis. Every driver has been through a thoroughly screened comprehensive background check that includes county, multistate and federal databases. Uber leverages our technology to focus on safety in ways that others cannot. Beyond our stringent background check process our platform has many other features such as Uber uses gps to keep a record of where a driver goes during the ride, creating accountability and a strong incentive for good behavior. Riders can easily share the ride details, allowing friends and family to follow along their trip in realtime. Each trip concludes with riders rating drivers and drivers rating riders, and we have a 24/7 customer support to assure feedback is heard and acted upon quickly. Every trip is paid electronically, which takes away significant risk from drivers carrying cash and being targets of theft. With that overview, it's been almost a year since Austin passed its Progressive ordinance establishing regulations for tncs. And I am so pleased to report that this ordinance is succeeding in allowing for austinites to gain tremendous benefits. Growing the local economy, improving transportation access for all, and reducing drunk driving. What is happening since Uber came to Austin is nothing short of extraordinary. Ride sharing has created new, meaningful and flexible opportunities in Austin. More than 10,000 unique driver partners have taken a trip on Uber in 2015 to

[3:18:03 PM]

date. Many of these austinites use the platform for part-time work. Some 50% of our partners are on the platform 10 hours a week or less. More than 30% of our driver partners in Austin are women, which is an extraordinary number and speaks to the safety of the platform itself. And this is part of our company's global goal to recruit more than one million female drivers on to our platform by 20/20. And Uber partners this year to date have taken home more than 27 million in their -- from their work on the platform. We've also been able to improve transportation options for underserved communities in areas where taxi has not historically been so reliable. For example, 49% of our trips begin or end in east Austin. And we are making an impact when it comes to solving one of Austin and Travis county's most serious problems, d.w.i.'s, because of our model we have a flexible supply of driver partners that can help ensure that there are safe rides available at the exact moment when people need them the most. Often times when bars are closing. The Austin police department announced that after two years of increased D.W.I. incidents, Austin saw a 23% reduction in D.W.I. Accidents in 2014, the year Uber entered the Austin market. Da. [Applause]. And because Uber has been able to grow in Austin, we've been able to invest in Austin. Today Uber is in more than 300 cities and 60 countries around the world, but Austin isn't just a city where we're simply an option. Austin is among the leading cities where we are expanding, testing and growing new products. We recently launched Uber he espanol to serve Austin's hispanic community. It allows riders to select

[3:20:04 PM]

Spanish speaking drivers. [Cheers and applause] Last month we launched Uber access, making wheelchair accessible vehicles available on our platform 24 hours a day. Today the average wait for a wheelchair accessible vehicle is less than 14 minutes. [Applause]. And in addition to our everyday products, which reduce traffic by putting less people on the roads driving around looking for parking, we're expanding other ways to solve community challenges. We launched Uber pool in Austin on a trial basis, allowing austinites to share rides on weekend evenings with their neighbors, making Uber even more affordable while reducing congestion and supporting the environment. We hope to expand this program in the future. And we've had the honor of becoming more a part of the community and keeping up with amazing organizations to make a difference, including add Austin, dress for success, the Ronald McDonald house, goodwill and hays county food bank. We've been able to do all these things because of the current ordinance empowers us to leverage to innovate, invest and build better products in this great city. In fact, Austin's ordinance has become a Progressive model for dozens of cities and states across the nation in regulating tnccs. Yet despite the success we are here today responding to recommendations that would reverse the gains we've made with little to no policy rationale to the benefits of austinites. And I just would like to pause and say that I have prepared my remarks to respond to the atd's recommendations which we find extremely problematic and think would reverse a lot of the gains we've made in Austin, but I must say the new ideas that I've heard, but have not had a chance to review yet are extremely concerning to us. We think that they further put burdens on the drivers and would greatly reduce our ability to provide reliable, affordable service in

[3:22:05 PM]

Austin. Moving to the atd's proposals specifically, without pointing to any specific issue, the atd is putting forward ideas that would do a lot of problematic things. I would highlight two here. One that would install one of the highest taxes on riders in the nation who rely on Uber to provide a safe alternative to drinking and driving. It would be a regressive fee felt most by those seeking affordable transportation options. We've been able to make transportation more affordable for low income austinites over the last year, but the highest in the nation in tax would reverse that progress. It would

also mandate unnecessary and excessive insurance requirements that are inconsistent with the new Texas state law. As noted, Uber already has a million-dollar insurance policy covering every ride and has established national standards with insurance companies across the country, including USAA. Just to highlight once again, taxi in Austin is only required to have 300,000 when the trip is on and they also have the additional option of self-insuring at a much lower rate. Furthermore, we believe today's deeply flawed proposal is in part the result of a flawed process. The working group established by the previous council to discuss tnc regulations was heavily biased against tncs and mostly made up of those who perceived that they have competitive interests against us. We come before you today with an update to show that tncs are bringing great benefit to Austin from creating thousands of flexible economic opportunities that weren't here before to expanding transportation access to all austinites and reducing drunk driving. We are also reducing congestion and helping the environment by taking cars off the road. Excessive regulations with no tangible public policy benefit would disrupt ride sharing in Austin and disrupt people's lives. The facts today show that the current rules are working extraordinarily well. Let's continue with this

[3:24:06 PM]

process. President not fix what is not broken. Last to counter the arguments made previously, the current operating agreement contains no expiration date. There is no rush. There is no problem that requires fixing. If this is a desire to update the rules we strongly recommend that the city look to tncs and the communities and the people who are benefit is from their presence in Austin to inform these recommendations. We are honored to be a part of the Austin community and we will work with you to ensure that we can continue bringing more benefits to the city. Thank you very much. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: So thank you very much. We're going to take everybody's testimony -- we're going to take our invited testimony first. I'm sure we'll have questions for you. So our next speaker is Veronica Juarez representing Lyft. >> Good afternoon, chairwoman, councilmembers, and thank you, Mr. Mayor, for joining us. My name is Veronica Juarez. I'm the director of government relations for Lyft. I'm also a proud native texan, born and raised in Houston. I'm also a former Austin resident. To prior to Lyft I worked for mayor bill white in Austin, and three years at the Texas state senate I was a staffer. I am really happy to be back home to discuss ride sharing with you all. Since November of last year we have participated cooperatively in a successful operating agreement with the city of Austin. This operating agreement as you know was authorized through a thorough and public city council process that took place in the months prior and included input from hundreds of Austin residents and especially formed tnc working group that included a very broad number of interested stakeholders. The Austin agreement has served as a national model

[3:26:08 PM]

for how to best regulate ride sharing and in December of 2014 Austin monthly held this agreement as Austin's best transportation victory of the year. I would like to commend Austin and the city council for taking these steps towards a regulatory framework that embraces ride sharing and for creating an environment in which we can meet the demand for more transportation options in this great city. We all know the daily growth that Austin is experiencing and we're happy to be part of the solution to help alleviate the challenges of traffic, congestion and the very persistent challenge of drunk driving incidents which my colleague at Uber referred to before. In 2012 we founded Lyft with the mission and vision that we would create the most dynamic car pooling system that we have ever seen. We know that if more people use the platform as both drivers and passengers, we will be able to see the most efficient transportation and car pooling system that this country has ever seen. We have already started to see

that progress here in Austin because of the good framework that you all put forth. In March we're able to launch Lyft line so that multiple passengers could share rides with their neighbors and we're really happy to see what happens with that program. In the past year we have enjoyed learning more about Austin and becoming more involved in the local community so we can better meet the needs and the unique transportation challenges here. We have worked with meals on wheels to deliver meals to seniors. We have hosted a park cleanup day to clean up debris and help repave trails throughout the park and we are very happy to partner with south by southwest in March as the official ride sharing sponsor and had a really good experience at that festival as well. In July we also hosted our first driver recruitment event at the St. James episcopal church in district

[3:28:10 PM]

1. I understand we are here to discuss a few items that have been raised, such as fees, which if passes would be the highest in the country. [Buzzer sounds] >> Kitchen: I'm sorry. That's not right. You have 10 minutes. Keep going. That's my fault. I didn't let him know that. >> We are committed like yourself to public safety because it's in our best interest that anybody that uses ride sharing services that a consistent and safe experience. We have consistently demonstrated I believe with you and with countless regulatory bodies across the country that we will be cooperative in that process. And we look forward to continued discussion with you over the coming weeks about more ways that we can help alleviate some of these transportation challenges. That concludes my comments and I look forward to more discussion later. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. [Applause]. So our next speakers are Jennifer Mcphail with adapt and Regina Blye with the Texas state council on independent living. And combined you all have six minutes. So however you want to do that. >> I'm Jennifer Mcphail with adapt of Texas. And I just wanted to go over some brief points with you. We want equivalency and service for people with disabilities and when we mean equivalency, we mean across the board for the tncs, taxicabs, everybody. We want football a able to access them all at the same days of day for the same fees, the same places that everyone else goes to and for the same price and availability during the day. Typically what happens or what has happened, we've been working on taxicab

[3:30:10 PM]

issues since 1985 formally, and what we find is that we're being told that no one can really require people to be available during the day. So that's one of our concerns with tncs is that they actually are available and equivalent to the non-disabled community because there are times of day when buses or cabs or whatever might not be available and people have been getting stuck in the community with no way of dealing with emergencies or formal occasions with family or just going out and having fun, listening to music. You can't really do that right now. We've heard horror stories of people getting stuck from out of town and not knowing how to get around with south by southwest. And since we're rolling out the tncs and that's one of the big pushes is to get people to be able to go out and do entertainment and be spontaneous, that's what we want as well. There's also this misunderstanding that it's -- we're looking for some form of paratransit. That's not what we're looking for. We don't want a separate service that provide services to disabled people only for some sort of subsidized fee. We just want tnc services and taxicab services like everyone else. So that's what we're here advocating for. We're really glad that Uber has rolled out its service and its good to hear that they're able to pick people up within 14 minutes, but that's not yet comparable to the non-disabled community and we want to get there. We want to make sure people know about the service and can actually access it at the times of day they need it. So far the little bit of feedback we've had from our community has been good, but

[3:32:11 PM]

it needs to expand. To my knowledge Lyft has nothing yet. Also something to think about. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Is Regina here? >> Hello. My name is Regina Blye, the executive director of the Texas state independent living council, which is a statewide organization that focuses on people with disabilities living independently in the community. And I also sit on the United States Access Board where we look at legislation for ADA requirements to make sure that the built environment is accessible. I have to say that I used to be against Uber. I did not like it because it didn't have the ability for people with disabilities to be a part of the process. And I have to say that because Uber chose to have this pilot project in Austin, for people with disabilities to be able to have quality of life and be able to have immediate access to transportation, that hasn't happened before and I think that it's encouraging to know that they chose Austin because we are creative, we're innovative and we do things outside the box. So I think that it's important to regulate, but we shouldn't regulate to a point where we miss out on populations that could be able to have true quality of life and this is the first opportunity as someone who dated, someone who had their own cab and it was accessible. And I knew what it was like when you call someone at two P.M. And you didn't get someone until 11:00 P.M. And they said they were on the way, multiple times you call, you complain, nothing ever happens and you have this opportunity have Uber, you know when it's going to happen, you can pay and you have someone to file complaints or each to say when the project or process

[3:34:11 PM]

worked well. You know you're part of that entire process. I just want to say be mindful of whatever you do moving forward that you allow us to be able to have options. Options allow us to have quality, options allow us to be an Progressive city to we can be a model and make sure that all people part of the process can be able to participate the best as possible. Don't want to take much of your time. There's a lot of wonderful people here that are going to speak on behalf of Uber, but I just wanted to say that this is right for not just people with disabilities, but everybody in general. [Cheers and applause] Richard our next speaker is Solomon Casa. Is he here? Ed, are you going to speak? So we have Ed Cargo from -- to speak from the taxicab perspective. Taxi franchises. And you have five minutes. >> Good afternoon, good evening to all of you councilmembers and everybody in the chamber. Thank you for taking the time to hear from another party and some perspective in this issue. My name is Ed Cargo, president of Yellow Cab Austin and I'm speaking on behalf of the three franchises here in Austin. And we agree with many of the recommendations from the Austin transportation staff. As the city of Austin moves to level the playing field for all drivers providing transportation services for compensation in the city of Austin. And I think these

