

RESOLUTION
Zoning and Platting Commission
Desired Development Zone

WHEREAS the City's watershed protection regulations utilize the Desired Development Zone (DSZ) to steer development and redevelopment away from environmentally sensitive areas in West Austin, and

WHEREAS the DSZ was established in the late 1990s as a component of the City's Smart Growth Initiative, and

WHEREAS the City's Economic Development Department's website encourages companies to relocate or expand in the DSZ, and

WHEREAS the City utilizes the DSZ on zoning cases, building permits, land development cases, neighborhood plans, strategic planning; and,

WHEREAS the DSZ has helped focus development and redevelopment on East Austin, and

WHEREAS East Austin has experienced a disproportionate amount of development and redevelopment compared to other areas of Austin, and

WHEREAS East Austin neighborhoods have experienced gentrification and displacement of low-income families, people of color, and small local businesses, and,

WHEREAS a report by the Washington Post on April 30, 2016, indicated that single-family home values in the 78702 zip code in East Austin increased by 172% between 2004 and 2015; and, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/04/30/what-the-best-places-to-buy-a-home-in-america-have-in-common/?utm_term=.2be5713ffa90

WHEREAS a 2012 report by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute found that the Non-Hispanic white share of the population in the 78702 zip code increased from 23.4% in 2000 to 56.3% in 2010, which implies that the population of people of color in 78702 decreased by more than 57% during that same period; <https://edexcellence.net/commentary/education-gadfly-daily/flypaper/2012/the-fastest-gentrifying-neighborhoods-in-the-united-states.html>

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BE IT RESOLVED that the Zoning and Platting Commission recommends that the City Council direct the City Manager to:

1. Suspend use of the DSZ for all zoning cases, building permits, land development cases, neighborhood plan amendments, strategic planning; and CodeNEXT; and,
2. Direct the City of Austin Equity Office to review the DSZ and provide recommendations regarding its impact on displacement of low-income families, families of color, and small local businesses in East Austin; and,
3. Provide a public report and public briefing on the Equity Office review and recommendations on the DSZ at a Council meeting within the next six months.

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