[3:36:13 PM]

regulations essentially work towards establishing what is a fundamental baseline of rules that take public safety into consideration. A very important step towards leveling the playing field is the basic registration of the individual driver and the equipment that individual will be using to provide transportation services. All drivers shall be required to get chauffeur's permits through the Austin Department of Transportation. All drivers should register the vehicle they'll be using through the Austin Department of Transportation. The reason is because it both helps identify the person that's operating, but most importantly it allows for enforcement from the Austin Department of Transportation. Fingerprint background checks are one critical example of why regulating and having fundamental regulations in place are important. The regulation that's being recommended is the same requirement for every single



person providing transportation services for compensation in the city of Austin. So from the pedicab drivers all the way to the tnc drivers. Real estate agents in the state of Texas are required to get the fingerprint background check that's certified by D.P.S., whether they're working part time or full time. So the argument that individuals are working part time is really moot because they're running a business to make money. I know the term ride sharing keeps getting thrown out, but Austin has properly defined ride sharing and this is on demand transportation for compensation. Fingerprint background checks do a better job of confirming the identity of the individual being checked. It is the gold standard. The reason being is it's very cheap and easy to purchase social security Numbers, drivers license Numbers. Identity fraud is a pretty critical issue in the united States so the fingerprint background check, the fingerprint itself has been identified as the best process for identifying the

[3:38:17 PM]

individual being checked. And running that process through the Austin transportation department creates a one stop shop. It levels the playing field and creates transparency and eliminates confusion for all drivers across all platforms. Uber and Lyft conduct background checks in other cities. They do it in New York. My research shows that they do it in Columbus, Ohio. Which is a city similar to Austin. They actually do -- Uber does it in Houston, they're required to. And the city of Dallas as I just found out today, also requires the fingerprint background check. So they can do it. It can be done. The current contract that the tncs have with the city of Austin doesn't actually allow the transportation department to enforce any violations by tnc drivers as the contract is with the tnc company and not with the driver. So having the driver register with the city and having them register the vehicle with the city allows Gordon to address many of the issues that he presented to you guys at the last mobility committee meeting. I think the truth is most, if not all transportation network company drivers, if you asked them, would be willing to get the fingerprint background check done and you should be very skeptical of anyone that's not willing to do so. And so to give you an example of what the slippery slope is, the backup information that you have there with the -- with my testimony that I gave you is that the proof and the evidence that all real estate agents in the state of Texas do the fingerprint background process is not a difficult process. It's actually really easy. The district attorneys in Los Angeles sued Uber and Lyft for misleading the public about how good their background checks are. Lyft actually settled that lawsuit to the tune of half a million dollars so that -- and agreed to discontinue making the statement that they would discontinue misleading statements about its background checks. So they actually settled that lawsuit and essentially admitted that the background

[3:40:17 PM]

check that's done by fingerprints is better. Uber argues vehemently that their process is better. As they continue to try to use your process, you have one story from the city of Dallas -- this is in CBS news dfw 2014, with where Uber found problems with the background checks, they were going to go back and check everybody, and in 2015 they didn't even background check the driver who slipped through the cracks in their system and unfortunately a sexual assault occurred and that driver who was a convicted felon Uber has admitted the mistake and apologized for the sexual assault. So it's important to run these processes through the city because staff is responsible for public safety. Uber and left is responsible for their protest. -- For their profit. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. >> Hi, good afternoon, councilmembers. Dave Passmore, representing the taxi drivers association of Austin. This evening we're here at this hearing to voice our actual agreement on some of these regulations made by staff to you in reference to regulations and other things

[3:42:18 PM]

which staff has recommended to you. However, there are some of the recommendations that we would like to have some time to sit down and go over with staff to address some of the issues and come up with some more concrete type of recommendations that will be able to stay in place and be also enforced if necessary. One of the things I've not actually heard very much about, councilmembers, is the effect of unlimited vehicles on the income of drivers. Not only taxi drivers, but also the tnc drivers. What does that do and how -- in long-term will that effect be if you can't make a living wage at what you're doing, then what is the purpose of actually continuing to do is if there are, you know, no actual benefits. So we should take into consideration these things in long-term rather than trying to just bundle a group of recommendations and said this is what should be there. It has to be an ongoing and ongoing -- as staff has mentioned a definition of a tnc and that tncs can operate with private vehicles. Now, if there are too many of those vehicles, we hear Austin complain, austinites and people complain a lot about traffic, right? What does unlimited amount of vehicles do to the traffic congestion? Does it alleviate that congestion? No, it only adds to it. So we need to continue to bring forward to staff, we know the timeline is very short, but keep bringing to staff some more concrete recommendations that, you know, people will have to -- will have to adhere to.

[3:44:20 PM]

We do support all the recommendation except for some. I shouldn't say all the recommendations that staff has put forward. It's a good start, however, we would like for the drivers' income to be taken into consideration because if you flood a market with too many cars, no matter whether it's taxi or whether it's tncs, there is a repercussion for that to the workers who are in that industry, providing the services. And it's no benefit to them to be out there eight, 10, 12 hours a day and you can't afford to live here. I know not all the tnc drivers might live in Austin, but I've been living here for the last 21 years. So I see income fluctuation going back and forth, property taxes, you name it. So in order for me to continue to live here, we would like to see the playing field to be a little bit more evenly put in place for not just tncs, but for everyone within the taxi industry. And I'm not sure if my allotted time to speak, but I can stop here and if there are any questions I'll be glad to take them. Thank you. [Applause]. Taxi, okay, councilmembers take reflects -- that reflects our invited testimony. We have a lot more people who would like to speak. My suggestion is that we take just a few questions but not too many because the more questions that we have, the less people we'll be able to speak. So -- so what's the pleasure of the committee? What -- do you all have a preference or -- no preference? No preference? >> Zimmerman: I have an Uber question on the San Antonio situation. >> Okay. Are you all all right if we ask one or two questions and then we'll get to the rest of the testimony. >> Zimmerman: Someone was here from Uber. >> Kitchen: Adam. >> Zimmerman: Tell us what has happened in San Antonio. I was there for my mom's

[3:46:21 PM]

80th birthday, we said hey we'll look at Uber, we need to go a short distance, it says operation suspended. That's just down the road from us. Tell us what happened there. >> For sure. September passed an ordinance that was unworkable for the tnc model. It included fingerprinting of our drivers and random drug tests, other provisions, too, that would be very onerous if a model that's really structured on the belief of people that are mostly looking to do this part-time and they can't get shoe horned into an old regime that was set up for a different industry, frankly. We do have very strong safety provisions in place. We did our best to speak with them about that, to assure them that the model that actually Austin led the way on, dozens of other cities and states have gone forward with is the right model that

really supports ride sharing and allows a city to reap all of the benefits. Especially a city like San Antonio, like Austin, has a huge dwi problem. It's sad for us that we're still not there. We always engage with the city, we would like to be back there soon. But the ordinance they initially passed just does not work with our model. >> Zimmerman: Follow-up. Could you tell me quickly about the fees? Were there any trip fees connected with the September situation? -- With the San Antonio situation? >> No, there were not. There was a flat tnc fee. >> Very good. What would that fee, if you look at -- what you've been doing now, how much would this fee bring in to Austin, if you had to pay the fee, if you could afford it, if you bring in to Austin. >> I'm reluctant to speak too specifically about that, I think it would be well over \$5 million, but I'm not 100% sure. I would say that it would be an extremely regressive tax, but it would be on every ride and affect those with low income who are trying to use the platform --

[3:48:23 PM]

>> Zimmerman: It's especially millions of dollars that the city is looking to reap from your business, potentially. >> Absolutely. >> Zimmerman: Thank you. >> Kitchen: I'll ask twofoldup questions, then I would -- two follow-up questions then I would ask Lyft -- let me ask you this. I mean, with regard to the background checks, I think that you probably understand that or at least from my perspective the fingerprinting printing is important for safety. And this is something that everyone else does, all other drivers do. So is it y'all's position that you just think fingerprints, checks, are not necessary? >> Our position is that our background check is comparable if not better than the fingerprinted background check. In addition, I would say for Austin, it's important to highlight that the background check requirements on tnc dressers are actually more stringent than they are on taxi -- >> Kitchen: I appreciate that perspective. So you think the fingerprint checks, you think what you are doing is more stringent than fingerprint checks. >> Exactly. >> Kitchen: All right. I would like to ask Lyft the same questions, except do you want to ask one here. >> Can he expand on that, I would like to know why what -- why you feel like what you are doing is better. >> Speaking specifically to Austin, they only do a dps check, so it's only for the state of Texas, the background checks we do and are required to do by the ordinance are national in scope. So when we take the information from a driver, several points of information that we are required to collect in order to confirm the person's identity, we do county, courthouse checks, of every location in which they've lived for the proscribed period of time.

[3:50:23 PM]

We do state database checks and we do federal database checks. When we find that someone has been tied to any event, criminal or otherwise, we will go to that local courthouse and look at the record. What fingerprinting does not do is record dispositions in most instances. So you can have individual who have been arrested and then never convicted or charges dismissed and they will end up in a database and be precluded from getting on to a platform or getting jobs even though they have never been found guilty of any crime. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Garza: Is it a cost concern? Does fingerprinting cost more. >> We incur the cost of all drivers applications, of our driver applicants. We pay for all of the partners to go through that check, regardless of whether or not they pass or not. The main issue is it's -- it's duplicative in nature. We do not believe that it provides any enhanced security. We also think that our whole platform has a huge safety bonus, safety features that further enhance safety and help incentivize good behavior. But the problem is you try to squeeze drivers, a stay at home mother, someone who has a full-time job and do this on the weekend, they have to go to this location at this specific time, they are only intending on driving, two, three hours a week, like a lot of people. That is a cost, it's a barrier to entry. I would just say that hearing Mr. Carville talk, it was an sent any discussion of what's good for the people of Austin. What they need for accessibility, what they need to reduce congestion and I think if we really

want to have a policy discussion, we're happy to have one about safety. We stand hyped what !!!!!!!!!!!  
-- Behind what we do. >> Can I ask this? We will certainly have that

[3:52:24 PM]

opportunities. I have one last question about fingerprint. We're going to have lots of opportunities to discuss policy, but we have folks here that want to talk so we want to get to them. Let me just ask you this on fingerprints. How do you know that the person is who they are if you don't fingerprint them? >> Right. So they have to provide a lot of pieces of information in which we have to then consolidate and make sure that they all match up. So that's social security number, date of birth, full name, insurance -- >> Kitchen: All of the pieces of paper that they provide would have to match. >> They would also have to have a bank account in that name because we only do direct deposits. So the amount of data that we have to collect and consolidates, if we're doing a long background check and something doesn't add up, there's a gap, it doesn't work. It doesn't care -- care.com the organization that looks -- helps people have baby-sitters, look after kids, they use the same background check process that we do. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. We'll have more opportunity to discuss this. [ Cheering ] >> Kitchen: I don't know if the staff wants to add anything or not? Go ahead. >> I have a question of staff. So the comment was made when we do our fingerprinting process that we do for the taxi franchises and chauffeurs that it only looks at Texas. Could you address that, also? Please. >> Good afternoon, Carlton Thomas, Austin transportation department. If an applicant has lived outside of the state of Texas for a period of time, the -- our application process requires that they secure criminal background from the area that they lived. >> Gallo: So you would do fingerprinting if they currently lived in Texas, then the fingerprinting would be done by dps and that would be just in Texas. That would reflect just Texas. But if the application indicated that they lived

[3:54:27 PM]

outside, then they would also need to provide that information from the other areas they lived, too? >> That is correct. >> Gallo: Okay. >> As is standard, we don't do a nationwide background check for all applicants, only applicants that have indicated that they have lived outside of the state of Texas. >> Gallo: Okay, thank you. >> Kitchen: Okay, so we -- we started down the road and I want to bring us back. We have -- we will have a lot more questions, not meaning to cut anybody off. It's just that it's important to get the folks that are here signed up and we will have lots more questions with everyone and the opportunity to talk about policy. So let's turn, if that's all right with everyone, I'm going to turn back to asking people to come and speak with us. So let's see. Next person is Barbara Dearing. Is Barbara Dearing here? Three minutes. >> Good afternoon, my name is Barbara Dearing, I represent limo and charter associations, I currently operate a limo and charter here in Austin and also born and raised in Austin, so I have seen Austin go through all of the changes in the past years. One reason that I am here, I don't really feel that I should be here, is because tnc's are starting to cut into our process as well. When they first came into Austin two years ago, worked south-by-southwest, they had all permitted operating authority limo associations sign up with them, who had insurance that met the city's requirements. Last year -- this year they told us we could not participate with Uber or

[3:56:27 PM]

Lyft as a commercial insurance company. We had to drop our insurance and have a -- have just a regular insurance policy. Could not be commercial insurance policy. Which tells me, if they are a tnc company and they are operating as a for-hire service, they need commercial insurance. A prime example is the

[indiscernible] Omni hotel here in town was recently rear-ended hit by one of the tnc drivers. That tnc driver lost their insurance automatically and that claim was not paid. So you tell me how safe that is. Also I want to mention, pardon me, I have a cold, the -- let me look at my notes here. The dispositions that the Uber gentleman mentioned, I have guys that constantly have to go back and forth with the city to try to get their permit set up. If there's no dispositions that are listed on the actual background check itself, they have to go back and forth with each county in each state to get all of the documented information stating that they've served their time, that the -- that the action was closed or it was canceled and what they did and everything was paid and completed before they can even test to be able to get a chauffeur's permit. I know that Lyft recently started doing group rides, that's starting into our charter service where they can go, a guest can go on to lift, say they have a group of people and the driver can pull up within five minutes or so, pick them up, if they are around the corner, less time. When a charter service we are defined by a prearrangement of 30 minutes, someone can call us and ask for a ride, we have to wait 30 minutes according to our regulation before we can show up to provide service, that's cutting into our profits. We also have a \$55 membership for the limo

[3:58:32 PM]

associations operating authorities and Uber tries to get around that by doing a select so they don't have to go by those same rules. So you have a completely unfair playing ground and we have companies, numerous companies that are starting to lose their employees because they don't -- they are not able to operate and function and make the money we used to because these folks are coming right in over us and it's just not fair. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause] >> Kitchen: Our next speaker is Hayden walker with reconnect, Austin, after him will be ken [indiscernible]. Everyone, we have a lot of speakers, I project we're not going to get through everyone, we will get through as many as we can and then we'll talk about the next opportunity. If you can make your remarks two minutes that would be helpful. So -- but we're going to make that voluntary at the moment. That would be helpful. Is Hayden walker here? No? Okay, ken flipin? Okay. >> Thank you, councilmembers, my name is ken flipin, I am a driver for both Uber and Lyft, also a public policy degree from the L.B.J. School of public affairs and worked a lot in public policy. I have just a couple of comments that I want to say. I think there's a lot of cheerleading on one side or the other saying either that Uber and Lyft should basically not be regulated at all but the city or there's attempts to create regulations that are so strine get as to push -- strine get to push them out. Stringent. I think there are a key issues that I think are key

[4:00:32 PM]

to what the city should be focusing on when it comes to safety. When it comes to safety regulations, a couple of big holes that I have seen is first off the number of hours that a driver can operate. Right now, Lyft has it where you can only drive 18 hours and then they kick you off, you have to be off for eight hours. Uber does not have that kind of system in there. And as you can imagine, there's reasons why you wouldn't want people working 14, 16, 18 hour, 20 hour shifts. Drivers could also obviously switch between those services. And so that could be a -- a concern. Especially if you have a lot of drivers out there, a number of drivers out there that are willing to work those longer hours and they think that they're fine, but in reality if we had a regulated equal playing ground, it would benefit all drivers. Along those same lines, Uber, Lyft, they have different policies as far as these things. But they -- I can tell you for sure, they're not always diligent about making sure that their drivers have updated insurance and registration. Right now, my insurance, according to Uber, is supposed to -- to lapse on September 1st. I actually changed insurance policies and it goes past then [buzzer sounding] But I could still get on to Uber right now even though technically I haven't updated by information. And I've seep that before. So

there are definitely areas where the cities, mute appellates, have a -- municipalities have a role to play, it shouldn't be so heavy handed to push them out. But if there's some middle grounds it could make a difference in the safety for the city. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. >> Thank you [applause] Next speaker will be Dennis Mcadams, after Dennis will be William Newsome.

[4:02:40 PM]

>> How are you all doing? My name is Dennis Mcadams, with crown limousine. Seems like Uber has been, you know, we've been talking about it for a long time, meanwhile they're clicking into the billions and we are still allowing what I think are unfair business practices just to continue while we wait and see what other cities are doing. You know, why do we do that? I mean, we're just talking about it and waiting until there's another accident or incident, but this time in our hometown, which would then, you know, have to question why, you know, we allow it at all. I'm not a proponent of just getting rid of Uber, not at all, there's definitely a place for Uber, absolutely, the model. I mean, as limo companies I don't think we're going to go downtown at midnight or, you know, picking up people partying all hours of the night. Definitely we need those kind of people kept off the road. I think if they're doing that, that's definitely great. Austin needs that. You know, all my friends, though, should be able to protect themselves against a company of people that have no regard for their public safety. You know, we -- they should have to adhere the same regulations as all cab company, limousine companies. I thought the 10 fingerprint background check was an F.B.I. Background check. I didn't know -- that's what I've been thinking. I've got to do it, smart myself to do mine. I have to go get the background check, a current copy of my drivers records, if I've had any tickets in the last three years, I've going to have to take defensive driving in order to then take the test and then pass the test, which I hear is a new test. I'm going to have to know about all of the pedicabs and all of the rules and

[4:04:42 PM]

regulations to pass the test just to get my new permit, which I'll do. [Buzzer sounding]. That's beeping at me, isn't it? >> Kitchen: Yes. [Laughter]. >> Anyway -- >> Kitchen: Please wrap up your thoughts. >> I guess that's it. Initially I wanted to start my own company until I found out the rules, regulations, you have to have a limo in your fleet, all of those kind of things. I think the playing field should be level and they should have to do the same things that all drivers and companies do. [Applause] >> Kitchen: When I call you as the second person to -- be sure to be lined up, William Newsome here? No? Larry finestein and then after Larry it will be Charles or Dan bass. You can -- that's right. Thank you very much, we have two podiums here, I'll call the first person, second person stand at the other podium, that way we will go back and forth. You are Larry, is that right? >> Yes, I am. >> Kitchen: I think William Newsome was not here. Dan bass, please come to the second podium. Go ahead. >> Okay. Good afternoon, thank you for allowing me to speak to you. I've got a small company. I'm up in the hill country. And I do come to Austin periodically. For pickups, usually going back to the hill country. The thing that gets me, I was licensed or a -- did have a certification or whatever through the city of Austin. At which time I had it for a couple of years, complied, did everything that I was supposed to do, and came -- came -- then very rarely, but I did come in and I kept it until I had been given a ticket by one of the compliance officers who had been on probation for burglary, felony. So I've got a little bit of a problem with -- with -- I think these two gentlemen

[4:06:43 PM]

right here would be rather insulted -- I'm a retired police officer. 35 years, criminal investigator. And to

get a ticket from someone that had been on probation for something I used to put people in prison for is rather -- it's rather upsetting. And I also believe that I think that y'all should be a little bit more vigilant on the fingerprints. As you all brought that up, because it does not do nationwide. I was told that when I did mine. So someone could have a felony record somewhere else and we wouldn't know. I don't think that's fair. Also, I do -- I would like to see maybe the transportation department doing something with having day permits or something, I have no problem -- you can have my credit card. I'll send you a copy of my run and you can charge me whatever. I don't want to have to come to Austin to be afraid I'm going to get a \$500 ticket, you know, from a compliance officer and then have to worry that we're going into court. I've wasted enough time. But -- [buzzer sounding] -- I would like maybe the city to consider something like that as to -- where we can pay on a -- on a trip by trip run. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you very much. Okay. [Applause] I'm going to -- I'm going to read the next four names, if you all will start coming up to the front. So next we have Shaun Murray, Shaun Murray, then Eric Goff, Jordan bass and then Boone blocker, any of those folks here? Okay. Come forward.

[4:08:47 PM]

What's your name, sir? >> Jordan bass. I guess my two minutes, thank you all for hearing this, but so I signed up to speak as resident because that's what I am, even though I do Uber and Lyft driving. Pardon my attire, I'm looking at myself. I just came from papering some stuff. That's kind of the point this allows me to make my ends meet and have the flexibility of time, to create music, to create art, to stay in Austin while the cost of living is high and rising, you know. That's the issue is like all of this is connected and I do think that what's happening with cab drivers, that is an issue as well. Because they are having a tough time making ends meet, but with them they are having a tough time, their permits are \$400 or 450, I remember reading in the chronicle, each week the cab driver has to pay \$300 on it to 333 just to have that permit, that is egregious, that is absurd. I don't know what we can do as a city to help that, but I really do think that Austin needs to take the idea of a Progressive city, especially if we're trying to be a world hub, the idea of thinking outside the box a little more seriously in terms of how we're communicating with our public, how we're doing the transportation because, also as a former bartender and a native Texas, seeing how we drink down here, that is a major issue, you know. Being able to get someone a ride home within minutes as opposed to -- I remember being in college visiting down here, stumbling around looking for a ride for an hour and a half, ended up having to walk, you know. Like that's an issue having young people or old people, [laughter], inebriated and not have a ride home, you know.

[4:10:48 PM]

[Applause] >> Thank you all for listening. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Okay. The next -- next four I'm going to call is Kenneth bork, Boone blocker, Mario Pollack -- >> What's your name, sir. >> Kenneth Bjork. >> A lot of the comments that I was going to make have already been made, I'm not going to rehash those, the bottom line is I've only done Uber for two weeks, basically. That allowed me to have a supplemental income. The policies that have been recommended here would only restrict mine and others ability to provide this service. It would increase costs and it would increase -- the limit of the people's ability to get that service. I think you should really look at what you're really asking here. Does that really meet what you're looking for? Does it really provide extra safety? Does those requirements really do anything additional? To help? Or are you going to restrict the service that the people of Austin really need? That's the question that I think needs to be answered. [Applause] >> Kitchen: What was your name, sir? >> [Indiscernible]. >> Kitchen: Okay. Before you start, let me just call the next group. So let's see. Lanell Ripley, Anthony negune, Hannah rittering and -- >> I'm Boone blocker. >> Kitchen: I apologize, you'll be

next. >> Thank you. >> I just wrapped up my service on the urban transportation commission, so it's interesting to be on

[4:12:49 PM]

this side of the dais at these kinds of meetings, I'm used to being up there. I served on both the tnc working group, which you spoke of earlier, and the taxi task force which is of course interrelated. And something that keeps coming back, I keep coming back to, I thought of, it's like trying to find a solution to imaginary problem. There's -- why are we going backwards? When they -- when Uber access launched in Austin, again this is more than about accessible service. I know of what I speak, so I'm going to talk about this. But, you know, it's also, you know, applicable to the bigger issues that Uber and Lyft and those types of companies are dealing with. But why should we go backwards to accessible service? And Jennifer Mcphail mentioned that the price and hours of the day, the Uber access is the same price as Uber X. Hours of the day are 24 hours, which the cab companies do not provide and has been a joke in Austin and around the state for years. Comparable service, you know, having 24 hours on demand service and then someone to contact, that's amazing. And so I'm just going to run through these brief points about the staff recommendations for tncs just the accessibility. They should be required to comply with the Ada they are complying with the Ada and they're committed to complying with it. Tncs begin to lease tnc-owned vehicles. I know there's some projects underway to get more vehicles on boarded. If the tnc has an existing accessibility plan filed with another city, then expects Austin to come into compliance. Austin is the leader in accessible service in ride sharing. If anything, the other cities should be trying to come back and comply and match the level of service that Uber access is providing here. Not the other way around. The -- once the six-month

[4:14:51 PM]

implementation period has concluded, the tncss [indiscernible] Same requirements for accessible service. Again, Austin is the leader and the reporting requirements, Austin is the leader and so again I don't think we should go backwards, we're leading and these services are necessary and being used and I think we should enable those, not disable them and move them backwards, so thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause] >> Kitchen: I believe you were next. >> Hi, my name is Adam [indiscernible]. I just want to say one thing. The most important part of all of this is happening now. When I'm driving Uber, I save people's life. I'll tell you why. All of these college students go party, when they get out there's 50,000 of them, they can't drive. It not enough parking everywhere. So they choose Uber. 90% of them is students. What I drive. And every one of them is telling me "Thank you for picking me up." It's true. Parents appreciate, they pay their Uber fee. They don't care, about \$5. They care about the daughter or son getting home safe. That's it. [Applause] >> Kitchen: Thank you. Lanelle Ripley, I'm a Lyft driver and also sometimes Uber driver with a disability and I live in Austin. I've been here for over 20 years. My neighborhood, William cannon, Brodie area, public transportation is not an option. For where I brought my home which is kind of ridiculous when I think about it.

[4:16:51 PM]

The city of Austin isn't meeting the needs, for me to get a taxi from my house to here would be \$58 for me to get a Lyft or an Uber, it's 15, maybe 20. It doesn't need to be regulated anymore. It's working as it stands. If I have to get more permits, I don't see it -- it's not going to improve the service. It's not going to make it faster or better. It's just going to put money into a fund for the city to -- >> Waste. >> All of those things. >> Kitchen: Okay. Let's let her speak, okay. >> So for me, if I wanted to take a bus, it would



be two and a half hours plus a half hour walking one day, it would still be six dollars. That's ridiculous, that's not an option. And taxi service is not really in my neighborhood either. As a driver, I know that we're in the neighborhood. And I help people in my area get to where they need to go around Austin, that is something that I'm happy to do. Because of the flexibility of the -- it's not really a job, it's something that I choose to do to benefit the city and the traffic problem and the transportation issues that we have. And it's -- if we regulate it more, it's -- my friend is a driver in Dallas. They just had the permits go into place. Nothing changed. Except for the city is now making money off of a business model. That it's -- it doesn't benefit anyone. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Buzzer sounding] [Applause] >> Hello, I'm Anthony Wynn. I'm a user of tnc services, I've also used taxi in the past, I'm just a general user. I also have used Uber and

[4:18:53 PM]

Lyft to find drivers also signed up for wins. I'm kind of a technologist, a software consultant by trade but I travel a lot and utilize these services. I just owe I just wants to give you my perspective on this. Tncs in general are a better, safer, faster way of getting around town. I used it two years ago and was surprised it was not available in Austin. Austin is a hub of technology, it's innate active, should have been here a long time ago. In fact they were actually number four on the Uber list to launch, but because of this city council years ago, it never did get launched and that's really a shame. I know that it does continue. I am against these regulations. 1 I've been following this. And what -- what hasn't been said is Uber is out of San Antonio. Lyft is out of San Antonio and Houston. The primary reasons where the fingerprint checks and the permitting -- were the fingerprint checks and the permitting requirement. Uber is not bluffing. I'm working in Kansas City or Wichita in Kansas right now, the state actually passed legislation and prevented Uber from driving there. It was overturned two weeks later and they brought it back. They are not bluffing. I know the city -- New York City is caving in to these regulations, but New York City is 8 million people, the largest ride share market in probably the world. Austin is 800,000. If these are passed, these regulations as-is, I'm afraid that Uber, Lyft, winsey, all of these other guys will be out of here. I don't see a reason why they need to be present. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> My name is Hannah

[4:20:54 PM]

[indiscernible], it's interesting how their biggest objection Uber and Lyft have to the regulations are doing full criminal background checks. That's what happened in Kansas, the Kansas legislature required that, so they announced they were pulling out. Everywhere, where true criminal background checks are being done, they claim they pull out. One of the other issues is that I don't know -- how many of you people in the blue and the pink went to the Travis county tax assessor and paid your ad valorem taxes on your equipment? >> Kitchen: Hannah. Talk with us, okay, thank you. >> The Travis county attorney has determined that people who are working for tncs and using their vehicles as a business need to be paying ad valorem tax as we all do in our cars. I haven't had time to talk to Mr. Elfant, but not a whole lot of hands went up about paying your ad valorem taxes. Your predecessors said of course we intend for you to follow the law. Looks like we have a lot of law breakers in here. I've said you might as well stick your thumb out on the side of the road if you are going to ride with a tncs without the regulation. I realized that you are actually better off sticking your thumb out on the side of the road, even though you still don't know who that person is picking you up, if you have an accident at least their insurance will cover you if you are injured because it was a commercial transaction. These previous lobbyists tried to run all of this same stuff, their responsibility, insurance, all of that, who did that in front of your predecessors, when those questions were asked in front of the Texas legislature, stood at the podium

and transportation

[4:22:55 PM]

committee and hemmed and hawed, because in the legislature, as you know, Ms. Kitchen, is where you tell the truth and nothing but the truth. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you, the next set we have brad Ryker, let's see, brad Ryker, Amelia Lopez, Billy Carter and ed Herndon. >> Good afternoon. My name is brad Ryker, I love this city. I've lived here 45 years. I've been in the cab business for 27 years. I own 26 taxi cabs, I'm working with yellow cab. I lease cabs to qualified individuals. Every individual that is driving my cab has been vetted by the state of Texas, by the city of Austin, the city of Austin knows all of my drivers, the city of Austin knows all of my vehicles, the -- my vehicles get inspected 14 times a year, once by the city, once by the state and 12 times by yellow cab. I don't think the tncs can say that their vehicles are inspected as often as mine. We are insured completely. You get in an accident. If you are a customer or a passenger in a yellow cab, you are covered completely. We are a commercial business. Tnc is really just a gypsy cab company. I would like to see them come under the same rules and regulations that we do. I've lost so many drivers because it's so easy to just pick up the phone and get a job with Uber, they don't really look that closely, they don't look at your cars, the cars are so much older than our cars, we can only have our cars or I guess -- changed that for seven years now. [Laughter]. >> Kitchen: Please, please be respectful and let people speak. Go ahead. >> At any rate, I think they should come under the same insurance requirements, same background checks and same

[4:24:56 PM]

vehicle inspection that's we have, it's only fair, thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Lapse in audio] >> Exucar and 10-10 taxi here in Austin, I went back and looked at the council meeting from may 15th and watched that testimony, it was a long night. I was there. I testified. There were several councilmembers, including councilmember tovo and mayor Leffingwell, went on the record, that they would vote to approve this ordinance for the tnc pilot program, but they were specifically directing the city transportation staff to work with all of the stakeholders to -- to develop a level playing field. Councilmember tovo actually added a friendly amendment that spoke to that. In the amendment one of my company's super shuttle was named specifically to be in that stakeholder process. It was accepted by councilmember Riley. That was supposed to happen within 180 days. The mayor, councilmember Martinez before the vote said the biggest issue they wanted corrected was the inequity between the classifications and they directed staff to come up with a plan that would level the playing field. It's been 16 months, I haven't been contacted to be on that group. I -- I like the recommendations by director spiller. I think it's a good start from a public safety perspective. But it doesn't do anything to level the playing field between the classifications. Just a few of the things would be the 30 minute prearrangement, requirement, for other services, doesn't make any sense. The minimum fair requirements for the limousine ordinance doesn't make any sense. The inequity of the fees that are charged and

[4:26:58 PM]

councilmember Zimmerman we would love to have a no-fee system. If you want to do that, let's have a no-fee system for everybody. They are operating a limousine service with Uber select. They are wanted to operate a shared ride service, two classifications that they are not authorized to run. So that's all, thank you very much. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause] >> Good afternoon, council, thank you for inviting us to be part of this. My name is ed Herndon, I'm the president of central Texas limousine

association. Limousine association we represent 60% of the fleet that is part of the Austin ordinance. That's a lot of vehicles from motor coaches to buses to sprinters to -- to sedans and SUVs. It's a lot of inventory. One thing I want to go back on right now, it came up earlier the question was asked to you what do you think that the money and the fees would come up to? We don't have to think about that. We know. We have operators that's been operated here in this city over 20 something years who have been paying those fees. I'm quite sure the staff can give you an accounting of the amount of money from our association and the limousine association and the limousine operators that's been paying to the city over, over and over. What we look at, what is the level playing field from the the limousine operators' perspective. When we look at rates and fees, look at removal of the 30 minute prearrangement requirement from the ordinance from all chauffeur's services, purpose, the best interest to the residents and visitors of this city of Austin. The licensing fees, one of the things that I just talked about a few minutes ago, make the fees pay to

[4:28:58 PM]

the city and to the airport consistent and equitable for all transportation services. Then we'll go down to insurance, we recommend all vehicles for hire, any vehicle that accepts a fee for transportation, for transporting a passenger should be required to carry commercial insurance at the same minimum with no exceptions. We talk about driver requirements -- [buzzer sounding] -- All commercial drivers, any operator, with a vehicle for hire should be required to be registered, background checked through the city of Austin, and qualified for a permit based on the same criteria with no exceptions. I'm going over it because we just feel like we just have been slapped in the face because we are feeling like our industry brings a lot to the table. And we feel like that we -- we have a big voice in this. And to be just looked over is just -- looks like a slap in the face. >> Kitchen: >> Kitchen: I apologize for that. That's not your intention and we'll talk more. >> We've been asked -- we've been here. We have a lot at stake here. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you. [Applause]. The next four speakers are Joe Garcia, Sarah Levine, Thomas -- Tomas Hearne. And I apologize, I may be mispronouncing the fourth person. Sabez mushan. >> Hello, my name is Joe

[4:30:59 PM]

Garcia and I'm a local business owner of a transportation service here in Austin and also a true austinite born and raised here in Austin. I've seen a lot of change here in Austin and change is good. And the proposals that are being stated here by the city I don't see how that is going to reverse any progress that the tnc companies have already accomplished here. As a matter of fact, it's going to make it better because it's going to make it safer for the citizens of Austin and they're going to meet all the requirements, everybody is going to be happy. Uber is worth 18.2 billion, why can't they do it? I don't know why. But the reason I'm here to speak is because me as a small business owner, I have been losing drivers as well just like the other gentleman that owns 26 cabs. And the reason is that the process for the tnc companies suspect easier. I had to do a little research myself and I went and joined those tnc companies. And neither one did they ask for my social security card. They just asked for the number, which can be easily bought here in the united States, an id can easily be created here in the united States. Okay? So, you know, it is about safety for our citizens. I'm not trying to run them away. Let's make it fair for everybody. You know, everybody meet the requirements. And then everybody is going to be happy. And the technology -- tnc stands for technology networking company. If they wanted to, why don't they just run the technology part of the transportation and let the local companies that have been in business over 30 years here in Austin that meet all the requirements, insurance requirements, let them run the transportation side of

[4:32:59 PM]

it. [Buzzer sounds] That's it. Thank you. >> So just to clarify, I'm supposed to be speaking on six, but I actually do have a few things to say about this anyway. >> Kitchen: I'm sorry. I'm not reading my list correctly. Did you want to speak on this? >> I have like 30 seconds of something to say while I'm up here. We're talking about leveling the playing field a lot here and I think what needs to be addressed is a level playing field, but not taking the tncs up to the level of cabs and limos. They need to come down. There are way too many regulations on cabs and limo companies. [Applause]. And I think we need to look at lowering some of that. Technology has improved a lot since the days that these regulations were put into place and those regulations have piled on each other throughout the years. And so we need to step back on those and knock them down a little bit instead of trying to take tncs up to that ridiculous level. Thank you. [Applause]. >> How you doing, Tomas juarta. I don't have much to say. The only thing I keep hearing is about safety and that's a big thing. I keep hearing about taxi drivers and a level playing field. I was driving with Uber. The funny thing I keep seeing is driving is taxi drivers are the ones that are always double parked, illegally parking. I always see taxi drivers fighting each other, always causing fist fights between each other. As I'm driving that's what I personally see. I think A.P.D. Are the ones trying to change it, but I never see A.P.D. Trying to break up nothing. They're never around when you really need them. And also another thing is, I mean, I'm willing to compromise, but we can do stuff that as far as traffic at night I see like fifth street backed up, I see seventh street backed up, but I never see A.P.D. Out there helping flow traffic, help get the congestion

[4:35:01 PM]

going. There's no A.P.D. Around to help out with traffic either. So A.P.D. Can also help out instead of trying to take Uber out. Let's see what they can do to help us out. So that's all I've got to say. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Our next four, Jason Stoddard, derrick Schmidt, I think, I apologize if I misread that. Gay real Garcia and -- Gabriel Garcia and Ted seff. >> Don't start the timer yet. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the committee. I agree with most of the proposed regulations and agree stronger background checks, licensing and laws regarding safety are needed. My concerns are four fold. First of all, we don't make a lot of money. Despite the radio commercials that you hear, we make about 50% higher than the minimum wage considering self-employment taxes, fuel, maintenance on the vehicle and miles on our vehicle. Not to mention our risk of tickets and citations and accidents. I personally had someone run into me causing \$14,000 to my brand new truck. Requiring \$300,000 in per accident liability coverage is abusive. While sr-22 drivers are out there transporting their passengers with very low, low liability. Riders -- trying to regulate display and demand through advanced notice of fare changes and surges to the the city is burdensome and flies in the face of capitalism which this country was founded on. Riders know what they will pay before the ride where taxis and limos can gouge customers at the end. Three, I would like to know what services the city is going to provide with the extra dollar per ride.

[4:37:01 PM]

Better roads would be a start. Finally, if the taxi and limo companies hadn't abused and ripped off the public, leaving them stranded for years, then why is Uber and Lyft so successful? Not only citizens, but tourists that come to this city love the service. They really like it when I pick them up in a pickup truck. [Laughter]. Austin should be on the leading edge with forward thinking, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you. [Applause]. >> My name is Jason Stoddard. I'm a local resident, I'm been here since

2002. Also an entrepreneur. And my personal history with the city of Austin dates back to around 2005 when I put in a retail location on congress. And because of certain regulations and ordinances, I basically went into the buzz saw of what was the historic commission to make my place A.D.A. Compliant. Fast forward to taking an industrial led par lamp to market, most of my customers are here in Austin and those customers were all commercial builds. And being a commercial build, not only were they perfect for my product, but during that session of the city council they basically changed the ordinance, changed policy and every single par lamp that went into new construction in Austin had to be a pin lamp fixture. Well, going through ul testing that cost me about \$650,000 and bringing an ultra efficient par lamp to market, but I couldn't put any of my led lamps in Austin because of that change. It would force me to basically go through ul

[4:39:03 PM]

testing. So from afar I've been reading the rhetoric from both sides of the dais. I've been reading what the incumbents, who basically represent an unnatural monopoly if you look at the way that it's economically structured, and then obviously I've been reading and hearing what's going on with the tncs. And so the recommendation, to echo the woman who spoke before me, I hear a lot of rhetoric about leveling the playing field. I think in terms of the incumbents it needs to be less onerous. In terms of fingerprinting, what Adam won't tell you is when it comes to Uber and Lyft -- [buzzer sounds] These are marketing companies, that's what they are. They use technology to basically bring two sides of the market together and they charge a fee for that service. And what's going to happen is if you inhibit onboarding on either side of the marketplace, it actually significantly degrades service. And plus it doesn't cause any additional benefit in keeping the public safe. So to close, what I would ask is that in your elevated position and going through all this, stop this intermediating what's happening in the market because the market is basically going to determine what's best for all of us. Thanks. [Cheers and applause] >> Kitchen: So next we have Kyle Austin, and I'm going to get Kyle as last name wrong and I apologize. Then we have Tricia Davidson, Clinton Henderson and Janet Henderson. Kyle, you can come forward. I'm sorry, you can go first. >> My name is Gabriel Garcia. About 10 years ago I snapped

[4:41:04 PM]

my neck hanging Christmas lights, making me a quadraplegic. In those 10 years it's been pretty challenging, for lack of better words, to traverse the job market. When Uber came to town I found a company that was able to hire me almost immediately because of my clean background and because of my accessible vehicle. In that time I've been able to supplement my income while also having and holding a full-time job. Putting on these regulations, yes, could level the playing field, but it could also make it incredibly difficult for people with disabilities to get into the app and get into the product and make a living for themselves. Again, don't do this. It's very easy from the standpoint of Uber and Lyft to help the city move forward. Thank you. [Applause]. >> Howdy. My name is Kyle Austin Henry and I'm born and raised here in Austin, Texas. Go Austin. Growing up here -- well, now I'm currently a driver for ride, but I speak on behalf of myself as a driver. Recently I was ticketed for a potential one to five hundred dollar ticket for my passengers not wiring a seat belt and I want to talk about the the liability for myself and the person with their own responsibility. I believe that the liability for someone else's actions should not be put on to me as a driver. It mitigates myself as a law-abiding citizen, or at least a moral citizen for myself not to be liable for someone else. Takes the responsibility away from them where they can do whatever they want because they know it does not affect them and I feel like I am affected by someone else's actions. I've been listening here tonight and I would also like to make a comment about like Uber and ride,

[4:43:06 PM]

competition is good. Just because you lose at the competition does not mean you should punish the other person for being successful. I'm a strong believer that we should lower the regulations of anything else not raise the regulations of others to match it. To level the playing field is to lower regulations so we can have good competition. And if someone is losing at a competition maybe it's the business model, not the regulations. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: I'm sorry, I know y'all are enthusiastic and we really appreciate that, but we'll get through more speakers if you can hold your applause. So keep going. >> Also, in regards to safety, anything that are passed by the state in terms of safety -- this is an issue I'd like to talk about as well. I feel like safety should be upon the business. If something happens it should not be the state that defines what should be happening to the person, it should be that specific case by case issue. If a driver has an accident, it is that driver that should be responsible for that issue. There should be no responsibility in terms of safety. If there needs to be fingerprinting it needs to be done by the company and they need to be responsible for any criminals that they hire. It should not be done through the state. Thank you. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: I think Tricia was next. Is Tricia here? No? Okay, go ahead. >> My name is Clinton Henderson, and -- that's a pretty good concept. Let's take away all the requirements for everybody. We take all the meters and cut the ribbon on there that stops us from setting our own rates. Yellow cab, we can come in there, we'll charge 1.87 for a mile and let Austin put their rate on there. And you know, let's all just take away all the regulations. Instead of knowing the streets, let's all sit there and stare at a phone while driving down the road.

[4:45:07 PM]

This is -- safety is going to be impaired by not enforcing these rules on everybody. Take it one way or the other. No rules for anybody or everybody follows the rules. [Applause]. That's the only thing that works. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Good evening. My name is Janet Henderson. This is my tnc connection. I have people that call me specifically for a ride. I feel that yellow cab company has one of the finest dispatch, over the phone connections comparable with the Uber and Lyft as far as the equipment necessary to carry out dispatching, the connection between drivers and customers. My next thing I'd like to say is that as far as the fingerprint issue, I thought that ran through the FBI as it is a federal -- what do they call it? >> Kitchen: Requirement? >> Yeah. Federal identification of the person through the fingerprints. And this establishes that the person who is getting the permits are actually who

[4:47:07 PM]

they say they are. To me the fact that they may have committed some crime that they were not found guilty of or they were charged, but not tried, and yet Uber and Lyft wants to hold these people accounted for something that they were arrested, but not found guilty of is wrong. That should be -- [buzzer sounds] -- A civil issue. It's a liberty -- it's an American liberty that once you're found innocent you should have a clean slate. Although that might be on their record, I don't want bad people driving cars and so that's why I want to make sure that the person is who they say they are. >> Kitchen: Thank you very much. We appreciate your time. Russell carper, lingon Friedman and John Miller are next. >> I'm Rochelle carper. I've been driving for almost a year now with Uber specifically. I started thinking about everything that was said today and there's a lot of great points through it all. I would like to touch on all the extra fees that the city is trying to impose on to tncs for the possibility of an extra dollar per ride. I think that with Uber X being as cheap as it is, that is what is promoting drunk drivers without driving because it is so cheap to actually get into an Uber X.

[4:49:07 PM]

Instead of going into your car and parking and then waiting for a taxicab, which is two-thirds the price of an Uber X. So that's my biggest thing is that fee actually does bother me a lot. And the other thing is every time a drunk driver gets into a tnc, it allows them to be off the road where a D.W.I. Would actually take affair officer out of the market of his timeline of being on his shift for three to six hours where they could be out and about protecting our street and the safety and citizens of Austin. That's all. [Applause]. >> Good afternoon, my name is Leah Friedman. I moved here about 15, almost 16 months ago with my 17-year-old girl. I came here recruited by someone to start a company. That didn't work. After we started the company, this guy say to us, oh, by the way, I lied. I don't have the money I claim I had. So I found out Uber was here and I signed up. I was actually a rider in the northeast before I became a driver. I signed up, I gave them social security number, drivers license, they ran my background check obviously. They saw my car. And I started driving. You know, if Uber wasn't here I probably would have been part of the statistics as an unemployment single mother of a 17-year-old girl. My girl just started her senior year. And Uber has allowed me to make a decent living in Austin. We love Austin. Austin now is our home and I am the happiest here, just like Adam say, please don't fix what is not broken. Thank you.

[4:51:13 PM]

[Applause]. >> My name is John Miller. Before my time begins I wanted to kind of follow-up and clarify on the fingerprinting. If I'm understanding correctly, the. >> Kitchen: Sir, this will need to be part of your time. Is it is it that you have a question, is that what it is? >> The question was if I'm understanding correctly the fingerprinting only pulls up Texas background check. And it's up to applicant to provide information about where they may have lived previously or may not have. >> Kitchen: We'll speak to that in a minute if you'll go ahead and start your time. >> So John Miller. The only arrest I've ever had was for a D.W.I., January 12th, 2010, when I went and got my customs and border protection global entry background check, fullback ground check, interview, fingerprints, national background. I had to provide the disposition of that arrest showing the D refused to -- the da refused to practice. Yada, yada. Both Uber and Lyft had that disposition in there. I've been through background checks for church, for seminary, for single mission work, for everything, the most thorough background checks I've ever been through have been by Uber and Lyft. I live in and I service east Austin. Multiple complaints about how difficult it is to get a cab out there and how thankful they are to have us. As far as traffic goes I'm kind of not understanding the math when two vehicles on the road or one with a passenger, it seems like the one with the passenger is going to be better for traffic than everybody out driving. We hear the -- as far as identification placards go, I know who exactly I'm getting in the car with long before the vehicle arrives. I know exactly what vehicle, what driver, what license plate, everything about who is coming to get me before I ever get in the car. I've had more than a handful of rides in taxis over the years in different cities where when I get in the I

[4:53:15 PM]

had placard --ed id placard is not the person driving. The person driving is their brother because they had a family emergency or what have you. I know exactly who I'm getting into with Uber or with Lyft or with any of the others. I've had over a dozen riders who drove out, but chose to ride share back because they've been drinking and in their own words they'll take us, they won't wait or pay for a cab in those instances. So that's over a dozen people not drinking and driving, just myself personally. [Buzzer sounds]

>> Kitchen: Thank you, sir. Mr. Thomas, can you answer his question? Did you hear his question? >> Could you have him repeat the question? My question was it's completely up on the complicate to provide additional information to y'all as far as living elsewhere, that when he comes and does the fingerprint, the only background check done is Texas, is that correct? >> If I understand the question, the applicant has to indicate information on the application as to where they live. If they're truthful on the application we would know if they've lived in the city or not. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Is it okay if I do this with him? Or can I go next because the interpreters are already up here? >> Kitchen: What is your name? >> Brandy. And I'm sorry, my name is

[4:55:16 PM]

Garrett Scott. >> Yes. >> Okay. Nice to meet you all. My name is Garrett Scott. I'm a deaf driver for Uber and Lyft and I've been doing this year-round, in October will be a year. And this has also allowed me to do a job and I've been really motivated to do this and pick up riders. And I communicate with hearing riders by sending them a text and I get their number, I let them know that I'm deaf and that that's the way that we communicate. And so I go and I pick them up and I let them know ahead of time that I'm deaf and I get there, pick them up on time, everything works out. So I really have enjoyed working with Uber and Lyft and I appreciate them letting me work with them. And if I have not done this, I would really have a frustrating time finding a job. Deaf people have a 75% unemployment rate, so discrimination is really high among deaf people and I'm able to work. So Uber and Lyft really has provided me a really great opportunity and really good blessing for me to be able to pay my bills. And this hasless been a great opportunity -- has really been a great opportunity for me, not only me, but for other deaf people to work. And this has been a really emotional issue for me so I'm really thankful for Uber and Lyft to help me and provide this job opportunity for me. So I'm not understanding all of these rules and regulations and I think that

[4:57:18 PM]

we'll really -- it would be a struggle for me and it's really going to be harder. [Buzzer sounds] And all we really want is just equal opportunity. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause]. Let me say that we have -- our item number 7 we're going to move to October, and thank you for those folks here with the Bergstrom expressway 183 project. Thank you so much and I'm sorry we didn't anticipate that. But we will get into that in October. >> My name is apprehend Otto and I'm here to -- brandy Otto and I'm here to talk about my Lyft experience and why it's important to me and important to Austin. I'm very proud to be a driver for Lyft. Not only Lyft, but I also drive for Uber as well. And I've been jobless and I've been really frustrated trying to find a job to support myself, and Lyft has really given me an opportunity to go out safely and around Austin and save other lives. And every time I go out to drive I know that I'm saving people, saving drunk drivers, and that's really great. And I think that people are really -- more people are willing to use this service to save themselves and people like you and your family. Six years ago someone from your team, my angel, retired sheriff, Daniel Richards,

[4:59:19 PM]

was hit by a drunk driver. And I'm doing this in honor of him. He's my angel. And he's not the only person that died in that accident. Two people died in this accident. And if it was not for Lyft, I think these things wouldn't happen. And I feel like I've saved a lot of lives and that makes me feel really good. So I think that Lyft should continue to operate as is. Austin -- you know, keep Austin weird. [Buzzer sounds] It's really impacted my life. [Applause]. Because if Lyft would be removed, it would really impact



my life. I would be out of work. And it would be a domino effect because of this decision. So thank you very much. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Next we have Kenneth fryer, Mathias combat Gatto, veer Ron with a Juarez and Jackie Jacob. >> Hi. I guess I'm the only one in that little group. My name is Jackie Jacobo I'm here to make sure Lyft stays in Austin. I'm a recent college graduate and Lyft has helped me tremendously with some income besides my current job. We help drivers get to their destinations. That might be minor, but if someone has been drinking too much or needs to get to the airport, we have a safe and affordable way to get them to where they need to

[5:01:20 PM]

go. I also want to bring up how many of my passengers mentioned how safe and comfortable they feel when riding when Lyft. Also as a woman, and I do Lyft and Uber, I also feel very safe. I've never had anybody inappropriate or feel untoward to me. I know what it can be like trying to get home late and Lyft offers that ability for people to get home that way. I split my time between San Antonio and Austin. I urge you to keep up the good Lyft and allow them to keep operating under the same rules that have been so successful here in Austin. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Hello, council. Thanks for letting me speak. I'm Mathias gottro. I have a degree from the university of Denver in liberal studies. People keep talking about the -- leveling the playing field, but the real issue is safety, so I don't know if they're talking about how much money they're losing or actually, you know, helping the safety move along in Austin. You're talking about fingerprints, but everything is online. Everything is recorded. Your background check as a driver, you wouldn't do anything wrong because everything is online. Your checked. You're picked up on time. As a driver there's more eyes on the road so we act as safety as well because we're in parts of the neighborhood where most people wouldn't go, so we have a phone and we have our eyes and we're a part of the system as well. People in Westlake, more the richer customers, wealthy, they find Uber and Lyft very convenient. It's pleasurable to be able to go out to dinner and have a driver, have a few drinks and be relaxed, therefore getting back to work during the week and doing their work accordingly. It saves workers going to downtown a lot of time.

[5:03:22 PM]

And the parking fees, the workers will say that we now get dropped off right at the front door instead of parking and commuting 15 to 20 minutes so now they're making more dollar. I pick up at the airport and it does boost the tourism because we're part of the norm that's happening all over this world. People are selling their cars and not even buying a car when they realize that rideshare will be more efficient if they're living in the inner city. This helps the environment and less of a carbon footprint. And we know now that in Austin we have the influx of all this traffic, so each -- when you see Uber just lowered our pay a little bit, which is fine with me because if this becomes -- [buzzer sounds] -- More of a saturated system and everybody in the community and worldwide are doing rideshare, this is going to help the environment. And last but not least, the UT students jump in the car, they're saving two drinks a night to not drink and drive. And I ask the people of the council and everybody else in the taxi industry and people that feel a loss, what would happen to you and how would you feel if one of your children or grandchildren was in an accident or worse off was the one that caused the accident? So let this continue for the decreasing of the industry of d.w.l.'s. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause]. So next we have Tony Ellis, Joseph shaunlet, Kelly Dan and wade inyard. >> Good afternoon. Thank you for letting me speak. I've been listening to this for quite awhile. >> Kitchen: Could you say your name? >> Tony Ellis. I have a little bit of a different perspective I want to share with you. I'm a Navy veteran. I'm a volunteer with citizens on patrol. I'm also a ph.d candidate at an opposing college I won't mention, and I'm a full-time tech support agent with Dell. So I spend my entire day

[5:05:23 PM]

talking to computers. I may talk to two people a month in my day-to-day job. So when my wife retired from the city of pflugerville I was looking for something interesting to do. And we found Lyft and Uber. I've been driving for Lyft for about a month now. And initially I was doing it just for the money, but I find that I feel like an ambassador of the city to the people I ride with. I have people who remember me when they get back in my ride after a few days later. I tend to work the weekends so I deal with the kids a lot, the students, if you will. I have made it a policy or a practice, I guess, in the 200 plus rides I've given in the past month to ask why are you using Lyft, why are you using Uber? Why not use something else? I get three answers and I've actually submitted this to Lyft so they know. I don't want to drink and drive. It's a safe and reliable ride. And you're always there when I need it. Those are the majority of the answers I get. Now, keeping in mind there's other riders that I deal with other than students. In particular I've dealt with elderly, ladies that want to go shopping and don't have a way. I took a grandmother from 51st street to dripping springs the other day after her grand baby's birthday party. One of your own police officers and I were talking at the meeting. He goes to galveston on his motorcycle and uses Uber down there to get around. It's not just about the kids. It's about everybody else. When I pick up people at the airport we share stories, where to eat, what is the sixth street? I explain all that and I can share stories from when I was in the Navy when kids are interested. Not many have looked into a nuclear Rieker. I've seen the inside of one. [Buzzer sounds] Please don't change things. >> Kitchen: Thank you, sir. Now we have Charles Hudson, la knell Ripley, Hugo Vasquez and Winston he is extra says.

[5:07:26 PM]

>> My name is Raul Hudson. I arrived in Austin in 2007. I'm a California transplant and I drive for Lyft and Uber. When we got here [indiscernible] No matter how long I worked, how long I worked, there was nothing I could do. It crashed in '09. I was in a bad spot there because I got my accounting degree late in life. Before that I was in software. I hadn't been in accounting long enough. I had a three year gap in my employment and in '09 there was 100 resumes for every position. So cfo's were taking jobs as accountants and I didn't really have a chance. In addition I found out that for my demographic there really is no help. Four mouths to field, fully mortgaged house and there's no help. So I really suffered. I ended up doing seasonal work for tax agencies and I took jobs with temporary services and I kind of really for the most part I was unemployed. My resume each year got worse and worse. So in 2015 my old beat up car finally died, forcing me to buy a much nicer one, which now let me drive. And this year for the first time in eight years I'm floating. I'm able to make it. That's a big deal. You know, most of the benefits of ridesharing, the obvious ones they flow to the passenger in forms of convenience. This is a very convenient format. It doesn't really compare in my opinion to a cab. It's a different experience altogether. It's an experience. There's the difference right there. But for me, you know, the most important reason to keep this in Austin is there was no help for my demographic. And now there is. And that's it.

[5:09:29 PM]

[Applause]. >> Hello. My name is Hugo. I drive for Lyft. I just want to add there's been a lot of great comments by the Lyft and Uber drivers. I am not a taxi. I am not a limousine. I don't run a shuttle service. You know, I do feel that what I am doing is a convenience for those using it, young and old. Just as recently as this weekend I had a family that was visually impaired that thanked me so much for being

there on time, within a reasonable amount of time rather, to pick them up and take them to their destination. As far as safety is concerned, I was a Lyft user before becoming a driver. I do know what it's like to be a passenger obviously. I do feel safe with those that are driving me as well. My vehicle currently is checked for safety as anyone else's vehicle here in the state. I drive my family around in the same vehicle. It's safe, it's clean, it's convenient. I don't think that Lyft and/or Uber should be taken to a level that it is not in respect to taxi and limousine services, for example. That's not what it was meant for. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause]. >> Hi. My name is Kelly Darr and I actually started with Lyft the day that we launched here, may 29th of 2014. And I'm a single mom and I have two special needs children, and so this job has -- driving for Lyft, and I recently started driving for Uber as well. I personally prefer Lyft because I think that they actually do a better job of

[5:11:30 PM]

doing a background check. And I am a mentor as well, so I mentor brand new Lyft applicants. So when somebody applies for Lyft, they actually have to meet a seasoned driver in person and I also check out their car. I check their tires and make sure they're in working order. There's no cracks, et cetera, et cetera. And I also take a personal ride with them to basically do an interview to check them out and see how they're doing. But on top of all of that, this has provided me to be able to have an extremely flexible schedule where I can set my own hours to be there for my children. My 17-year-old daughter has type 1 diabetes and it's extremely dangerous at times. She doesn't always take care of her blood sugars. And if any of you know about that, it's very scary sometimes being able to -- so I have to basically work my schedule around her. And so I don't really think that the -- you know, the background checks should be extended. I think it should be level for everyone. I think that a complete background check is extremely important for all companies. But I think that, you know, we all serve a purpose. And personally we all need to work together instead of saying oh, I work for Uber or Lyft or the taxi or limousine company. We all need to work together in the fact that we are all providing a safe ride home

[5:13:32 PM]

and a ride service for anyone that needs it. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause]. Okay, go ahead. What was your name, sir? >> Winston Estevez. Good afternoon, thank you for your time. Appreciate you. I am an Uber and Lyft driver also. I own a small business, import, export to Texas. I would have to say regarding the safety matter on Uber and Lyft, if we do not care for austinites' safety on the roads, we would not be driving trying to make sure they make it home safely. Regarding the fee, I go against any new regulations. Regarding the living wage, Austin, it's a developing and growing city. We provide services to people that can not afford a more expensive, meaning a taxi or private shuttles. So we provide them a safe point A to point B. We do our best to make sure that we comply with all of the A.P.D. Requirements and transportation requirements abiding city laws. We are not a lime seen, we're not a taxi company. Don't expect us to act like it. We offer and provide water, gum, personal stories. We try to make sure all of our riders, on one on one warm relationship and what they're looking for. They've got options. If they choose us it's for a reason. We're here to do part of our job and also we enjoy what we do. That's my time and thank you so much for your time. [Applause]. >> Kitchen: Thank you. So colleagues, we just have a few more people. I think we're going to be able to finish up. So I'm going to call all five of the remaining people on the list. So that's Richard white --

[5:15:36 PM]

Richard white, Neal Diaz, jimmy hill and -- jimmy hill, Rene tovo and Joseph ily. Thank you go ahead. >>

I'm Richard white, driving for Uber since last October. I used to see every now and then a bumper sticker that said something to the effect that the motto of the federal government is: If it ain't broke, fix it until it is. And -- [laughter] -- You know, for offense, but I believe that many, not all, certainly, but many of the -- of the measures that you're proposing fall under that category. As you well know, thousands and thousands of austinites use our services every single day. We don't make them do it. We can't compel them to use our services, they volunteer to do it because we provide value to them and they think the value is worth the fare. As a matter of fact, some of my passengers have said that they've elected not to buy a car because Uber is good enough. That's the level of value that our services provide. Now, the proposal that you are making will impose additional financial or economic burdens on our passengers, some of them direct, some of them indirect. But what are they getting in return? The real question here would be how many of our passengers would volunteer to pay those extra costs for what you are proposing to give them in return? I don't know the answer to that, but I hope I may be excused if I'm skeptical that the number is very large. Give me a sec, I'm going somewhere with this. My question is this: Why would you do that? These are your people, neighborhoods, constituents, why would you do that to them, why would you impose these extra costs that they have not asked for.

[5:17:37 PM]

I could say maybe more, but my mother taught me that discretion is the better part of value [sic] So I won't go there. I would leave you with this, 100 years ago the railroads provided essentially all of the passenger and freight transportation in this company, we still have railroads, they still provide passenger and freight transportation but not to the same extent that they did before. >> Kitchen: Thank you, sir. >> Because new models emerged and that's what we're seeing here,. >> Kitchen: Thank you, sir. [Applause] >> Kitchen: Go ahead. >> Neil Diaz, board secretary for atx safer streets. Through this I see the need for all transportation. Also I serve the board for new milestones foundations regarding mental and developmental disability. This has allowed me to see those receive service they did not always have. However, my individual perspective is the drivers, I'm concerned that policy is made demand more expense from Uber, that will trickle down to the drivers. I'm also concerned with the driver rating system and do not see this addressed in the policies today. Uber has made various contributions to the community. Let's make sure we are protecting the drivers, Uber corporate and the city needs them, as well as chauffeurs and cab drivers, thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Go ahead. >> Good afternoon, committee, my name is jimmy hill. I'm a driver for Uber. I am, like all of the Uber drivers, a -- a contractor. Self-employed contractor. I'm also a veteran, a retiree from the united States Marine Corps. After I left the marine Corps, I settled in round Rock and did most of my business and trade here in Austin. What I would like to say is that I've run into an awful lot of people in employment who are more than willing to slap me on the back and say, "Oh, thank you for your

[5:19:38 PM]

service," but then not give me a job. I can't speak for other companies, but I can speak for Uber, Uber is a very veteran friendly company. They hired me. They are out there actively looking for veteran drivers. And I want to applaud Adam and the other folks with Uber who are out there trying to employ veterans because we are, when it comes to employment, there are people in this community and all over the united States who down play us, who look down their nose at us and, also, older persons like myself. I'll soon be 55 years old. And we don't get a fair shake at employment. Well, Uber is doing that. Uber is giving us a job and I certainly appreciate that. So, please, I ask you, not to put onerous requirements and regulations on us that will make it tougher for individuals like myself, veterans of the military forces and older employees, to get a job. Thank you. >> Kitchen: Thank you. [Applause] >> Hello, my name is Joseph

eiley, I'm a pedicab operator in the city of Austin and I have come here to represent pedicabbers. We believe that Uber should have to comply with the same regulations that all ground transportation providers do. If they can't do that, then there's no reason why any of us should do that. [Applause]. And the problem here is Uber has come and stated in the news something that's not fact. A.p.d. Did not say that you contributed to the lower rate of drunk driving. Number two, they're concerned about these fees. Let me tell you, Uber has screwed their own drivers more than once, they lowered the fees on you twice in one year. And they've also saturated the market so you don't have enough space to work.

[5:21:40 PM]

[Applause] >> We -- the final person who I -- I'm sorry, I overlooked on my list was -- let's see. What's his name? Who did I miss? >> [Indiscernible] >> Kitchen: Okay, please come forward. This will be our last speaker, thank you very much. Jeff, thank you. >> Thank you. >> Kitchen: I understand you signed up in the clerk's office. My apologies, I didn't see you on the list. >> Yeah, they said they could get it over here. They apparently didn't. Communication problem there. >> Kitchen: Thank you, we'll follow up on that. Please speak. >> Thank you very much, ma'am. And I would like to thank Mr. Thomas for seeing me and for sharing the aspects of the -- of the new code, the recommendations and so forth. I would like to refer to one part of the code which I frankly speaking have one vehement objection to, that I would like to explain. Specifically, on page 6, item B on -- on 11 B, any terms and conditions in the agreement between the permittee and drivers or between the permittee and passengers that would act as a waiver of the permittees liabilities or to the public are declared to be contrary to the public's policy and unenforceable. With that, I would like to make a couple of observations, if I might. First of all, I would like to observe in putting that in your recommendations here, the staff has -- has first and foremost recognized that the contracts that Uber, Lyft, et cetera used frankly speaking riddled with one waiver after another and they recognize that it's wrong to have those waivers in there to start with. On the other hand, I would also like to observe that two wrongs, specifically one of yours, don't make it right, either. Because the truths of the matter is the only solution is just demand of these people that they get these waivers out of their contracts before you give them a permit to operate to start with. That's the only thing that can possibly be consistent

[5:23:40 PM]

with public policy. Because if you do not do that, what you have instead is a situation where if somebody is a damaged individual from what happens with Uber lift, et cetera, they're going to sue in state district court and that is going to -- that will be concluded under contract law. This does not affect contract law. You can't change what state contract law is. And if they -- if the waivers that they have in their contracts are somehow legal under contract law, they're going to stand. The best case scenario that you can have out of that is that they are at minimum going to complicate the litigation. You need to demand that they get these waivers out of those contracts before they are given a permit to operate in this city, period. Thank you very much. [Applause] >> Kitchen: Thank you so much. Okay, that concludes our testimony. I want to say thank you to everyone who came down. We would love to be able to spend the time to ask you all questions and but what we did today is we listened and the reason for that is so that we would have time to hear from all of you. So thank you for being here. The next step in our process will be in our October meeting. Well, first off, you are welcome to contact our offices, we will continue to be talking with everyone between now and our October meeting. At our October meeting, we will have a policy discussion. We will have the representatives from the companies back and the other representatives from the stakeholders back and we will have questions with them and conversation at that time. What we're going to do now is move on, because we have two last items, but

again I want to thank you all for being here. We're going to move on to number 8, 7, 6, excuse me, item no. 6, traffic fatalities and safety

[5:25:42 PM]

briefing. Good afternoon, councilmembers, my name is Jim dale, assistant director for the transportation department. You have requested that we come here and provide a briefing for you. We will do that on high level overview of the fatalities so far in 2015. And we'll also talk to you about the initiatives, current transportation safety initiatives as well as future ones. Before you -- >> Wait until everybody gets out. >> Okay. >> Councilmember, could we wait until folks get out. No one can hear. >> Kitchen: We have two items left. How much time do you guys think you need? >> We can do it probably in 20 minutes. We can try to shrink that if you would like for us to. >> Kitchen: If you can, the last item here, I don't know how much time they need. Where are the folks from Google? >> Madam chair may make a suggestion that you take up the Google first and then come back, staff is at your pleasure. >> Kitchen: We were going to do that, we were going to go out and look at the car because I think the car is here. So ... Why don't we just do -- how much time do we need for the Google presentation? >> 20 minutes? >> 20 minutes. >> Kitchen: Okay. [Indiscernible]. All right, let me look here. [Laughter]. Can you give us 10 minutes then we'll do the Google. >> 10 minutes, we will, we will movie quickly through the slides. >> Kitchen: I apologize, this is a very important subject and we don't mean to

[5:27:42 PM]

give it short shrift, in fact we've been talking about finding the time for the full council to hear this. The solution may be to hit the high parts and then we will put you on the work session agenda. Obviously the traffic fatalities and safety is critical for all of us, we're going to want to be thinking about next steps. >> I agree with that completely because I think there are councilmembers whose districts are particularly impacted by the traffic fatalities that are not here. And you are more important than the Google car. So don't -- >> It not that you're not important. >> Topic is definitely very important. I want to start real quick. I would do introductions but just in the March of saving time. We do work closely with other departments, representatives from A.P.D. Here as well as the planning and zoning department, my co-presenter Francis Riley. All right, in terms of fatalities, we are at 72 as of August 29th. That does not include the fatality that occurred this weekend where four individuals died in the north part of town. So if we continue on this rate, we will be at over 100 fatalities for the year. Going back to 1985, at least in 1985 where we have data, that will be the highest year on record. This is also the state -- u.s.-wide, we're seeing about 10% increase in fatalities as well. So it's not only a problem we're seeing here in Austin, but as well as nationwide. They do affect all modes of transportation. Whether you are in a car, you are on a motorcycle, pedestrian, cyclists. About a third are pedestrians. And that's about twice the national average. The rest half are about autos, there you see the 15% there, then we have one or two bicyclist fatalities typically a year. The trends we're seeing are similar in terms of the distribution similar to the

[5:29:43 PM]

past years. Looking at the notable findings, I want to talk about the things that we see on the slide, then also make a comment about what's not listed there is the impairment is a big contributing factor, about 50%, that's about -- for the state it's about 30%. Pedestrians, in a -- again a third and what we're finding is that they are in prohibited areas, they are crossing highways, crossing mid block, maybe on the shoulder of a highway and getting killed. The police have also done a considerable amount of analysis on

the fatality and they see a relationship between driver's license issues and also fatalities. In terms of programs, there's -- the city has over 40 different transportation safety initiatives, some of those are listed here. We typically group those into education enforcement and engineering. One of those is our active transportation program, within the transportation department. It's striping bike lanes. And here not only does adding the additional separation between the -- between the motors and also the bicyclists increase safety but also increased perceived safety which attracts more people to riding bikes. We do about 40 bike lane miles per year, over 200 miles in our inventory right now. Mayor's challenge for safer people, safer streets, this is a challenge that was initiated by the secretary of transportation fox, the mayor Adler accepted this challenge, we are active in all seven areas. In terms of safety improvement plan, this is when we're talking about our engineering process where we go through the analysis, recommending alternatives, implementing them and evaluating them. Want to spend a brief moment on this to give you a little bit more insights to what we do as traffic engineers or transportation engineers is we look, we have to analyze when there is a location, a problem with safety, we have to analyze the types of crashes that occur here. And you can see in this

[5:31:43 PM]

particular diagram, this takes some time to put together, the data is not easy for us to develop these diagrams, this gives us insights into what can we do at this location. I can talk to you later about specific things that we would do to address these patterns that we see here, that's what we are looking for is patterns, once we have patterns, then we can start to develop some solutions. We also have a pedestrian safety action plan that we've been working on that will come out later at the end of this year. We are also proposing in our budget our fy '16 budget a consolidated mobility safety plan, the contract for that. That's really just to bring together all of the different initiatives that we are doing, looking at how we can measure those to document what's being effective, what can we do better. I want to turn it over owe. >> Kitchen: Quickly, what's your timeline for the safety plan? >> The safety plan, if approved in the budget, the next thing we do is work on developing a scope to go out to bid. Once we get it under contract, we're expecting about 18 months. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you. This is Francis Riley with the planning and development department. >> Thanks, Jim, thank you councilmembers for having us here today. My name is Francis Riley, I'm with the planning and zoning department, also one of the staff for the vision zero task force. Vision zero is a global movement that aims to eliminate all serious injuries and traffic deaths. It's an overarching data driven approach to improving traffic safety. Here in Austin, this is a way that we're building on the initiatives that we have underway and identifying new steps for addressing a very serious problem. Principles of vision zero include that traffic deaths and injuries are absolutely preventable.

[5:33:45 PM]

So none are acceptable. It accepts that people can and will make mistakes. But we should design our systems in a way that those mistakes aren't fatal. Safety should be the primary consideration in transportation decision making and very importantly that traffic safety solutions must be addressed holistically, so through education enforcement, engineering, and land use considerations. Vision zero has been adopted by cities throughout the country. It originally started in Sweden. It's since come to the United States. The cities that have adopted vision zero have by and large adopted action plans that focus on short-term actions to curb traffic deaths. Many of them have also formed task forces as a way of collaboratively addressing traffic safety. Austin's own vision zero task force was you initiated -- was initiated by council resolution last November and has been meeting since January to look at Austin's crash data best practices, nationally and has been developing recommendations that will ultimately go

back to y'all. It has broad membership. Composed of city, state, federal agencies as well as numerous community groups that all bring different perspectives on traffic safety. This is as -- as Jim showed this graph earlier, you know, our Numbers vary year to year. But we average about 64 people killed and for every person killed, three to four people are seriously

[5:35:47 PM]

injured. I think with all of this, I mean, it's easy to lose in these Numbers that each of these deaths was a person. With a family, friends, loved ones. And so any death is too many. One of the, you know, Austin is a part of a national trend. The national safety council has said that in the first half of the -- half of 2015, traffic deaths were up 14%, serious injuries were up 30%. This correlates with gas prices and a better economy. These are two things that increase driving and so that is a possible explanation for why we're seeing this. Austin fits this trend but I think this is a place where Austin doesn't want to be a trend setter, certainly. We also, from national research, know that traffic deaths are lower in more compact cities, that land use and urban design directly affect the Numbers of traffic deaths. Cities -- this -- this study found that cities with compact and connected urban form have -- that they are safer cities. I thought it was interesting, the study did say compact and connected. Which is one of the goals of imagine Austin, so I think that's particularly fitting. In cities that do have -- that do have similar urban

[5:37:48 PM]

form to Austin, Utah, as a state, adopted a vision zero policy. And has seen a 48% reduction in traffic deaths since the early 2000s. Provo have Utah, which Provo Utah which again has a similar urban form in many ways to Austin is the largest city in the country to have a year with zero traffic deaths. In 2000, no one died on Provo's roads. We're taking on the task force we're taking these best practices, looking at the data for Austin, and developing an action plan. So on this side I'm going to go through each of these briefly. Pretty high level recommendations. The first of which is that this needs to be a data driven solution. So -- so we need to be collecting and doing a better job of sharing data. So the task force has been working with five-year crash data. Obtained from txdot. To map all fatal collisions and all injury collisions. So this map is a start to a series of maps that we hope will uncover patterns and, you know, what are otherwise seemingly random incidents. Oops. The second big recommendation is to use the data to target our educational enforcement and engineering and design efforts. To really target those hot spot geographies, as well as

[5:39:50 PM]

the -- the -- the possible land use or transportation system features that may be contributing factors to collisions, as well as the individual behaviors that may be responsible. For fatal and injury collisions. Our third high level recommendation is to develop a media campaign that highlights this as a true problem. I think this is unfortunately not on as many people's radar as it should be. So if we were all more aware, all slowed down, didn't drink and drive, were a bit more patient, we could start saving lives today, so I think this has been shown to be effective. Lastly, I think we've seen some -- some significant benefits from the task force to date. The -- the collaboration and conversations that have happened at the task force have helped lead to new initiatives. New insights. And so we would recommend continuing this collaborative effort going forward. Last slide. Is our timeline going forward. We started in November and since January we've been researching and preparing policy recommendations with the intent that we would come back to you some time this winter. With that I'll hand it back over to Jim, thank you very much. >> Kitchen: Okay. That concludes our presentation. >> Kitchen: You guys are great, that's



wonderful. This is really very

[5:41:51 PM]

important information and -- and -- what we've been talking about is putting you all on the agenda for a work session, so you can share, give you more time, share it with the other councilmembers. The other thing, you know, is that we have a budget item for dollars of the top most dangerous and perhaps I don't know -- I don't know if you all are prepared to share a list that might be helpful. Did you have a question? >> I was just wondering if A.P.D. Wanted to add any comments to the presentation about fatalities? Perspective? >> As they're coming up, I would just say you mentioned the list. We have prioritized the top 60 and responded to the budget question, so that should be coming your way through the budget process on the top five intersections. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Just briefly, my name is lieutenant Richmond with the highway enforcement division. Just briefly I know that you guys are kind of pressed for time. We weren't prepared to go ahead and put the full list, but we do have a list of initiatives we are working with transportation on. We meet on a weekly basis. If during your working session, you would like us to discuss all of those we would be very much prepared to do so at that time if you would like. So -- >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> Thanks,. >> Kitchen: Did you have a question. >> Zimmerman: I wanted to -- one of the things that were a little shocking to me were the number of transients being killed. Would you go back to that slide, 43%? >> 43%. >> Zimmerman: That is shocking. Because they are what percentage of the population? >> Probably a very small percentage. >> Zimmerman: Extremely small percent of the population with a huge -- something is wrong there. So is that -- has that been going on for five or 10 years or are we drawing more homeless people into the city, what's going on there? >> Well, transients as you

[5:43:52 PM]

can see definitely involved more, higher than other pedestrians in the fatalities that we're seeing out there. Some of the issues that we have is within being where the pedestrians fatalities are occurring on the higher speed facilities, too. That's one issue. So we're looking, we're talking among ourselves with A.P.D. And ourselves, Austin transportation department, to see how can we address that and there's some really some tough discussions that need to occur there and how to address the transient population in terms of the fatalities occurring on these higher speed roadways. One of those questions is there opportunity to move them to some of the lower speed roadways, there's a much bigger discussion there to occur. >> Zimmerman: The reason this is incredibly important, somebody Francis put up something about zero fatalities. I'm an engineer like you are, you can't fix crazy. We could spend a billion dollars, right, making all of our stuff as safe as we could make it, a mentally ill person would still figure out how to get killed. I'm deeply concerned with it. I didn't realize the number was that huge, you know. It is a way for us to be defeated. We have a goal in mind, you know, no one wants fatalities. But now I'm getting deeply concerned. We could spend a staggering amount of money and not have success. >> Kitchen: Let's talk about that in more detail when we do the next presentation, that might be helpful. So thank you all, thank you very much. >> You are quite welcome, thank you. >> Kitchen: I think we're now ready for our last -- good catch -- for our last item. Which is. >> [Indiscernible]. >> Signed up on it. >> Kitchen: I'm sorry. You spoke before, yes, I forgot. If you could -- do you think that you could take two minutes. >> Two and a half minutes. >> Come on. >> I timed it. >> Thank you. I'm Sarah LE vine with atx,

[5:45:52 PM]

to offer my support of vision zero to encourage you to approve vision zero task force recommendations and budgetary items. This year we have faced an unprecedented number of avoidable traffic fatalities. Seems like each day brings news of another horrible crash. Factors such as speed, impairment, distraction has contributed to these deaths. These crashes have happened around the clock, the deceased are not in one group or one part of Austin, they are drivers, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians, moms, grandparents, brothers, sisters, children, the concept of vision zero originated in Sweden, as he stated in '97 when the Swedish parlor. Adopted as their official road policy founded on the belief that no loss of life is an acceptable price to pay for mobility. Vistas a systematic approach to enhancing safety. Rather than exclusively faulting drivers and other uses of the transportation system, it places core responsibility for accidents on the overall system design. Vision zero places addressing infrastructure design, vehicle technology and enforcement. This approach has resulted in noteworthy successes as he also pointed out. Sweden has one of the lowest annual rates of deaths in the world, 3 out of 100,000, compared with the U.S. At 11.6 in 2012 for both countries, it a reduction of 39% there. Over the past decade, many European nations have adopted vision zero and have achieved significant fatality reductions. Switzerland it's 41%, Germany 45%, France 48 and Spain at 53. And here in the states, vision zero has been successful of 43% reduction in traffic fatalities in Minnesota, 48% reduction in Utah, and a 40% decrease in Washington state. And in 2014 pedestrian fatalities in New York City were the lowest they have ever been since they started recording which is about 1910 and people were still on horses basically. As Austin's population increases, we believe no traffic death or serious injury is acceptable. Mistakes in traffic happen.

[5:47:54 PM]

Thank you. >> Kitchen: If you want to submit that in writing, too, that would be helpful to us. >> I will email it to you. >> Kitchen: Thank you, okay, thank you all very much. Okay, now we're going to move on to our last item, number 8. Self-driving, >> Kitchen: Welcome, council woman kitchen and the mobility committee. Thank you for inviting me, my name is Jennifer R 'on, part of the Google's self-driving cars project. As you know we've been here in Austin for about two months. In other words I did want to come and quickly answer three of the most common questions, why are we working on self-driving cars, why do we think they're important, how do they work and what are we doing here in Austin? Very quickly, a little bit of history. We did not invents the concept of self-driving cars, this is an ad from the 1950s that shows a family maybe on their summer road trip. The father, even though he's in the traditional driver's seat is able to engage with his family while he's on this trip, so this idea of being able to use your time better in the car has been around for a while.

[5:49:57 PM]

>> Kitchen: Maybe we can get a copy of that, that's great. So our team's mission is to improve people's lives by transforming mobility. When we talk about transforming mobility, one of the really key parts of that is safety. We just heard a really important presentation about safety. Nationally, 33,000 people die every year on our roads. And I think it was mentioned that it's really important to think about the individuals that these are and this is a little bit of a point of the slide. 33,000 people is hard for -- to grasp. So it's actually the same as a 737 falling out of the sky. Five days a week. And if that happened, we would all be talking about it all the time. Cars are sold to us like this. Right? I like to drive in this weather as well, with open roads, nice scenery. But unfortunately we all often find ourselves like this, whether it's sitting in traffic, dealing with bad weather, distracted either by, you know, something in our mind, the fact that we want to get home to our families or by physical objects. And unfortunately, about 94% of accidents are due to human error. The other aspect is accessibility. This gentleman is Steve Mann, a

long time friends of our program. He is blind. Back in California it should take him 30 minutes to drive to work. Instead he spends about two hours trying to patch together the public transit that is there or asking friends or family for help. Of course the visually impaired aren't the only ones who don't have that freedom and independence that those of us who do drive have to just get in the car, go see a friend, pick up some dinner, what have you. So that's also a very important part of our project. Now, we started working on self-driving cars in 2009. We do have -- this is a

[5:51:57 PM]

little bit of an outdated picture. We actually have one of these vehicles outside that we can go take a look at. Essentially, this is a Lexus hybrid vehicle. We have added in our sensors, such as lasers, cameras and radars and our computing system and that makes it into our self-driving vehicle. When we started our program, we really focused on highway driving. As you can see from this image, highway driving is pretty straightforward. Most of the cars, hopefully all, but not always, are driving in the same direction. There's not as much going on, on highways, and we were really happy with where we had reached in terms of highway driving. You could drive the vehicle on to the highway, push a button, it would stay in its lane, it would moderate its speed according to the objects around it. Then when you are ready to exit, you would take back over and drive it home or out to dinner. That was great. However, we realized it wasn't fully meeting our mission. We weren't addressing the safety issues on city streets and we weren't addressing those that I talked about who can't drive, they can't do the part where you first have to drive it on to the highway. So in 2013, we made the shift to also address driving on city streets, meaning think of a car that can drive itself anywhere. But, of course, that is more complicated, as you can see in this image, which is near our home, you know, cars going multiple directions, bicyclists, pedestrians, railroad crossing lights, so it was a much harder problem. So let me talk about how it works and how we address this much harder problem. We start by mapping everywhere we're going to drive and it's actually a very detailed map. That map sits on the car and with the sensors on the car, the car then knows where it is. It's also important to note that it's not just based on G.P.S. So when you have a system in

[5:53:58 PM]

your vehicle or on your phone, that might tell you what street you're on, but our vehicle needs to know not just what street it's on, but as you can see here what lane it's in. So it has that accuracy down to about 10-centimeter. From there, you want to know what's around you. Same thing for the self-driving vehicle. In this case, this is essentially what the vehicle sees. The purple boxes are other vehicles around it. That red box is a bicyclist and you might see some orange boxes up at the top, those are construction cones. Then as a driver, you want to know, well, what's going to happen with all of these things around me? Same thing for the self-driving vehicle. In this case that's a black pickup truck that's in the lane with the construction cones, so its highest probability is that black pickup truck is going to change lanes, that's that green line coming out of that truck. You can't just know what one vehicle around you is going to do, you want to know what everything around you is going to do, that's that complexity that I talked about. From there, then the vehicle can decide what it's going to do so that green carpet looking thing is essentially the trajectory it intends to take. A couple other things to note, there's a green horizontal, we call it a fence, sitting at the back of the car in front of the self-driving vehicle. That's the object closest to our vehicle and how the vehicle decides how it's going to moderate its speed. That's one of the things that it uses the vehicle in front of it. There's then that dotted horizontal fence that's sitting in front of the cross walk right in front of the self-driving vehicle. I like to call cross walks kind of exciting places, maybe not exciting in the best use of the word, but, you know, we've all experienced where we may

have the green light, but a, you know, person comes running out or a bicyclist comes running out, so a cross walk is a special place that the vehicle takes special care around. So I'm going to play two

[5:55:59 PM]

videos. The first one is to show our car driving around in California. And demonstrate some of the things that it encounters. So as I said when we started the program, we primarily did highway driving. You can see that here. Relatively simple, it's kind of a geometric understanding of world, what are the things around you. The next scene will be a city street scene, I think we are all agree much more complex, cars going in multiple directions, pedestrians, bicyclists, these are all things that the vehicle is tracking at all times. The vehicle then can understand construction Zones. So here it's nudging over to the right part of the lane because there are construction cones in the left part. It's also tracking that bicyclist also headed through this construction zone. It understands that a police vehicle is something that you have to stop for, but that you can then safely go around it. Versus a school bus is a different type of vehicle that also has lights on it and you can't go around it, you have to wait for it to proceed. It has to understand bicyclists hand gesture, here this bicyclist is indicating that he's going to change lanes, our vehicle yields to him. And here we're training our system to understand a person in the road directing traffic. Those are all pretty standard things, maybe that you might learn early in your driving time. But, of course, we all encounter things that are not so straightforward. So here's another video of things, again, that we're just encountered driving around our neighborhood in California. Here we're tracking a bird flying in front of us. Here's a funny looking bicycle, but still classified as a bicycle. Here a small cute car, but again something that's on the road that we have to be

[5:58:01 PM]

careful around. Here a guy is going to get out of his truck, our vehicle safely nudges around him. And here we see a -- a guy in the left of us make a right turn in front of us. Here our vehicle is making a lane change but a vehicle to the left decides it wants to be in that lane, too. Here our vehicle yields for a red light runner. And here our vehicle yields for a bicyclist running a red light. And this last one is just a little fun one that our team likes, this guy is pulling in perpendicular between two self-driving vehicles. So those went by really quickly. I will also try to quickly zone in on one of those scenes that I just showed you. Here's the bicyclist running the red light. Our vehicle is at an intersection, we clearly have a red light. That blue box to the left is the bicyclist. As you can see in the image, if you were sitting in the driver's seat of our vehicle you can't see the bicyclist with our own eyes, the black S.U.V. Has pulled too far forward, we can't see the bicyclist. But our car sensor system has a 360-degree view out to two football fields and so this is an image of our laser data. There's a lot going on here, I'm going to turn towards the curb. It's difficult for us to see in those laser data points where the bicyclist is. But since our system has seen hundreds of thousands of vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, it knows how to classify those, therefore there is the bicyclist there in the blue box. So now let's turn back, maybe one more thing to note in the lower right-hand corner, you can see the bicyclist has the yellow light. So now let's turn back, back to our scene, we're sitting at a red light, the bicyclist has decided to enter the intersection. >>> >>> Even though he has a yellow light.

[6:00:02 PM]

Now, our light is green, but we expect the bicyclist to continue through the intersection. That's that red line coming out of the blue box. So we continue to yield. That's that red horizontal fence in front of us. Unfortunately that black SUV to our left is not paying as much attention and of course has a greenlight,

so goes. Luckily for everyone the bicyclist was able to swerve and an accident avoided. Then when he completed his ride through the intersection our drive proceeded. What have we been up to lately? We decided not only to use your Lexus vehicles, but our prototype vehicle. That is the vehicle we're bringing to Austin in the next week or so. There's a couple of reasons for this. One was to think about design choices for a fully self-driving car, for instance, how might you place the sensors so that they have the best field of view possible. Another was if the vehicle can fully self-drive, then you don't need manual controls like a steering wheel or pedals. But the second reason was this vehicle is clearly a self-driving vehicle. It looks quite different than other vehicles on the road, so we want to hear from people about how they're interacting with self-driving vehicles on the road oh, they want to use them. The other thing is this prototype was built for this type of tested. It's capped at a neighborhood friendly 25 miles per hour. So -- and it behaves like our Lexus in a very conservative manner. So some of the safety features we have built in, for instance, are at a traffic stop when the light turns red to green, the car pauses for one to two seconds before proceeding because intersections and when lights turn are a place where accidents tend to happen.

[6:02:04 PM]

I'll conclude there. I think I'll say that we're really excited to be here in Austin. We're excited to be expanding our program. We've done a lot of speaking with community members and hearing what they have to say about how they've been irrelevanttter acting with our vehicles. -- Interacting with our vehicles. And we've felt really welcome by everyone we've talked to. Thank you. >> Kitchen: I want to say thank you for coming to speak to us from San Francisco, I think you are. >> Yes. >> Kitchen: So does anybody have any questions or should we just go see the car? Okay. Can we go see the car? Excellent. Where is it? >> This side. Is that right? >> Kitchen: Okay. We'll come right now. >> Kitchen: We're adjourning at 6:02 P.M.